

HIMALAYAN WANDERER

BY
BRIG. GEN.
HON. C. G. BRUCE, C.B.

WITH 25 ILLUSTRATIONS

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LONDON
ALEXANDER MACLEHOSE & CO.
58 Bloomsbury Street

1934



From a painting by G. P. JACOMB HOOD

THE AUTHOR

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THIS book has been written purely for amusement. Carping critics are asked to be indulgent to the author, who makes no claim to literary merit.

I have to thank Cav. Vittorio Sella and Professor J. C. Norman Collie for the illustrations facing pages 84, 100 and 128.

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CHAPTER I

BEGINNINGS

“Whenever they were dull or sad,
The Captain danced to them like mad,
And told, to pass the time away,
Droll legends of his infancy!”

Bab Ballads

“WELL,” said the publisher, finishing his tea and vigorously making use of a sober-coloured handkerchief, “I think that’s the silliest remark I have heard for a long time. Wouldn’t it be rather fun?”

“Well, fun!” I said, “if that’s the line I suppose I had better give way.”

“Go ahead,” he said, “and begin young, for seeing how silly you are at the present time you surely must have committed idiocies when young which might amuse those of a light mind.”

“Very well,” I replied, “but remember, whatever happens from this time on is your fault and not mine. Will you put up with it?”

“Oh, you go ahead and get to work and don’t talk nonsense,” and with that we parted.

Thinking over these words of wisdom it was borne in on me that it might be rather fun to put down what I remember of what, at least, has been an extremely

active life. And, as for fun, I think I may truthfully say that I have always had a very highly developed sense of enjoyment, and further that I have had much more than my share of very real happiness in my numerous, if rather insignificant, activities, for mine has not been a life of great successes in any particular form of sport or otherwise, because I must make it perfectly clear that although I have dabbled in many things I have never been a great performer in any special line. I think, however, I have had a certain capacity for using the skill of other people, especially in the matter of exploration and mountain climbing. But still I think that on the whole the actual ability I showed never to be very good at anything at all was, in itself, a very great asset.

I was able, in the line of sporting activities, to turn my mind to so many different forms, and for almost the youngest of a very large family (to wit, fourteen) I think I was extremely lucky to have had the many experiences I have had. The great point to remember, however, in this little chronicle is that I was never a model character by any means—such a thing would be intensely and hopelessly impossible, and I am not setting down these experiences as a model to be followed by other people, but merely because for the moment I find great amusement in recalling them as my excellent friend mentioned at the beginning of this chapter foreshadowed, and because there are certain parts of this book which may bring

back to some glorious and delightful days of hard physical work and of intense enjoyment in the marvellous mountain countries of the East, ineffaceable memories when all that is pleasurable is remembered now and all the disadvantages forgotten. I suppose at the beginning of my time I missed, through one side of my "make-up" being for many years irretrievably lazy, many great opportunities. (I was hopelessly lazy in my books all my school life and afterwards, but I made up for it by a very useful capacity for passing exams. well with the minimum of knowledge. In fact, looking back, I have always felt desperately ashamed of these lost chances which I had when I was quite young, as with quite ordinary endeavour I might have fitted myself so infinitely better than I did for what was to come. Also, I am afraid, I began being an irreclaimable ruffian at a very early age, and for this ruffianism in the family I was sent to school at the age of five and handed over to the care of the two sisters of John Leech, the artist and humorist ; these same dear old ladies being early Victorian and humourless to the very last degree. Can you imagine any old ladies at any period giving a small boy hot tea to cure a tummy-ache ! I have never forgotten it and the subsequent agonies of those dreadful draughts.

There were, however, many other recollections of that time far more pleasurable, and I have still very clear in my memory being taken by my father, at a

very early age, to call on old Lord Albemarle on Waterloo Day. Lord Albemarle was one of the last survivors of Waterloo, having been an A.D.C. to the Duke of Wellington at that battle. Next Harrow. My brother had been a most distinguished member of the school. I was informed after I had left that I, at any rate, had left my mark, for during the five rather hectic terms that I spent there I gained the reputation of having been "swished" by the Headmaster more often than any boy in such a short space of time. My brother was a great athlete and scholar—in fact, a credit to the school. I, on the contrary, was the most irresponsible and thoroughly naughty boy with, however, a keen sense of the ludicrous which was, beyond anything else, my downfall.

I shared a room with the late Lord Athlumney, who was quite as naughty as I was and of the same age, but he had a highly developed sense of caution, and in all the fusses that we got into I was almost invariably caught whilst he escaped. I think almost my last visit to the Headmaster was for being captured after having thrown a pot of geraniums at a well-known Harrow lawyer from the very top of my Housemaster's house. The subsequent explosion, fright and flight of the said lawyer, which appeared to me exquisitely funny, was my Sedan. Unable to move for laughter I was easily apprehended. Athlumney had disappeared! But the beating, which still sticks in my mind, and which I consider the most

terrible hard luck, was due to a mere taradiddle, and considering the real brilliance of the performance, in every way a misfortune. I had been given fifty lines and been told to bring them up on the following morning at early school. Naturally, I had not done them, though I said I had and had forgotten to bring them. Priding myself on being, through intensive culture, the fastest writer of lines in the school even at that youthful age, I sprinted back and hoped to meet the form-master as he passed the house. I did so, with the written lines—a record. Unfortunately I had only blotted one side of the paper ! But what a reward for a record holder !

Apparently my reputation was undying, as many, many years afterwards, on my return from Tibet, when dining with the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Province in India, who was a near relation of the Headmaster under whom I had suffered, in the cruellest way he asked me if I had ever met, during my time at Harrow, Dr. Montague Butler. My answer was clear and to the point.

“ Yes,” I said, “ many, many times. He would recognise me anywhere, of that I am certain, possibly to this day, but I don’t think that he would recognise my face ! ”

No, I was not thrown out !

Luckily for such a hardened rascal I went to Repton and was under that great assistant master Arthur Forman. My little jokes were not taken seriously—

in fact, they were taken with much laughter. No visit to the Headmaster, but my head very severely smacked. There was, consequently, but little fun in continuing the more ruffianly side of my career, and my energies went into athletics. I only wish they had gone still more energetically into educating myself otherwise. Still, there was great humour in the fact that during my last year or so I was in the Army Class and was the only one in it, and was educated by many masters, so it was really most uncertain where I should be at any particular hour. I knew myself very often, but they didn't! This suited my book admirably.

I left Repton, however, instructed in certain subjects fairly well. I had a passion for geography and a passion for India, and had received a prize from the Royal Geographical Society for these subjects. (I also left a fair cricketer and a fair athlete, but nothing more. No doubt I should have been a better cricketer if I had played after leaving school at eighteen until I joined my Regiment when I was twenty-one, but cricket very seldom came my way in those two years when the greatest progress should have been made, but even then I should never have been more than a fair cricketer. I took up many other forms of athletics and became fair at these but nothing more. About this later. However, in justice, I must rather correct the impression that there were no other experiences. To begin with, my family had, I think, a

passion for history, my father being a great military historian and a friend of Wolseley and Lord Roberts. My mother, a daughter of Sir William Napier, the historian of the Peninsular War, brought us all up in the Napier tradition—in fact, we were all soaked in Napier lore. In my father's possession, too, were the Diaries of Sir John Moore, which came to him through my grandmother, a daughter of General H. E. Fox, and who had for a time in her youth been engaged to Sir John Moore, and who owned the Moore Diaries.¹ We were also soaked in Moore tradition, and especially in what interested me so tremendously, the dramatic campaigns of Sir Charles Napier in Sindh and his subsequent career as Commander-in-Chief in India. Still more, one of the greatest thrills that I have ever had in the whole of my young life was when I was about eighteen and visited my cousin, General William Napier, who put around me the silk belt worn by Sir John Moore when killed at Corunna, and which was an heirloom in his family, his father being Sir George Napier, who had been one of Moore's Majors at Corunna, the other being Major Stanhope. This belt is now, I believe, in the United Services Institute in Whitehall.

My home, too, was in the hills of Glamorgan, in the Aberdare Valley, which lies just south of Merthyr Tydvil, and I spent all my time running about the

¹ Afterwards published by General Sir F. Maurice.

hills, and sucked in from my earliest time a love and understanding of mountain country without my appreciating it at the time, my father being a most complete lover of his own valleys and hills, and was, in fact, until quite late in life a great walker and a fine shot even up to nearly his eightieth year.

My father had grown up with the growth of Glamorgan—one might almost say their growth was synonymous. It was really wonderful to think, considering how many years he was spared and how many years I had the advantage of knowing him, that he was actually born before the Battle of Waterloo, remembered the death of George III, and had come to man's estate when Glamorgan began to pass from a purely rural district to an industrial one, owing to the immense development of the coal industry and to the increasing immediate growth also of iron, steel, copper, etc. Not that there had not been foundries in Glamorgan from quite an early date, but not sufficient to change the face of the country. It was curious to think that when he was young he worked his spaniels from one end to the other of the Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys without let or hindrance, from farm to farm. Those two valleys are now filled to overflowing with humanity. Few people knew more about the habits of a woodcock or how to get round him. I have heard him described as one of the finest fore-hand shots to be found anywhere.

He also was a remarkably active man and kept

his activity almost to the day of his death. As an instance, he was visiting Dunvegan Castle in Skye, the home of the Macleods, in 1867, when he was not only fifty-two years of age but also Home Secretary, and was watching the Highland Games held in honour of Macleod's birthday. Seeing that the jumping was not very good he asked to be allowed to take part himself, and jumping in ordinary knickerbockers and light shoes he accomplished the extraordinary jump of 4 ft. 9 in. One of the other guests also was fired by his example and took part, no less than Heathcote, the well-known tennis player.

Curiously enough years afterwards, when dining with my cousin General Tyler at the Artillery Mess at Aldershot, I related this incident, I then being a very young militia officer on my way into the army. The only results of the story were that they intimated to me that I had begun young and that they were rather too old to have their legs pulled by a wart, when, to my astonishment, from the end of the table, a very senior officer got up and said, "I can bear witness to everything that has been related as true. I was present myself at Dunvegan at the time as a guest." It was General Albert Williams, then a well-known Artillery officer and very prominent in the great world as well. A triumph!

Nothing my father adored so much as taking us out on the hills. Our Sunday walks over the hills with our large family was never missed, and if my

subsequent life has perhaps been too much taken up with my mountain life as opposed to my professional life there is an excuse for it.

Both my brothers helped, too, the eldest being a great sportsman and the other a tremendous coverer of hill country. All my spare moments I was out with the gun in my holidays, following an elusive cock pheasant or an elusive woodcock in out-of-the-way parts where I could do no harm to the real shoots.

In those days there were plenty of rough characters in the hills, and I used to join the keepers in hunts after a special gang which we eventually broke up. It might possibly be amusing to set down their names. I remember them so well : they were a rough crew, and after they had been rounded up and had completed their punishments they came back and stole my father's guns from the gun-room at home. I believe they were again punished for burglary. They were Bill the Butcher, Shoni Kick-o-Top, Billy Blaen Llechau, Dick Shon Edwards, and there was also Dai Brass-knocker who was not so notorious. I remember well that we ran down one of these poachers after a long chase over the hills and through the woods into a little village called Georgetown, where, unable to escape, he ran into a house and hid himself in the bed of the lady of the house, and was finally found snoring for all he was worth until dragged out in fury by the owner and handed over to us.

Just to give an idea of some of the conditions in these valleys (we won't say where it is), there was a new colliery village which grew up round the colliery, with one long street, and in the middle of it you could see, if you looked carefully, a lady's marriage lines plastered in the window, she priding herself on this, as the report said she was the only lady in the street who owned one !

I had a mentor too—a regular old Welshman and a true supporter of the family. He was a man of well over fifty, a farmer and an innkeeper and a terribly keen sportsman. Many days we had together, and much of the history of old Glamorgan and Glamorgan hill families I learnt from him. He had spent some years of his youth in the old days in California and British Columbia, and earned a precarious living by shooting for the pot and supplying pioneers with game. He was a great raconteur and an excellent companion. He had a weakness, however, which now would be a distinct drawback in my opinion, and that was his love of pigeon matches and pigeon shooting—thank goodness now departed from the land.

It was during this time, when my school days were very nearly finishing, that I started a passion to see India, and this passion had really as much as anything been acquired from reading *The Old Shikari* and *My Indian Journal*, two of the earliest published books on sport in India, and never have better books been

written. The author was Campbell of Skipness, who had been a friend of my father's. The interest in these books was greatly enhanced by the fact that Campbell's son, Archie Campbell, was then a curate in Aberdare, with whom I made the greatest of friends. He used to come out shooting with us occasionally when he was free, and his descriptions of Highland sport and his reminiscences of his father's life filled me with a strong desire to follow in these lines. Campbell was afterwards Bishop of Glasgow, and was the most delightful and unconventional and stimulating of men. Then, too, a little later, my father gave me General MacIntyre's *Hindu' Koh*, the best book on hill sport that I have ever read, and which added to my determination to go to India, and turned my thoughts towards the Himalaya and Gurkha troops, not that I mentioned that side of it for a long time.

Naturally, we did not spend all our time in Wales : in those days people went to London about April and came away after Lord's in July. We lived for some twenty-eight years in Queen's Gate. Those were days infinitely more conventional and of much greater formality. We had, as usual, a special afternoon—a Wednesday afternoon—when there was an At Home, invariably with all the trimmings of that time—footmen in knee-breeches and white heads. In fact, they were to me a terrible ordeal and I escaped whenever possible.

However, even such stately things as Wednesday At Homes sometimes had their humorous side. They were, none the less, or would be thought now, extremely pompous and formal. The guests were ushered in with the utmost ceremony. The household suffered about that time, in a way, from a footman who had an astonishing sense of humour and of the ludicrous, which occasionally took complete charge, and was his end as far as we were concerned. There was at that time a French friend who was rather a regular attendant and was an Attaché at the French Embassy. His name, Monsieur de Blacasse, was altogether too much for the young footman, who threw open the door and announced in a loud voice, "Mr. Black——," and exploded with laughter. That was the end of his career as a footman but not as a humorist, for some nights later he returned, and knowing the habits of the house, broke into and stole from the basement all the left foot boots, a large number of which had been collected for the morning clean, and the house was left with right boots and right boots only !

Owing to my shocking habits of laziness I went into the army through the Militia, having again made a record by sending in my entrance papers for the Sandhurst examinations twice too late. And so to the Militia I went. However, I spent two most enjoyable years, with a minimum amount of work and a maximum amount of all sorts of athletics.

We trained both years I was in the Militia at York, and I put in a strenuous three weeks on each occasion. Most undoubtedly I ran the greatest possible risk of losing all chance of a further army career during this period. Another joke—this time a thoroughly bad one. I think we only escaped very condign punishment partly through the really good nature of the victim and of justice being tempered by kindness by the C.O. himself. As a matter of fact we were egged on by a senior officer who ought to have known better, and I daresay this had something to do with the leniency shown to us.

A certain Captain of the Regiment had unwittingly and, I consider now, quite unjustly made himself unpopular, so some of the younger sparks proceeded to take certain steps for which there was no excuse. In fact, while he was at Mess they packed every stitch of his uniform, the whole of his kit, everything that belonged to him, took it quietly down to the station and forwarded it to his home in Yorkshire. When he finally went to bed he was homeless and the following morning we were all under arrest. I think a curtain should be drawn over this incident, but it only shows in a way to what lengths rather reckless youths went in those days.

I have a pleasanter episode to relate, and which has never as far as I know been repeated, and probably will not be repeated unless this record may produce sufficient enthusiasm in the two high con-

tracting parties so to speak to copy my terrible example, but such a combination of characteristics is difficult to conceive. The then Archbishop of York was a friend of my family, and he invited me to stay at Bishopthorpe at the end of my training. One wet afternoon certain abilities which I had acquired for amusement's sake were by request made use of. Among them I had acquired an art of balancing a peacock's feather on the end of my nose, and further of blowing it up high and catching it again on my nose, of carrying it over the furniture—in fact, it rested there in perfect safety under nearly every condition. I gave a small performance and the other guests of the party joined in, and finally I had the glorious satisfaction of teaching the Archbishop successfully to copy me; but the great disappointment was that no, oh never! could he, after blowing it to the ceiling, recapture it on his nose, no matter how I coached him.

Among the great friends of my family was the Benson family, and Frank Benson, now the well-known actor, Sir Frank Benson, who had been one of the greatest amateur athletes of his time, was a hero of mine and a friend. He also had a pleasant adventurous spirit, and after many excursions that we made into the rougher parts of the East End of London we came to the conclusion we must have a real adventure, and that it should take the form of going to the Derby dressed as costers. We were

coached and dressed for the part by my boxing-master, old Ned Donnelly—"The Royal Professor" as he called himself. We had tremendous fun getting ready for it. We were to have a barrow and a donkey-cart, and I was to meet Benson on the eve of Derby Day, when we were to set out. Unfortunately, I had nowhere to go but my own home, and with the greatest care and caution I managed to get myself ready, all complete with kicksies, and crept down to the hall. However, when I opened the door to leave who should walk in but my mother, and no Derby for me! The tableau was marvellous! She had the greatest sense of humour possible, but equal determination. Frank went by himself and I believe enjoyed it. What a terrific joke it would have been, and I wonder whether we should have been able to have kept up the part together!

I used to do a lot of boxing in those days in a mild way, but as I had one damaged arm I could never get very good, like everything else. I worked very hard, too, at fencing, to which I had been introduced in France, being a pupil of Maurriette, the fencing-master of the 1st Regiment of Artillery at Chalons, himself a pupil of the great Merignac. I used to frequent, both for fencing and boxing, Waite's School and there saw a great number of professional bouts, but not only in Waite's School. I also took up running in a spasmodic manner, but as usual was no more than middling at that. I began, too, at that

time a career of “ wobbling ” which spoiled my other running, *i.e.* long distance running at a slow pace and walking, and when I left London for Heath End College, near Aldershot, I somehow or other managed to get in, during the right season of the year, four or five days with the different packs of beagles. We even had a small pack at Heath End College in those days.

The countryside and the Aldershot Gymnasium took up the greater part of my time, and while there another little adventure occurred. Somehow or other I managed to form part of the English team which ran against the French for the first time in Paris. I forget now how I succeeded in getting a nomination, but it was my own doing and through my own worrying as much as anything; and further, knowing perfectly well that I had no business to do what I was doing, I went over to Paris on the strict Q.T. to take part in these sports. We had a really marvellous experience and a very great success. The French, in fact, had only just taken up serious training for athletic sports, which was very largely due to the enthusiasm of Mons. St. Clair and of the Racing Club de France. Mons. St. Clair had a half-brother Sinclair who was in one of the Highland Regiments, I believe, and it was due to his endeavours that this semi-International match was arranged. Three of us at any rate, who took part in that little adventure are alive to-day—Mr. C. G. Wood, Mr. Mabey and

myself : Wood and Mabey being quite at the top of the tree in their own departments of athletics in those days and myself an interloper.

I think I am correct in saying that the English team was successful in every event. What a difference to the present day ! Doubtless France owes a great debt of gratitude to St. Clair's enthusiasm. We had the most marvellous reception it is possible to conceive. After the sports we were entertained to a great dinner at which the Governor of Paris was present, and royally entertained afterwards among the most amusing, delightful and friendly crowd one could wish. And what enthusiasm ! We had just time the next morning to bathe and catch our train, and no more, and back I came to my military college hoping that I had escaped all notice, but terrified of parental disapproval. And it came, of course. A letter from my mother—the Press had given us away, and an enthusiastic butler had done the rest in drawing attention to what little success I had had. I rightly deserved all I got, but was able to modify the “telling off” that I received owing to the fact of my mother's sense of humour, which again saved the situation when I pointed out to her that my exploits were not in the paper she quoted to me by mistake, which was no less than the *Pink 'Un*, but in the respectable daily press. We had great fun over this afterwards.

One more athletic performance before going to the

army is worthy, I think, of notice. For a little wager with a friend—I think only of a dinner—I bet myself to go from London to Brighton in a certain specified time, the conditions being that I should go by myself, that I should get myself up in the morning, pick up my food on the road and go in ordinary shooting kit, and if I arrived inside the stated time that he would pay for the dinner, and if I lost I was to do so. I won by the skin of my teeth. Beer and cold beef at Reigate, beer in large quantities and ham and bread and cheese and a violent flirtation with a barmaid, almost bringing oblivion to the task before me, nearly completed my ruin. Tearing myself away, and rolling like an oil tanker in a heavy sea, I staggered away from the Crawley Arms, and picking up a helper or two later on with the reward of certain shillings, I just managed to arrive in Brighton, tired but triumphant. There was a little dispute about the exact time of meeting, as my friend missed me in the crowd and only found me in a hot bath in the hotel. But he played up and paid for the dinner, and we were swimming in the swimming-bath in Brighton early next morning, none the worse for the trip.

And so finally to the army. In June '87 I joined the 1st Battalion of what is now the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, then and still known as the 43rd Light Infantry, and I joined it at Shorncliffe, the spot where my grandfather had actually joined the Battalion eighty-three years previously

when it formed part with the 52nd, its present 2nd Battalion, with the Rifle Brigade of Sir John Moore's Light Division, and where it received in those days the training which made that Division supreme at its special duties and a model for the entire British Army. Even then, in '87, the Moore tradition was strong. It was a period when the drilling and manœuvres of the English Army was still behind the times, when rapidity of movement, good skirmishing, really hard marching, handling of country as an art, were thought but little of, nor widely appreciated. But luckily for us at Shorncliffe both the Infantry Battalions (for next to us lay the 2nd Battalion of the 60th Rifles) had made a speciality of these points, and I was lucky enough to be appointed to a Company commanded by a remarkable enthusiast, both as a Light Infantryman, as a military historian and as a reformer in military training—Major William Clark.

Perhaps he was not the most tactful of men in many of his dealings, but he knew how to inspire enthusiasm, and no doubt his own passion for all kinds of sport and athletics was what made me immediately give my heart to him. I am afraid, however, in one way he strengthened my innate desire for travel and India, for his stories of the Burma War, the little incidents he had had with Gurkhas belonging to some of the Assam Battalions, and many recollections of sport, etc., such as were far

beyond one's reach in England—at least far beyond the reach of one with very small personal means—filled me with a longing to cross the seas.

I joined the 43rd, as I have said, at Shorncliffe, with another friend who had been with me at Aldershot as my sole acquaintance. We arrived together : he was the only one who knew that my nose was more than double its proper size—luckily. I had had a little trial with a professional boxer in London the day before, and that was the result. No one knew me and so no one recognised my nose. It gradually reduced, so all was well.

I was put through the mill properly in the 43rd but given every opportunity to continue my physical activities. The Regiment had always been a very active one, and all forms of athletics were encouraged, although the work was taken most seriously. We had delightful cricket matches both at home and out, playing for the Regiment or Shorncliffe Garrison, and I think I was one of the earliest, with the approval and assistance of the before-mentioned Major Clark, to start a boxing class. Then an event occurred which quite upset the balance of so young an officer. About this time it was necessary that new Colours should be presented to the 43rd, and to my prodigious joy and pride it was unanimously decided to ask my mother to present the Colours, she being the daughter of Sir William Napier who had, though not actually gazetted Lieut.-Colonel, commanded the

Battalion through the latter half of the Peninsular War, especially at Salamanca, Vittoria and the subsequent campaign through the Pyrenees. My father was also present, and myself on parade. My mother made a speech to the Regiment, for which she received afterwards a letter from the Duke of Cambridge, then Commander-in-Chief of the Army, congratulating her and thanking her for having made such a stimulating and sympathetic speech to British soldiers. Following the presentation there were naturally festivities in the Regiment. Anyone who does me the honour of perusing this simple chronicle, and whose mother has ever presented Colours to a Battalion, especially if it was nearly fifty years ago, will sympathise with what I had to put up with from all ranks in the Regiment, particularly from the members of the Sergeants' Mess. We only escaped in the early morning when I and my friend, now General Frank Lamotte, took the only step that was possible to make us respectable members of society, changed into sweaters and flannels and went for a ten mile run over the hills behind Shorncliffe. Thus were the martyrs saved !

I was an unwilling participator about this time in a rather dramatic incident in the running world. I had been doing a certain amount of running in London, and during that time had often done practice with certain of the best professional runners in England, for professional running was then in its heyday

and immense sums changed hands on the results of Sheffield Handicaps. There were two well-known runners, Ransome and Moody, who regularly practised at Lillie Bridge, and also that marvellous athlete, Harry Hutchins. Harry Hutchins was already some thirty-two years of age when a match was made with him to run Gent of Darlington for the professional championship, and enormous interest was taken in this event, and to me it was of great interest because I knew Hutchins very well myself and therefore made a point of being present at the match.

Owing to Hutchins' age it was considered unlikely that he would be able to hold the younger man, who was a very remarkable performer ; but curiously enough Ransome, a sprinter of the very first class, was engaged by both backers of Gent and of Hutchins, privately, of course, to run each of them a trial, and that very shortly before the match. It then leaked out somehow that Hutchins had quite regained his old form and that on the result of these two trials Gent really was a beaten man. This was private information, but somehow or other it became known at Lillie Bridge grounds where the match was to take place ; the hubbub that went on, where there were thousands of Yorkshiremen supporters of Gent and thousands of Londoners supporters of Harry Hutchins, who was a Putney man, was tremendous as the betting changed from 2-1 on Gent to no less than 6-1 on Hutchins. But no runners appeared, and by

degrees the crowd got more and more impatient, and eventually a feeling that all was not well seemed to surge over that great multitude. Finally, after waiting some three-quarters of an hour, the dressing-rooms at Lillie Bridge were rushed by the crowd, and behold they were empty! A wave of fury seemed to sweep over everybody; who started the riot I cannot tell, but in a moment fires were lit and very shortly the great Pavilion and some of the side stands were in flames. Not only that, the very tall flagstaff in the middle of the ground was uprooted and used as a battering-ram to smash down more of the Pavilion stands. As practically everything in those days was built of wood, in no time there was a great conflagration, and there came down through the entrance tearing columns of police with their batons drawn.

I said to myself, "This is no place for me!" and made for the railings on the east side of the ground on the other side of which was the Underground Railway. It seemed impossible to escape, but I found a tall Guardsman in the same predicament and somehow or other we helped each other up and without much damage dropped down the far side, ran along the line, through the tunnel and out at Walham Green station. I was only too glad to escape.

The police had great difficulty in calming the mob, and free fights were naturally very much the order of the day. It afterwards became known that two London bookmakers, perfectly well known as backers

of Gent, had rushed and kidnapped both runners and carried them up the covered way to West Brompton Station and rushed them out of London in hansoms. I got back to Shorncliffe thrilled with my adventure. Luckily no harm was done to either of the runners, nor was it ever decided in public after that which was the better of the two men. At any rate it was an incident to be remembered.

That year brought me to another incident in my life which was my entry into what has been ever since then my greatest pre-occupation probably, for in that year I climbed for the first time my first snow mountain. My friend before-mentioned in the Regiment, Frank Lamotte, had already as a boy been up Mont Blanc and one or two other expeditions in Switzerland, and his conversation had fanned a fire already lit for Alpine experiences. I had previously become from my bringing up what I was later on known as among many of my friends, which they shortened to the term "M.M.M.", which means "Mad Mountain Maniac." I had walked with another friend, the present Sir Rhys Williams, before this time, from South Wales to North and had already become a worshipper of wild Welsh mountain scenery, and I had a great yearning to extend my activities further afield.

So in rather fear and trembling the two of us, as it was summer and therefore the drill season, asked for a short leave to visit Switzerland, and to our great

joy it was granted. We had very little time on our hands and our aims were not ambitious, but we travelled to Lucerne, walked over the St. Gothard, over the Furka Pass and so to Meiringen, made an ascent of the Wetterhorn. Back again the same way, crossing the Rhone Glacier to the Furka Pass and so home by the same route. My first snow mountain, and once more a little French proverb, "Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte," proved very much to be correct. For that first taste of the mountains woke a passion for mountain travel and exploration which shows no signs of diminution to the present day. However, I was not to see a snow mountain again for three years, and then under very different conditions indeed, and for still longer was I to base my authority of snow and ice work on that one climb, undertaken between two excellent guides ! In fact I started my climbing in the Himalayas on that basis—a little knowledge is a dangerous thing indeed ! At any rate we had a most glorious and enjoyable time, and one that lives in my memory as vividly to-day as the day I came back to Shorncliffe. I saw, too, two first-class mountaineers at work, and that alone was of the greatest interest ; further, I still remember equally well that as we entered the Dossen Hut under the Wetterhorn meeting Miss Katharine Plunket and her guide, Peter Baumann, passing on their way down. What a memory ! Miss Plunket died only the other day, aged ninety-seven.

In the early spring of '88 the Regiment moved to Newport in the Isle of Wight, while at that time I had determined to leave the English Army and go to what was then called the Indian Staff Corps, and, in fact, left the Regiment in the autumn of '88. Before leaving, however, I managed to account for some army running championships, and also took part in the first race authorised by the A.A.A. (Amateur Athletic Association) when for the first time officers were allowed to compete against the men. Before that, owing to the fact that men had run for money prizes, officers technically became professionals if they competed against them. My debut was in a way a little dramatic. I had been already informed that I should not be allowed to compete against the men, and after the first day's athletics when my work was finished I had dined with the Yorkshire Regiment in Aldershot and with friends, and dinner had been followed by a most extensive "rag," and the night spent in innumerable activities, almost all of them of the most athletic type, thirst-producing and in which that thirst had been duly quenched.

I got back to my quarters in Aldershot about six in the morning, stiff and very sore from numerous tumbles, cock-fighting, wrestling, etc., and at 7.30 was woken up by gallant Col. Fox, Commandant of the Aldershot Gym and Director of the Aldershot Athletic Meeting, with a telegram to say that the A.A.A. had withdrawn their objection and that I

was to run in the 300 yards Championship that afternoon.

There was only one thing for it. To Macdonald's ¹ Turkish Baths I went, and for three hours or more I was sweated and pummelled and pummelled and sweated until my limbs became limber again. The race was held early in the afternoon, and although I was supplied with a very powerful stimulant before starting I was left at the post. But having really the legs of the Company I managed to get a good second.

Yes, I think I may say that about that time I was a healthy young man. No further remarks are necessary, with one exception—that I could enjoy a rag and did so, and also for some years afterwards, how many I don't intend to divulge !

Now the time was drawing on when I had to leave the Regiment, which was my own doing, no doubt. It was not the usual way of getting into the Indian Army, as I had not previously put my name down for it ; but I had had so much talk with my chief mentor, Maj. William Clark, and with many other of the officers who had spent many years in the East, that my mind had become made up. Maj. Clark, during his experiences in the Burma War, had commanded small columns and had acquired a great admiration for and a great interest in Gurkha troops with which he had worked, and many of his stories had

¹ Mr. Macdonald is now the greatest tattooer in England, and is to be found in Jermyn Street.

specially fired me with ambition. About that time, while we were in Newport, came the account of the death of Col. Battye and his companion Urmston on the Black Mountain on the banks of the Indus, on the Indian Frontier, and an account of how well his small escort of Gurkhas had behaved. All this added fuel to the fire, but I little thought that I should join the actual Battalion in which Battye had passed his distinguished career. I think, too, that probably for a young officer of very small means indeed my decision was a wise one, for I could not live economically at home, and my activities and bents and interests all tended to be rather expensive. At the same time, however, I felt a terrible deserter. My connections with the Regiment and the kindnesses I had received in it remain an unpayable debt of gratitude. My education in the Regiment had been short but absolutely invaluable : I had been made to work but encouraged to play, and specially had learnt one thing—that all soldiers one has to deal with in the British Army are exactly the same as oneself, with the exception that they have not had equal advantages. Such knowledge is a liberal education.

More I learnt, too, for again let me say that drill and training were still rather formal. Good steady drill was the watchword of the army—probably, to put it more clearly, drill was the means and the end, instead of the means to an end. I remember particularly the inspection held by the Duke of Cam-

bridge in '87. On one day we had a field day on the hills behind Folkstone and in the rather broken and wooded country at the back of it. Fancy going out nowadays in full kit. I myself had to carry the Colours besides, dressed in red coat with a full-dress belt, white gloves and everything except one's gold-braided trousers, which one had in those days for a Court ceremonial. But we let nothing interfere with our rapidity of movement, notwithstanding the archaic outfit we were in. I remember afterwards my repairs cost me over £5. We had been through every kind of country—woods, hedges, hillsides and all sorts of rough ground, and going fast on a hot day. No wonder even a simple field day of that description was detested by officers and men alike at that time. However, thinking we had done well and had shown our pace and our paces, we were hardly prepared to be told that what the Regiment really wanted was “good, steady drill”! But such was the spirit of the time—a time happily now past from that point of view.

Lord Roberts was already a friend of the family and had written to my mother to say that he would see that I was posted to a Gurkha Regiment. I therefore left comforted greatly by that assurance and a little bit possibly uplifted more than was justified.

CHAPTER II

TO INDIA

I RECEIVED my orders for India early in September '88, and as my family was at that time at Aix-les-Bains I was given leave to join H.M.S. "Crocodile," the old troop-ship, at Malta. This gave me an excellent opportunity, not only of an extremely delightful ten days at Aix, but also of a journey through Italy and Sicily on my way south. I also had my one and only fencing match at the Café des Fleurs at Aix. As a matter of fact I had made great progress as a fencer—better, in fact, than in any other form of physical activity. That match was my fencing swan song, for never again did I do any serious fencing, to my regret, as I really had a chance of becoming good in this particular line. Another year or two of intensive study under adequate masters and I could have looked forward to becoming expert. But it was not to be.

From Naples to Malta I travelled in a little coasting steamer of a primitive type, which stopped for nearly a whole day at each of the ports—Messina, Catania and Syracuse—and I spent at each a very active and instructive day, regretting intensely that

I had not more time to push my explorations further afield, but rather thrilled by the fact that I had a good view of Etna, which my father climbed as long ago as 1841, and about which and his other sporting expeditions in Sicily, and his amusing "shikari" Borasco, I had read in his Diaries.

And so by troop-ship to Bombay, my cabin being naturally in "Pandemonium," as it was called, where all the subalterns were quartered in the very lowest deck. The old troop-ships were roomy and very comfortable, but slow, and though "Pandemonium" was well ventilated by great windsails, still dressing, long before electric punkahs were heard of, in the Red Sea at the end of September was a disastrous performance, my collars at any rate being soaked and floppy long before I could get on deck to a cool breeze. We arrived in Bombay about the middle of October, and a cocksure young officer walked into the Headquarter offices and enquired at the necessary department for the Gurkha Regiment to which he was immediately to go, only to be met with the answer that his name was down for none and that he was to leave for Secunderabad and join a certain regiment in the Madras Infantry, the number of which does not matter, and which is now no longer in the Army List. Swelled heads are bad things at any time, and a very deflated and chastened youth crept out of the office. Luckily, with fifteen days' joining leave, I was able to visit my connections in



IN 1815



FRESH CAUGHT GURKHA
RECRUITS



AFTER A YEAR



AFTER FORTY YEARS
Sub. Maj. Passu Khattsi

Poona—John Muir Mackenzie and his wife—and spent a delightful time with them and was initiated, so far as it was possible to do in the time, into the beginnings of Indian life. The process of further deflation continued there and very rapidly. Having at home had a considerable amount of instruction and practice in catch-as-catch-can wrestling, and having at that time certain rather highly developed ideas of the superiority of the British race over all comers, all nations and languages, a visit to the Gymnasium was arranged. Having heard so much of the skill of Indians, an appointment was made to meet some of the Indian pupils undergoing gymnastic instruction there. The result the following morning was highly instructive, extraordinarily morally beneficial. Three ordinary and much smaller Sepoys of the Bombay Army administered three complete and most convincing defeats in quick succession !

So to Secunderabad to join my Regiment. I had been warned by many people I had met that I should probably find things very, very different from my home experiences. Words could not possibly convey how great that difference was. It is terrible to have to confess it, but the Battalion which I joined was well known—notorious, in fact—as inefficient and hopeless, even among the twenty-six Battalions of the old Coast Army which at that date were still in the Army List. Not for a moment would I compare it, for instance, with its neighbour in Secunderabad

which, though practically enlisted from the same class of man, was in every degree so infinitely superior. But imagine after what I had left at home what an extraordinary experience it was to join such an organisation as I had to.

The Officer Commanding at that time was of the type often written and chaffed about in Madras—Colonels who, not liking horses, when the weather was wet would drill their Regiment off a pile of bricks. And, really, this is hardly an exaggeration. The Regiment, too, was ruined by its terrible physique, many of the men having been bred and born in the Regiment and descended from old Sepoys whose own fathers had been in the Regiment—underfed, hampered by enormous families. I think, too, without exaggeration, I may say that among the officers of the senior rank were men who had lost hope of any possibility of better things and were settling down to as comfortable a life as they could manage, evading as far as possible the unpleasant attentions of the general officers entrusted with their inspection.

The most pitiable part of the whole condition was that among the younger officers there were some of as good fellows as one could wish to find—keen and hard working and full of ambition and hope. For me everything was new, and, further, my hands were itching to get at my guns, and especially at my new rifle ; but I was very easily comforted, for as soon as I had found my legs, which didn't take me very long,

and with the help of friends I set about exploring all avenues whereby I could obtain some sport within reach of Secunderabad, for the Battalion moved to Burma in the winter, where it was already under orders to proceed, and therefore time was short. I had just enough money to do what I wanted, and I have often roared with laughter when I think of my first step. I found a keen Mohammedan in the village of Begum Pet who was also a very, very enthusiastic shikari, and beyond that an honest man—he must have been or how could he have served me the way he did, for I engaged him immediately on a salary and also an assistant shikari on a salary. I yearned to see if I could get a panther or a tiger before leaving, so I bought a herd of no less than twenty-two buffaloes which I was assured my new friend would be able to place in the right direction and under trustworthy people to tie up for panther and tiger. It certainly was trusting on my part, but curiously enough I had really got an honest man.

I then set about obtaining ponies and I bought no less than three—one was really a remarkable performer in the matter of covering long distances, and a good, all-round animal which I used on parade into the bargain, a Kabuli who made nothing of my weight. The other two were good steady little animals intended for the road, in other words, to take me out shooting. And, as a matter of fact, leave was not difficult to obtain, and every Friday night I crept

out into the jungle, using my three ponies as relays, where I was met by my shikari and got news of the beats he had arranged. It really is astonishing to think that I picked up quite an amount of small animals and that I actually arranged a beat in which I saw a tiger in the flesh for the first time and had a magnificent sight of it. My companion, however, at that particular shoot, lost his nerve and did not fire at it as it cleared a rock within ten yards of the one on which he was standing. Possibly he was right! I was some fifty or sixty yards away on his flank and was unable to get a shot.

In those days shooting round Secunderabad was free: it was not necessary to obtain a special block of country which one earmarked long before, as I believe very shortly followed that period. It was for this reason alone that I was able to carry out my little expeditions. I lost a good many of my herd, taken by both panther and tiger, and which I was able to verify by visiting the kills, so that by the beginning of January—a very short period really, less than eight weeks after my arrival at Secunderabad—I had only twelve buffaloes left. Still nearly every week I got in a shoot on Saturday and Sunday, riding back at night on my three ponies laid out in relays and arriving in time to be on parade on Monday morning, desperately tired as usual when I got there.

At any rate I escaped without financial disaster, getting rid of two of my ponies and the remainder

of my buffaloes before leaving for Burma. I have always considered it was a great effort. Luckily, a knowledge of the language did not bother me, as my acquisition from the bazaar, who was my organiser as I have before stated, spoke English fluently, which is often the case in the South of India, and I really did have a most wonderful time.

Another experience, and that a most amusing and humorous one which I have never forgotten. Shortly after my arrival, naturally as long after as possible, but certainly about the first fortnight, I was sent off by my Adjutant to call in uniform, as the custom was, on the G.O.C. of the Brigade to which my Regiment belonged. As long as laughter did not give me away I had an innocent face on occasions which, properly set, got me through many difficulties—on this occasion a capacity which stood me in wonderful stead. I was received by the G.O.C., who happened to be in uniform at the time, and ushered into the presence. He was of the old world—personally he seemed to me to belong to about a century and a half ago, a relic of the old Coast Army—bald-headed, with a long white beard, stately and stern and very fatherly. I sat on the very edge of a chair while he delivered to me a long homily on the conduct of young officers on arrival in India and the terrible temptations which beset them. Finally he said, “ Now all young officers should take my advice. You will have much leisure on your hands, much time—you should have a hobby

—all young officers should have a hobby. How about butterflies ? ”

My thoughts at that moment turned to my herd of buffaloes and my rifles, and I had visions of my jaunt to Paris and my exploits in the Sheffield Handicaps and exciting visits to Bill Symonds at his boxing-booth in the East End. No, I was not exactly at that moment exhilarated by butterflies as a hobby !

So to Burma. And what a business it was in the old days moving a Madras Regiment. Their prodigious families had to be settled, none being allowed to accompany us, and it was hoped that we should escape terrible scenes on the road to Madras and when embarking. Even the younger officers knew quite well what this meant, and the senior ones were rather terrified at what was in front of them. Luckily for the Regiment we had attached to us for Burma from another and efficient Corps an officer of experience and character—Capt. Tom Haughton, with whom I subsequently made great friends. He was a delightful companion, the whole seventeen stone of him.

Somehow the Regiment arrived without anything untoward happening until we got down to the beach at Madras, where we were to embark. There, to our dismay, we found a collection of ladies of the Regiment beating their chests and howling at seeing their fathers and husbands departing, and to my intense disgust practically equal howling from the men themselves. To see an old Telugu of those days, with his

long Piccadilly weepers that many of our men had, and a bunch of hair at the back of his head, dressed as a soldier and howling, with tears falling down his cheeks, was not exhilarating to my inexperienced mind. But really it was a most trying business. Finally, however, we got off and arrived at Rangoon. The journey down to Madras had been very interesting, as we drew up at different periods for the men to get off the troop train and cook their food. Those halts, being of several hours' duration, gave us younger ones time to go out with our guns, and though much game was not obtained we got a good idea of the countryside, all to me filled with interest.

In January '89 Burma had not fully recovered from the Burmese War, and where we were destined for in Northern Burma, Mandalay and the Ruby Mines, was still in a very disturbed state. Luckily for me I belonged to the wing commanded by my friend, Capt. Tom Haughton, which was told off for the now derelict station of Bernard Myo at a height of some 5600 ft. I was delighted with the outlook. Burma altogether is perfectly delicious when seen for the first time—the colouring, the interest of the pagodas, the pleasant smiling faces of the people and their humorous outlook were all delightful. The journey up to Mandalay was filled with interest, and we made the best of it, getting an evening's shoot when the steamer tied up on the banks of the Irrawaddy.

Two of my friends on the steamer were keen enough shots but had not been exactly brought up to the gun, and I remember the first and only time I went snipe-shooting with them. One of them, Thomas, finally commanded a Panjabi Regiment ; the other, Johnson, joined the Panjab Frontier Force as I did myself later on, and was well known afterwards as "Winkie." Even in those days he was above weight, and his "Winkie" name came from wearing an eye-glass. We had not started off long, I being well on the flank, before "Winkie" shot Thomas, though not enough to damage him, followed not long afterwards by Thomas shooting "Winkie." Things were getting a little heated by this time, and I was getting much further off, taking a long, long arm round the flank. Then a snipe flew back between them—a double shot and a prodigious explosion of language, some of the finest that I have ever heard, notwithstanding my East End experiences ! They had shot each other simultaneously !

My wing finally landed at Thabeitkin, where the road to Bernard Myo, Mogok and the Ruby Mines leaves the Irrawaddy. It was then merely a rough cart track through forest, slowly ascending until a fairly large post called Shwenoungbin was reached. At Thabeitkin we left the worst of the heat behind. It was rather a struggle getting to the first stage, as it was quite apparent that the men were entirely unfitted for any hard work and numbers had fallen out.

Trees down over the path had to be cut away or eliminated, and it was hard work in many places so doing, while often the bullock carts and mules on an inadequate road had to be assisted by the men, few of whom could be found who knew anything apparently of the use of an axe or a spade or would willingly work when one's back was turned in assisting the mule carts. Perforce a halt had to be called for two or three days before the steeper road to Bernard Myo could be faced, and I got leave to take a little shikari, who was my servant and whom I had brought from Secunderabad, to go to Bernard Myo to report progress to the officer commanding the station—Colonel Cochran of the Hampshire Regiment—and to explain to him the predicament in which we were. As the country was still in a very disturbed condition it really was rather foolish of Capt. Haughton to have allowed me to go, and that was clearly explained to me by Colonel Cochran on my arrival.

However, I got there and back again, bringing a lot of mess comforts for our little mess in a rucksack which I had already acquired in Switzerland, without any damage to either of us. A long trek and terribly interesting, through most gorgeous jungles and great trees, and I was thrilled from head to foot with my first experience of the Eastern hills and the superb colouring of Upper Burma. Further, many Shan traders were passed on the road, quaint Leeshaws

and other hill-folk, with their good-humoured and smiling faces and their brilliant and delightful clothing.

Life at Bernard Myo was quiet but not uneventful by any means. There were continued rumours on which action had to be taken against marauding dacoits, and besides there was much interesting country to be wandered over, and fairly safely. Up in the hills there was little fear of meeting anyone, but to the east in the valley of the Kin River that was not the case at all. Above Bernard Myo, though covered with jungle, was quite a considerable hill, about 8000 ft., where I used to wander in search of game, and I made friends there, too, with a brother of Edward Whymper, conqueror of the Matterhorn, who was in the Telegraph Department, and made an ascent of this hill with him, where we looked down on Mogok, the centre of the ruby mine trade. Streeter, the great London dealer in jewels, was then on the point of acquiring the rights of the best part of the minefield, though he had not yet actually started his operations there, and Colquhoun, a well-known traveller in China, was the Deputy-Commissioner. His book, *Across Chryse*, had made some stir in the geographical world. I had, as a matter of fact, met him at the Geographical Society before I left home, my father at that time being President.

We had a detachment in Mogok who gave an exhibition of their capacity as soldiers. Johnson was

in command of it and had rather an unpleasant time with them. Eventually he had to report the whole matter to headquarters and I went over with the C.O. to enquire as to what had happened. We arrived there and found a certain number of men under arrest. It appeared that in the night a scare had been raised that the dacoits (marauding bands of robbers) were attacking the post. However, a very careful enquiry finally elicited the following story. There were three sentries round the post where this particular company of the Regiment was stationed, and which was on a little peninsula of land jutting out from the hillside. The sentry stationed at the col thus formed saw something cross in the dark. He challenged, lost his head, fired and ran away. The other sentries on the flanks of the building equally fired, lost their heads and ran away. In a moment there was a hubbub inside the post. It was then discovered that all that had happened was that a panther had crossed the col, travelling from one part of the jungle to the other !

Later on I found myself detailed to take a column of my own people to follow dacoits on the Kin River, for they had been raiding again in that direction. These dacoits were often horribly cruel to villagers. The Burmese and the Shans and all the hill people, though in ordinary conditions delightful people to deal with, have at the back a strain of cruelty which, when they become outlaws, so to speak,

has full scope and seems to develop to a terrible extent. We were accompanied by a young police officer named Underwood and some of his Shan policemen as trackers and for information—excellent fellows, and I was happy enough to find, too, as was only natural, some of my own men, a few who were staunch and strong and good chaps. At any rate we had a very exciting time. The policemen got excellent news of the movements of the dacoits, and after a forced march through the jungle we sprang upon a band of them cooking their food on the banks of the Kin River. I was sensible enough before going to Burma to provide myself with a Winchester carbine which carried nine cartridges. At that time I was about the world's worst shot with the revolver, and consequently I felt much happier with a carbine. With the exception of a few stalwarts the rest of the men went clean off their heads, but my few stalwarts behaved excellently and we were able to break up the band.

Luckily for myself I got out of a little trouble, my carbine proving too handy and too accurate for the leader of the dacoits, as he turned out to be, with whom I had a fuss in the middle of the river. We found out afterwards he was the head of the band and that his name was Boh Nungoo. A piece of quite unexpected luck !

Later I was further employed on small columns, and Colonel Cochran was kind enough also to give

me besides my own men a small detachment of the Hampshire Regiment, for which I was more than duly thankful.

But, after all, what interested me beyond anything in that perfectly delightful country were the people themselves. Whenever it was possible I went over to Mogok, and on one occasion was present at, and took part in, the funeral rites of a well-known—in fact an illustrious—Burmese priest or pounge, one of the most astonishing ceremonies it is possible for man to conceive.

He had been placed in the funeral car, which was an immense construction of wood supported on four solid cart wheels, in which he lay in state, and the car was ornamented with upper works of some 60 or 70 feet of bamboo, naturally quite light. At each end of the car was attached a gigantic bamboo rope, and then the villagers of South Mogok and the villagers of North Mogok, simultaneously seizing the ropes from opposite ends of the car, proceeded to have a tug-of-war for the ownership of the priest and for the right of continuing his funeral ceremony : to wit, burning him.

Fancy 500 a side, all in the most gorgeous raiment of silk and plush—men, women and children, all terribly excited and evidently enjoying themselves to their fullest bent—a wonderful sight of life and colour. There was a tremendous pull lasting some minutes, but finally one rope broke and the car

bounded in the direction of the unbroken rope, the winners, everyone of them, being flat on their backs. Luckily no one was crushed by the released car, which I was told was a bit of good luck—in fact almost a record.

What a contrast to our methods ! How often have all of us during our lifetime when singing hymns appealed somewhat in these terms, “ But oh ! I long to hear the triumphant song of Heaven,” and when the time comes all is gloom and regret and mournfulness, so different from the earnest appeals we apparently make in Church. I would far rather give one day of pleasure and life and light to all and sundry in place of the gloom which accompanies one’s passing. How I would like in my own valley to see myself in a great wooden car—the town of Aberdare tugging for me against Mountain Ash ! Wouldn’t it be a glorious vision—deputations from the Sunday Schools of all denominations falling in on the ropes, the Boy Scouts, the local fire brigades, the athletic and football clubs, the Salvation Army band, or possibly the brass band which had lately been playing at the Crystal Palace competitions, and the St. John of Jerusalem members all present to pick up the casualties in case the ropes should break ! Which would win—Aberdare or Mountain Ash ? All that I would pray for though in the final ceremony would be that I should be buried on the hillside in full view of the valleys and the hills where I was

brought up and adore ! Aren't I a heathen to prefer joy to black coats ? No need to embalm me in honey. For thus was the poungye embalmed !

About this time I had almost made up my mind to go back to my original Regiment when two letters arrived—one from my father enclosing a letter he had received from Lord Wolseley saying that he had personally asked that I might be sent back to the 2nd Battalion of my old Regiment, the 52nd, then stationed in the East ; and another, from Simla, to say that I had been appointed to the 5th Gurkhas at Abbottabad in the North-West Frontier Province. I chose the Gurkhas.

CHAPTER III

THE FRONTIER: SWITZERLAND AND CONWAY EXPEDITION

FROM Mandalay to the North-West Frontier at the end of May is a long cry, and a warm cry into the bargain, especially as at that time I began to feel the effects of dacoit hunting on the Kin River, where we had also spent some nights out in the rain. Being thoroughly inexperienced in those days I had no idea of how to guard against tropical ills, and not only was fever seizing me but my feet were full of Burmese sores, to such an extent that my last trek in the jungle had been undertaken with three pairs of socks and a pair of old pumps tied on with boot laces, in such a way that my feet were not irritated. It seemed to be a passion in those days to let young officers find out things for themselves. That attitude is now gone for good, and bad luck go with it.

The journey was finally accomplished, and the prodigious change, too, made from rich and colourful Burma through the parched plains of Upper India to the even still more parched Panjab. I arrived at Hassan Abdal, some twenty-five miles to the west of Pindi, on the 4th June, and from there was taken by

tonga, which is a very strongly built two-wheeled cart, to Abbottabad, forty-four miles further.

Abbottabad was the headquarters of the Panjab Frontier Force, then still very much in existence. Just after the second Sikh War the Force had been constituted to look after the wild tribes on the North-West Frontier of India, and they had made for themselves a tradition of efficiency second to no other organisation in India. It consisted of about 15,000 troops—cavalry, artillery and infantry—and detachments were placed at certain stations on or near the actual frontier itself. In those days they fulfilled their duties, and had done so since their original institution, with exceptional efficiency; but even at that time of which I am now writing the frontier had become an infinitely greater and more difficult affair. Peshawar and the Khyber had never been included in their activities, however. There was no North-West Frontier Province then—the whole of the frontier north of Sindh being administered by the Panjab Government under the Lieut.-Governor of the Panjab, and the Panjab Frontier Force being directly under the Commander-in-Chief in India and not belonging to the Bengal Army as such. It had also a General and Staff in charge of it, whose headquarters were Abbottabad, where I had now arrived. At the moment of my arrival it was commanded by a very well-known and famous old frontier soldier, Sir John MacQueen. The troops in

Abbottabad consisted of a mountain battery, the two battalions of 5th Gurkhas, whose permanent station it then was, and a battalion of the Panjab Frontier Force.

I had just been able to hold out until my arrival, as I had suffered a good deal from fever on the journey up from Calcutta and through the Panjab. Everyone knows that in June the journey across Northern India gives one a very good idea of what real heat is; but I, too, was without servants, all my Madrasi servants having refused to come with me to the North. And so a rather dishevelled figure arrived in Abbottabad to find the station more or less *en fête* as it was the final end of a polo week. The climate of Abbottabad at 4000 ft. above the sea is on the whole excellent. Even then in June the heat was easily supportable, although it could not be exactly described as a hill station, for even at that height in June and the beginning of July one may expect temperatures reaching 100 and even one or two points above it possibly.

The end of the polo week was celebrated by a great evening in the Garrison Mess, but that was not for me—I took to my bed, but I heard of a tremendous romp afterwards, and to give an idea of how terrific the romp had been, at 6.30 the following morning a wild Irishman of the name Bidy Cunningham put his face from under the ante-room carpet and remarked “Which is por-r-r-t?” It struck me that

they may have been doing something besides romping, but goodness knows. (Please note : there must have been somebody keeping him company !)

The next two months kept me busy recovering, and included a sick leave to a neighbouring hill station at the height of 8500 ft. called Thandiani. There for the first time I saw the magnificence of the Himalayan forest of firs and pines, which was a revelation. Of course I had wandered in the Swiss forest before, but here the trees were so infinitely greater—deodar, spruce, sycamore, Webbiani pine, and, lower down, chestnut and walnut. I also had for the first time a glorious view of the snows on the mountains on the west of Kashmir, the district of Kaj-i-nag, the Kaghan mountains, and away, away to the north across the Indus what I learnt afterwards were part of the outer Hindu Koosh, quaintly named the Hindu Raj, the great peaks above Laspore and Buni. Then was born my determination to visit them, and there was open to me a field of activity beyond what I had expected or suspected even from the glimpse I had had from lower down. However, one soon gets over fever at that age, which if well treated one ought soon to throw off. This beautiful little station, one of the very highest in the outer Himalaya and one of the few entirely and absolutely unspoilt, chiefly because it is so out of the way, had, as a matter of fact, been originally established by the officers of the 5th Gurkhas after the Regiment was first raised in

1858. They had built themselves by degrees small houses and gradually made a little hill home for themselves, but later on it naturally extended and a great number of the houses were bought up by the Church Missionary Society ; it has since become a centre to send missionaries up to in the warm weather and give them a much-wanted change from the plains of the Panjab.

Some of these missionaries were very, very wise, and some of them were not quite so wise. It is rather amusing to think that one lady actually supplied herself with many bottles of Thandiani water to accompany her down to the plains because the waters of Thandiani were so much colder than the waters down in the Panjab ! Please note, I am not poking fun at her godliness and worthiness because both were no doubt beyond cavil.

And so cured and back. What an immense change again. Everything so filled with interest and evident efficiency. Then began for me what was and has been, and remains to this day, the chief interest of the whole of my life—that is, my connection with the little men of Nepal and the adventures we have had together and the many journeys we have taken in the mountains and otherwise. It was, too, of the very greatest advantage to be next to a fine Panjab Frontier Force Regiment of the very best type and the difference in character, physique and mentality of the different races not only was most marked but also

was, to so very inexperienced an officer as I was then, of incalculable advantage. To find an organisation in which everybody was simply bursting with energy and keenness and the smartness of the men and their evident fitness and efficiency compared with anything I had seen before in my short experiences in the south, gave me a completely different outlook on life.

But oh! if I had only known what was in front of me! my difficulty at the moment being a complete want of knowledge of Indian vernaculars. In looking back on the Indian Army as it was then I cannot, I am afraid, do so with complacency. In the light of modern arrangements there were many most terrible defects and I still wonder, when I think of the conditions in those days, how the Army really managed to be as efficient as it was. Its organisation was such that it certainly could not possibly have stood or faced what it was called on to do in these latter years. Gurkhas, too, I think, were at an even greater disadvantage than Panjab troops; they certainly knew less on arrival in the Regiments, were foreigners completely, and had not the capacity for taking care of themselves and looking after their own interests as highly developed as most of the inhabitants of the Panjab and the frontier.

One hoary old system, which was to remain for many years, until in fact shortly before the Great War with modifications, was a curious one known as

“half-mounting.” This was really a method by which the men bought for themselves out of their wretched pay of 7 Rs. a month when I first joined, and good conduct pay, a portion of their clothing, by no means covered by a small allowance to meet those charges, and they also from this extremely meagre pay were obliged to feed themselves into the bargain. It is true that the price of all commodities was infinitely cheaper then than at the present time, but even so it was a wretched position. The result of the men paying for their clothing, and especially for their boots, was that if they were hard worked during peace time the very fact that one was making them efficient acted in a way like a fine. The results were that a great deal of their work was done in their ordinary clothes, and that the wear and tear when they had to wear uniform and wear out their boots unconsciously affected the methods of training.

The physical condition of the men generally in peace time, particularly among Gurkha troops, could not possibly be compared with the present state. There was also a real scandal, which in those days was not apparently considered at all, but was in itself a terrible scandal, and that was the condition of the hospitals. However keen the medical officers in charge of battalions might have been, they were handicapped when not even hospital clothes were allowed for the troops and they had to go to bed in hospital, no matter from what they were suffering,

in their own plain clothes—a really dreadful outlook. At the back of everything, of course, was economy, but it never seemed to strike authorities how bad that economy was and that the duty of an army was to be good enough to beat the other man, no matter who he might be, and that health comes first. Nevertheless, all activities of any description were encouraged as far as activities could be encouraged, on the part of the officers of the Regiment which was an exceptionally active one. Polo, although it was going pretty strong at that time, had not dominated India to the extent it has in later years, but hill shooting was immensely thought of and one heard a good deal more of wanderings in search of game in mountains than one does at the present time.

Abbottabad being situated in the district of Hazara, almost on the borders of Kashmir, naturally many of our officers took their leave there, and in fact the Frontier Force (for most of its stations got three months' leave a year) had many noted Shikaris among its officers. This long leave was given partly owing to the difficulty in getting away and partly to the terribly hot climates in which many of the stations were situated. Well-known Shikaris, of which there were many, were household words, and there was great competition invariably to engage them. So also were mentioned with bated breath men like Gaitskell of the Guides and Shirres of the Gunners, and many others, men whose knowledge of hill game

was unsurpassed. In those days, too, leave was easily obtainable : there were few courses and short leave in the district was very much encouraged. Officers were able to go for small game-shooting and fishing all over Hazara and knew the district well and the local gentry into the bargain—a very great advantage towards their knowledge and understanding of the country and its peoples.

I soon got settled down and was delighted with my surroundings, but when the cold weather arrived was packed off to Rawalpindi on language leave for six months. I marched to Pindi over the full range of the Murree Hills and saw for the first time that marvellous peak of Nanga Parbat of which I was to have later a very much closer acquaintance. I think there is nothing so striking or so overwhelming as a first-class Himalayan Peak when one first gets a view of it, and especially if one has obtained a little of the understanding of scale. A sunrise in early October when the weather is clear over the top of the great ridge of the Murree Hills, looking down direct for some 7000 ft. to the Jhelum River to the east and then across range after range until towering into the skies and dwarfing everything between you and itself, and lit up by the morning sun, the great mountain rises, giving one an impression of space and immensity to say nothing of beauty which is almost impossible to describe. Nanga Parbat is nearly 27,000 ft. in altitude.

The course at Pindi lasted six months and I left it with a smattering of language, sufficient to carry on and also sufficient to get me through the trials of those days—the Lower and Higher standards of Hindi and Urdu—as usual with a minimum of work. However, all's well that ends well, and the exams. were passed. I also managed to get in during this time surreptitiously a shooting trip down the Indus and back to Rawalpindi through the western end of the Salt Range and Kala Chita Hills—a dry broken-up country of a character that I had never before encountered. The trip was more remarkable for what we saw than for what we bagged.

And here during this leave I think I put in my hardest work with my first contacts with the Panjab professional wrestler. I also met certain Panjab Mohammedans of good position who were themselves extremely interested in that particular form of sport, the result being that when the time came to rejoin my Regiment I returned to Abbottabad accompanied by a couple of young professionals, and no sooner had I arrived in the station than I established in my garden a properly laid-out wrestling ground. This was quite a new departure. However, time was now taken up in more profitable ways, and I had to settle down to the life of the Regiment. In those days athletic sports of all kinds, although they had been more or less established for a great many years, were not considered as forming part of the

training of soldiers to anywhere near to the same extent as they are at the present time, and they tended to be much more gladiatorial—that is to say, they were in the hands of specialists. The general training of the men was far, far below what it is now from the point of view of attention being paid to their physical welfare and to their physical development, but every Regiment prided itself on its champions—good runners, good wrestlers, good weight putters, etc. There was also a great deal of training in the heavier form of gymnastics, now found largely to be a mistake.

A month or two after my arrival, the annual sports of the Panjab Frontier Force were held in Abbottabad, and it was perfectly correctly held that in nearly every form of athletics the Gurkha could not compete either successfully or even on equal terms with the Panjab troops, which was to say the least of it encouraging an inferiority complex. As the latest from the athletic world at home and also from the Aldershot Gymnasium into the bargain, this seemed to me rather strange, that although accustomed to the hillside all my life and being also a runner, I found that any ordinary Gurkha could easily leave me behind on the hill. The then Colonel of the Regiment, afterwards Sir John Sym, allowed me to select and train a considerable number of the men and we got for the first time, as far as I know in athletics in India, the first regular hill race based on

the type of race which had been run for so many years in Cumberland and Westmorland at the Grasmere Sports.

The results of that particular meeting were an absolute surprise to, I think, many of even our own officers, but of nearly everybody outside, the Gurkhas obtaining thirty-two out of the first thirty-three men in. Since that time hill racing, in one form or another, has continued in the Regiment. By degrees, too, the inferiority complex established by Gurkhas having special events from the in many ways more athletic Sikhs and Panjabis, has been broken down very much, to the moral advantage of the Gurkhas themselves. The result also of establishing these particular hill races was that a standard of pace and efficiency gradually became set and the pace of manœuvre in the Battalions was prodigiously increased also.

Pathans, Sikhs and Panjabis are undoubtedly very athletic races, and proper training and care taken of them, to advance their actual technique as understood in modern athletics, ought to lead to some very fine performers being obtainable from those sources. At the time of which I am writing they were extraordinarily fine marchers, partly because their shoeing arrangements were of the kind to which they were accustomed from boyhood, and also because they were accustomed at all times to cover very long distances on their own proper affairs. The opposite

of that was the then condition of most Gurkha Regiments. I have actually seen a thing which would not be conceived at the present time, as many as seventy men falling out and having to be carried during the first ten miles of leaving their station, due almost entirely to the fact that they had been kept in a soft condition. And it was very remarkable to see the enormous improvement made in the men after they had been out of the station for some time, and especially if they were supplied with an ample ration by Government, as they were under certain conditions.

Oh no ! I am not writing of old, bad days exactly, but I am writing of days when there were difficulties to contend with which are now probably forgotten. I think I may say that in one point and one point only the Indian Army of those days compared well with the present Army, in that in the Panjab the actual recruits when they joined the Regiment were of a slightly better physical type, though this does not, I think, however, apply to Gurkha Regiments.

In the summer of 1890 I was able to make my first expedition in the Kaghan Hills. In those days they had been visited by very few people at all, in fact the information concerning them was very meagre indeed. Of course they were perfectly well known really, though their reputation as a wild country was considerable and absolutely undeserved. They were supposed, for instance, to be exposed to raids from

the tribes on the Indus border. These raids were seldom more than little incursions by the wild Kohistanis (independent tribesmen from the Indus banks) who stole from traders an occasional donkey or two, and sugar and rice possibly : there was very little other damage done. Kaghan is a valley drained by a river called the Kunhar or Nainsuk, which river rises very close to the great Nanga Parbat massif, near the Babusar Pass at the head of the valley leading over into the Chilas district, now part of the Kashmir Dominions, but in those days wild and independent. All the lower part of the valley was very well known in reality although the hill-sides and passes leading to the west or to Kashmir on the east were almost entirely unvisited. Some years before my arrival in Abbottabad a Civil Servant of the name of Scott had been deputed to examine the passes leading to the Indus and had written a report about them, and that was the only information even in the Civil Headquarters at Abbottabad that I could obtain of the mountains. However, that was all the more interesting. I obtained leave, not only from my Regiment but also from the Civil Authorities to take a short journey through the district. I travelled with a very light camp and with one servant and one Gurkha, one length of cotton rope about 40 ft. and one axe which had been sent out to me from England as a present and which I did not know how to use properly.

We journeyed out as far as the forest bungalow of Māla Kāndi, passing on the way a settlement called Bela Kawai where I made the acquaintance of a remarkable old gentleman, called Ghulam Haidar Shah, who belonged to the ruling classes of Kaghan. He was a man of very great age and had actually represented Kaghan itself when that country was under the rule of the Duranis dynasty, before the advent of the Sikhs into Kashmir. He survived until at least 1908, some eighteen years later, and was supposed to have attained the age of 112. From Māla Kāndi we travelled further up one march to a village called Bādālgraon, and with the help of my Gurkha and my servant I was gradually obtaining a little information from natives and from examining the Survey Map of India, for Kaghan had already been surveyed. I wished to try and get on to the great ridge dividing the Kaghan Valley from Kashmir. Another march took us right into the mountains and we thought we could not do better than try a little peak which dominated the valley. Later on I found that this particular peak was one of a great crowd of peaks—at least a dozen of them—known generally as Mātu-ka-ser or Raji Bogi. It amused us immensely that nearly every peak we saw was called Raji Bogi. We were joined, too, by a splendid old Kaghani, named Fazl Khan, a Swati by birth, who for many years with his son travelled with me in Kaghan. The said son, Hebat Khan, was quite a remarkable

young man and the best inhabitant of that country that I have ever met. Unfortunately he died young.

Our subsequent performance was really rather remarkable. Without exactly explaining what we meant to do, we set off one morning determined, myself and my Gurkha, to reach the great ridge above us. At the break of dawn, about four, we left our camp and by one in the afternoon had reached the snow line, having struggled for several hours through very dense forest apparently to the intense amusement of the old gentleman who was with us. Above us, some 3000 ft. or more, was a very steep ridge. To reach it we had to cross a field of winter snow which covered a very small glacier in embryo which never quite arrived at the stage of hard névé: however, it managed to supply a considerable crevasse which cut us off from the apparently climbable ridge leading to the top. The old gentleman, with his grass shoes, was quite all there and led us across a fairly narrow snow bridge in good style, assisted by the advice of an experienced mountaineer, myself, whose one experience was the ascent of the Wetterhorn as before related! Fazl Khan was a very tough old man; he was armed with a woodman's axe with an adze back—an axe somewhat resembling the small snow-cutting side of an ice axe—and which he perfectly well knew how to use. Rather inadequate, but he made better work with that than I did with my ice axe.

Further up we put on our 40 ft. of rope and that was a queer sight, too ! It was a cotton rope and shortly became very stiff. After another two hours' struggle up an easy but very rotten ridge where we were continually escaping stones which we threw down on top of each other, we gave it up as a bad job being also in shocking tempers, but got off the ridge on to the snow again without accident.

Having arrived on the snow one of the party, probably myself, slipped and in a moment the whole three of us were slithering down the steep slope direct to the big crevasse, and here's where luck steps in to help the ignorant. We took a bee-line for the bridge and passed it like a ski runner, but on our backs, and so whizzed on to the flat surface some 100 ft. lower down. Night caught us in the forest and naturally we had no food left. We lit a fire in the jungle and stayed up most of the night because a bear would come prowling round us to see what we were up to. As a matter of fact, under these conditions bears are quite harmless. A dishevelled crowd crept down into the village of Bādālgraon the following morning. Anyhow that was quite a good entry to the Himalaya, but altogether the performance was about as young as one could possibly imagine !

With the autumn, too, I made my first experience of the frontier hills, for the tribes in the Black Mountain on the banks of the Indus had shown every sign of getting out of hand and were giving trouble, and

in order to prevent further trouble and to encourage them a little a column was sent out to the Frontier post of Oghi to show the flag, and we made a little advance into the hills beyond Oghi. This was a preliminary to the much greater rising in the mountain country which took place in 1891, but it gave me my first experience of the frontier.

In the New Year an event occurred which was to have a great bearing on my subsequent career. General Sir William Lockhart succeeded Sir John Sym as Commander of the Frontier Force. He had had a very great experience of Indian life, was a very fine figure of a man with an extraordinary personality, and of the type which immediately impresses one. He came, too, with a great reputation not only purely as a soldier but also as an explorer and traveller, as he had been in charge of the Lockhart Mission which was one of the first to explore the Hindu Kush and Chitral and to enter Kafiristan. He had a most marvellous influence on Indians of all types and an immense regard for them personally, which was returned by them with the kind of veneration extended only to exceptional characters. He was also an immense supporter of all those activities which lead to enterprise, health and strength, and his delight in watching and following good sports of all kinds was a pleasure to see. Luckily for me he was also a friend of Colonel Clark of the 43rd.

Before that year was ended I managed to get in

another short leave in following the Markhor in the Kaj-i-nag. Not that it is necessary to record every little trip that I took in those days, but it possibly has been impressed on my mind by a little incident which occurred on my return. I had made a very long march to get back home and arrived at Domel, a stage on the banks of the Jhelum, where one leaves Kashmir territory to cross into the Hazara District. Getting in there after some eight hours of marching I discovered that I was one day behind in my leave and was due on parade the following morning at Abbottabad, forty-four miles distant. As I had gone on the minimum of outfit and had outmarched that outfit I had to leave just as I stood. Putting two more stages behind me I came to a little town called Mansehra. Apparently there was no possible means of getting carried beyond this point as my legs were all in and my shoes (Kaghani grass shoes to wit) were all finished. Not a vehicle could be found, but finally, although it was one o'clock in the morning, a man turned up and told me that it was he who supplied the dhooly or palanquin used at native weddings, especially at the weddings of the trading Hindu. Now this palanquin has a small red covered-in compartment, possibly big enough for a boy of fifteen years to hunch himself up and disappear. However, they tied ropes between the carrying poles, and I stretched myself out and slept very soundly for sixteen miles. So pleased was I at arriving in time that

on entering my station I had a brain wave. A great friend of mine, a most delightful and pleasant youth, was the object. The poor lad unfortunately had a little, weakness and this weakness, though of course I do not hold this out as an excuse, he had also in common with some of the greatest names in history. Since the human race emerged from the primaeval slime and took form, this weakness has been known to dominate the actions of even greater men than my young friend. Dare I say it that the better half of the human race unduly attracted him ! However, a call at his house and a little talk with my carriers, and he was woken up and finally emerged in a state of suitable excitement and expectation, when lo and behold ! a hideous, hairy face emerged from the palanquin and was greeted with a volley of thoroughly deserved abuse. Thus are our idols shattered ! But I was in time for parade !

Early in the year 1891 the Frontier definitely entered upon a period of storm ; in many places the tribes were getting out of hand. The Black Mountain tribes under the stormy petrel, who had been a pest to Civil officers for years, were still to the fore. As a matter of fact the stormy petrel was rather a sportsman of the name of Hasham Ali, and he was joined by tribes from the west bank of the Indus and also by the men of Buner who were more formidable, or reputed more formidable, than the Black Mountain tribes. Their reputation dated from the good fight

they put up during the Ambeyla Expedition of 1863.

In the early spring an expedition was sent up the Indus under the command of Sir William Ellis, and finally a Reserve Brigade was formed which was commanded by Sir William Lockhart who took me with him as his orderly officer. It was rather an abortive expedition, not unknown in those days, and before it was finished a far more serious rising occurred on the southern borders of the Afridi land in the Kohat district. This was a rising of infinitely greater menace ; the high valleys of Tirah south of the Khyber and its neighbouring lands are the homes of the Afridi and Orakzai mountaineers who are exceptionally fine and warlike tribes and who had for many, many years supplied excellent recruits to our army. However, they are wild tribes, and from time immemorial they have raided India and have fought with either the border tribes or the dominant race of the moment long before the British came to the Panjab ; and in '91 chiefly the Orakzai tribes, south of the Afridi land, rose and massacred all the garrison on the range known as the Samana ridge which dominates the British district of Miranzai to the west of Kohat. In consequence an expedition was organised to re-establish proper conditions, retake the Samana and to punish the tribes. This was given to Sir William Lockhart, and I had the luck also to accompany him as orderly-officer, my own battalion of the



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5th Gurkhas forming part of the force. The expedition was infinitely more successful than that of the Black Mountain, due largely to the fact that the object of the expedition was much more clearly defined and also to the far more energetic way in which action was taken. But after the first attack on the ridge the only occurrence of note was the practical wiping out of the sub-section of the Orakzai known as the Rabia Khel in an attack made on the position held by them, carried out by the 5th Gurkhas and the 60th Rifles, in which the tribes lost very heavily indeed and were known for several years afterwards as the Rabia Tails in consequence.

I shortly returned to the Regiment and was able to join the small organisation of Scouts already established in the year 1891. I think I may say here a word about the establishment of these Scouts. It was due to a suggestion made by Colonel Arthur Hammond of the Guides in the winter of 1890 when he was temporarily commanding the Frontier Force, when talking to my friend Lucas of his regiment. He suggested a small body of picked men, clever on the hill, clever at night, clever at finding their way, who could be used not only as guides, if guides were necessary and native ones not obtainable, but also to deal with that peculiar form of nuisance so common in frontier warfare—the sniper, who can be a perfect pest to troops at night.

We obtained from our own Commanding Officers

leave to form this small body and used to take them out together on the hillside to practise such manœuvres as our then small knowledge would allow, and towards the close of the Miranzai Expedition for the first time I was allowed to use my little command of Scouts. I shall have more to say on this subject later on when they became very much more highly developed than they were at that time. But even then, in 1891, one young Gurkha made a great name for himself, and later, not only as a Scout but also as a mountaineer and as a great athlete. He finally survived to get wounded in the Great War in Gallipoli and retired as Subadar Major in the Regiment. His name was Harkbir Thapa.

The Regiment got back to Abbottabad in June after a hot march and I was lucky enough to be given sick leave and went off on a shooting expedition as usual. The whole of my leave in that way has been lucky, and from the very time I joined I did one of those things which has always stood me in great stead—I established a reputation for acquiring leave, and it is perfectly marvellous when such a reputation is established how often leave appears to come round. This shooting expedition was of no particular note, but there occurred one incident which is entirely unique in my experience. Even when we were on the frontier we had been incommoded that year by huge flights of locusts just as the hot weather was breaking, and these had been taken by the wind over the

Murree Hills and were finally frozen on the Kaj-i-nag mountains, and high up on the snows where we had gone in search of red bear we found the locusts lying in masses ; in fact great drifts of them behind any cover such as great rocks projecting from the winter snow. These drifts were sometimes as thick as 3 ft. We saw bears in every direction, both red and black, who had come up from the forest to feed on them. I counted over eleven and out of these I got a black and a red one before the others escaped. It is one of the most astonishing sights that one can conceive on the mountain side and entirely unknown in my experience.

However, my luck did not last, a sharp return of fever sending me to hospital on my return and I was granted six months' sick leave to England. Before that happened I had got wind of an enterprise which turned out to be the real start of my introduction to the Himalayas. I heard, in fact, that Martin Conway¹ was proposing to visit the Karakoram Himalaya. It immediately struck me that I was exactly the man to go with him, supplying him with the necessary knowledge of local vernaculars and to run his transport for him if necessary. I wrote him an enthusiastic and optimistic letter, that is if you can call optimism getting as near the edge of truth as it is possible to go without actually lying. My knowledge of vernaculars at that time was very, very

¹ Now Lord Conway of Alington.

rocky indeed, and my knowledge of how to travel beyond a very light camp and very short journeys as before related was on about the same level. However, I made the best of it and a letter arrived from Conway to say that my application to him had received his best consideration. When the time came to leave for England on sick leave I did so imbued with the idea that now was my chance if I could only get well. I further persuaded my charming, amused but complacent Commanding Officer to allow me to take a picked Gurkha home with me to learn something about Alpine climbing in Switzerland and further to be an assistant to Martin Conway on his expedition. My choice fell on a lad by name Parbir Thapa who had already proved himself an excellent companion, a fine hill runner and a good man in camp. He was also afflicted by a prodigious sense of fun and the ludicrous, more than any Gurkha I have met even since, and that's saying a good deal. But before this time some of our men had accompanied Captain Younghusband (now Sir Francis Younghusband) on his expedition to Hunza and Nagar and other explorations in the Karakoram, so the tradition was there and I think the idea of further extending our regimental activities in this line also appealed to my Commanding Officer.

Lugubrious warnings of what a nuisance my orderly Parbir would be to me when once in England were showered on me. Everybody told me that I

should not know what to do with him and that he was sure to get into mischief. They were all entirely wrong, as will shortly be related.

On arrival in England I very soon got into first-class health and almost at once met Martin Conway. A formal application was made through the India Office that I might be attached to his expedition for at least six months and met also with the approval of my own Commanding Officer. This gave me a free hand to go back to my home in Wales and Parbir was found plenty of employment and exercise out with the keepers and on the hillside. He also made friends with all and sundry.

Before leaving London, where we were for some time, I was asked by Mr. Vereker Hamilton, the artist brother of General Sir Ian Hamilton, if I would come to lunch with him at his home in St. John's Wood and bring Parbir to see him, as he wished to make some studies of him. He went, therefore, in uniform and I found that Vereker Hamilton was then making studies for his picture which afterwards became well known, the "Taking of the Guns in Kandahar" during the Afghan War of 1879-81, and which was the culmination of Lord Roberts' great march from Kabul to Kandahar to relieve the garrison. The heroes of the incident had been the 2nd (P.W.O.) Gurkha Rifles, and as Parbir was the most typical example of sturdy Mongolian that could be found anywhere, he made an excellent model. I was

dressed up as an Afghan, given a sword and shield, and Parbir a rifle and fixed bayonet, and Parbir and I had mock fights all over the garden and were duly photographed during our struggles. It was altogether great fun and made more realistic by my drawing blood from Parbir's thigh by mistake with the point of my Afghan knife.

I had to leave very shortly and Vereker Hamilton took Parbir round the Zoo. Not for a minute did it strike him that a Gurkha would never have even heard of a giraffe, and almost on entering the grounds he found himself face to face with one, with the result of such an explosion of mirth that they were quickly the centre of a crowd. Finally his legs gave way and he sat on the ground, holding his head, and every time he looked at the giraffe he had another spasm. Finally he was calmed and taken round the gardens, and somehow or other seemed to have made himself intelligible to his host.

That was by no means his only adventure. We had rather solemn prayers on Sunday evenings conducted by my father, and one Sunday they nearly came almost to a cataclysmic end because my father, suddenly looking up, found a very solemn Gurkha in full uniform sitting between the hall boy and the footman with a peculiarly pious expression on his face. He also accompanied the very heavily built and rather slow keeper over the hills on some of his turns up with the local poachers, but I am afraid on

one occasion was rather roughly treated by them. In consequence of this little incident he armed himself with a big blackthorn. Poachers in those days took uphill knowing the capacity of the heavy keeper as a runner and knowing they were safe if they did so. Parbir was not of that type quite, being one of our special hill runners into the bargain. Catching a couple of them on one occasion when he had got them blown, with the help of his blackthorn he brought them both back in triumph. We both came to the conclusion that it was rather caddish to hit two very blown men. However, they deserved it as they belonged to the gang that I have mentioned earlier in these records.

Curiously, too, although his language was limited, he made friends with certain colliers who belonged to the Rhondda Valley, and to our dismay on one occasion disappeared and when he reappeared it was found that the colliers had invited him to their homes in the Rhondda and he had been spending the last three days in Ton-y-pandy.

Towards the end of November we went off, with another of the Conway party, Oscar Eckenstein, to Zermatt, where Parbir and I wanted not only to get ourselves into good hard condition but also to have more practice in Alpine work, although it was the middle of winter. There we were joined by a very remarkable guide who was then at the very top of his strength and skill—Mathias Zurbriggen—and also

last, but not least, came with me my friend Lamotte, with whom I had climbed the Wetterhorn four years previously, in '87. An unforgettable trip of a month.

Mathias was delighted to have us, specially as it was the off season, and was quite full of overbounding spirits. He was in every way a delightful person at that time, not however in particularly good odour with everyone. He lived on two sides of the border, so to speak, his real home being at Macugnaga in Italy at the foot of Monte Rosa, where he was known as Delponte, and he also belonged, and many of his relations too, to Saas Fe on the Swiss side where he was known as Zurbriggen. I am sorry to say that in winter he was chiefly employed organising smugglers and this gave him astonishing facility in dealing with winter conditions. He had been Eckenstein's guide and companion for some years and they had made many notable climbs together. Further, he could turn his hand to anything—mending an ice axe, carpentering or cobbling, and besides was a blacksmith by trade officially. So what better companion could one have for a journey to the Karakoram, for he had already been engaged to join our expedition.

We had a delightful time ; very hard work, as there were no skis in those days and raquettes we liked not. We climbed the Unter Gabelhorn, then made an attempt on the Rimpfischorn, but after a terrific wallow in snow were completely beaten, and then

followed an incident that probably could not be equalled in any other country. Herr Seiler, our host at the Monte Rosa, gave us the keys of the Schwarz See Hotel and the keys of the cellar too, and the store rooms, and told us to do for ourselves and keep an account of what we used, and there in very rough weather indeed we made many scrambles and little climbs, including the Kleine Matterhorn, which really was tremendous fun, but the wind was very high and the cold very severe. It was, however, a first-class training for Himalayan work.

And so again to Zermatt, where we became for a day or two weather-bound. The inhabitants of Zermatt in those days had but small sources of amusement in the winter months except the many bars, and many of them looked on the wine when it was red not wisely but too well, usually followed by numerous *petits verres* which were worse. Lamotte, Eckenstein and I, sitting together one evening, heard a tremendous commotion in the street—yells and roars of laughter and general uproar. We went out and found that the Gurkha, having nothing to do, had built himself a “sangar” or little fort in the corner of the Monte Rosa Hotel, stocked it with snowballs and proceeded to snowball the town as it passed. It was all taken in very good part, and the town divided there and then, and there was a general rag in which we all joined. I must say, though, that there had been a rise of temperature and although

the snowfall had been very heavy, the snow bound splendidly. Our trip finished, the whole party was carried off by Herr Seiler to Brigue to visit his family, where we were royally entertained and had a great send-off.

Seeing Conway, arranging for my expedition and the Swiss trip were not, however, my only activities during my leave in England for I became, before leaving, engaged to be married and left my fiancée behind me when my leave was finished. We did not meet again until the autumn of '94.

I think it might be of interest to relate here the fate of Rifleman Parbir Thapa. It was in its way dramatic and typical of his character. He did very well on the Conway Expedition but was not quite so good possibly as his friend Harkbir Thapa, whom I have before mentioned and about whom I have much more to relate. But he was a splendid companion and stuck to me when I got unfortunately hurt during this expedition : in fact, it was due to his nursing and care of me that I got through without real damage, so I have always been much beholden to him.

As I have said before, he was a lad of the highest possible spirits and that was partly what brought him to grief. The following is a typical little Gurkha battalion romance, which would now be described as having sex appeal. After his return to his Regiment following the Conway Expedition and during the

time that I was attached as a special service officer up in Gilgit, it had been what you might describe as the "smart thing," the dangerous adventure, so to speak, among the daring young bloods of the battalion to make love to the Subadar Major's wife. The Gurkha, of course, will make love to anybody of his own race, but such an adventure as the fascinating Subadar Major's wife, had in it drama and comedy and such adventure very closely linked. I may here remark that this particular lady was not worthy of pity or of any peculiar sentimental regard, but you can imagine, the Subadar Major being the chief Gurkha officer of the Regiment, how it became not only a terrible scandal but also the greatest joke the Regiment had had for many years, and the old gentleman was in a state of fury approaching madness. He had his own hidden detectives posted round his house but the "bloods" were for a long time too clever for him. They are clever little thieves Gurkhas when necessary! Then one day my lad was seen very stealthily creeping into the house. The place was completely surrounded, but after a strict search lo! and behold! no Parbir—not a sign. They were just leaving the courtyard when from underneath the very thinnest bunch of Indian corn stalks which apparently wouldn't cover a rat, and standing up against the wall came a violent sneeze! Flung aside and there he was—a corn leaf had got up his nose—hence the

explosion. As they say in Nepali, “Chor ko taugo ma Khasingra ”—“ On every thief’s head there is a little bit of grass,” meaning that something or other is sure to give him away.

The case was made a Civil one—he was caught “*en flagrant délit*,” and that is unfortunately in Indian law considered a criminal case and the culprit can be given long terms of imprisonment. Parbir got a year by sentence of the Civil Court : he should have got nothing. The Subadar Major’s real wife was in Nepal and the Cleopatra of Abbottabad was only a regimental one and therefore outside the purview of the law, but this never came out—it naturally would not. Her brother was another Subadar !

Before leaving for India we had been very much thrilled by the news of the Hunza-Nagar Expedition, of the journey of our detachment under Captain Barrett ¹ over the Burzil Pass and their subsequent gallant action in the taking of the Nilt forts, the V.C. obtained by Boisragon and the D.S.O. by Badcock, and not only that but further another V.C. won by an officer of the Regiment who had lately joined the Political, Manners Smith, and the Order of Merit obtained by no less than Harkbir Thapa, whom I have mentioned before. Altogether wonderful news and especially interesting to all of us as it was on the very ground that we should be travelling through and we should very soon hear at first-hand all that

¹ Late Field-Marshal Sir A. A. Barrett, G.C.B., etc.

had occurred, as we heard that the detachment and its officers were to be up in Gilgit for that summer at least. This was all very heartening and helpful and added very great enthusiasm to our start.

CHAPTER IV

CONWAY EXPEDITION

THE Conway Expedition arrived in India early in April and we all met together at my home in Abbottabad. Conway took on the whole outfit and I joined him as soon as I was free to leave my Regiment, and again we collected for our final arrangements in Srinagar, Kashmir.

This expedition was very much more in reality an exploring expedition than a mountaineering one, as it would be understood at the present day. That is apparent also from the personnel, which consisted of Martin Conway, his nephew Roudebush, A. D. McCormick, our invaluable artist, Oscar Eckenstein, Zurbriggen the guide and myself. The only first-class mountaineer judged from the point of view of a modern expedition—that is a member capable of personally leading and carrying out great attempts on a great Himalayan peak—was Mathias Zurbriggen. Both Conway and Eckenstein had had great experience of the mountains and in the mountains, and had climbed a great deal, but as leaders their experience was slight. I do not mean by this that Conway was not an excessively competent leader of an expedition :

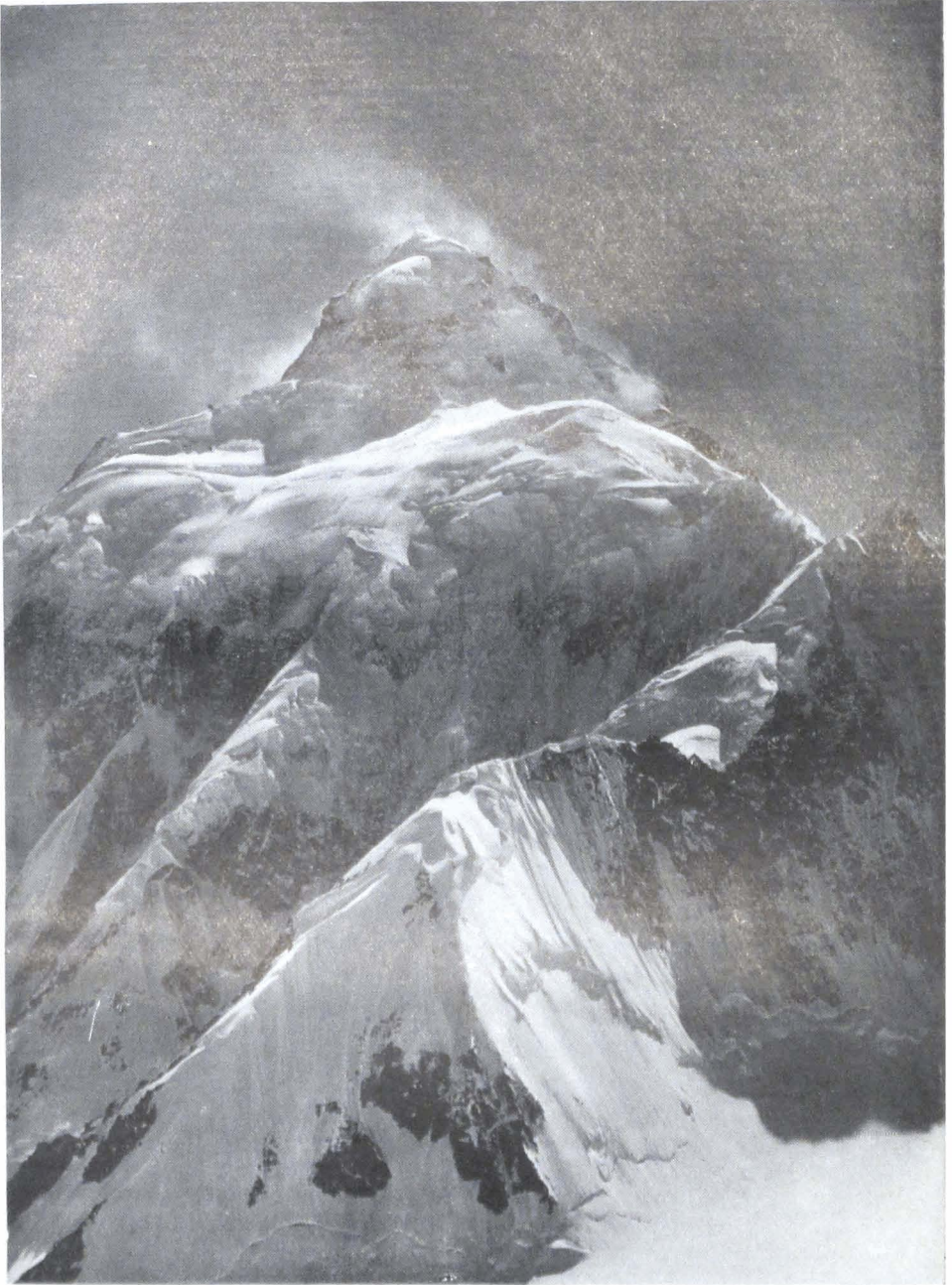
what I mean is that technically he was not equipped in the same way as a first-class amateur is now. Neither Roudebush nor McCormick had had any Alpine experience and my own was but slight. The Gurkhas we had attached to us, too, had none, though born hill men.

Conway, however, never made any pretension of conducting a purely mountaineering expedition : he had far wider aims, for in those days the Karakoram were but little known. Our ideas were rather ambitious, as we proposed to march from Kashmir into the Gilgit district and then travelling by the newly acquired Hunza valley, to cross to Nagar and cut across the Karakoram range via the Hispar Pass, descending into Baltistan, and from there continuing the explorations of the great mass of mountains surrounding the second highest mountain in the world, known as Mount Godwin Austen or possibly nowadays still better by the Survey mark of K.2, which was approached by way of the Baltoro Glacier. It was also doubtless Conway's aim to get in any climbs that he could manage on the way, and we hoped also to make an attempt on the altitude record, if such a thing was possible, but we had as a matter of fact hardly the time or the personnel, as before said, to carry out the siege of any great peak if we followed the far more important aims we had of exploring a country, a great part of which was up to then practically unvisited.

Our large outfit of stores was divided in two, half of

which was forwarded by the Kashmir Government to meet us in Skardo, the chief town of Baltistan, and the remainder we took with us to Gilgit. We had every possible assistance given us by the authorities in Kashmir and in Gilgit. I often look back on our outfit for that expedition with great admiration. For the first time a mountaineering party was treated seriously. In many ways, especially in the matter of provisions, very little advance has been made since that time. Conway had a great experience of the Alps and beyond that a vast knowledge of all that had been accomplished in the matter of mountain travel, on which knowledge he was able to outfit himself in a most satisfactory manner. In all that country it must be remembered that food, except of the simplest kind (*i.e.*, flour, butter, sheep, etc.) is practically unobtainable. Anything in the way of food for high camping must be carried with one.

We had with us, too, tents for the heat and for the cold. On the whole probably now we should have reduced our weight considerably by leaving behind us our heavy Indian 80 lb. Kabul tents and would have put up with the much lighter Whymper tent as was done in the last two Everest expeditions. But we felt that we could not risk a chance of members of the party getting ill and that the sun must be guarded against; that was a very real danger as the Valley of the Indus and the Gilgit Valley, and indeed many valleys of far greater altitudes in the



Signor Vittorio Sella

K.2 IN THE EVENING

From Camp VIII on the Staircase at 21,657 ft. The photograph was taken by H.R.H. The Duke of Abruzzi

bare Karakoram districts are extraordinarily hot and the sun very fierce, infinitely more so than at equal altitudes on the southern slopes of the Himalaya.

The main body of the expedition marched to Gilgit over the Burzil Pass, encountering the ordinary difficulties that naturally occur in getting a heavily laden caravan early in the year over a pass as high as 13,000 ft., and deep in winter snow—a tiring performance as the snow so rapidly softens after 7 o'clock in the morning. Zurbriggen and myself made a little diversion over the Kāmsi Pass and Zurbriggen obtained on the way his first red bear. We met the expedition again at Bunji where we were entertained by Captain Kemball of the 5th Gurkhas, who was employed as Special Service Officer in Gilgit. He lent his Shikari, Hazara Khan, to Zurbriggen to see if he could get him a Markor. Zurbriggen returned delighted with quite a fair head. Bunji is situated on the banks of the Indus not more than 3000 ft. above the sea, and was already in the first days of May terribly hot : it is known as an exceptionally hot spot.

In one march over the Burzil one passes right under the great Nanga Parbat Mountain, the official western end of the Himalaya, nearly 27,000 ft. in height. Thence the road skirts the slopes of the Nanga Parbat massif until one arrives at Hattu Pir which stands directly above the Indus Valley, a sheer drop of 6000 ft., and from where one obtains a most

glorious view of the mountains surrounding the Gilgit district. There is no more striking view to be obtained for the newcomer or one which gives him a greater idea of the scale of this prodigious mountain country. From Hattu Pir one descends to Rāmghāt at the foot of which the Astor River is crossed, and if one is at all late in the day this descent is extremely unpleasant. In those days the road as it exists now had not been made and one descended by a very steep track direct to Rāmghāt, a perfectly bare stony hillside into a narrow gorge, the last 3000 ft. being red hot.

Finally we were all in Gilgit and our arrangements were quickly made. A preliminary excursion, while our heavy luggage was forwarded for us up to Hunza, was made to the Bagrote Nullah to examine the further side of Rakapushi, an extremely interesting trip and one, I am glad to say, we got out of without accident, which, on the whole, was rather remarkable, for it was much too early in the year to play tricks with the mountains. Luckily Zurbriggen had a great knowledge of dangerous winter and spring snow conditions, probably due to his continual illegal winter exploits in the Alps, but we had one or two rather hair-raising incidents.

We got in several climbs, however, one of which was most educative, when Zurbriggen, myself and the Gurkhas ascended quite a difficult rock peak in which the Gurkhas demonstrated their facility on

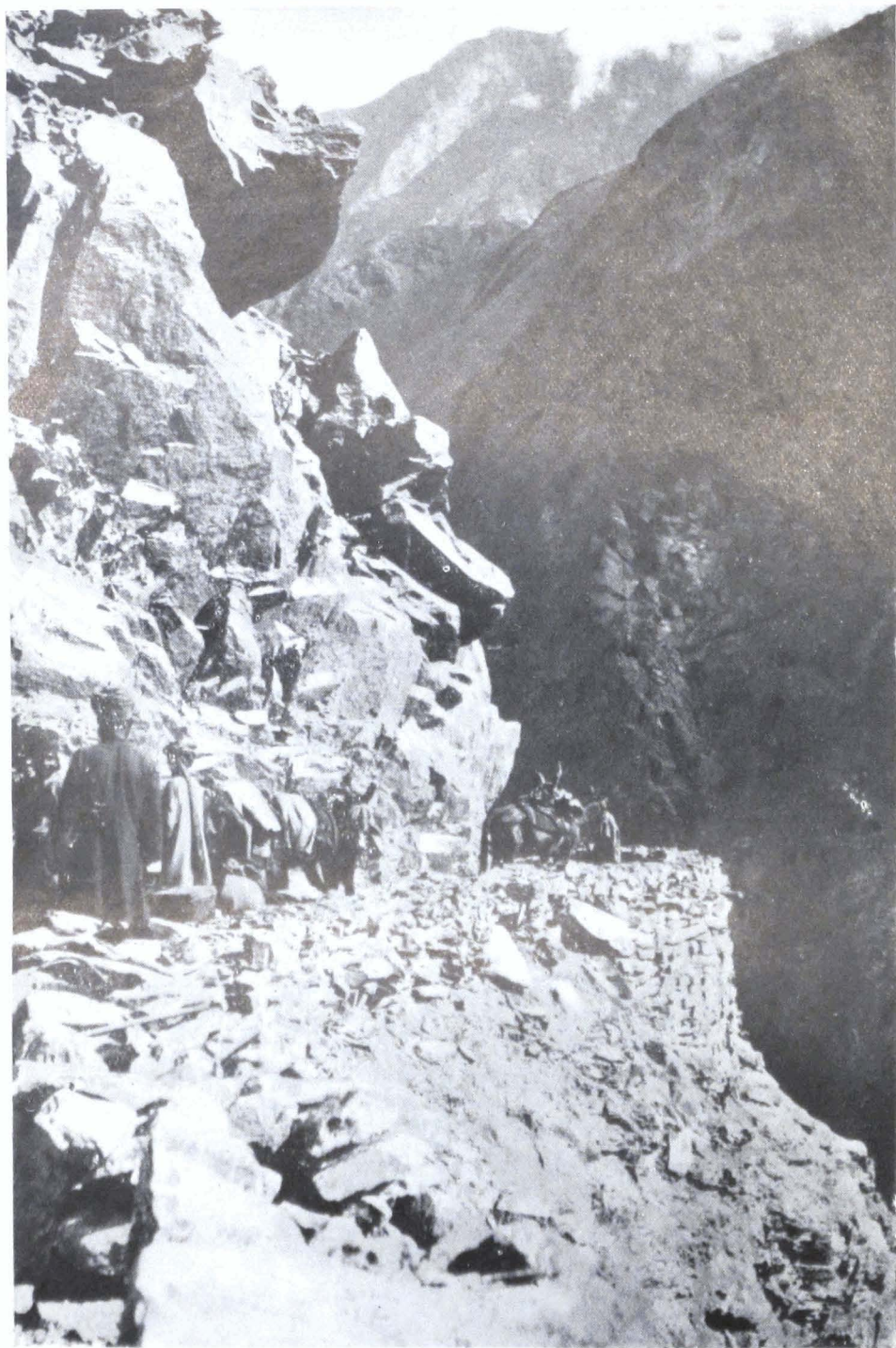
rocks and their ignorance of snow, and also an exploration by Conway and Zurbriggen of the flanks of Rakapushi and an exploration of the peaks which continued beyond Rakapushi and which gave us a sight of certain most glorious mountains in country up to date unvisited.

It was here, too, that we had the worst of our contretemps with avalanches, for the mountains were alive with them. Crossing one narrow couloir at its lower extremity where it was not very steep, Conway and Zurbriggen having already crossed before us and being in a position of safety on a ridge beyond, the three Gurkhas and myself suddenly were aware that the head of the couloir was filled with an avalanche. To cross we should have to take uphill : we thought it better to go down in front of the avalanche and to jump several crevasses which intervened between us and the flat glacier. I have seldom run so quickly and I have never jumped so far as I did during that descent. The avalanche wind and dust overtook us and rolled us over like rabbits, but no avalanche followed ! It had all been caught in a very heavy crevasse glacier some 3000 ft. higher up. The snow avalanches at this time of year are inconceivable in size as they are everywhere in the great Himalaya early in the year, and we were very lucky to have got away as we did.

That evening we camped at a height of about 16,000 ft. on a sharp rocky ridge and on a comfortable

ledge protected by a high vertical wall of rock behind it, rather overhanging if anything, and we were in safety whatever happened. Later in the afternoon an avalanche of winter snow with a noise like an artillery barrage filled the couloir close to us on our left ; a most hair-raising experience, and in it were tossed about the bodies of several ibex. Zurbriggen was fearfully excited, as were the Gurkhas, and when the avalanche was over nothing would stop them but they would descend and try and get one of the bodies which they could see had been thrown out to one side. The steep face of the couloir, itself winter snow, had been polished by the avalanche to almost a condition of ice. Zurbriggen managed to negotiate it without trouble, but what was ordinary to him was new to the Gurkha who followed him. Away went his feet and slithering over 300 ft. he was deposited in a mass of soft snow from where he was rescued by Zurbriggen, who found to his amazement that no harm had been done except the destruction of his finger tips. They hid the ibex in a rocky crevasse at the edge of the avalanche, and returned. The ibex was young : we kept his small head as a souvenir and later cooked his tender body.

Thence to Hunza and preparations to cross the Hunza River to Nagar. We passed on our way up the Nilt forts where the fighting had taken place the previous year. Before leaving Gilgit to make up our band of Gurkhas we were joined by Harkbir Thapa,



A ROAD IN THE KARAKORAM

whom I have mentioned before. He had already made a name for himself as he was orderly to Manners Smith, who had made the exploration and led the attack up to the Tol Cliffs behind Nilt, by which the position and Nilt fort itself had been turned. Manners Smith's gallant exploit earned for him the V.C. and for Harkbir the Indian Order of Merit. After that he had accompanied another officer of my Regiment, Capt. J. M. Stewart (now Sir James Stewart, K.C.B.) on a mission to aid Capt. Francis Younghusband, who had been taken prisoner by the Russians on the Pamirs, so he had already had considerable experience of travel. At that time he was in his full health and strength and full of activity and intelligence, and I cannot do better than add here what Conway writes about him in his book :

“ He was remarkably intelligent ; he taught himself by mere observation, how to set up, level and orient the table, and the tricks of the various cameras. He was an admirable companion, and we soon became the best and most inseparable of friends. I can find no words too high to express my appreciation of him. He lacked Parbir's joyous spirits, but he possessed a fund of quiet good sense and excellent feeling, rare among men of any nationality. Like all Gurkhas he was perfectly brave, but he was likewise humane. He was the first to notice if a coolie was ill and to give him a helping hand or relieve him of his burden. In snowy regions he would deprive me of my waterproof tent floor to make a coolie comfortable—a duty I learnt to leave to him. But they never imposed upon him by shamming. He did his duty and expected other men to do theirs.”

From now on he became Conway's henchman and carried his camera or surveying instruments, and he, Conway and Zurbriggen always travelled and climbed together. And I may further remark, too, that later he also became my particular henchman in the Regiment and continued a career as an athlete, mountaineer and scout ; a good deal more will be heard of him in this book before it comes to an end.

From Nagar we had to re-organise as certain difficulties had arisen, and Conway wished to carry out explorations in the neighbourhood of Nagar before going on to Hispar from where we could organise our move into Baltistan and for the passage of the Hispar and Biafo Glaciers. From Nagar I was, with Eckenstein and a small number of porters, sent on to the Hispar settlement and Conway was to follow. Our stay in the Hunza Valley had been absolutely thrilling. I cannot imagine a valley, seen for the first time, of greater interest—prodigious scale, the splendour and size and the astonishing steepness of the mountains that surround it, and last but not least the extraordinarily interesting people. The whole of the people of the Gilgit district are officially classed as Dards, but are not by any means homogeneous. They divide themselves up chiefly into Shins and Yaskuns, and their languages differ. In the Hunza Valley they speak a language called Burishaski which is spoken in but one other valley, the Ishkuman, and

apparently not related to Shinaki, the ordinary language of the country.

Hunza and Nagar towns are practically bare of vegetation except where water can be brought, and even before there was much iron to be found in the valleys the skill with which both the Hunza and the Nagar inhabitants laid out and constructed their irrigation canals along the hillsides was a marvel, and a very good example of efficiency and hard work under the most difficult conditions. It is also wonderful that in these valleys wherever water can be brought things grow astonishingly—the crops as far as they go and the apricot trees are magnificent, and the crops of grass, where land is put under grass, equally so. The main town of Hunza, Baltit, is wonderfully situated, perched on a hill with the village grouped round, and dominating its polo ground, for here in the Karakoram polo is the classic recreation. Baltit itself stands beneath the great triple-headed peak called Boiohaghurduanashur (all three of which are over 24,000 ft.), the Peak which is so steep that only the horse of a demon can go there.

To cross to Nagar in those days meant crossing two rope bridges which, owing to the jealousy and enmity which had previously existed between Hunza and Nagar, might or might not be in good condition.

To make our arrangements for following up the Hispar Glacier we were obliged to pass through Nagar, and there we arranged for the large number

of porters required to make the journey, as not nearly enough of these men could be found in the very small settlement of Hispar close to the glacier, and indeed the road itself from Nagar to Hispar was in those days, and probably is at the present time, as unpleasant a road as one could wish to travel. It was during the journey to Hispar that I made the acquaintance for the first time of that most disagreeable thing, a mud avalanche. The hills are all bare and rather rotten, and high up, when the snow melts and soaks into the rotten mountain face, down many of the water courses come earth avalanches carrying all before them. In some of these little valleys they seem to fall during certain times of the day at very frequent intervals. It was a horrid experience, and I thought a terrifying one, having to cross over quaking debris of black mud and stones, with the expectation that at any moment more might be on its way.

Hispar was quite a small settlement—very few houses. The inhabitants must live a really terrible life. Its height is about 10,000 ft. above the sea and they are cut off from the rest of the world as soon as the snow falls heavily. They certainly live a hard and isolated life, but as a matter of fact we found some of their men the best for handling snow questions that we met at all. We had to warn the people of the coming of Conway and review our own position.

Now Conway wished us not only to prepare Hispar

for our advent but to go up the Hispar Glacier and make a passage over the unclimbed Nushik La and go down to Skardo to find out whether the luggage had come and, if so, to bring it up to the little Balti village of Askoley which lies one march from the end of the Biafo Glacier and directly on the road to the Baltoro. We fitted ourselves out with the best of the Hispar men and set off on our first piece of real independent exploration. With us came two Gurkhas, my old orderly Parbir, and another efficient man, Amar Sing Thapa. Two days brought us to Hygutum, at the foot of the Pass, where we found some little stone huts which had been used apparently by shepherds and were very primitive indeed. They were about 2 ft. 6 in. high and into these we were able to creep.

Then the weather broke very badly and we were completely camp-bound—a really rather serious outlook as our food was running short. After two days of this I volunteered with the men to push down to Hispar and try and renew supplies sufficient to take us across, but after we had made a march down the weather cleared and we ate our one tin of Herbsworst (a German soup containing all that is wanted for man's nourishment and which served us very well throughout our expedition). Having eaten we felt bold, and decided that the weather should not be wasted and that we should go back and start for the Pass the following morning. Back we came and found that Eckenstein had, in the meantime, rather

characteristically, eaten up the remainder of our food with the exception of a little chocolate. Now there was nothing for it but to cross or starve, so the following morning off we set. The Pass is about 17,000 ft. and we were camping high, at least 13,000 ft., and a really good climb it was to get to the top. The elderly man from Hispar who led the party was really a most accomplished mountaineer. He carried a sort of snow-cutting implement of his own, but very soon took to one of our axes, whose use he promptly mastered without difficulty. He also told us that in his youth he had crossed the Pass before and thought he remembered the way, and led us with some certainty. Eckenstein, our experienced mountaineer, in watching him, refused to interfere as he found his manœuvres so interesting.

He led us at first up steep slopes of no particular difficulty and then traversed right across the face of the mountain over really steep snow slopes which required good steps as well as handholds, snow in absolutely first-class order and very hard, and then by little steep ridges of snow with a long final traverse underneath a rather dangerous looking cornice, some of which did us the honour of breaking away, luckily without harm. The task of cutting through the cornice was given to the two Gurkhas, who were just beginning to become useful on the mountains. We finally marched through a little tunnel on to the main pass itself. Some ten days later Zurbriggen

led Roudebush and his porters by a longer but easier route over the pass by which he himself returned to rejoin Conway.

Eckenstein was delighted with the work of the Hispar men and rather astonished at their capacity for handling a quite delicate snow problem. The porters carried their loads over this awkward ground with perfect confidence, notwithstanding that they were wearing most inadequate foot-gear called "taotis," which are simply strips of raw hide bound round and round with raw hide rope, excellent on dry rocks but most unpleasant on snow or ice.

A very, very long march over easy glacier and snow and finally some three hours of the usual dry mountain track and past a settlement of shepherds, now empty, took us to a side valley down which flowed the great Chogolungma Glacier, a prodigious ice river, very broken up and very thick, but not at that point too broad to negotiate, in a short space of time, and by night time we got to the village at its foot, Arindoo, where we found supplies in plenty. It was about time for we had been working very hard for the last two days on practically nothing except some sticks of chocolate, and our subsequent performance that night and the following morning, even though it was divided among ourselves, the Gurkhas and the porters, was really a remarkable feat. Eckenstein in a book he afterwards published enumerates the amounts. I remember looking at that at the time of the publica-

tion and wondering at his optimism in daring to expose such a gargantuan feast. The list is subscribed :

8 qts. of milk.
53 eggs.
3 sheep.
32 lbs. of flour.
40 lbs. of barley flour.
10 lbs. of butter.
3 chickens.

Let us hope, if there were some fragments that remained, that we took them with us, though we were now marching through a country of plenty, but I cannot believe it any more than I can quite believe that the quoted list is strictly inside the truth. Thence to Skardo in some four days, travelling on our feet, by ponies, or "zak" (skin raft) down the Braldu. We bathed in the hot springs we found on the way down and arrived in time to find the apricots in perfect condition.

So to Askoley over the Skoro La—an interesting expedition and hard work, the Skoro La being some 17,000 ft. and still pretty deep in winter snow. Conway had not arrived, but after a few days when I pushed up the Biafo Glacier I met the party coming over, he and the men of the expedition having marched up the whole length of the Hispar glacier across the Place de la Concorde which forms the col and down the length of the 25-mile long Biafo, altogether some 60-70 miles of glacier travel. It

was lucky for them that the weather had remained good for I can hardly imagine being able to negotiate the glacier and find one's way across in anything like foggy or misty weather, especially as the map of that part of the world was then very incomplete, as was only natural.

We soon organised our advance to the Baltoro, but before doing so said goodbye to Eckenstein who returned to Kashmir. He had many of the qualifications of a mountain explorer highly developed, but his "make-up" had one small weakness which is a terrible handicap in that part of the world, and that is a delicate interior. People who do well in the Himalaya are those who can deal with a plentiful supply of millstone grit, contaminated milk, and general rough food without trouble, and although as far as possible one makes arrangements to counteract the roughness, on so many occasions this is not possible.

Our porters from here on were to be the tough, gentle Balti, nice little people, very primitive, very simple and very timid. Very fine load carriers, completely devoid of ambition, but who when well and kindly treated will follow a good leader anywhere he wishes to take them. The Balti is a very hard worker, his poor life probably makes him so. In fact he has to work and live hard to earn a living at all. Many in the winter go down to India, taking contracts for road making, load carrying and so on in the hill stations. They are Mongolians but by religion

Mohammedans of a very mild type. To give an idea of their character, though well accustomed to crossing rope bridges, which is almost the commonest form of bridge in their country, using them without hesitation with heavy loads on their backs, if the bridge looks unsafe they like to go in company with often four or five or more, calling on Allah to take them safely over, while one or two at the very outside were as many as the bridge could carry. That is the Balti. He is rather like a sheep, and like a sheep follows the bell-wether quite well. I think he is the only hill man that the average Kashmiri dares to ill-treat with impunity. We had a good gang of them and they did us very well indeed. They are not very well clothed although they dress in wool and their foot-gear, called "pabboos", are really very thick leather socks and not much more, that is to say, they look like socks made of thick leather and pull on in much the same way. It is really wonderful, considering this inadequate footgear, how well they get along, though on dry rock or dry stones or dry hill-sides this half-tanned leather seems to hold very well.

Three days took us to the foot of the glacier and then began days of continual moraine "hopping" as we called it, for the lower twenty miles of this glacier are covered with loose stones of all shapes and sizes, very few of them being stable. To say the least of it, progression is fatiguing and one of the

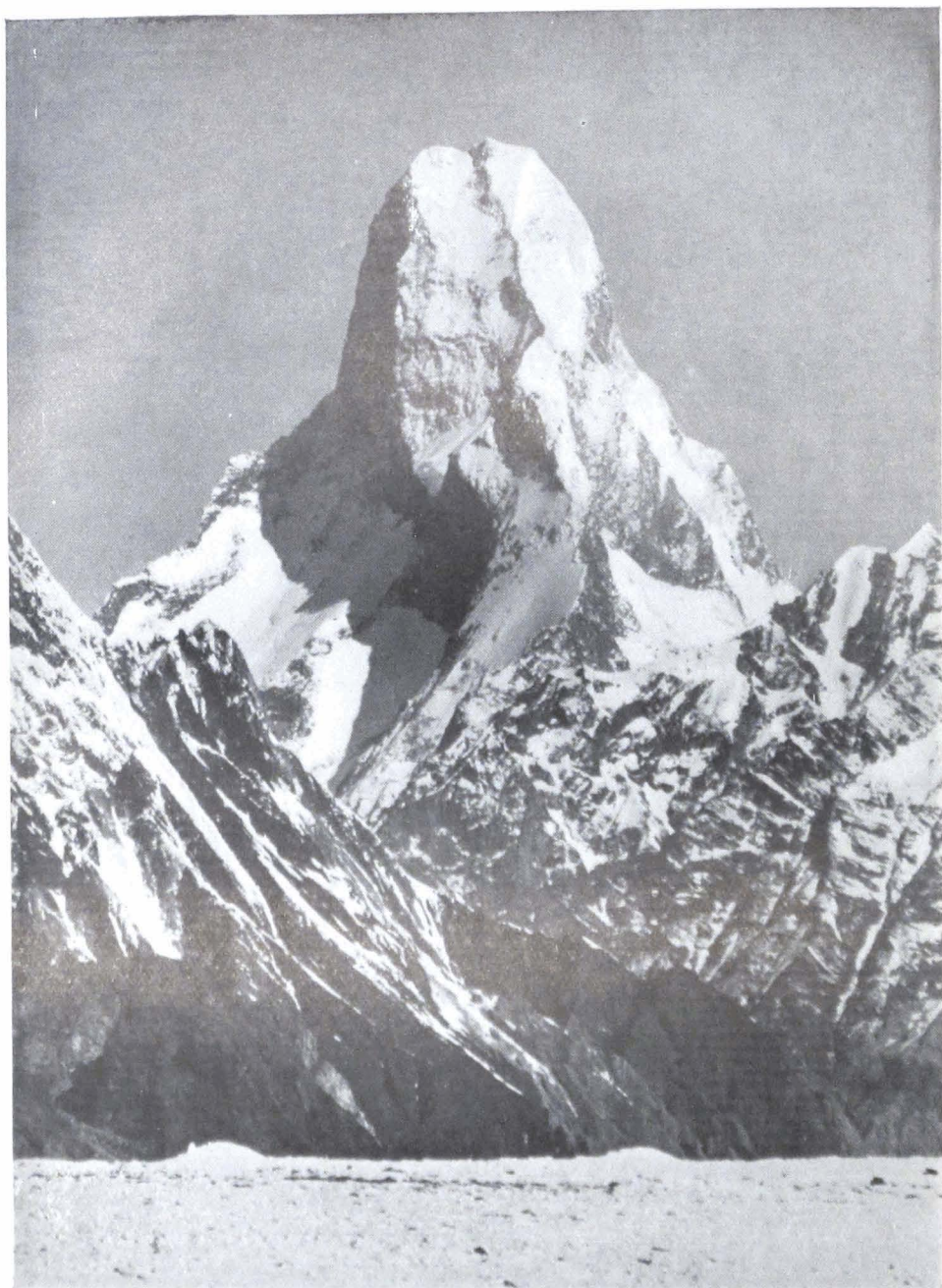
finest trials to the temper that exists. We put in a really good climb on the way up, a peak something near 20,000 ft., from which we hoped to obtain, and did obtain, a magnificent view of the work in front of us and of the surrounding mountains, and saw for the first time a mountain of which we knew nothing, to wit that magnificent Muztagh Tower whose parallel among mountains I have never seen since. An absolute pinnacle, its steepness inconceivable and almost indescribable. We passed on our way the junction of the glacier descending from the Muztagh Pass to the Baltoro, and it was over this same Muztagh Pass that Younghusband came when crossing over from the Shaksgam or Oprang Valley on his journey from Central Asia—a wonderful *tour de force* seeing how ill-equipped in every way he was to tackle so difficult a mountain problem.

And then to our base camp towards the head of the glacier and from which we looked up that arm of the glacier which surrounds the base of K.2,¹ which dominates the scenery, great as it is, for we were simply surrounded by giants of the first magnitude—an ice world where everything was on a gigantic scale. The three great peaks of Gusherbrum—"The Golden Throne" as Conway called it—itsself a great snow peak, with beautiful lines, "The Broad Peak," also named by Conway, and Masherbrum, which we had passed on our way up. It is impossible to

¹ Mount Godwin Austen.

enumerate or give any idea on paper of the quality and scale of this prodigious scenery.

Conway was now taken up working at his map, and Zurbriggen and myself were detailed with the Gurkhas (always excepting, of course, Conway's henchman Harkbir), to move our camp up the glacier leading to the Chogolisa saddle, which we explored first, leaving our porters behind in camp, and finally found a route to a little plateau on the way up. After several more journeys, everyone being laden, we established camp at about 20,000 ft. under a subsidiary peak on the right flank of the glacier, and Conway, having finished his map for the time being, joined us. He determined to climb the peak above the camp as it appeared to lead to "The Golden Throne" and also was evidently magnificently situated as a view-point of the whole range. We had one day's partial rest in this high camp and the following day, with two rope loads, made a push for our point. My own tent was an hour's walk below Conway's and I was to join him in the early morning, but made the mistake of starting too early; though only halfway through August it was very cold indeed, and I and my two Gurkhas arrived over-chilled and had to be thawed out and given hot drinks before we could go on. We all of us rested then until a little later, owing to the evident chance of frost-bite; in fact, all of us three had to take off our boots and revive our feet as it was.



MUZTAGH TOWER

Signor Vittorio Sella

From Camp XI at the foot of The Golden Throne (Telephoto)

The climb requires no particular description—it was up a snow ridge, in parts very steep, and the last three hours required pretty continuous step-cutting, but luckily the day was fine and warm. We were using crampons with the exception of Harkbir, and very soon found attention had to be paid to one's feet. At 21,000 ft. Amar Sing broke down from mountain sickness. Parbir and I continued on our rope, Zurbriggen, Conway and Harkbir on the leading rope. Thanks to the crampons very small steps were required in the steep ridge on which we were climbing, and Harkbir, whose balance was quite excellent, was able to follow without mishap.

When we arrived at the crest of what looked to us like a ridge leading to the Golden Throne we suddenly found there was a drop of some thousand feet and that we had only climbed a little separate peak on the ridge—all very satisfactory, as it turned out to be a marvellous view-point over all the great mountains that we had passed on the way up from Hunza to our present position—a perfect maze of giants with the great Baltoro flowing in the most river-like manner at our feet. We named our peak, Pioneer Peak.

To Zurbriggen the Baltoro was a revelation, but this was not to be his last journey in these parts and he was subsequently to see even greater glaciers, and indeed the Baltoro is only one of a great number. The troughs formed between the different ranges of the Hindu Kush-Karakoram-Himalayan system hold

glaciers greater than anything outside the Arctic and Antarctic regions—in Kanjut, for instance, the great Baturu Glacier, the Khungurab and Gunjurab above the Shimshal district, the Baltistan glaciers of Remo and Siachen, and many others prodigious in size, make a country to see and travel in, but essentially not a country to live in.

We had now been some four months in the mountains ; the season was getting late and it was quite evident that not much more could be done. Conway, too, wished to return through Baltistan, travelling there via the Indus to Leh in Ladak, returning thence to Kashmir, but he first wished to have a look at the Masherbrum peaks on our way down. So down we went, knowing that no more could we accomplish. From the camp below Masherbrum I set off with my two Gurkhas and a Kashmiri attendant and a couple of porters down to Askoley in order to arrange for the moving of the expedition and the remainder of its luggage, but unfortunately when some few miles below the camp I had an awkward accident crossing a crevasse, the result of which was a damaged back and a sprained leg, and there I had to stay. My tumble was just opposite the Muztagh Pass before mentioned. Luckily I had two Gurkhas with me and hoped I should be soon mended. The expedition passed me the next day and I was visited by McCormick, who left me a little food.

I had expected to be quickly cured, but that was not

to be, and a few days after the departure of the expedition, one of my Gurkhas, Amar Sing, taking two porters, was obliged to go down as fast as he could to Askoley to get some food, I hoping to meet him on my way down. It was, however, many days before I could do so and there was no hope of their getting back inside a week. Finally, after we had been lying quietly on the surface of the glacier for ten days, I was sufficiently recovered, with the aid of my Gurkha, to start, very hungry as our food had been done for two days. We were lucky enough in that sea of ice and stones to come across Amar Sing, and his men: we might easily have missed them. We found, though he had plenty of coarse wheat flour, that the eggs he had brought with him had all gone bad.

At any rate, we finally got comfortably back to Askoley. How I should have got through undamaged without the continual help of my orderly I do not know, for owing to my being unable to move and lying on the ice, although naturally, of course, I had some bedding, he had frequently to rub me and indeed keep the circulation going and help me in many other ways, as it was almost impossible for me for many days to hobble at all. However, all's well that ends well, and no harm was done, but we, being in the very lightest possible kit, were very pleased to find that our heavier luggage had been left for us at Askoley. We made the best of our way down to

Baltistan, refitted at Skardo and crossed the Deosai Plain back to Kashmir, picking up on the way a couple of red bear. So back to my station where, some three weeks later, I was joined by Conway for a few days before he left for England.

The two Gurkhas who accompanied Conway on his final trip through Ladak were the before-mentioned Harkbir and a younger man, Karbir Burathoki, who showed signs of the greatest promise, but who was not quite old enough to stand the rough life and hard work in the high mountains as well as the other man. Thus began for him and Harkbir a companionship of the mountains which lasted for many years, the younger man finally overtopping Harkbir in his achievements, for fifteen years later the same Karbir Burathoki was with Dr. Longstaff on the first ascent of Trissul.

CHAPTER V

CHILAS AND CHITRAL

SHORTLY after my arrival I found myself detailed as Special Service Officer to serve with Kashmiri troops in the Gilgit district again. Colonel Durand, the British Agent in Gilgit, had made arrangements that Zurbriggen should come back to instruct the different levies in snow and ice work. That was a very pleasant outlook from my point of view, but on our arrival in Kashmir a telegram came to say that owing to the disturbed condition of the country Zurbriggen's services would not be required. As a matter of fact, I consider they would have been quite unnecessary as difficult questions of snow and ice practically never occur, that is to say from a military point of view, and all other conditions would be more than adequately met by the local men themselves. For the Gilgit Agency of the Hindu Kush hold a population of extraordinarily fine natural mountaineers.

So Zurbriggen being paid off, I continued by myself, with the exception that I had taken with me by special leave four Gurkha orderlies and I had also an excellent Pathan orderly from the Queen's Own Corps of Guides who had been attached to my party.

The chief of my orderlies was the before-mentioned Karbir who had been with us on the Conway expedition ; the other three were all good men, two of them later getting the Indian Order of Merit in frontier expeditions and the third, a magnificent hill man, now lies on the slopes of Nanga Parbat in company with the great Mummery.

We found that we were detailed to join an expedition which had hurriedly been despatched down the Indus to quell the rising of the settlement of Chilas, a stronghold of the wild tribes which inhabit both banks of the Indus. The Government news-writer had been killed and at our advance posts down the river other tragedies had taken place, including an attack on Captain Twigg and his servants while on the march, which resulted in a very narrow escape for Capt. Twigg, some of his following being killed. An expedition was very rapidly fitted out and despatched even before the Kashmir Government was aware of the position. It was entrusted, as Political Officer, to Dr. G. S. Robertson (afterwards Sir George Robertson), the explorer of Kafiristan, who was Colonel Durand's assistant at the Gilgit Agency.

It really was rather a buccaneering expedition. It consisted of small bodies of Kashmiri troops reinforced by half a Company of the 15th Sikhs pushed down whenever transport could be found, transport consisting entirely of porters, men who were as heavily laden as it was possible for them to be, carry-

ing stores and ammunition. Little posts were formed on the way down and gradually and gradually little advances were made. At the time of my arrival a post opposite Chilas, at Tälpen, had been established, and little posts on the road had also been arranged for. My orders were to go on to the lines of communication and keep the road open at all costs, the actual name of my little spot being Darang. I asked about transport and was told that there were only two coolies available, and two Baltis were found. The countryside, very sparsely populated, had been emptied of everybody who could carry a load.

So off we went down the terrible Lechar Gorge. I was told to make my own arrangements for food. Luckily, knowing more or less what was in front of me, I slung a gun on my back and took as many cartridges as I could possibly carry. We were all six of us (five orderlies and myself), besides the two porters, loaded down as heavily as we could possibly be, but fortunately for us we were told that there would be no difficulties on the road except those of the road itself, which were very considerable. For in those days the Indus had merely markings on it to show where one could pass, the only track being the one made by the troops who had gone down before. I was lucky enough with one of the men's rifles to shoot a good oorial when not very far from our objective. It fell in very bad ground and it was really fine to see the way the two lads, Karbir and Ragobir, carried his

heavy 120 lbs. or more over steep slabby rocks—a wonderful exhibition of sure-footedness and balance, naturally in bare feet. The animal was cut up there and then and loaded on to one man, whose load we then divided.

Finally, we arrived opposite Darang, crossed in a zak and climbed up 300 ft. of a very steep path, where the small camp had been pitched right on the edge of steep cliffs. The camp consisted of a detachment of Kashmiri troops and a gang of very frightened Baltis. There was no possible defence against an attack by night as the camp was dominated entirely by the hill-sides beyond it. But there we were and no chance of bettering ourselves. Darang, at 3000 ft. above the sea, was immediately at the foot of tremendous hill-sides, leading up to the settlement of Ghor, whose chief was supposed not only to be in sympathy with the raiding Chilasis but also himself to have been responsible for the treacherous attack on Twigg and his men. Ghor, as a matter of fact, is inside the Gilgit Agency, and he was therefore a subject of Kashmir.

That night my poor Pathan orderly, sitting too near the cliffs to cook his food, slipped and fell over backwards—a fall of some 200 ft.—and was instantly killed. We had some trouble in finding him in the night. Not a good beginning. We felt ourselves, however, very lucky to have got our oorial, as the Commissariat provisions, hardly enough to keep the

garrison alive, consisted mostly of a very coarse grain called " china " which is a sort of pulse and more like bird's seed than anything else. I had with me some soups in cubes, tea, and chocolate—in fact, some light stores left over from the Conway expedition.

We found, too, in camp, in our little quarter guard, certain of the men actually caught in the attack on Twigg and other outrages. There was no doubt of their personal guilt, but all were sorry for them, as they felt that they were mere instruments in the hands of people who were really responsible for the attacks. They were held for trial and were sent in later to Gilgit. We were never worried at Darang, but troops moving down to Chilas had to put up a pretty tough fight or two. Finally the camp opposite Chilas was attacked by a strong force of tribesmen, who received a really good lesson as a result, and after their defeat small bodies were pushed across the river to the eastern bank, establishing themselves until a sufficient number were collected, when the settlement of Chilas was taken and occupied, and from that day to the present it has remained part of the Kashmir dominions.

There were some very brave actions undertaken by the Kashmiri troops during this period in trying to get across, either by swimming or on little skin rafts, one especially—four Gurkhas in the Kashmir Service—swimming under a raft with their arms and equipment on top in an attempt to cross. Three were

killed and the fourth with difficulty rescued. Our casualties were quite severe enough considering the terrible difficulty of the country, and it was lucky for us that the tribesmen had received a sufficient beating, because so bad was the road up the Indus valley that it was some months before the wounded could be evacuated, and even then where the cliffs came down to the river they had to be ferried back and forward on skin rafts.

My duties at Darang were very interesting. I carried out patrols down both sides of the Indus, using my own men as scouts, and working in conjunction with the Kashmiri troops. I also paid visits to the settlement of Ghor, which is nearly 5000 ft. above the river and on a most attractive great bench on the mountain side. There we found cultivated fields and hillsides with actual scrub on them everywhere; also covering many of the smaller fields were quantities of vines supported on what are best described as little pergolas, while the whole hillside was alive with chickor (the hill partridge). But it was a thoroughly unfriendly settlement. My first visit to it was in order to obtain the pins for the water mills at Darang, for Darang low down had ample water power and it was at this settlement that nearly all the grinding of the grain for Ghor was done. The mills had been dismantled by the simple process of taking the pins away. Further, we had supplies of grain and our bird seed had to be ground. I got my pins finally

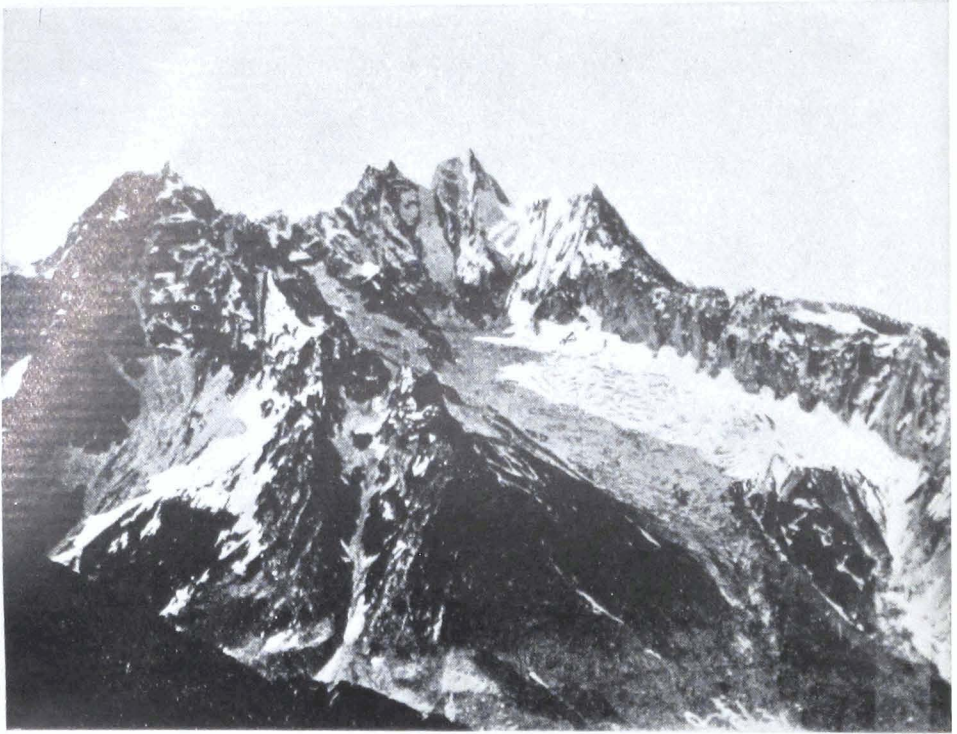
without trouble. The headmen of Ghor had already begun to be nervous of what was to happen to them, and it was only with the help of interpreters, who were soldiers of the Kashmiri army and could make themselves understood, that I, rather weak in the language, was able to explain to the headmen, without mentioning these particular mills, what awful things I had once done to certain Pathan chieftains who would not give me the pins for mills when I required them. Purely imaginary, but even the Gurkhas were upset at the terrific pictures of agony which I drew.

The shooting there was exciting. I took enough men to post sentries all round a piece of ground and shot between them. Before taking up the next piece, a skirmish over the hillside and a re-posting of sentries, and so on until the few cartridges which I had allowed myself for each shoot were expended. We had no difficulty in getting a sufficient bag, not only for my own use but also to distribute to a certain extent. Also scouts sent out to locate goats supplied us with more food for the men. But the whole camp was on very short commons until the organisation was improved and more and more stores were pushed through from the pass.

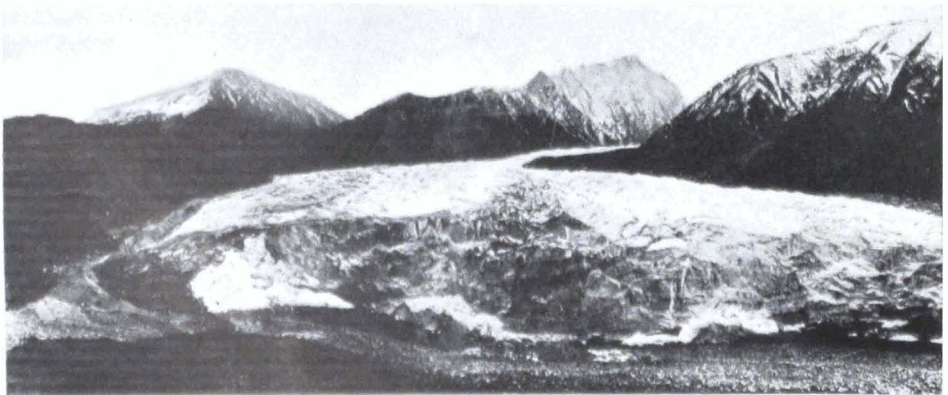
However, by far the greatest experience and one that has left its mark as an unforgettable sight, and which drew me to Ghor on every excuse, an attraction even stronger than the interest of chickor shooting, was the panorama from Ghor. For from the

terraces at 8000 ft. one could look at the line of the Indus directly below one at a height of 3000 ft., and then rising from it immense bare rocky and precipitous hillsides, through the great forest belts above, then great alps and finally the eternal snows, where rose prodigiously the entire massif of Nanga Parbat and its satellites. What a marvellous *coup d'œil*. No need here to have a sense of scale—the size and majesty were apparent. I cannot believe that there is its equal in any part of the world. May be there is some place in Nepal equally gloriously situated—there is one that I have my eye on as a possibility but which I shall never see to verify. I still keep in my mind, however, as an unforgettable experience in the mountains, that overwhelming landscape. It gave one a feeling of impossibility, it gave one also a feeling that one wasn't there, and it also gave one a feeling that if one was there one didn't matter. In fact, it was a liberal education in itself.

Finally I was ordered to move from Darang to a place some seven miles further down, called Domussel. The whole camp had to be taken across the river on skin rafts—men, stores, coolies and everything—and marched down the left bank. Then came the question of moving my murderers, who turned out to be much the best skin raft men on the river and did yeoman service moving the troops across. I then asked them whether they would take me down to Domussel by river. They were delighted to do so,



GOKAN PEAKS. SHISHI KOH
CHITRAL



CHATABOI GLACIER
HINDU KUSH

and a couple of orderlies and myself in consequence took the trip entirely in the hands of these very nice murderers. They were excellent fellows, and the position they were in was not really their fault but force of circumstances. I kept a very soft place in my heart for them, especially as they had to go back into the local quarter guard on arrival, and later were duly delivered up to the authorities in Gilgit.

The detachment of 15th Sikhs down the Indus valley were commanded by a remarkable character, Captain Trevor. Captain Trevor was a very fine shikari indeed, both as a fisherman and a hunter of mountain game, and was an even more remarkable shot with gun or with rifle. So plentiful were the chickor on these hillsides and so excellent was his marksmanship that he was able to pick up quite decent bags of chickor, following the coveys with a pea rifle and taking them as they scattered along the hillsides. He had with him a shikari whose name was Gul Sher Khan; the finest Hindu Kush shikaris are infinitely superior in their profession to any Kashmiri that I have ever seen. They are also infinitely finer hillmen. Their knowledge, too, of game is on an entirely different basis, and the very best of these men in the Gilgit Agency at that time was Gul Sher Khan, who was besides that an extremely intelligent man and a first-rate companion.

In winter, when it is cold above, the markor will descend unusually low, and one is able to get good

sport without going far back into the mountains. One day when Trevor was out after markor on the banks of the Indus with Gul Sher Khan, they discovered that they had been noticed by certain of the local tribesmen, and that while they were engaged in stalking markor two of the local tribesmen were stalking them ; but the local tribesmen had bitten off a bit bigger than they could chew, for Gul Sher Khan and Trevor returned the compliment, and Gul Sher Khan led him up to the new quarry with complete success, Trevor killing one and bringing the other in as a prisoner—a very neat bit of shikar and also a bit of luck for Trevor. This shows the advantage of having a really good eye for country, such an eye as can be obtained following hill game and in mountaineering.

And so to Gilgit. Christmas Day was passed at Bunji and there, with the help of the officers of the Bunji garrison, one of whom had also been my superior officer down in Chilas, Captain Capper, R.E., we had great festivities before going on to Gilgit. The story goes (I cannot vouch for it being true) that at one in the morning I cut my way from the mess to my tent with the utmost difficulty with my ice axe, spending an hour doing it and falling out of my steps three times, but I got into them without accident—as a matter of fact, it was a terrific ice slope on ground flat enough for a bowling green. Well, when one comes to think of it, considering what we had been living on down the Indus, a little

overstepping the mark on Christmas night might possibly be excused, especially considering the mountaineering skill I displayed in getting back into my steps without accident. The only real food I had had down the Indus valley was when I robbed the post-bag of certain plum puddings intended for the Christmas dinners down at Chilas. When one has only bird's seed to eat, plum pudding is irresistible.

The Mission to Chitral, under Dr. G. S. Robertson, consisted of Capt. Francis Younghusband, J. L. R. Gordon of the 15th Sikhs and myself, Special Service Officer, an escort of half a Company of 15th Sikhs and my Gurkha orderlies. Chitral, as dominating the passes into Central Asia, had Imperial value. The only easy pass across the Hindu Kush, known as the Dorah Pass, forms the only available approach from Russian territory to threaten our northern flank, and that is probably a reason which makes the Imperial Government take interest in it.

A very remarkable character, whose name was Aman-ul-Mulk, had dominated Chitral and the neighbouring valleys for many years. He was an autocrat in his way : he had kept everyone in order, though a cruel savage in his methods. It was his death and the feuds between his sons which caused the state of chaos in the country. It is unnecessary to go into all these local intrigues, but the son who was most in favour of British interference and anxious to obtain the help of the Imperial Govern-

ment was probably the weakest and least remarkable of the descendants of the old gentleman. His name was Nizam-ul-Mulk, and it was decided to back his claims and place him on the throne of his father—a rather hazardous undertaking, but Robertson was thoroughly *au fait* with the conditions of the country, as he had travelled there before during his different expeditions into Kafirstan, which lies to the west of the Chitral territory, and understood the people well.

Still, a march beginning in early January is not to be undertaken too lightly. We were a fairly large party, requiring about 250 ponies to transport all our effects. Chitral lies some 200 miles due west of Gilgit, and it is necessary to cross via the Shandur Pass, a high ridge descending due south from the main chain. The weather in early January was very cold. All our men had been fitted out with long sheep-skin coats, and sheep-skin wraps for the feet of the sentries. But still a few of the Sikhs suffered from frost-bite and at first rather resented the summary methods of myself and the Gurkhas in restoring their circulation but we had had good previous training. The Shandur, 12,000 ft. high, was passed in fairly good weather and the march into Chitral carried out with no particular difficulty except for the cold. On our arrival there we were met by the usual Chitral reception—a kind of sports were held before we entered, the shooting at the popinjay, etc., exactly like mediaeval English sport.

Chitral has been described as the “land of mirth and murder” by Colonel Durand, and a most suitable name it was at his time. The population is roughly divided into two classes—the aristocrats known as the Adamzadahs, and the ordinary population known as Fakir Mushkin—and in those days, when there was very little amusement for the aristocrats, except polo and hunting, intrigue was rife, jealousies innumerable and, in consequence, in that wild country, murder common.

The old gentleman the Mehtar (Prince) Aman-ul-Mulk was himself an arch fiend. It would be curious to know how many of his subjects he had either poisoned or sold into slavery. He was a very much married man ; in fact, he was married in every village in the country, and was supposed to have had over eighty sons, large numbers of whom have survived. He was a terrible hypocrite into the bargain, and when any of his Court with whom he had fallen out were found to have suddenly demised, the whole Court went into mourning and showed every sign of sorrow. The fight for the throne had been between his two sons, Afzul-ul-Mulk and Nizam-ul-Mulk, an uncle, Sher Afzul, also taking a hand, but Afzul, by far the finer character of the two, had been killed by the same uncle ; hence our Mission. The results were that we got a hold in Chitral, which, notwithstanding the siege in 1895 and troubles¹ two years

¹ Not actually in Chitral.

later, has never been relaxed, and at the present moment Chitral is politically supervised by the North-West Frontier Government and ruled by the grandson of Aman-ul-Mulk.

The Hindu Kush is crossed and connected with Central Asia by various passes, but, as I have said before, the only one of no difficulty, being sufficiently easy for armed bodies of troops to cross, is the Dorah Pass, which is one of the most westerly of them all.

Our time in Chitral was rather anxious; the country was very unsettled and there were a great many enemies of Nizam-ul-Mulk. In consequence, at times our position was a little hazardous. Gilgit, too, was far away, so we were very much dependent on the tact of our leader. However, nothing untoward occurred, and the Mission was able to amuse itself by playing polo with the Chitralis and a certain amount of sport, not very much, as it was not thought advisable for members of the Mission to camp out or be out after dark, though on one occasion Gordon and myself got off on a short trip on to the Kafiristan frontier.

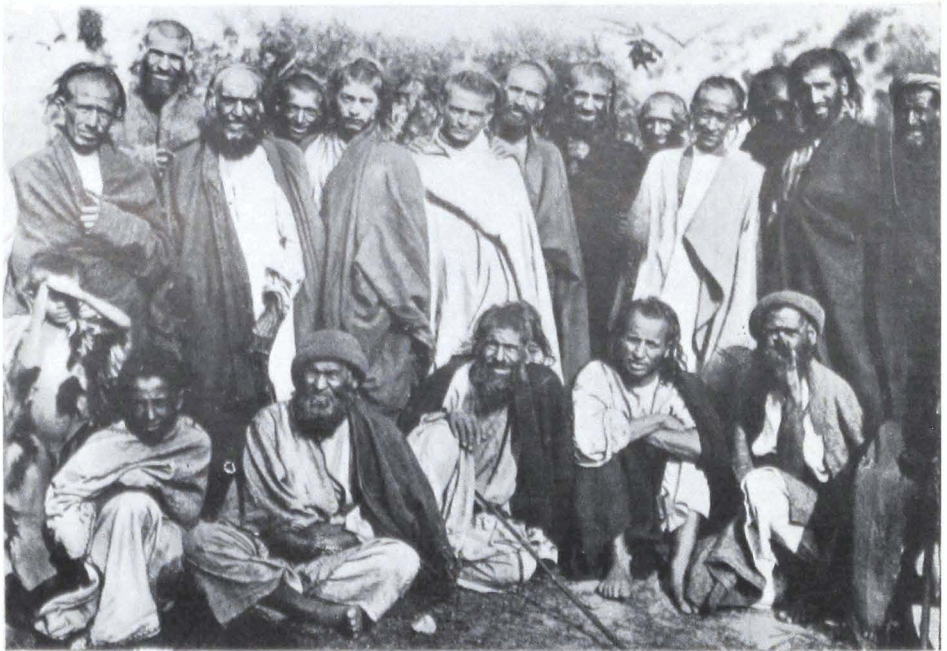
Chitral is dominated by the last big group of any important altitude to the west, the great massif of Tirich Mir, of which two peaks are over 25,000 ft. and at least three are over 24,000 ft. ; and which has not even yet to this day been thoroughly surveyed and explored. In fact, there is an enormous track of the Hindu Kush which is but little known, and would

certainly repay an explorer's trouble. With the exception of the glory of this great Tirich Mir mass, which rather dominates the Chitral valley, on the whole the scenery is disappointing. It is huge, but in many ways ugly, and neither the lines nor the forms of the mountains have any particular attraction, but it has its points—wherever water can be brought, as anywhere in the Hindu Kush apparently, good crops result; and in the valleys of Chitral, not being at a great elevation, one other product which is very pleasant during the hot months is an excellent supply of fruit—grapes and apricots especially, while melons are fairly abundant. Now that the country has been under British supervision for a great many years, the name given to it by Col. Durand has ceased to apply, for the Chitrali is a merry soul and a most good-natured one, and given enough to do is a very pleasant and amiable companion, and the murderous tendencies of old days have faded and disappeared to all intents and purposes. It is probably now a country of very little crime. Dancing and singing, often in a very pleasant and amusing way, are their chief forms of amusements. They are also fine shikaris and polo players.

In June, when all seemed arranged and quiet, Dr. Robertson returned to Gilgit, taking me with him, leaving Capt. Younghusband in charge of Chitral with his escort of the 15th Sikhs. All went well for a couple of years, but then after Young-

husband had left and Gordon, who had become Political Officer, taken charge there was a terrible break-up in Chitral. Nizam-ul-Mulk was murdered by his enemies and the whole country was in a state of uproar. Robertson had returned to Chitral shortly before the outbreak and, as all the world knows, had to take refuge in the fort and hold it with the very small garrison which he was able to collect, consisting of a detachment of 14th Sikhs and Kashmiri troops, against the rebels who had also been very much reinforced by an incursion of the well-known Pathan chief, Umra Khan of Bajour. One of the officers of the garrison was Capt. Charles Townshend, afterwards defender of Kut.

The story of the Siege of Chitral has been told in many works and need not be referred to here, but after the country had been thoroughly quieted, Chitral, under the grandson of the old Mehtar Aman-ul-Mulk and under the direction of British Agents, has prospered immensely. We have at the present time a Resident there and a small garrison which is situated rather further down the Chitral River at a place called Drosh, to safeguard our interests, and the Chitralis themselves provide a most efficient body of scouts whose business it is to watch the different passes which connect Chitral with Central Asia. It still remains, though, from an explorer's point of view, a worth-while country. Although men in search of game and travellers have been on the passes on each



Top : A KAFIR WOMAN

Below : GROUP OF KAFIR TRIBESMEN

side of Tirich Mir, such as the Agram, the Sadh Istragh and the neighbouring Khatinza, the only expedition which has really explored the mountain, and that without adequate outfit and for only a short period into the bargain, was the one led by Capt. Culverwell, R.A. He suffered from fairies !

Even in the old days when I first went up there I heard many stories of how the valleys round Tirich Mir were the homes of the fairies. It is curious that the supernatural inhabitants of these mountains are quite different from the central and eastern Himalaya : there are neither gods nor devils to be feared, but fairies. They are popularly supposed to be blood relations of the Adamzadah families. In fact, the old chief Aman-ul-Mulk took advantage of this particular notion and employed it as an excellent excuse for the sudden disappearance of men whom he wanted to get rid of.

I had, eleven years later than this, a far larger experience of the country, as I returned to it with my Regiment and spent a year there—very pleasant employment, too, as naturally plenty of leave was obtainable and plenty of chances of wandering over the mountains. Also, further explorations were made of the Kafiristan settlements and those strange people the Kafirs. The Kafirs are relics of a worn-out people. Their forebears were certainly in existence when Alexander marched into India, and most of the country through which he advanced was peopled by

an analogous race. When I first knew them they were still independent tribes, detested generally by Chitralis and equally feared. In many ways they were savages, not semi-civilised people like the Chitralis, although they had a certain culture—houses were very well built, for instance, and in their rich deep valleys they grew vines from which they made a rough wine which was kept exactly as in the old world, in goat-skins.

In the latter years of the life of the great Amir of Kabul, Abdur Rahman Khan, he had expeditions sent into Kafiristan and forcibly converted the Kafirs to Mohammedanism. “Kafir” means an unbeliever—“Kafiristan” the country of the unbelievers. Their ordinary name, which covered all tribes, was Siaposh,¹ from the dark colour of the cloth with which the women made their cloaks. Their religion contained strange relics of Hinduism—Imra, their chief god, a corruption, no doubt, of Indra the lord of Heaven and Rain, and Gich the god of war, a very blood-thirsty person. They were intensely opposed to Islam. The chief amusement in the life of the men was Mohammedan killing, and their method of warfare consisted almost entirely in the skulking of two men in Mohammedan country and assassination, then a rush home and on arrival in their village a pæan of praise to the War God, and a dance. Every village had its dancing platform jutting out from the

¹ Siaposh: black coated. Not a Kafir name.

hillside, and on every possible occasion dances were held.

The sole weapons of these curious people were a very bad and primitive bow and arrow and a stabbing knife with a cross handle, also of primitive make. There were two methods of obtaining renown and standing in village life : one, by having established a reputation as a warrior and a killer, and the other, possibly even more important, by having fed the people. A man having obtained a good reputation in either of these ways received the title of "Jâst," which meant really more or less a headman of the village. All sorts of privileges were allowed to people who obtained this title, which was beyond the reach of lesser folk. When they were not fighting Mohammedans they were fighting each other in practically the same way. All the work of the fields was done by the women, the men having a great contempt for personal manual labour. But one great peculiarity which they had, and the relics of them still have, is that they always in their houses use stools to sit on and do not squat on their heels as is usually done by the Asiatics. It is rather a curious trait, and another one is that although they are quite ready to eat raw a markor when it is killed on a hillside, they look upon fish as unclean and actually regard with horror the people who eat it. Their other characteristics are that a great many of them are beautifully made men and extraordinarily fast on the hills. A man who is good

on the hill, too, has a certain special reputation which is of value as this capacity helps to ensure his safety as a raider.

At the present time there are very few Kafirs left. Naturally only a few families have taken refuge in Chitral territory, where they are looked after by the authorities, but even among these few one finds much to study and to interest one in their old customs. It is curious to see relics, too, of Greek religious ceremony which they have grafted into their degenerate worship—the invocations of the Kafir priest at the altar, and the use of the double pipe on which they play their simple little tunes. Still, they have in their dancing and their tunes a certain pleasing rhythm which rather carries one away. I think in a very few years there will be no Kafirs left. Many of the tribes were deported bodily by the Amir and planted down in other parts of Afghanistan, so by degrees they will be swallowed up into the more virile and capable Afghan tribes.

Before this chapter closes it is necessary to record that it was on our actual march to Chitral that Younghusband made to me a proposition for the first exploration of Everest. The sketch of the action that he suggested we should take was, to say the least of it, ambitious. He suggested, and I believe had already approached the Resident in Kashgar privately, that it might be possible to march through Tibet via Yarkand and Northern Tibet, drop down

by Lhasa, and before returning to India by the main road from Lhasa to Bengal, explore the base of Everest and surrounding country with a view to a further expedition. This, I believe, was the first concrete suggestion ever made with such an object. For the time it had the modified approval of Sir Mortimer Durand, the then Foreign Secretary, but shortly afterwards had to be given up for political reasons, although at that time exploration was very much in the air, Younghusband being the most noted of explorers. Then began an association with this object in view which continues to the present day. We little knew what future developments were in store.

Back to Gilgit and from there to Hunza, where I was in charge for a short period of the Hunza and Nagar Scouts and had a very delightful and active time with them, exploring too the neighbouring mountain sides with the Political Officer, my friend Gurdon, whose name was so well known later on in connection with Chitral and the Chitral siege and on the Indian Frontier.

Of all the tribes in the great Hindu Kush-Himalaya system that I have travelled with and with whom I have had to do as movers over the hillsides, the Hunza men stand first. The distances they cover are prodigious, but for many, many years it must have been a question of the survival of the fittest, for their life has been hard, and in the old days when they

were entirely isolated they eked out their precarious existence by raids over the terrific roads of Kanjut to the Pamirs, even pushing their raids so far as to Shahidula, to the main road which connects Yarkand with the road to Ladak and Kashmir, over the Karakoram passes. They were accustomed, therefore, to cover prodigious distances. Twice while I was so employed, the levies were called out and sent for service to Gilgit, many of them coming many miles, either from the neighbouring hillsides or from further away villages. They were on each occasion despatched in the evening with their rifles and provisions and thence marched in one march to Gilgit, a distance of sixty-five miles. I would not, however, much as I admire the Hunza men, put them on the same level as the Sherpas and Tibetans of the East from the point of view of their utility as mountain explorers, at least for the present. They have not been accustomed to snow and ice, they have a great fear of it, chiefly due to their shocking foot-gear, the "taotis." Also their habitat is not high, usually about 5000 ft., and they are not by any means so accustomed to great altitudes as the Tibetans, nor are they as a rule such extraordinarily good carriers, although I have seen some very fine performances with heavy loads over slabby country almost anywhere in the Hindu Kush. On great rocky slabs and broken country of that description these people are really wonderful, and there is no reason why they

should not do first-class service to mountaineers and explorers if required to do so. The experience of the celebrated Dutch explorers, the Vissers, amply bears this out.

There has always been a great rivalry and possibly in the old days enmity between the men of Hunza and the men of Nagar, but nowadays it is merely rivalry on the polo ground, in sports and like amusements. There is a little difference in the religion of the two peoples as many of the Hunza men are followers of H.H. The Aga Khan, and the rest Sunnis, while the Nagar people belong to the Shiah sect. I tried to learn their language, Burishâski, and even accomplished the outlines of an easy drill in that strange and difficult tongue.

To give an idea of their isolation before the Hunza Expedition, some years before that event when Younghusband first visited the Thum (the ruler) of Hunza, he suggested to him that it would be interesting for him to visit Kashmir or even India, and received the surprising answer that great kings such as Alexander, Cyrus or himself did not leave their dominions. Strange how certain historical traditions persist ! But a bad shot !

CHAPTER VI

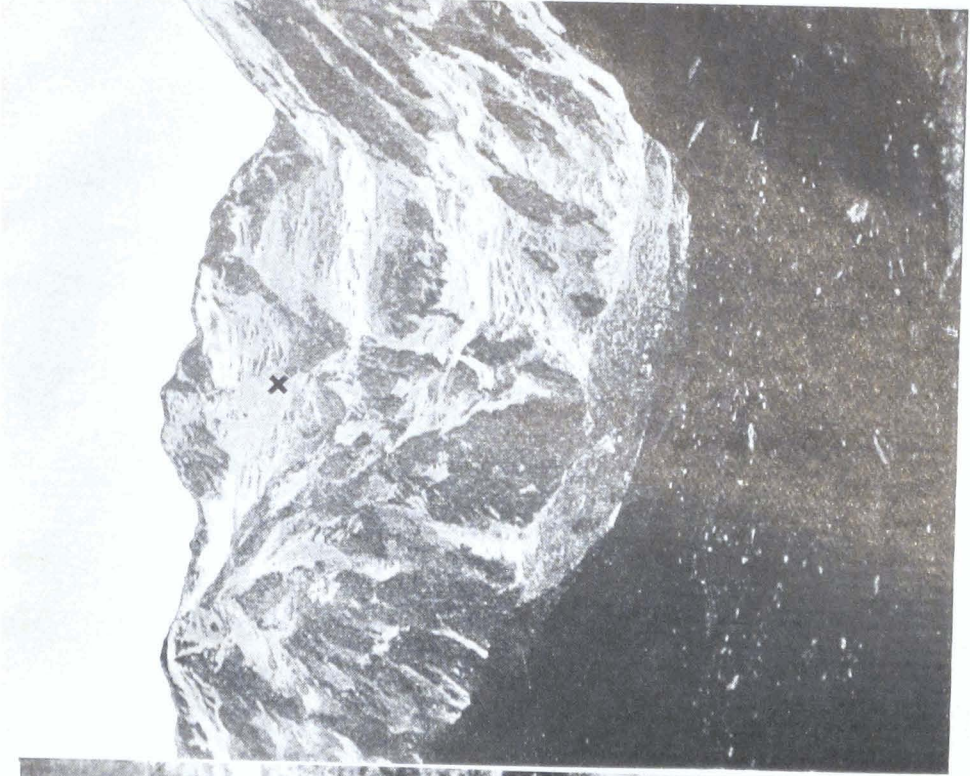
NANGA PARBAT

1894 found me again in England, where I had taken a short leave to be married, but it was during the early part of this year that Conway made his journey over the Alps from end to end, which is recorded in his charming book of that name. He had obtained leave to take with him two of his old companions, the two Gurkhas, Karbir and Amar Sing, with whom he was extremely pleased. It was really remarkable to see how well they managed to adapt themselves, travelling in a country so strange to them as Europe, staying in hotels, etc., and at the same time being general utility men to Conway himself.

On the early part of that journey they were accompanied by guides, in fact their old friend Zurbriggen was with them for a time, but during the latter part of the tour in the Eastern Alps they were Conway's sole companions and led him, among other climbs, over the Gross Glockner. It was in every way a great education, and completed what was required to make Karbir a most efficient mountaineer. As a matter of fact, during the previous winter he and I had done some interesting climbing on the Dhaul



MUMMERY AND AUTHOR
DIAMARAI VALLEY



NANGA PARBAT FROM DIAMARAI
x indicates point reached by Mummery and Raghobir

Dhar range, on which the station of Dharmsala is situated and which is the station of the 1st Gurkha Rifles. With my friend Money of that Regiment we made an ascent of one of the peaks directly behind this station, which we named after one of his men as being the first mountain he had ever been up and which bears his name to this day,¹ the Deo Pir. It was my first introduction, too, to that wonderful range and to the Kangra Valley.

After my wedding my wife and I returned to India, and very shortly afterwards I left for Waziristan as my Regiment formed part of the relief expedition commanded by Sir William Lockhart to clear up the situation caused by the Mashuds' attack on the camp at Wano. Our Scouts were in those days properly established and Karbir did excellent service during that expedition in the rough Mashud hills.

The whole of the Indian frontier was very disturbed about that time. In fact, in the early part of the year Dr. Robertson, with his small force, was shut up in the fort in Chitral until relieved by Sir Robert Low and his field force. After May, all had quietened down and we resumed the usual even tenor of our way. My wife and I, obtaining two months' leave, spent a delightful and very active two months in the Kaghan Valley with my usual companions Harkbir and Karbir, and we got through quite a lot of mountaineering, climbing several of the Kaghan

¹ Vide *Alpine Journal* of 1894.

peaks. It was during this leave, too, that all the Gurkhas were down with mumps, which unpleasant and uncomfortable disease they handed on to me. Before we were completely cured I received information from home that Mummery and his party, Dr. Norman Collie and Hastings, were on their way to Kashmir and so to Nanga Parbat, with a request for me to help them with their transport arrangements. They had also applied for a couple of Gurkhas to assist them, and I received, too, a very cordial invitation to make one of the party. Consequently, letters were rapidly despatched and I left, crossing the intervening mountain ranges by the passes of Shikara and Barboon on my way to Kashmir to give what help I could, my wife very pluckily marching back to Abbottabad by herself down that perfectly peaceful but rather wild valley of Kaghan.

I was in Bandipur in four days, which was good going, and having heard no further news from India was obliged to go back to report myself. On my way I met the Mummery party on the road and they gave me news that leave had been received for a couple of Gurkhas to join them and that they hoped when I got back to the station that I should find a letter authorising me to accompany them as well. This I found to be the case. Within a few days I was off again : telegrams were despatched to arrange transport, and in exactly one week from Abbottabad I found myself at Astor and even that same night got up to the British

Agent's camp at Chongra, directly under the great peaks of that name. We could not have travelled so fast, of course, unless we had had double relays of ponies for even our small amount of baggage.

On arrival at Mummery's camp near Tarshing I found the camp empty, the party having departed on their first exploring journey. Two days later they arrived done to the world, having had a most strenuous time. They had actually crossed the range to the Chilas side of the mountain, over the Mazeno Pass, some 18,000 ft. in height, crossed again into the Diamarai Valley which descends from the N.W. face of Nanga Parbat, and having despatched their light camp back, they took a sporting route, making one first-class climb but mistaking the ridge they were on, and on arrival at the summit finding themselves cut off by a deep valley from the Mazeno Pass. The peak on the ridge they had climbed was well over 20,000 ft. and afforded snow and ice work of a high order. Thence by night over the comparatively easy but heart-breaking Mazeno. Finally they straggled into the base camp at Tarshing during the course of the following evening. They had been going continuously for forty-eight hours.

After a rest of some few days at Tarshing, which included a trial trip with the two men, in which Raghobir gained Mummery's confidence, a much more ambitious expedition was undertaken with a heavier outfit to establish a high camp in the Diamarai

Valley. Mummery, who had a perfect horror of the stones of the Mazeno, determined to try and force a passage across the main Nanga Parbat chain by which, if it were humanly possible, they might descend direct on to the Diamarai Glacier. But we had bitten off more than we could chew, and after about seventeen hours of climbing were obliged to beat a retreat and began descending the steep ice slopes leading actually to our own side of the Mazeno Pass, and there on a little outcrop of rock Collie, myself and the Gurkha Raghobir, at some 19,000 ft. above the sea, spent a chilly but safe night. Mummery and Hastings were located rather higher up in the same kind of bivouac. No food, no clothes, but luckily for us no wind !

I am not likely to forget the descent in the early morning and dragging a worn-out body over the Mazeno, hour after hour of boulder-hopping. By six in the evening we got down to the head of the Bunar Valley and were lucky enough to find shepherds from whom we bought a sheep and milk. The five of us ate that sheep that night, leaving just enough for the morning's breakfast and no more ! It was not the biggest possible sheep ever seen, but even then not a bad effort—meat in huge chunks roasted on sticks in front of a wood fire. We were still high, with frosts at night, but we slept round the fire the sleep of the just, dead to the world, and careless of the cold and the hoar frost which covered us in the morning.

Another pass over a high ridge took us direct the following day down to the Diamarai camp, where we all went to bed for two days. At the end of that time my leave was up and I had to return to India, but unfortunately I had already begun to feel the results of that exposure on the mountain on mumps that were not quite cleared up and once again I had to cross the Mazeno. However, everything comes to an end, even the 200 miles or so of the march back to Kashmir and my final struggle into my station, although I had been swelling visibly the whole time. I have always said that I crossed the Wular Lake in Kashmir on my way down in three boats—sitting in the middle one, with one on each side to hold up my swollen cheeks.

However, I finally did arrive, swollen out of all recognition. A week later my dear old friend, the Regimental Doctor, addressed me as follows—he came from old Ireland: “Well, me dear fella, I don’t know what’s the matter with ye, I really don’t, but there’s one thing that I can tell ye, ye’ll never be any better!” Cheery old bird! Which indeed he was!

After my departure, Mummery and his party carried out some of the most exacting mountaineering that had ever been done in the Himalayas and has hardly since been excelled. He followed a ridge directly under the summit of the mountain at the head of the Diamarai Valley. For his chief attempt

and after suitable exploration by the whole of the party, this route was decided on as being what was apparently the only possible way, a most precipitous ridge leading directly up to the great snow fields that lay under the summit. During the exploration of this ridge it was clear that many days must be allowed and that the lightest possible camp equipment must be taken, as the climb was of the very first order, both rock and snow and ice.

Before Mummery made the final attempt on the mountain, for training purposes the party successfully attacked both the Diamarai Peak and the Gonalo Peak, both over 20,000 ft., and providing excellent mountaineering problems. Hastings, however, had been obliged to go round to the south side of the mountain to get another supply of stores, etc., and as the weather looked like breaking badly, Mummery determined to make a push for the mountain. Collie, too, had succumbed and was temporarily out of action, so Mummery and Raghobir started off for the mountain by the very steep ridge before mentioned and arrived at a height of some 21,000 ft., having, even to reach that point, spent two nights out on the ridge. Food, too, was finished, but Mummery thought that if they had had more supplies they might have reached the summit in one day. As there was still nearly 7000 ft. more to do this was, as a matter of fact, quite beyond human capacity.

It gives a very good idea of the size of the great ice

avalanches that are continually falling from Nanga Parbat that, when on their way down, they found that the ridge, though standing well up some 200 or 300 ft. above the couloirs on the right and left, had been swept by an ice avalanche which took it in its stride and one of their camps had been carried away. Later on a study of the map gave them a very shrewd suspicion that the best line of attack might be from the head of the Buldar-Rakiot Valley and up the Rakiot Glacier, and it was therefore arranged to move the camp round under Collie's charge. Mummery and the two Gurkhas would follow up the Dama Glacier, cross the col at its summit, and descend into the Rakiot Valley, rejoining Collie—a very desperate undertaking.

On their way up they left caches of provisions in rucksacks for fear they should have to retrace their steps. It was certainly chancing matters too far in such a desperately difficult and unexplored country to believe that if it was possible even to reach the col at the head of the Dama, they could necessarily descend on the other side. It was quite clear when Collie had once seen the ice slopes which descend from the Rakiot side of the col that such an undertaking was quite impossible.

Therefore, on Mummery's non-arrival at the time he had specified, the belief was still held that he had failed to descend and had beaten a retreat to the Diamarai and would arrive in due course. However,

as he did not do so, parties were sent out, Hastings was informed, and further exploration showed that the rucksacks had not been touched. Further, there had been heavy falls of snow and it was quite evident that in the Diama Valley ice avalanches too had fallen and there was no hope any longer of finding the party alive.

Thus passed one of the greatest mountaineers that has ever come out of the British Isles. Collie writes of him in his book, *Climbing on the Himalayas and Other Ranges*: “Pitiless mountains have claimed him and among the snow-laden glaciers of the mighty hills he rests. The curves of the wind-moulded cornice, the delicate undulations of the fissured snow cover him, whilst the grim precipices, the great brown rocks bending down into an immeasurable space and the snow peaks he loved so well keep guard and watch over the spot where he lies.”

CHAPTER VII

THE INDIAN PROFESSIONAL WRESTLER

I HAVE a chapter included here, as a sort of interlude, on the Indian professional wrestler as I found him. As a matter of fact, although it is well known in England that India produces wrestlers of a very high class—indeed one has seen certain well-known exponents over in England competing with our own men and also with Continental experts—I do not think, as far as I can remember, that anybody has ever written specially about them or given in an ordinary way an account of their lives or of the conditions of this sport.

I am rather inclined to think, too, that there has been a diminution of interest in India, probably owing to the many other forms of sport in which the Princes and rulers of states, noblemen and the gentry generally are now able to indulge, but I also hear from the Panjab of matches still held and so probably to a very large extent this sport continues. I have no doubt that in the villages and towns there are still good local men and that the young men are brought up to take part in wrestling, and it would be a pity if this natural sport of the

country should be allowed to die out, for essentially it has been the people's sport in the more virile parts of the country for innumerable generations and even if we go back into the Hindu classics we find great wrestlers doing incredible feats of strength, defeating demons and altogether behaving very much as did the great athletes of Greek mythology.

For many, many years, wrestling has been highly organised, but very few have really had either the taste or the opportunity for finding out very much about it. Innumerable people have, of course, seen the matches between great champions, but the life of the wrestler, how the professional wrestler is made and rises, and the history of the sport is understood by very few, chiefly for the reason that few Englishmen have either cared or had the opportunity of being interested in it. When I first went out to India, after having done a great deal of practice with some of the best catch-as-catch-can wrestlers available, I thought no small beer of myself and, as I have related, when I got to Poona on my first arrival I took three very rapid defeats from men whom I should later have described as novices.

For some years I followed wrestling so to speak as a side show, but I also found it very interesting in itself and by so doing I was able to become acquainted with a side of Panjab life which otherwise would have been to me a completely closed book.

Shortly after my arrival in Abbottabad I made

great friends with an Indian gentleman who was employed in the Public Works Department, Mohamed Zāmān Khan.¹ He was a sportsman and an athlete exactly as we should consider and describe one in England and we remained very good friends until the day of his death, which occurred but three years ago. He was from his youth a wrestler, in his own town at Gujranwalla; he had been in the midst of it and had been interested in the professionals of that district. He was a man of very good Panjabi Mohammedan family and was very much respected throughout his most distinguished career. He initiated me into the mysteries of real catch-hold wrestling. We imported as a master from the Panjab a little wrestler whose wrestling name was Khāmb the Feather because he was a man who was certainly not more than 9 stone in weight, beautifully proportioned and entirely scientific.

We established in the garden of my house a wrestling arena or akhara and there we did our almost daily practice and I learned the elements of wrestling practically and a deal more theoretically. We were also visited by a large number of other professionals who, having heard of this establishment, came up of their own accord to pay visits and to put in practice with Khāmb. And there, too, as a boy was brought up Rahim, the son of Sultana who had been the great wrestler at the court of Maharajah Ranjit Singh, the

¹ Afterwards Khan Bahadur Captain Mohamed Zāmān Khan.

lion of the Panjab. This same lad Rahim was not born until his father was 74 years of age. He finally developed into a rival of Gama about whom so much has been heard in England : in fact, they remained equal although at the time of their meeting Rahim was many, many years the senior man.

And now to hark back. All through India, from one end to the other, in nearly every town and every village in my time there were local wrestlers, excellent and good men, many Mahrattas, men from Central India, the United Provinces, especially from Muttra, Meerut and Delhi ; and many other towns had wrestling schools or akhāras as they are called, for this word lends its name not only to the ground but also to the school. The Panjab and its southern borders provided, however, an infinitely greater number of the best men ; in fact, all the names that are remembered in India to this day, and are passed down from generation to generation as Pir Pāhlwāns or sanctified wrestlers, are Panjabis of one sort or another. This undoubtedly comes not only from their more sporting character but also from their very much superior physique.

It is, however, not necessarily a question of physique, because although the Indian almost worships a very big man, the very finest and most scientific of the exponents of wrestling are naturally the lighter and more active men. Just as in Europe a great number of people will always be drawn to a match

between heavy-weight boxers, for whom also the largest prizes have to be arranged, so in India will the big men have an equally great following, and I think that is easily to be understood in a country where the physique is generally inferior to Europe and where a great number of these wrestlers grow to an enormous size.

My experience has been wholly among Panjabis but I have had in my capacity as judge or referee at a great number of matches, to watch the performances of men from many other districts. Outside the Panjab probably the Chobas of Muttra are the men who have the greatest reputation, but all the champions of that race and district whose contests I have seen have always been matched against Panjabis of the second order and I have never even heard of a challenge to the big men from any other quarter except from the Panjab and its southern borders.

Now wrestling is not such a simple question as one might believe. In the Panjab there are certain noted and perfectly well recognised schools of wrestling; first Lahore and Amritsar, between whom there is bitter rivalry, then Gujrat and Gujranwalla, and down south Bāhāwālpur and Dera Ismail Khan, were the chief centres. Recruits are often roped in from outlying districts as we shall see, and attached generally to one or other of these great wrestling schools.

The classes which supply the greater number are usually Panjabi Mohammedan clans, and standing

out from them especially is the clan known as Kashmiri who are supposed to have been natives of that country but to have emigrated into the Panjab some generations ago. In Bāhāwālpur and Dera Ismail Khan one finds a trace of Pathan blood and a different type of man. Then also, as one would expect, from that great athletic nation, the Sikhs, there are many of the best known exponents. The types are fairly clearly marked, the Kashmiri being a rather short, thick-set man, the Sikh tall and heavy, and very often the Southern Pathan classes are of somewhat the same build but inclined possibly to be heavier. There is also among them a good sprinkling of Panjabi Hindus who have made names for themselves. In the old days—I cannot answer for the actual present day—nearly all the well-known rulers of states and many of the great landowners had their schools of wrestling ; often they matched their men against wrestlers of other states, but generally matches were made by some rising young wrestler, coming down with his akhara and challenging the Rajah's men. Many of the greatest of the wrestling matches were so arranged.

Many of the great professional wrestling families have gone on from generation to generation, the son following in the footsteps of the father and starting as a wrestler as soon as he was able to toddle. As wrestling was his one and only pursuit and as he learnt young and kept his body supple under good

teachers who were to be found nearly everywhere, extraordinarily efficient and scientific wrestlers were produced. There is in the Panjab a great mace which is known as the Gurj of Ramzi. Ramzi was the great wrestler in the service of the Gaikwar of Baroda at the time when the Prince of Wales visited India in 1876. He was challenged by a great Panjabi Mohammedan from Amritsar whose name was Alia and the match came off at the time of the Prince of Wales' visit to Baroda and was won by Ramzi. I believe the chief prize was the presentation of this gurj which, when I left India, was the insignia of the championship of India. Ramzi later on met a much younger man who was many stones lighter than himself, but still a fine upstanding youth of fifteen stones whose name was Mohamed Buta, and he was defeated, as should happen when age takes on youth. Mohamed Buta gained the gurj and the title of Rustam-i-Hind, the champion of India.

The before-mentioned Alia had two sons, one whose name was Ghulam and the other Kallu. Many years later when Mohamed Buta retired from the championship, the acknowledged champion of that time was a gigantic Sikh, Kikar Singh, in the employment of the Maharajah of Kashmir, a man of such physique and strength as to be almost regarded by the rather superstitious Maharajah of that time as an incarnation of Bhairab, the great wrestling champion of Hindu mythology. The said Ghulam travelled to

Jammu, and looking quite a baby in front of this prodigious Life Guardsman was treated with contumely by the Maharajah ; but being a rich man he offered to stake no less than a lakh of his own money. The Maharajah was so struck by this act that he allowed the match to take place and his ideals received a terrible shock when the little man put the giant on his back. During later years these two wrestled three other times—twice in the Shahdera Sarai near Lahore and once, I believe, before the Maharajah of Jodhpur in Jodhpur. The matches in Lahore were both drawn, while Ghulam won the third decisively. I was referee at both of the Shahdera matches and again at the match between Ghulam's younger brother Kallu and the giant, Kikar Singh, which took place at the Coronation Darbar time in Delhi in 1911 and resulted in another draw. Kikar Singh by this time had grown enormous : his weight was every bit of twenty-six stone, with a height of 6 ft. 2 in. In good training he was a nineteen-stone man. Present at his match, too, was his great opponent of earlier days who hailed from Bāhāwālpur. His name was Shah Newaz and his wrestling name Nani Walla, denoting the father from whom he was descended. These men were all known from one end of wrestling India to the other.

To go back to wrestling history, it was interesting to learn about it and to trace back for a couple of



RAMZI : HOLDING THE GURJ



MAHOMED BUTA, RUSTAM-I-HIND

generations or so the great names of whom stories of every description were told, such as Sādīk the unbeatable giant, who appears to have been much less gross than many of the heavier men became; some of his feats were pedestrian, such as running from Lahore to Amritsar before undertaking a great match, a feat from which many of these men would have died if they had attempted even a quarter. Ramzi and Alia before mentioned, and then the most popular of all and in themselves great characters, Bārna and Jewan, desperate opponents in several hard-fought struggles and bosom friends to the end of their lives. Then their great opponents such as Niaz Ali, remembered for many years for his surprising muscular development and skill, and of modern times the before-mentioned Mohamed Buta and a young wrestler who is, I believe, now the father of one of the present champions, Gamu of Bāhāwālpur, and then again Mochi of Dera Ismail Khan, and many others. There have also been names of quite small men passed down from generation to generation—men who could take on nearly everybody in the Panjab and give them as much as five stone in weight; but chiefly remembered by those specially interested.

In my time one of the cleverest wrestlers that I ever saw take his clothes off in a ring was Karim Baksh Pehlera Wallah, denoting his descent from his father Pehlera, a well-known Gujran walla wrestler many years ago. This lad won a competition promoted by

the then Maharajah of Cooch Behar and afterwards wrestled with old Tom Cannon, the English wrestler in Calcutta, beating him twice inside ten minutes. There was more than three stone difference in weight between the two, this man Karim Baksh never in his life weighing more than a little over twelve stone even when he was grown up, which he certainly was not when he met the Englishman. He was the finest leg wrestler that I ever saw in the ring and could cut the legs away from anybody he met. He never, however, got to the top of the tree as he was crippled by rheumatic fever when still a comparatively young man.

If one has the chance and is taken round with the proper introductions to the great wrestling schools, it is interesting to watch their way of life. Let us take, for instance, the akhara of Ghulam at Amritsar. Ghulam, a master of his art, had a great number of followers and many of these were old retired wrestlers by no means necessarily the best known outside wrestling circles, but a great many of them infinitely scientific and small men who had great experience in imparting their knowledge. There one would see in the early morning or the evening the practices being gone through and lessons being given and coaching done by the instructors known as ustāds. Nearly every boy starting in a school took on an ustād who would be practically what a manager is in English boxing to a professional wrestler. He would take charge not only of his instruction but of all his prac-

tices and would give him most tremendous scoldings for things he did wrong. He would also supervise what one might call his physical training apart from the practice of wrestling. (At Abbottabad my ustād was Nābbi Sain, an old man of eight stone in weight.)

While all this was going on the swells of the wrestling ground would be meeting each other, also having their little old ustād watching them and talking to them in practically the same way as he would to the beginner, coaching them and so forth, and besides that he was also responsible for their massage after the exercises, which massage was done usually with mustard oil, well rubbed in to all muscles and joints. Their massage might not have been conducted on truly scientific lines and they would probably not have obtained a diploma as masseur, but at the same time they thoroughly understood what was required to supple and take the stiffness and fatigue out of an athlete's body. I suppose only Orientals could stand the monotony of such a life—practice morning and evening, day in and day out, resting only in the middle of the day.

It is a custom nearly always on high days and holidays in Panjab towns, or at any rate used to be not so very long ago, to hold wrestling shows in some great centre. These were always very well attended, but it would certainly astonish those who are not acquainted with the interest that exists, to find that when Ghulam

and Kikar Singh wrestled in Lahore on both occasions when I was refereeing there were at least 70,000 to 80,000 people collected from all over the Panjab to see that match, and it will also be news that the money paid to the men ran into several thousands of rupees before they would condescend to enter the wrestling ground. Large sums were paid personally by me before the beginning of the match. Further, so high had become the reputation of Ghulam that when Kikar Singh, after two-and-a-half hours' wrestling, managed to make a draw I heard on the best authority that the Sikh nobles and gentry present collected a sum of over 20,000 rupees for him. In those days 20,000 rupees to a man living in his position was a very large sum indeed.

The whole of the Panjab, as I have said, was there and feelings were running high. Naturally there was a great possibility of trouble owing to the strong feeling between Sikhs and Mohammedans. In the Mohammedan corner, so to speak, but as a matter of fact well back from the ring, were Mohammedan priests or Mullahs praying for their man's success, and a heterogeneous collection of Sikh priests and ascetics offering prayers and invocations for the success of the Sikh. Altogether a rather nervous and responsible position for the referee, and in fact he did not get off scot free, as on several occasions the crowd flooded the centre and were with very great difficulty removed by a guard of some 200 police and 300 soldiers.

I have never in any athletic performance seen feelings run higher.

Although these men have often great reputations and earn considerable sums of money, the fact remains that in their lives they are extremely self-centred. They know very little of the outside world, and speaking generally hardly any other language but their own rough Panjabi dialects. I have always rather regretted their being brought to England where they met men under such different conditions. It was extremely difficult for a Panjabi to realise the difference of rules which are very considerable, the difference of the ground and their general surroundings, and they are very, very much creatures of habit, and not very adaptable. I would also clearly state without fear of making a mistake, that they are fifty per cent. better men in their own surroundings, wearing their own clothes and living the life to which they are accustomed and fifty per cent. more formidable than they are under any conditions when they have once left India.

However, for any student who wishes to see the finer points of the real science of this great sport, the way to do so is to watch some of the lighter men at practice, when I can assure him that he will see science displayed which will astonish him, and suppleness of body which is in itself even more remarkable. It is also interesting to know that their methods of training the body are entirely free gymnastics : no apparatus

of any kind is used nor weights of any sort. The backbone of their training is suppling exercises done innumerable times and continual practice in actual wrestling into the bargain. However, if they become very big men they are given other work to do, very often to give stamina and to harden their bodies, such as harnessing themselves to a Persian wheel, having taken away the usual couple of bullocks or mules that usually turn the great shaft. This continued for a considerable time is prodigious hard work.

I hope that means will be found in future to keep this sport going as it is essentially a national one, if this term can be applied to any human pursuit in such a country of mixed nationalities as the Indian sub-continent.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FRONTIER—VARIOUS MOUNTAINEERING

THERE had been trouble brewing on the Frontier two or three years in succession, but in 1897 things came to a head and nearly the whole Frontier from the Chitral border to Waziristan was in turmoil. It was really a very serious outlook, the situation, however, as usual, being saved by want of co-operation among the tribes.

During the summer the Frontier garrisons on the Malakand and Chakdara were very heavily attacked by the tribesmen and repulsed with considerable difficulty, the tribesmen losing heavily in both attacks. These attacks were followed by an advance of our troops and a very active campaign was carried out in the Mohmand and Mahmud country and also in Bajour, but the most serious was the rising of the Afridis who live in the Tirah Plateau and the great uplands and mountain valleys that surround it and which lie on the south border of the Khyber Pass.

The Khyber was held in those days by tribal levies enlisted by us and formed into a regiment known as the Khyber Rifles, whose business it was to keep the Khyber open and to act more or less as

military police. The first action of the Afridis was to attack their own tribesmen, the same Khyber Rifles, and to raid the less well held part of the Khyber and burn several of the intermediate posts. They had also taken another serious step, in which they were joined by the Orakzais on the south, when they attacked and seized the Samana Ridge which divides British territory on the south border of Tirah. There they met their hereditary foes, the Sikhs, who put up against terrific odds one of the finest resistances in the history of the Indian Army. The behaviour of the Sikhs in the besieged outposts of Saragarhi and Gulistan is one of the epics of Frontier warfare.

An expedition, larger than any which had ever before been employed on the Frontier, was despatched under Sir William Lockhart to deal out suitable punishment and raise the purdah of the country, which up to that time had never been entered. I had the luck with my friend Lucas to accompany that expedition with a special body of Scouts directly under the orders of the G.O.C. himself. We were joined also by the Scouts of the 3rd Gurkha Rifles under Tillard. In those days the drill of the army was still rather archaic, and the musketry was on the whole run on more archaic lines than the drill.

Manœuvres which now would be considered in Frontier warfare as acts of madmen, were the order of the day in many Corps, and I have actually seen certain highly trained Corps (who shall be nameless)



CONFLAGRATION IN TIRAH, 1897

collecting and halting their men and dressing them when descending hillsides. It was believed that you could not allow men to move rapidly and exercise their natural skirmishing powers without demoralisation, especially in retreat. It is quite understood that the army owes very much to the South African War, which obliged it to adapt itself to more modern conditions, but it is sometimes forgotten that the first step in that direction was the experience that many regiments had on the Indian Frontier. Naturally, however, it was considered as hill fighting only, and further there were very few regiments, comparatively speaking, employed, so the lessons derived were not as widely spread as they otherwise would have been, but still we owe to the wild hill men very largely the better conception of what disciplined men and active and intelligent soldiers acting on their own can do without demoralisation.

The reason why the organisation to which I was attached was able to extricate itself from many of the dangers run by other Corps, was that we had prepared ourselves to meet exactly the problems with which we then dealt. We could not, however, escape from the tyranny of an archaic musketry. One little benefit to the army came directly from us, and that was the introduction of "shorts" as a suitable garment for active employment in a hot and difficult country. At the end of the main Tirah expedition our organisation was increased and we were allowed to change our

tight khaki pantaloons for more suitable kit. I may mention that on one occasion when we knew that we were going to be hard pressed when evacuating a ridge of hills the men stripped, putting their trousers round their necks. When retiring at full speed and scattered about the hillside many of these trousers streamed out behind, looking like Pathan pugarees blown in the wind, and we were promptly fired on by the covering battery of Mountain Artillery. Luckily the shells all burst behind us and very shortly they discovered their mistake.

In these days all regiments are trained in the elements of mountain warfare, rapid skirmishing, rapid movement, how to handle country, and, it is hoped, how to move at night.

Our business was often to seize points at night to cover the advance of troops and afterwards to cover their retirement from hill positions. We had much work at night operating against enemy "snipers" as well, besides carrying out reconnaissance work. The men became very good at ruses of all kinds and especially at taking advantage of every description of ground, in which they were almost as good as the extremely clever and active enemy himself.

The expedition in Tirah was on the whole arduous from the troops' point of view. The climate was rather cold but dry and very healthy; as a matter of fact, it would be hard to better the climate of Indian hills at medium elevation during the winter months.

There was also as hard fighting as had been known on the Frontier since the Ambela Campaign in 1863. It was curious, too, to find the Indian Army armed with a Martini-Henry rifle, whereas there were many of the new small-bore in the possession of the enemy. After the first phase our organisation was very largely increased and detachments from other battalions were added to it, and it was on one of the earlier parades of the new formation that a photograph was taken which shows for the first time, at least during modern times, troops on parade in "shorts." A reference to old prints and pictures will show, however, the soldiers of the Indian Army in early times wearing shorts as their uniform, and a very sensible kit it appears to be in these pictures. Shorts from that day were adopted all through the army by degrees until at the present time they are universally in use, but I may point out that our first appearance as a Corps in shorts was not very well received by a certain type of officer.

By the summer of 1898 the Frontier had quietened down and the troops had returned to their stations. I had what I considered a rather sporting idea of getting a number of men from different Gurkha Battalions and taking them with some of my own men for a tour in the easier Kashmir Himalaya to give them an entry into the training which I considered had made the two best scouts, the often mentioned Harkbir and Karbir, of such value to me.

The Commanding Officers to whom I suggested this entered into the plan very willingly and also the military authorities with whom I had to deal, under, however, the usual proviso made in India that no one but myself should be put to any expense. I got together a party of very promising young soldiers from my own regiment and three other Gurkha Battalions into the bargain and we left for Kashmir—a party consisting of myself, my wife, and some sixteen Gurkhas, directed by my two experts. We altogether had a very successful and very delightful tour through Kashmir, Lower Ladak, returning over one of the Nun Kun ridges and so again to Kashmir, making on our way too the first passage of the Sentik La and an exploration of the long glacier which descends from Nun Kun to the head of the Wardwan Valley. We climbed quite a number of peaks of no particular importance, had an immense amount of exercise, saw a great deal of not often visited country, and the Sentik La itself afforded us a little bit of true exploration. As we were rather marching into the blue we were obliged to get local assistance to carry our kit and we left as a party of some twenty-eight. Even from the start we were most inadequately supplied with rope, and the only extra reserve rope I could get was obtained from Naval Stores in Calcutta which, though strong enough to hold an elephant, was almost heavy enough to require an elephant to carry it.

Sentik La, as a matter of fact, reached by long snow slopes, is quite easy to descend on to the aforementioned glacier, but the long descent of the glacier was at the time rather crevassed and a good many rickety snow bridges had to be crossed. We made a very long line of what rope we had, but all was quite inadequate for our numbers, and the passage of the rather long and very steep crevassed nose of the glacier which joins the Bhot Khol Glacier, descending from the pass of that name, required a great deal of manœuvring. Myself and some of the men were fitted out with crampons, but the loads and local men, entirely unaccustomed to ice, required great care in passing over and through the crevasses. Here our long and powerful cable came into action. Altogether not a bad effort under the circumstances and great fun. On some of our climbs in Lower Ladak we had most gorgeous views of the main Baltistan mountains and the main Karakoram chain and were clearly able to see my old friends the Gusherbrum and K.2 and all the other giants.

My wife had turned herself into a sort of Quartermaster-General and had most efficiently taken charge of the camps and the movement of the main baggage. Wherever our wanderings had been and however long our passages in the mountains had lasted we always found our camp ready for us on arrival and ample stores of food. She had, in fact, become a first-class Quartermaster for a mountaineering expedition, and

when we were leaving the mountains she successfully accompanied the main body over the Bhot Khol Pass and down into the Wardwan, finally carrying all our impedimenta round via the Margan Pass and back to Kashmir, while the other members of the party were lucky enough to traverse the Kohinar peaks, joining her in Kashmir. Here I received orders to return and to leave on recruiting duty to Darjeeling. Again the Quartermaster-General carried off the luggage while the troops made a flanking march from Kashmir into my old friend the Kaghan Valley, successfully managing on our way to traverse one of the Kaghan peaks of about 16,500 ft. This little activity was made memorable to the men by the fact that we got into a severe thunderstorm on the top and several of the men were slightly struck by lightning, one or two of them feeling the effects for at least a week.

On the whole it was an excellent experiment but remained just that. Such are the exigencies of the Service that I doubt very much whether any of the members of that party, with a few exceptions, ever went to the high mountains again or whether they had a chance to utilise in their battalions the experience they had received. It is, however, worthy of notice that not very many years afterwards Capt. Money of the 1st Gurkhas had actually a grant made to him from Army funds to equip men and train them in snow and ice work and in mountain work

generally, and he took full advantage of this offer. That was at least something.

Thrills for that year were not quite over, as my wife and I departed immediately for Darjeeling, arriving there in October. Having a breathing space on my arrival I was able, for the first time, to take a trip along the Singalela ridge which divides the independent territory of Nepal from the British territory of Sikkim, and from where one gets one of the finest views of the main chain. We were lucky to have periods of clear weather, and so within six weeks of actual time I saw the three highest summits in the world—Mount Everest, Kangchenjanga, and K.2, a very unusual experience, I think, for anybody to have had.

April '99 found us on our way home accompanied, luckily for me, by the same Harkbir Thapa, now become a Havildar (Sergeant). I had been very keen indeed in my own mind to see how he would shape in the Alps. He had had a pretty good all-round experience, especially during our last trip, and I hoped that after a season in the Alps he might greatly improve himself and become a really trustworthy and experienced mountaineer. For the place to learn snow and ice work is definitely in the Alps, where one is close to the mountains and continually at work. We had altogether, I think, one of the most enjoyable times of our life. As usual, after a period in London, we spent most of our time in my Welsh hills, including trips to North Wales and Snowdonia, and

then we were personally conducted to Switzerland by Dr. (now Professor) Norman Collie, my old friend of Nanga Parbat days, who had such a respect for the climbing abilities of Raghobir. We dispensed with professional assistance but did a wander through the Alps and covered and saw quite a considerable part of it. No doubt we could have done more actual mountaineering if we had allowed ourselves to remain in a great centre, but my restless spirit had always wanted to see what was on the other side of every ridge, and under the circumstances far the wisest method was to wander from one great centre to another.

There was one quite remarkable incident which occurred, to which as a coincidence it would be hard to find a parallel. In the year 1892, when we were in the Karakoram, Harkbir and Zurbriggen had always worked together, and Zurbriggen had clearly stamped his axe with his initials, "M. Z.", one letter on each side of the blade where the shaft comes through. In an attempt to climb Mont Blanc from the Aiguille du Midi hut, now not in existence, we had run into very bad weather and were storm-bound till midday and considered it advisable, as the weather was still bad, to beat a retreat. So descending the Requin Glacier to near the spot where it joins the glacier descending from the Col du Géant, we passed a particularly huge and very open and very deep crevasse, and at the bottom of it was an ice axe sticking in the ice. We

let Harkbir down on the end of a climbing rope to retrieve this axe ; he became very vociferous and quite incoherent with excitement, and when we got him up again he said, " Why, this is the very axe that Zurbriggen had in the Karakoram and that I have used myself there with him, and now I have picked it out from the bottom of a glacier in Switzerland." I promptly recognised it myself.

Three weeks later we were in Saas Fee, where we met Mr. Von Blanque of the Alpine Club and related the circumstances. " Well," he said, " this is most extraordinary. In '93, the year after Zurbriggen came back from India, when we were crossing the head of the Requin Glacier 1500 ft. higher up than where you found the axe, Zurbriggen dropped his axe into a crevasse, and now six years later Harkbir picked it out at the bottom of the glacier ! "

Towards the end of August we left Zermatt for what Collie considers the most glorious country in the world, and after all he has good grounds for his claim—the Highlands of Scotland. He was terribly anxious to go back to his true love and to show us his country. Before leaving the Monte Rosa Hotel we bade goodbye to Mr. O. G. Jones, the first and only time that I met that really remarkable mountaineer, and it was not till three weeks later, when we were in Skye, that we heard of the terrible accident on the Dent Blanche.

We had had a really glorious time in Switzerland,

as besides having made the acquaintance of a large part of the range, we had also had a large family party to meet us at different centres. It was interesting, too, that the whole family also transferred itself to Scotland, where we followed very much the same procedure as in Switzerland, visiting Ben Nevis and doing a descent of the Tower Ridge, a very, very different thing to the same expedition in winter ; visiting the Cairngorms, and last, but certainly not least, a long stay in Skye and many climbs on the Coolins. I agree with Collie that one of the finest sights to be seen in the mountains is Loch Coruisk and the masses of black Coolins in bad weather with the clouds swinging round the mountains and little waterfalls in every direction pouring down the great black cliffs. Unbeatable wildness and savagery !

In these days of records and athletics I would like to draw the attention of the young and active, either mountaineer or cross-country runner, to an incident which occurred at Sligachan. We had had a very hard day at Glen Brittle in which we accomplished what Collie says was a new route up Sgurr-Alastair, and to amuse ourselves had jogged home in front of the " Machine." The following day I personally was all out for a complete rest, but during the afternoon Macleod of Macleod visited Sligachan and had an argument with a number of ghillies who happened to be there, who told him that Harkbir had been up and down from Sligachan Inn to the top of Glamaig,

a pull over the moor of some two miles from the hotel and standing over 2600 ft. above it, in one and a quarter hours. After a very heated argument it was suggested that Harkbir should be sent for and asked to do it again. I found him asleep in his bed ; however, he was perfectly game, and getting into a pair of shorts came down to the bridge in front of the Inn. I suggest that if any athletes want to get their skin to act properly and otherwise stretch their legs they should attempt to equal his performance. As a matter of fact he completed the run in 55 minutes—37 minutes to get up and 18 back—which was in every way an extraordinary performance, considering that quite a considerable amount of moorland has to be crossed before reaching uphill. He did not require reviving on arrival but ran into the river to wash his legs—he ran alone and in bare feet. I have every reason to believe this little record stands to this day.

This season ended Harkbir's experience in the great mountains. Such are the exigencies of the Service that the higher one reaches in a regiment the less one can be spared, and Harkbir was now making progress. Although naturally during his ordinary work he was continually on the hillside, he never again took part in a mountain expedition. Perhaps also this helps one to realise how difficult it is to train men regularly in the mountains. This man had had special leave from Commanding Officers quite ready to assist in these matters, and just at the time he was really fitted for

work his career was obliged to cease. There is also another point to be thought of. Although he had done an immense amount of mountain travel his actual mountaineering experience, that is, real mountaineering as understood in Switzerland, would not equal for the whole of his career the experience of an ordinary guide in full employment for one season. I think the statement of this fact alone, of the career of a man whose experiences were quite outside the common, will show the unavoidable difficulties that one finds in these matters in India.

CHAPTER IX

GARHWAL EXPEDITION

FROM now on for three or four years time passed much in the same way as one sees at the end of an entry in *Who's Who*—Interests : Soldiering, shooting, athletics, mountaineering, etc. In fact, a very, very busy time but with nothing of importance to relate. A year on the Samana Ridge, winter trips on the Frontier, trips in Kashmir for shooting and climbing in Kaghan, Kumaon and Garhwal, and finally and very luckily another visit to England for the best part of a year in 1903-4. Even here, much the same procedure as described in the *Who's Who* footnote, though a great interest was added by my having charge of the first detachment of King's Indian Orderly Officers, who came home to attend King Edward VII. The first batch consisted of no less than six, each of them representing different classes, and it was owing to the difficulties that we experienced in housing and other ways that from that day the delegations of Indian officers have always been chosen from the same or analogous classes.

It was an entirely new experience and of great value both to myself and to the Indian officers.

There were a good many incidents too which were amusing in their way. I have always considered myself extraordinarily lucky to have escaped without disgrace from one of them at any rate. I had been detailed to take the duties at a Levee which ordinarily should have devolved on the late, much regretted Sir Curzon Wylie, who had fallen a victim to a fanatic only some short time before, but unfortunately for me the day before the Levee was also the day on which the Centenary of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry was to be held at Chatham. I had received an invitation to it and had visited Chatham to be present at the sports, intending to be back that evening owing to the function the following morning. However, man proposed on this occasion but the officers of the 43rd disposed, and I was not allowed to return. An evening suit, a quarter of a size too small, was found for me, and after dinner there was the usual gigantic romp. Somebody in the general mix-up caught me by the ankles from behind and dropped me with a crash. The first thing I knew was the bridge of my nose hitting the marble floor. I knew but little after that for some minutes, but the clothes were split from head to foot and they and my shirt were drenched in blood.

I got back to London but it was nearly two in the morning, and it was only a very skilful masseur at the Hamam Turkish Baths, working for two and a half hours, who finally brought my nose and eyes into

sufficiently good condition to allow me to call out the names of the foreign potentates who were paying that morning their respects to His Majesty. But get through that morning I did, and that, too, without undue notice.

That autumn I left London under orders for Chitral, but managed to get in a very short but very successful little campaign in the Alps on my way to Genoa. So to Chitral, where a delightful and very active year was passed and where I met many of my old friends mentioned in an earlier chapter and also greatly improved my knowledge of the country. In addition I secured a very satisfactory bag of hill game of all sorts.

One little incident, however, is worth while recording. Returning from a shoot near the Agram Pass, which brought me down into the road which leads over the Dorah and finally to the gorge of Darband and so to a little fort called Shoghor, as we were riding to our camp, a very ragged young Chitrali came up to me, and instead of addressing me either in Chitrali or Hindustani, did so in the most fluent and rather fastidious English.

“ Please, sir, may I enquire whether you have any papers ? ”

It sounded so incongruous that it was almost like hearing a voice from a gramophone, and for a moment I did not know what to say, but finally we had a conversation, and being very inquisitive I asked him to

my tent. It then turned out that he belonged to the Maulai sect of the Mohammedan religion, whose chief is H.H. The Aga Khan. As I had several Gurkhas with me I had also brought some commissariat rum. I asked him if he would like a glass of rum ; he thanked me profusely and I gave him about half a pint of raw rum, which he assimilated in three swallows and then remarked : “ Thank you, sir, that gives a very pleasant stimulation, a very pleasant stimulation indeed ! ”

Altogether it seemed this incident was more like a little nightmare and a very amusing one at that. It turned out that he had been a servant in the establishment of H.H. The Aga Khan in Bombay and could read and write English very well indeed, but apparently had lost his employment through some crime or other he had committed. I believe afterwards that on making a report about our meeting he got employment in the establishment of H.H. The Mehtar of Chitral translating letters.

More trips in the mountains, more climbing, including an exploration of Kolahoi in Kashmir and a great deal of hill training thrown in, varied the following year or two, but in 1906 my wife fell terribly ill in Kashmir and we had to make a hurried departure direct to India. In those days, before the advent of motor-cars, the ordinary method of leaving Kashmir was either by tonga or by what is known as a “ fitton-gharry,” otherwise a most dilapidated vehicle

which posed as a real phaeton. With the help of blankets and cushions my wife was made fairly comfortable in one of these latter, but when we had nearly completed the journey, there was a sudden crack and the two horses, the driver and the front wheels went on, leaving us behind with the back wheels on the road. It was probably the very best medicine that she could have had at the moment. Luckily help was easily obtained and the rest of the journey made without incident, but so much did we laugh and so cheerful did the incident make us that it seemed to have a most stimulating effect upon her and she finally arrived at our home without undue fatigue from her journey.

So to England for the winter, and that winter was really a landmark in my mountain life. One evening at the Alpine Club I met my two friends, Dr. T. G. Longstaff and the late Mr. A. L. Mumm, and there and then we made a plan not only to visit the neighbourhood of Everest but also even to attempt to climb it. Little did we realise then the task that we should have to face. I do not think for a moment that we really thought we could reach the summit, but we certainly had at the back of our minds an idea of making an attempt on it. I should like now to express my admiration of the sporting spirit of my two friends as they took on their shoulders the whole burden of the expense of the expedition and were willing to put down a sufficient sum to finance a small party such as

we had intended it to be in an adequate manner, and that sum was not a small one. We were enthusiastically backed by the Presidents both of the Alpine Club and of the Geographical Society, the former being the late Bishop of Bristol, and of the Geographical Society, Sir George Taubman Goldie, than whom we could have had no better or more enthusiastic supporter. And as things turned out it was very fortunate for us that the Viceroy of India, Lord Minto, also interested himself immensely in our project and held out to us, too, every hope that Tibet would be ready to grant our passage through the country.

It was about that time, too, that the Dalai Lama was very friendly to our cause. It was also the time, unfortunately, when difficulties had arisen with the Russians on the subject of Tibet, and the Secretary of State for India (at that time Lord Morley) was very, very nervous of an intrusion into Eastern Tibet as being likely to contravene the understanding with Russia and to make the Russians, whose nearest outpost at that time was at Marghilan on the western Pamirs, apprehensive of our motives. It seemed a rather far-fetched idea that a small party of five or six mountaineers passing along underneath the shadow of the mountains could produce such an untoward result; but notwithstanding all that Sir George Taubman Goldie could do it was from England, and not from India, that the veto came preventing us making that attempt.



MOUNT GAURISANKAR
THE GLORIOUS IMPOSTOR

Lord Minto, however, in regretting that we were unable to carry out our original project, stated his wish to help us if we desired to visit any other part under the jurisdiction of the Government of India. Dr. Longstaff, who had had previous experience in Garhwal and Tibet, suggested that we should go out again to the Nanda Devi group and make also a reconnaissance of Kamet, the great mountain standing almost on the Tibetan border. It was on its great supporter, Ibn Gamin, that the Schlagintweits had made their first exploration in 1858.

Thus was our way made easy. I reached India rather before the rest of the members of the expedition, which consisted of Dr. T. G. Longstaff, Mr. A. L. Mumm, two Italian guides from Courmayeur, Alexis Brocherel and his brother Henri, and Mumm's guide, Maurice Inderbinnen. The two Brocherels had travelled in this country before with Longstaff and had been with him on that truly terrific attempt that he made on Gurla Mandhata, a peak of the same height as Nanda Devi, to all intents and purposes, 25,355 ft. roughly, which is situated across the Tibetan border. Therefore, not only were they first-class guides but also excellent travellers, and I may add also first-class companions. Inderbinnen had been everywhere with Mumm for years and years and was his guide, philosopher and friend, so to speak—and the word philosopher is not misplaced by any means. He was already a little old possibly

for Himalayan exploration, but at the same time a most thoroughly reliable and efficient member of the party, and a most charming personality. Then there was myself, general transport officer. I had also brought with me a gang of Gurkhas, four of whom were of exceptional merit, and another of whom was a trained surveyor into the bargain and did very good work on the expedition, being a remarkably accurate plane table, though he possibly would have been considered rather slow in his work by an actual member of the Survey Dept. The chief of our Gurkhas was my many times before mentioned friend Karbir Buratoki, now a Gurkha officer.

Rather a formidable expedition, as a matter of fact, for travelling in Garhwal, for Garhwal is a sparsely populated country, provisions are very hard to get and porters are difficult to obtain. We took with us rather a larger outfit than was necessary, but I was given a free hand and we certainly had a sufficiency of good food. A good deal of it was pushed up by stages into Garhwal, but it was most lucky for us that we had the support of the Viceroy. All the Civil authorities had been warned to do their best for us and their arrangements were perfect considering the difficulty of obtaining so much transport, and our movements were carried out without undue trouble, but we certainly were a large party for that country. Upper Kumaon and Garhwal must be among the most beautiful parts of the entire Himalaya. We had

chosen the high level route beyond the Pindāri River where one leaves Kumaon and every march was a delight ; the views of the great Nanda Devi group beyond anything beautiful and the forests through which we marched even satisfied me with my critical sense accustomed to the great Kashmir forests. I have always been a forest lover and nothing gives me greater pleasure than to wander in the great Himalayan jungles—the size of the trees and their variety and the splendour of really big deodars and firs and pines is to me always a special delight.

We had, too, to cross the not very elevated pass called the Kuari, over a shoulder of the Nanda Devi group, about 12,000 ft. in elevation, in order to descend into the valley of the Alaknanda, which is the twin westerly source of the Ganges. The pass at this time of the year (the beginning of May) was deep in snow, so deep that it was hard to believe that in six weeks it would turn itself into a purely grass pass. We passed it luckily in gorgeous weather and obtained a view of the main Himalaya and of that bifurcation known as the Zaskar Range on which Kamet is situated, such as is only afforded to wanderers in the Himalaya itself. I think that our guides, when they first had experience of the Himalayas, had an idea that although there were great peaks to be found there of exceptional size, the average run of the mountains would be something on Swiss scale, but that notion was dissipated at once and for always by such

a view as that afforded by the Kumaon and Garhwal summits—mountain after mountain, peak after peak, snow-covered, precipitous, steep to a degree that Switzerland could not compare with. It is impossible to enumerate all the peaks seen, but when I state that in a country no greater than Carmarthenshire and Glamorgan there are some eighty peaks all in the neighbourhood of 20,000 ft., several of which top 23,000 ft. and even more, it will give an idea of that marvellous *coup d'œil*, to which must be added the height, depth, and the colour, such as belong only to the southern slopes of that mighty range.

From the pass there is a drop to Tapoban close to the junction of the great Alaknanda, with its tributary the Dhauli, of about 6000 ft. We stopped there but a day; we had decided to follow on the lines of our predecessor of the 'eighties—Graham—and make an exploration of the Rishi Valley and thence plan our campaign. We had already decided that our first objective was to be Trissul, Nanda Devi's great western supporter of 23,000 ft. odd, so we moved our camp a couple of marches forward to the mouth of the Rishi Valley, from where we organised reconnaissances for our further explorations.

We knew by previous experience that the way up the actual valley itself was far too steep and difficult to be of any practical value, and indeed, in the whole course of my wanderings, I have never seen a more unpromising valley of such size than the Rishi. How-

ever, we pitched a camp high up on a ridge on the route used by shepherds, named Lata Kharak, some 6000 ft. above the Dhaulī River, from which we could look right across up the whole length of the valley and on to the southern slopes of Trissul, and viewed with amazement the prodigious steepness of the country. We were to all intents and purposes on a subsidiary ridge running down from one of the great peaks, called Dunagiri, which Graham and his companions Boss and Kaufmann had attempted to climb during the 'eighties after a desperate struggle up that same Rishi River bed. But the way from our high camp across the very steep face of the mountain was at this time out of the question, being so deeply covered with winter snow. So after a most pleasant time spent in studying the country we were obliged to beat a retreat. We then re-equipped and took a far larger camp up to the village of Dunagiri, then into the Bagani Valley, pitching a camp at the foot of the Bagani glacier, directly under the north ridges of Dunagiri itself. The whole of this country appeared to be entirely unexplored and I doubt very much whether it had been visited except by members of the Survey Dept., and that same Bagani Valley is certainly in itself worthy of more attention. One was in a mass of virtually unknown and unexplored country, the snowscape and icescape being of the finest order.

Our time was spent while the snow melted, which

it was doing at a very great pace, in exploring a route into the Rishi Valley at the head of a glacier on the southern side of the Bagani, which leads to a pass lying on the south-eastern flanks of Dunagiri and connecting it with another very striking peak, Changa-bung. We had some time on our hands as we were still very early on account of the depth of winter snow, which also prevented us from using the easy high level route occasionally employed by shepherds direct from Dunagiri village over the western slopes of Dunagiri, and so to the Rishi Valley. However, our time was not wasted, exploring and a little shooting for the pot to keep us in fresh meat. Finally an expedition was organised to try and force this pass. We had not been able to find adequate local porters among the natives of that part, nor were they properly clothed; neither had we the necessary outfit for them with us, and therefore our little raiding party consisted of Longstaff and myself, the two Brocherels and the four fittest of the Gurkhas.¹

We loaded ourselves up for a stay of ten days, not knowing what we should find on the other side of the pass. We also carried rifles and ammunition—it was, in fact, a true raiding party. Mumm and the remaining Gurkhas and Maurice Inderbinnen carried the camp back again to our original site on the Dhauli

¹ It must be explained that the Garhwali peasant is clothed, almost as his single garment, in a blanket cunningly secured with large pins, and that his footgear, the “Sharvel,” is a most inadequate plaited sandal, excellent on dry rock but futile in snow.

River near the mouth of the Rishi in order to meet us on our return.

We started off on the 20th May and camped on the glacier at a height of about 18,000 ft. There was still an immense amount of winter snow, so that after mid-day we found it practically impossible to proceed owing to the effect of the sun on the snow, so we camped under a great rock. It was gorgeous weather and the sun terribly hot, as it can be at great elevations in the Himalaya, and the glare from the snow too was very severe. We spent the afternoon chilling ourselves in the shade where it was freezing hard and then baking ourselves in the sun. It was impossible to stay in either for any length of time. The nights were terribly cold and we made the mistake of starting too early the following morning, with the result that very soon we all had to stop, remove our boots and revive our feet, all of which were getting numbed. However, that condition very soon gave way to greater heat than we cared about.

We had a very steep ascent to the pass, where we felt the weight of our heavy loads considerably, but finally arrived on the ridge at a height of somewhat over 20,000 ft. After a rest Henri Brocherel descended on a long rope, in fact on several ropes joined together, down what seemed to be the most unpromising gully, on one side very steep frozen snow slopes and on the other extremely steep rocks. These rocks, however, lent themselves to good roping

operations, and after Henri had made a preliminary examination, employing all the spare rope that we possessed, we engineered our descent. Several pitons had to be hammered in and ropes passed through them, for every member of the party was heavily laden.

The two Brocherels were magnificent load carriers and one of the Gurkhas in particular was really a very remarkable performer. On this occasion he was carrying a great fish creel slung on his back full of provisions and on top of it a bag of what is called in this part of the world *satu*, which is crushed barley. During his descent a stone came down and neatly took the bag of *satu* off his back, a pretty close call for him, and our valuable *satu* dissipated. The descent was really extremely trying and was what is often called in Alpine adventure "A.P.," which naturally means "absolutely perpendicular," a term employed almost invariably in describing climbs done by oneself! I was left to the last with Alexis, passing the others down, and rather flattered myself on having an easier time as I thought my load was a good deal lighter than his. However, before starting he said, "Monsieur Bruce, as I am coming down last, would you kindly change loads with me as mine is much heavier than yours?"

I said, "Brocherel, with the greatest pleasure," meaning, "Damn your eyes, I thought I had escaped you!" I also had to take my rifle slung over the top of my load, which was a greater handicap.

Still, I got safely down from rope to rope and arrived blown and wet through.¹ We had to hide in a hole in the snow at the bottom for fear of falling stones, but from there we could watch the performance of Alexis coming down last and retrieving the ropes as he came, and I must say we were all extremely impressed by his skill and strength.

We camped on the glacier at the foot of the pass at a height of again nearly 18,000 ft. and again had a very cold night. Our tents were naturally of the smallest type of Mummery Alpine tent, weighing some four or five pounds each. I and one of the Gurkhas, called Kul Bahadur, slept together in one and had a very, very cold and uncomfortable night into the bargain. In the early morning two miserable figures crept to the door of the tent, simultaneously regarded each other with despair and were both promptly and violently sick for the next ten minutes. A chorus of groans and unpleasantness, but each supporting the other in our mutual misery.

We were now in entirely unexplored and unknown country which the map had simply guessed at, no one having seen this corner before. Finally, by the afternoon, we had got down into the main Rishi, having had a very good scramble on the way down ; in places ropes had again to be used to let ourselves down steep pitches. We camped in a little cave on a very steep hillside.

¹ I always get wet through when the work is hard !

Three more days brought us back, coasting along the banks of the Rishi, some of the hardest and most trying days that I ever remember experiencing in the mountains, continual descents and ascents in an attempt to find a passage across the cliff faces. Two nights, however, were spent at known grazing grounds used by occasional shepherds and hunters of the musk deer and burhel, and we finished up with a very sporting little peak on the ridge of some 15,000 ft. and down a very steep couloir filled with winter snow, the ordinary route into the Dhaulī Valley which crossed a very exposed mountain face being still unsafe from the amount of soft winter snow still on it. So to our camp at Tolma Kharak. On arriving we set to work to make preparations for the organised attempt to climb Trissul. I was, however, the victim of bad luck. I had cut my knee and got it poisoned lying in a dirty camp, which resulted in a prodigious black abscess on my knee cap, and when the time was ripe to tackle Trissul I was still completely laid up.

The party mounted again to our first camp at Lata Kharak on the ridge and they found the road across the cliff faces leading towards the grazing grounds unpleasant but feasible. They pushed up to near the head of the Rishi where the valley bifurcates, one branch leading to Trissul and the other to Nanda Devi. Here a base camp was established and after a short rest an advance on Trissul was made. At 20,000 ft., however, where they pitched a camp, they

spent forty-eight hours in a howling blizzard and were obliged to beat a retreat down to 17,000 ft. From there, as the weather cleared, Longstaff decided to rush the peak. Leaving with the two Brocherels and Karbir he secured a great success, and though he found the climbing quite easy technically, a climb of 6000 ft. in one day was anything but an easy task. However, Trissul was conquered.

By this time I had managed to join the party; my knee had given way to rather drastic treatment—a large glass of whisky and a little surgical operation rather violently carried out had luckily caused it to burst outwards and I was very shortly able to follow the climbers.

Longstaff on our return also attempted to explore with one of the Gurkhas, Pahar Singh by name, who was an excellent rock climber, the branch of the valley leading to the foot of Nanda Devi, but found it a most terribly difficult job, and having little time at his disposal was obliged to beat a retreat. Karbir, unfortunately, had been rather badly frost-bitten and on arrival at our base camp had to be carefully taken in hand. He was unable, as a matter of fact, to do high climbing again that season, but took charge of our heavy baggage and brought it round to meet us after we, as a party, had explored the great Raikana glacier which leads to Kamet, and had crossed the great ridge which separated us from the valley of the Alaknanda, where we all met again at Badrinath and

established ourselves a little beyond it at the very large Bhotia village of Mana. This passage over from the Dhauli Valley to Alaknanda proved to be one of the most interesting trips of our expedition. The pass is known as the Bhyandar Pass and lies directly to the north of the Rataban and Bhyandar Peaks. The pass is not difficult, but runs through the most glorious scenery. Our final descent to Hanuman Chettri through a gorge of great steepness, then filled with winter snow, was most stimulating. Badrinath is an excessively interesting place as being almost as holy as Gangotri itself, which is at the head of the main source of the holy Ganges : in fact, Badrinath on the Alaknanda considers itself of equal importance, the Alaknanda being the twin sister of the Ganges. It has its source, too, in the Sathé Panth glacier near Mana village, Sathé Panth meaning the true source.

We made an exploration towards the Mana Pass and on to the ridges from where Kamet could be seen, but were very soon completely involved in the monsoon rains, it being now nearly the middle of July, and we determined to reconstruct our expedition.

A rather amusing incident occurred at Mana village, shortly after our arrival there. Having been in the mountains almost continually for a month, without much in the way of amenities, I was not looking my neatest. I then received a message from the head lady of Mana that she wanted to see me. I came out and found her standing on a rock and she shouted

out that ever since I had arrived she had been ill and what was I going to do about it. I sympathised with her ! I said that I would do anything I could to remove that terrible impression. She said, " Wash your face in water and give it to me."

So in order to make quite sure that my rather ragged face and very ragged beard was properly washed, we brought hot water and soap and had a ceremonial washing in front of her. Karbir then presented her with it, all hot and soapy, and she there and then drank it, and next morning I heard that the treatment had been completely successful ! I know that in many parts of England the nastier the medicine the more effective it is supposed to be, but I wonder how many of the people who believe that would have swallowed her prescription !

Back again over the Kuari, this time grass and flowers and very wet, then from our camp at Ramini we divided forces, Longstaff taking two of the men to examine the southern valleys of the Nanda Devi massif, an exploration having everything to recommend it, except the time of year, for the monsoon was at its height. However, he was not dismayed. Mumm was very anxious to see Kashmir before returning to England and so we determined to make a push direct from Garhwal to Srinagar, the two Brocherels returning to Italy.

We then set off for a delightful and most luxurious trip compared with Garhwal experiences. We found

Kashmir at its best, wandered over all the peaks of Haramukh, hoping for the gorgeous view which we knew could be obtained from there, including a marvellous one of Nanga Parbat, but unfortunately all was hidden in cloud. Then across country into my old haunts of Kaghan, a long but delightful march where we had quite a little sporting and mountaineering three weeks, bagging among other things a peak called Shikara, the second highest peak of Kaghan, and examining the face of the one giant Mali Parbat,¹ but unfortunately missing the only really apparent way by which the mountain could be climbed with any facility. Mali Parbat is a real mountain in every sense, its height being 17,345 ft., but a greater mountain than its mere height indicates.

We lived well and we camped in comfort and among forests with all the things that made travel on the Kashmir side so pleasant. The only thing we regretted was that our one goose that we had brought for our final triumphant feast was seen walking proudly out of camp one evening, and was never found again. Poor goose ! I can still retain a very fierce desire for revenge on the jackals who got him.

¹ Mali Parbat was later climbed by Capt. Batty and four Gurkhas.

CHAPTER X

NEPAL

IN the following year there were wars and rumours of war and disturbances on the Frontier, but somehow I managed to put in a month beyond Jongri in Upper Sikkim and in the neighbourhood of the Kang La to have a look at the western faces of Kangchenjanga and its other great satellites, Janu and Kabru. But unfortunately my luck this time was well out, and although I spent a fortnight all among the mountains I was wet through the whole time and hardly got a glimpse of anything. Luckily, however, the bad weather did not extend below a certain elevation and I managed to put in a very interesting time in the frontier villages, both Nepalese and Bhotia. That winter, however, brought a real thrill. My old friend, Colonel Manners Smith, who had won his V.C. in the Hunza-Nagar campaigns, was now Resident in Nepal and I received an invitation to visit him there. I must mention that the number of Europeans who have visited Nepal in the last hundred years is really very small, and the number who have had the experience of travelling a little about the valley and neighbouring hills is still less. I am per-

fectly certain there cannot be more than 300 or 400 individuals who have been so privileged, and further, it is really very extraordinary the number of people that one meets who know India well but who have very little knowledge or understanding of this same Kingdom of Nepal and its conditions. Since the war, however, this is probably a thing of the past.

The manner in which the Nepalese Government backed up the British Government during that period must be known and realised by anyone who knows anything at all about what war conditions were in India. It has always been the policy of the Nepal Government, although showing all possible friendship to the British, to keep its country closed to foreigners unless specially invited to visit it, and on the whole one cannot blame them for keeping themselves to themselves and not caring to rub shoulders too closely with modern civilised life. It really would be a terrible disaster to find the one country in the world which entirely lives its own life (even its customs and laws date back into the forgotten past), modernised and vulgarised. At the same time it is an anomaly, and the only possible method of keeping it in its present excessively interesting, though anomalous condition, is to continue the policy so long established.

The country occupies 500 miles of the southern slopes of the Himalaya, divided from the Sikkim district on the east by the Singalelia ridge and from the British territory of Kumaon on the west by the

Maha Kali or Sarda River. Its greatest depth is in Central Nepal somewhat west of Khatmandu, from Mastang beyond the main chain to the plains of the United Provinces ; nowhere more than 140 miles and the average breadth considerably less than that. In it one finds every type of climate, from the plains of Bengal and Oudh across the Nepal Tarai forests, fever-haunted swamps, rising through every form of fauna and flora, to the greatest heights almost on the world's surface and the eternal snows. Beyond the eternal snows some portions of country are typically Tibetan—high, dry, frozen mountain land and plain, notably in the neighbourhood of the before-mentioned Mastang.

The inhabitants too are no less varied. It is completely and entirely mountainous ; beyond the belt of Tarai which divides Nepal proper from the plains of India one enters immediately into the mountain country. The only valley and plain of any size is the great valley of Nepal, some fifteen miles long and seven miles broad, which gives its name to the entire kingdom. This valley is the hub of the kingdom, the centre of all civilisation and the centre of government. Its own particular history is intensely ancient and its civilisation and culture date back to the time of the Buddha himself.

So very little is realised about the government of Nepal by most people that a short sketch of the present conditions is certainly advisable. For in-

numerable generations this valley of Nepal was the centre of a very advanced and a very real civilisation. This had already been established to a certain extent when Gautama Buddha was alive, and he is supposed to have visited it somewhere about the year 560 B.C. That, however, is no more than a tradition, but what is quite clear is that the valley was visited by the great Emperor Asoka, the St. Paul of Buddhism, about the year 250 B.C., and that he himself founded Buddhistic temples and monasteries in the valley which are extant to this day.

There have been from that time to the present a considerable number of dynasties reigning in the valley, but as far as authentic history goes it has been ruled over by numerous kings of the Newar race. This Newar race is clearly Mongolian in origin : that is quite evident not only from the physiognomy of the people but also from their language, and the claim that Newars sometimes make to have descended from high-class Hindus of Southern India is quite untenable. However, they are in some ways highly cultivated people, and as a matter of fact to the present day are responsible for all the arts and crafts as well as being the chief merchants of the whole kingdom.

When the history of modern Nepal begins the valley of Nepal was divided into three little kingdoms, the capitals of which were in the neighbouring states of Khatmandu, Patan and Bhatgaon. The valley had already been visited by certain Carthusian and

Franciscan friars who remained there for a considerable period, but who unfortunately have left but little account of their stay there, nor are traces of them to be found except in certain symbolic marks on ancient Nepalese coins. Whether they were successful or not in making converts is extremely doubtful. They left the kingdom somewhere about the year 1745. The rest of the country which is now included in the kingdom of Nepal was broken up into innumerable little hill states, both east and west of the valley, which were in a very primitive condition. No doubt, too, the influence of Newar traders extended through the country, which was most easily travelled in, as far as Tansing on the west and to the present towns of Dhankuta and Ilam on the east. But the actual hill country was, at that time, quite independent.

During the course of ages a race had been built up right throughout the length of the Himalaya which was a mixture of high-caste inhabitants of the plains and the rough hill people, and that part of the race inhabiting the Nepal hill tracts was composed of a mixture of these well-bred Hindus and what we should call now the Mongolian military clans. During the earlier Mohammedan invasions of India this invasion by high-caste refugees was very largely increased. The fall of Chitor in the fourteenth century produced an influx of the very finest Rajputs, who received the hospitality, too, of the hill states, and owing to their higher civilisation and their knowledge

of government and so forth very soon established themselves as chiefs of the many small hill kingdoms.

In the central portion of the present kingdom of Nepal there were no less than twenty-four of these little states, known as the Chaubisia Raj, and one of these was the small state of Gurkha. From among the chiefs of Gurkha arose an extremely able leader whose name was Prithwi Narayan Sah. He was not only a fine soldier but also a very astute politician, and by degrees he brought under his own influence and also under his own chieftainship most of these little hill states, until about the year 1750 he felt himself strong enough to challenge the Newar kings for the possession of Nepal, for this meant wealth and strength far beyond anything which he possessed at that time. After twenty years of continual fighting and intrigue, he finally reduced all the three capitals of the three kings, and, I am afraid, when completing his conquests of the valley he showed himself to be an extremely cruel and terrible conqueror. That, however, was not to be wondered at considering the wild state of the hill country at that time.

Having established himself in Nepal, he and his successors conquered the country both east and west, although that was no easy task, especially towards the east, where there was a considerable amount of hard fighting. Finally the tribes of what is now eastern Nepal became subjects of the King of Gurkha and were given the title of Gurkhalis, that is, fol-

lowers of the King of Gurkha, as were also all the inhabitants of Gurkha itself and all the other little kingdoms of the Chaubisia Raj who had joined him, no matter what their position in society or no matter what their caste condition was. They were also persuaded to accept the Hindu ceremonial laws and from that time on to the present day have considered themselves Hindus. It was the indifferent behaviour of the descendants of this remarkable man which gave an opportunity for the establishment of the hereditary Prime Minister as a great official of the state.

The first holder of this office of any great distinction was a certain Bhima Sen Thapa, a remarkable man in every way. He held the position for more than thirty years, and a little later it will be related how his family and his clan lost that great hereditary position and how it came into the hands of the present family. It can easily be understood how an uncivilised people rising entirely by force of arms would become rather pretentious, shall we say, especially as they had no very great opposition in extending their domains very much further to the west, and also because they were nearly always victorious in their marauding expeditions which they undertook both into Sikkim and into Tibet. Their first great set-back was when, after penetrating as far into real Tibet as Shigatze, they were driven back by an army of mixed Tibetans and Chinese who followed them up to within two marches

of the capital and there dictated terms to them. By those terms Nepal was obliged to send a deputation every five years to Peking to acknowledge the suzerainty of China. This became a fixed but unnecessary habit and continued up to the time of the establishment of the Chinese Republic.

Meanwhile, the Gurkhas had pushed their hold over the mountain land as far west as Bakloh on the borders between Chamba and the Panjab, where unfortunately for them their weak detachments ran against Sikh troops who very easily turned them back. In 1814, however, the Gurkha leaders had become very much above themselves again and fell out with John Company, and the resulting Gurkha war (1814-15-16) deprived them of the whole of their dominions in Garhwal and Kumaon and drove them back into their present territory east of the Kali River.

It must not be supposed for a moment that the Gurkha forces or organisation in these days were in any way comparable to what they are at the present time. I do not think from all I can gather that the whole army itself, fighting for the Gurkhas on each of their different fronts, could have amounted to more than 14,000 troops, and although they had modelled their army as far as possible on European lines, some of the regiments were still armed with bows and arrows.¹ They certainly, however, put up an extraordinarily fine fight, and it was only the successful

¹ *Fraser's* authority.

H.H. GENERAL MAHARAJAH SIR CHANDRA
SHAMSHER JANG BAHADUR RANA,
Prime Minister and Marshal of Nepal



H.H. MAHARAJAH SIR JANG BAHADUR
RANA, G.C.B., ETC.



action of General Ochterloney's forces at Bichia Koh, which is on the present road to the Nepal Valley, that brought the Nepal leaders to their senses.

Shortly afterwards the Treaty of Segowli was signed, from which time the present friendly relations between the two Governments date. It was also on the signing of the Treaty of Segowli that the first three regiments of Gurkhas were formed, in a great part composed of some troops who had surrendered during the war. Although the fighting had been as hard, or probably harder than we had had up to that date, there appears to have been extraordinarily little bad feeling, so much so that the Gurkha wounded were often brought over to our lines, as related by Fraser, to be treated by our doctors, so great was the faith the Gurkhas had in the right treatment they would receive.

I think it would be better before describing the people to give a very short sketch of our relations with the Government up to the present date. When war broke out the hereditary Prime Ministers were established as permanent public functionaries, second only to the descendants of the founder of the Gurkha dynasty of Prithwi Narayan Sah. This family became to a great extent degenerate, it lost its hold and it produced no men of character, and by degrees the whole of the power got into the hands of the Prime Minister, a sort of *Maire du palais* as in the reign of the French Carlovingian kings. The history of the

Nepal Government is very largely a history of the quarrels and intrigues of different clans to obtain the Prime Ministership. This condition continued down to the year 1845 when the clan, of whom the great Jang Bahadur was the representative, after a fierce Palace intrigue and a general massacre of the then Prime Minister's clan, obtained the power. From that day to this his family has held the hereditary Prime Ministership and are the real rulers of Nepal, and his descendants have produced some most distinguished men.

Jang Bahadur himself had quite exceptional qualities ; but he was a man of very little world experience or education and he was surrounded by enemies. He overcame them all with the help, no doubt, of royal influence, and although many of the steps which he had to take were bloodthirsty in the extreme, he was not in himself a cruel man. He ruled the country most wisely and well, and it came on hand over fist under his guidance. He ameliorated many of the savage laws which were still on the statute book, and also, in fact, inaugurated the modern regime as it stands to-day. There was much intrigue after his death, but luckily his family was finally firmly established and he has been succeeded by his nephews, sons of his younger brother Dhir Shamsher, who was himself one of his great supporters, and among these nephews have been men of quite remarkable capacity. Jang Bahadur was the first Nepalese to visit England

officially, having paid a visit with a full following to Queen Victoria, and it was very largely due to the impressions that he received during that State visit that he backed up the British Government as fully and faithfully as he did during the Indian Mutiny.

All this time the real king, who is known as the Maharaj Adhiraj, remained the hereditary and titular king of the country, but the two offices are now known as the reigning family and the ruling family, the ruling family being very much the family of the hereditary Prime Minister.

As I have said, the nephews of Jang Bahadur have been very remarkable men. The one who has had by far the most influence up to the present day is the late regretted H.H. Sir Chandra Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, who showed himself such a great friend of the British Government during the late War. He was succeeded by his brother, the Maharajah Bhim Shamsher, who unfortunately died after a short period of office, and the present ruler of the country is his younger brother, the Maharajah Judha Shamsher.

The prosperity of the whole country, due to this remarkable family, has increased by leaps and bounds. I must, however, point out quite clearly, in order if possible to throw a little light on the very complicated conditions that obtain in Nepal, that the mixed race descended from a portion of the great Khasia race, to which I have already referred and which has been the

dominating race throughout the hills for many generations and to which all the great Gurkha families belong, is to this day by far the most important influence in the country.

It must be understood that when the Gurkhas came down they were people of no culture. They naturally adopted, to a large extent, the civil and religious codes which they found already in time-honoured use in the Nepal Valley, but since that period they have greatly added to them. The laws of the country are based on the ancient law of Manu, but they have been brought up to what are nearer modern requirements, though one finds civil, military and religious laws contained in the same articles. In a Hindu State the civil and religious march hand in hand and are indivisible.

It must also be understood that although for many generations Buddhism and Hinduism flourished side by side in the valley of Nepal, the present ruling clans are Hindu and that orthodox Hindu. Further, the other hill clans, more primitive and less cultivated, in the Nepal Himalaya, with the exception of the actual Tibetan settlements, have also submitted to Hindu ceremonial laws. This immediately brings in the question of caste, and although in former times many of these clans were practically animistic without any notion of the meaning of caste, the whole country at the present day has been carefully and legally divided up into caste departments.

However, when in Nepal one hears of such remarks as “ The Gurkhas do this ” or “ The Gurkhas do that,” every time it means the higher classes who consider themselves and are the real Gurkhas, that is, the Brahmin and Chettri clans—the upper classes, in fact.

Nepal is divided from south to north into clear belts, the first belt being the great stretch of jungle and plain which divides the whole country from the plains of India, intensely malarious and all covered with tropical forest and low broken hills. Beyond that comes a great belt of broken mountain country from 1000 ft. above the sea to 10,000 ft. or so, and it is in this belt that the greater amount of the population exists, including the Nepal Valley before mentioned, which is very highly cultivated and densely populated. Then beyond this belt one rises into the great mountains, practically deserted in winter and where only shepherds and the very highest living of the Gurkha and Tibetan tribes are to be found, and there is even a portion of the country beyond the Himalaya where one is in complete Tibetan surroundings.

There are four great ridges which descend from the main Himalaya, dividing the country up into four great departments, and it can easily be seen and understood from the innumerable valleys descending from these ridges how cut off and divided up the country has been; and therefore from east to west

you find tribes whose history is still but little known and all of whom bear, more or less strongly, signs of their Mongolian descent. It is from these valleys and clans that the greater part of our present Gurkha regiments come. These clans are, from the point of view of social position, of no particular importance, although a great number of them are recognised as military clans and freely enlist into Nepal's own army. But they have very little chance of rising to any high position of authority or power and their careers are distinctly limited. It must, however, be understood that the greater part of the Gurkha soldiers enlisted in the Nepal army is furnished by men of the before-mentioned Chettri clans. We have, as a matter of fact, in our own army two battalions of them, it being found more convenient that they should serve in regiments which enlist only their superior caste.

One of the strangest outcomes of the conquest of Nepal by the Gurkha clans is that they have established a curious military mind. Nepal at the present date is a very much governed country. It is a country which is policed well, it is very well looked after by its own Government, and the conditions are not the least like those that obtain on the North-West Frontier or even in Afghanistan, nor are the people in any way to be compared one with the other. There are very mistaken ideas about the Gurkha in Europe as a kind of desperate swashbuckler. The real fact is exactly

the opposite. I think I would be perfectly justified in saying that all these little hill peasants (for that is what they are) are not warlike, but they are intensely military. It is a curious psychological fact but it is the case, and why it should be is more than I can say, for the life they lead in their own homes is that of a very hard-working and very poor mountain peasant. It is a country of very bad communications, practically no pack animals, and nearly the whole of the merchandise and commerce of the country goes on men's backs, and women's backs if it comes to that, but they have established this curious military outlook.

Nepal itself has a very large army and recruiting is a problem which gives no trouble, for every regiment has long waiting lists of men who wish to join it. It is their one great wish, from the very top of the tree to the bottom, to serve in some military capacity, and it is curious to observe that very seldom, with the exception of the great feats of Jang Bahadur and one or two other people, does the great fighting hero get the first place. It is the fine leader, the military man in the best sense of the phrase "a good leader of men," whose reputation comes first. The entire country is, in fact, run on a military basis and on the whole very successfully.

Naturally, for a very poor country under these conditions, it seems extraordinary the amount of money that is spent on an army which to our mind is

too numerous, but it fits in with Gurkha notions and the wishes of the people themselves. Nearly every official in the country has a military rank. Drill and all that appertains to drill is one of the chief interests and, I might almost say, amusements of the princes and nobles, all of whom belong, or at some time have belonged, to some form of military organisation. Also, because the country has been over-populated compared with its productive capacity, there have always been emigrants from these strangely military-minded people enlisting in other armies, somewhat like the Swiss of the Middle Ages and after. There were Gurkhas in the Sikh army of Ranjit Singh, and I believe I am correct in saying that in the first Sikh war our own Gurkha regiments had facing them a battalion or two in the Sikh army. The Shah Shuja's army also had Gurkha battalions, and curiously enough in a much later period when there was trouble at Khelat in Baluchistan it was found that the Khan of Khelat's bodyguard consisted of Gurkhas. No doubt this was due to economic considerations, but even to this day one finds them enlisting in all sorts of out-of-the-way places for one reason or another.

Perhaps the most productive part of the country included in the kingdom of Nepal is the great slice of the Tarai which forms part of the great forest belt. It is thickly populated and highly cultivated, while its inhabitants differ but little from those of the plains of Bengal and Oudh. Then as we go back into

the hill country itself we find the whole attitude changes, so to speak. The idiom of life is different, the houses are very much more cosy, better shaped and better built, probably due to the fact that they have the right kind of timber available, and often they are thatched in the same way as those at home are thatched. Little homesteads spread about the hill-sides greet us everywhere. Wherever there is a small town a Chinese note seems to be struck and the familiar evidences of India are left behind.

Women are everywhere taking part in the life of the country, trading and holding their own with the men. The larger the town the more one feels the influence of China. But what strikes one more than anything else is that one appears to have left behind the Indian type of person. With the exception of a few travelling traders, one meets nothing but Mongolian faces, smiles and grins and laughter nearly always, and a short, thick-set physique. In fact, with a little imagination one might believe oneself almost to be among a rougher and less cultivated Japanese population. But everywhere one sees signs of the dominant Hindu religion.

As I have said, the country has been broken up by these great ridges descending from the Himalayas and dividing the country contained between them into very isolated valleys and communities. One can therefore understand that the original languages of the different tribes have been preserved,

though the official language of the country has partly ousted these crude Mongolian dialects. The official language called Nepali or Khas Kura is best described by calling it a granddaughter of Sanskrit, and not a very pure granddaughter at that. But the very fact of the existence of such a number of local dialects shows how diverse are the people and emphasises the manner in which Hinduism has shown itself to be a unifying force.

The tribes in the east of Nepal, the most characteristic of which are the Limboos and Rais (or Kirantis), have, however, little in common with the central Nepalese and the still better known tribes Magar and Gurung, who differ between themselves too ; in fact, the Magar tribes accepted Hinduism some hundreds of years ago, whereas the eastern Nepalese, certainly 150 years ago, were not recognised by anybody as Hindus, having their own strange mixture of Animism and Buddhism. Now all these tribes, as I have before stated, have accepted the Hindu ceremonial laws and have thus been unified under the central Government, although in every other way keeping to their own special customs. I have, however, on many occasions, found recruits who were even unable to speak Nepali until they had been with their battalions for some considerable time, and a great number more who were only partially conversant with it. As the Indian army naturally carries on its business in

Hindustani, one can imagine how difficult it must be for these very uneducated peasants to have the rather abstruse problems which they have to learn nowadays got into their rather thick heads when very often they have to learn through a third language and not even a second.

To reach Nepal one travels to the rail-head station in the United Provinces called Raxaul. When I first went up one travelled by elephant or in a palanquin, or a conveyance which was still lighter than a palanquin, a hammock slung on a single pole, up a very primitive road through the great Tarai for some thirty miles until one arrived at the foot of the first great range of hills which, as a matter of fact, forms part of the very long curtain range called the Mahabarat Range dividing the hill country from the Tarai. From there and at the starting-point Bhimpheedi at the foot of the hills one is taken charge of by Nepal officials who most efficiently weigh one's luggage, hand it over to a gang of men, and produce it for you on your final arrival in the city.

Immediately one rises some 2500 ft. up a very steep path to a little frontier fort, Sissagarhi, most picturesquely perched on the hillside but archaically defended. Thence over a pass nearly 7000 ft. high, across the plateau of Chitlung or Little Nepal and to the pass which dominates it, from where one has the most glorious view into the Nepal Valley, some 2500 ft. below; and if one is still more lucky a per-

fectly marvellous view of the central Nepal Himalaya, such a view as I once saw on a February day—absolutely cloudless, and it looked as if my friends of song and many stories, Dhaulagiri and the great massif of Anna Purna and Machapuchri, the Fish Tail, were almost going to fall down on one's head, so marvellously clear was the atmosphere. An almost incomparable view, possibly made even more effective by the fact that it was all unvisited, and the wanderer's urge to dive into and explore where no European had been before, may insensibly have affected one's judgment. But there, I was privileged to see it and no complaints are worthy.

Then a descent of 2600 ft. by a worn and bad path of stone steps and—marvel of marvels—a macadamised road and a motor-car to meet one! Nepal is shut off from India and kept shut off, and though the valley has modern amenities which one discovers most unexpectedly, such as electric light, motor-cars, etc., all that is required was brought over at that time by elephants or men. Now in these days, a rail runs from Raxaul to near Bhimphedi, at Amlek Ganj,¹ and an aerial rope-way from there via Bhimphedi, moves heavy luggage over the hills. Nepal moves forward but moves on its own lines and is perfectly right to do so.

¹ So named to commemorate the freedom accorded to all slaves owned in Nepal by the late Maharajah and Marshal of Nepal, Sir Chandra Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana. "Amlek" is Nepal signifying this freedom.

Days can be spent in wandering over the Nepal Valley and its cities. Here one touches almost a Chinese note, for the ancient temples and many of the ancient buildings in all these three cities are pagoda-like in shape. In fact, the French scientist, Sylvain Levi, suggests even that the Chinese took the idea of their pagodas from the Nepalese architecture. This, however, seems to me a very far-fetched idea, but the fact still remains that these cities are unique in themselves. Writing as I am at the present moment nearly half a year after the disastrous earthquake of 1933, I fear many of the most splendid of these buildings have been destroyed, and I should doubt very much whether it will be possible to restore them to their original beauty. It is, however, gratifying to know that some of the most important and sacred temples of the Nepal Valley, owing to the solidity of their architecture, have escaped. I believe that the most sacred of all, the Temple of Pasupati, is almost intact, and that if any damage at all has been done it can be easily repaired. The Pasupati temple is situated on both banks of the Bhagmati River, the sacred river which drains the Nepal Valley, and it is at this temple and at the side of this river that all high-class Nepalese wish to finish their days.

At Khatmandu, the most outstanding and interesting part other than the architecture, is the marvelously situated great parade-ground known as the Tandikhel. Can there be anywhere in the world a

parade-ground capable of holding 25,000 men in such a marvellous setting? And it is grass-covered into the bargain, at least for quite half of the year and probably more. In its centre is situated a sort of grand-stand from which the Prime Minister, who is also the Marshal of Nepal, can review his troops on great days, and on its edge, too, is the remarkable Thornycroft statue of Sir Jang Bahadur on a peculiarly fiery steed such as I am afraid one seldom sees in Nepal. For the Nepalese are wise and they ride horses or rather powerful hill ponies suitable for the work which they have to do. However, the statue is full of life and go, and represents a man almost to be compared with Watts' great work "Physical Energy."

The army in Nepal is now in an infinitely better condition than it was during the time of my first visit there or even, if it comes to that, my second visit, which was early in 1914, and this is largely due to Nepal's efforts in the War, which were very remarkable and much worth while calling attention to. When the War broke out we had twenty battalions of regular Gurkha troops and about 8000 military police in Government service. Not only were the twenty battalions increased to thirty-three, but recruits and reinforcements were provided to the extent of 56,000 more men, and a contingent for internal defence of some 12,000 men was also furnished by the Nepal Government to the Government of India, and this



TEMPLE OF PASHUPATI NATH

contingent was brought up to date both in outfit and in training, British officers to assist this most desirable effort being attached to the Nepal army as advisers. It was not, therefore, remarkable to find, when one takes into account the natural military aptitude of the Gurkhas and their most intelligent leaders, that rapid improvement was made and that they quickly adapted themselves to modern requirements. At the present time they have profited by all they learned and the general efficiency throughout the country has been very greatly improved.

It is also very wonderful to remember that all the help we got from Nepal was from a nation entirely independent and not obliged to come to our assistance under any treaty made between India and Nepal, the only treaty at that time being the antiquated one of Segowli as before related, but it was done purely by the Nepal Government as a gesture of their friendliness and their desire to help us in our difficulties. I have always thought, and continue to think, that the history of our relations with Nepal from the very start, forms a very great romance. The conditions are probably entirely unique in the whole world, and this actual condition is not in the least modified by the fact that the Gurkhas themselves would not, I think, have the least inkling of what one meant if one told them that one regarded one's relations from this particular point of view. Nor do I quite believe that the somewhat bureau-

cratic outlook which has always dominated the Indian Government on this question would be more likely to view our relations with Nepal as a romance. But now with our highly organised recruiting system, although dealing with a country where to this day British officers are not allowed to travel, thousands and thousands of little men have poured down and given their very best to the Indian Government ; and the kindly feelings which have been aroused, the loyalty with which these complete mercenaries, as they really are, have served the British Raj, bears out my contention. Personal friendships formed between regiments of the British army and Gurkha regiments have further all the makings of a great romance.

I think the rather unimaginative Englishman did not quite realise that the whole of the Indian army when the Great War broke out had no real conception either of what they were fighting about and being called to lay down their lives for, or of who the people were whom they were going to fight against. I am certain that great numbers of them had no idea what the German Empire was and hardly any knew where the danger lay, and I was often asked by certain Sikhs, and not young Sikhs either, some time after the War had broken out, in fact in October when on my way to Egypt, whether the Germans actually possessed guns in the way that we did. But what an eye-opener lay in front of them !

Think of the very simple little Gurkha coming

down in his thousands during the War from, say, a shepherds' camp under Dhaulagiri, who had never seen even the plains much less a railway, and who had not the faintest conception of anything really outside Nepal and who certainly had no idea even where England was—imagine thousands of these little simpletons, after six months' training, sent off to meet either the Turkish army under astonishingly strange conditions and strange surroundings, or even possibly forming reinforcements for France to meet the finest army that has ever yet been produced in this world. The most surprising thing was that the flow of recruits never ceased, and still more curious that even the standard of recruit was but little altered by the end of the War. Naturally, none of these remarkable results could have been obtained without the active friendship and the tremendous push of Sir Chandra Shamsher, who was then Prime Minister and Marshal, to whom and to whose government we owe an eternal debt of gratitude.

Life with Colonel Manners Smith was always lively. He was the most energetic and most active man that it is possible to conceive. We were up in the early morning and out for a ride or a walk before breakfast or often out with a gun, and as a matter of fact, I one morning shot a woodcock within 200 yards of the Residency. He arranged parties by the kind-

ness of the Prime Minister at two of the Maharajah's reserves, called Gow Kārān and Godāvery, and most delightful shoots we had on the broken hillsides and in little tight valleys, on one day getting no less than nine solitary snipe, seven woodcock and a small bag of pheasants and an occasional high rocketing peacock flying from one hill to another, while the guns were in the bottom of the little narrow valleys. A peacock cleanly killed comes down with a most satisfactory whump.

I was also lucky enough to obtain leave for quite a high-level tour round the northern sides of the valley, following the range of hills immediately north of it, and also visiting with Colonel Manners Smith the small valley of Banepa, some fifteen miles to the east of Khatmandu.

My second visit to Nepal was in the early months of 1914. My friend, Colonel Rhys Williams,¹ was on a sporting tour in India and joined Colonel Manners Smith's shooting camp in the Morang, that is the eastern half of the Nepal Tarai, to which I also was bidden but was at the time on manœuvres with my regiment. I was, however, able to join him for far and away the most exciting part of that tour, for we were invited to take part in the great elephant-catching operations which were to take place in the jungles and low hills beyond Bichia Tori. Very few officers in India, even during the whole of their ser-

¹ Now Colonel Sir Rhys Williams, Bart.

vice, have an opportunity for such an experience, and this one certainly was not to be missed.

For many, many years the elephants in Southern India had been surrounded and caught by specially trained elephant-catchers by a system of driving them slowly into a centre and getting them to enter a great stockaded circle of immense tree trunks known as a Kheddah. Colonel Sanderson had trained his own particular troop and after his retirement these specially trained bands of hunters and elephant-catchers remained on, more or less as a corporate body, and were generally known as Colonel Sanderson's Kheddah. Kheddah is a term applied not only to the catching operations but also to the stockaded circle to which the elephants were secured. Up till then the Nepalese had employed the far more wasteful method which obtained in Northern India, of running down a herd of elephants with specially trained animals, and then cutting out from the herd one elephant after another, securing it and finally taming it. This method was most expensive; not only did it scatter the herd, but even the animals were sometimes damaged in securing them and often rendered useless. It also had the very great fault of producing very few captures.

Colonel Sanderson's Kheddah and elephant-catchers were sent up to assist the Nepalese. On arrival at Bichia Tori, a drive of some thirty miles took us to the scene of operations. Some three

regiments of Nepalese had been turned out to assist the Kheddah and a large tract of country had been very cleverly driven in until, by the time of our arrival, it was known that within the great circle thus formed there was a herd of thirty-three elephants who were quite quiet and unconscious of the fact that they had been slowly and carefully ushered down into the required places. There were also some two days of driving remaining and the utmost care was required to see that the elephants should not take alarm. The Kheddah, too, had been built up, and as we saw afterwards was of prodigious strength.

A circle of some twenty yards across had been formed by immense trunks of trees in twos and threes planted together and driven deep into the earth and plaited together with innumerable ropes and creepers, strong enough to resist the full pressure of any number of frightened elephants. And into it led a great funnel into which it was hoped it would be possible to entice the herd. When once in the funnel they were to be frightened and caused to stampede down it and into the Kheddah, the entrance being closed up by great descending doors.

We crept out during the evenings to watch the line of the beaters slowly closing in, and we were also lucky enough to be spectators of a most remarkable sight, for the herd of some thirty-three strong was known to contain two great bull elephants who were fighting for the captaincy of the herd. The night

before the final drive, under the charge of the head shikari, we crept out to watch the elephants as near as we dared go, and to our surprise and intense excitement out came the two bulls, paying no attention to anything except themselves. They were magnificent creatures, elephants in the prime of life. There and then, before our eyes, they had a battle-royal. They charged each other with the utmost ferocity. One of them turned his opponent over, but he was up faster than it is possible to conceive a great animal could move, and fled back to the forest followed by his conqueror.

The following morning, the circle having been made smaller and smaller during the night, we were taken out and posted on high platforms directly above the Kheddah itself, and very, very slowly the herd was edged in, so to speak tapped in, near the mouth of the great funnel, and then occurred a most lucky and dramatic incident. The winner of the previous night's fight again went for his enemy, who showed no fight this time but ran for his life and luckily right into the funnel's mouth. After him went his conqueror as hard as he could, followed by the herd, and then pandemonium began. The whole of the beaters shrieked and yelled, lighting fires behind the herd until it became a veritable stampede down the funnel and into the Kheddah. When they were all in crash down came the great doors and we, all so excited that we could hardly contain ourselves, also

crashed to earth and rushed up to the balcony built on the Kheddah itself, and what a sight! Thirty-three wild elephants within almost a few feet of us, but the two champions did not seem to realise their position and immediately started a battle-royal again, till one of them was completely vanquished and in order to save himself further punishment placed his rump against the ribs of his conqueror at right angles and proceeded for all he was worth to keep that position. If he lost it for a moment he got such a jab behind that one must have thought it immediately fatal, but no! he was a clever manœuvrer and survived.

Finally came the time of the entrance of the elephant-catchers—noted elephant drivers, Mahouts as they are called—who when the door was opened came in in pairs and slowly entered the arena. Williams and myself were standing over the door with orders that if the great champion showed fight and attacked the entering elephants, we were to fire both barrels of our shot-guns into his forehead, and this we did at a distance of some fifteen feet. We gave him four barrels of No. 4 shot right on to his forehead. One would consider this would have been to an ordinary animal a considerable shock, and it certainly was sufficient to steady the champion and make him draw back and shake his head, but without other results. Naturally we fired well up on his forehead. We had also allowed the catchers to enter

followed by others. Anything more exciting than to see these men on tame elephants pushing about among the wild ones is almost inconceivable, and to see the wild trunks pass over the tame elephants' backs !

We were told that practically never is a Mahout pulled off an elephant, but that if he happened to fall off he would be dead in a quarter of a minute.

Meanwhile round the edge of the Kheddah (for there were gaps between the great trees planted in the earth) nooses had been prepared in which as the wild elephants were slowly mothered past by the tame ones they were caught up and hitched to the immovable trees and so, despite most vigorous protests, they were finally captured and their long period of training began.

What an interesting day and not entirely without its tragedy, for, in the evening before, it had been reported by one of the shikaris that within the circle there was one of the finest tigers he had ever seen and also a baby rhinoceros, and during the night the tiger slew the baby rhinoceros and devoured some of him for his evening meal. We were very sad over this—the one blot on what was otherwise a marvellous spectacle.

I cannot leave Nepal altogether without giving some little idea of the life of the peasants from which

we draw our soldiery. No matter to what class or caste they belong, their life is very much the same. They are practically all cultivators or shepherds, and indeed the chief source of revenue for the Nepal Government is a land tax and there are very few other sources of income available to that Government. Probably, too, the greater part of their income comes from portions of the Nepal kingdom which are low-lying and in a country far more productive than that occupied by the hill people. But the strength of Nepal is naturally their military tribes who give the whole character to the country. The valley of Nepal itself, too, is most highly and finely cultivated, but that valley is almost in the hands of the Newars. We chiefly have to deal with the very poor and hard-working peasant of the hill valleys.

As I have said before, they are practically all shepherds and farmers; there is hardly any money in circulation and their living consists either in what they can grow for their own support or in exchanging it at the almost weekly fairs which are held in suitable places at the junction of valleys. To these fairs pour down all the peasants from the hillsides, every member of the family as soon as he is strong enough to carry a load, carrying grain or fruit or whatever has to be exchanged for other commodities, and at these fairs they usually manage to enjoy themselves after they have done their bartering. There is consumed, too, a good deal of the different forms of

country drinks such as beer made from different grains which is fairly innocuous, in fact it can be refreshing and thirst-quenching. There is also to be got a fresh country spirit which is anything but so.

One could also call it a country of song and dance. Dances are held in the village and at the fairs—there are ceremonial dances, dances that have come down from Hindu mythology, dances at certain periods of the year and on feast days. Songs, too—folk songs of all descriptions, also improvisations either on a subject or singing against an opponent, songs for the sowing of corn, songs for the sowing and reaping of the rice crop, in fact songs one way or another enter greatly into the life of the people.

But it is a hard life and a life where there is no luxury, amenities or recreation, except what they can make for themselves. Now the result of this has been, especially as the conditions of modern life in India are very different from what they were in the old days, that many thousands and thousands of Gurkhas, having been to India and also having seen a good deal of foreign countries, are loath to go back to their hard-working life in the mountains. This, too, is the life which we soldiers and officers of Gurkha regiments would like them to go back to because it is that life which has made them the valuable soldiers that they are. But it is perfectly natural that they are ready to take easy billets, such as are to be found in India, either as watchmen or even in the police under

Government or in many other positions available to them, for many Indian merchants have a great belief in the Gurkha as an honest and loyal servant.

There is one thing, however, in the make-up of most of these little hill men which is also quite clear. There are no people in India who require discipline more than they do, and who are happier under it, for the Gurkha likes being governed and thrives under it. With an easy life he is inclined to degenerate. Great colonies of Gurkhas have emigrated from Nepal, settling in Assam, while there are also colonies of them in Burma, settlers from the military police battalions who have so long served in that country, and I have always been given to understand that in each case they degenerate very considerably. The life is too easy for them and they have not the experience or the understanding to combat it by their own methods. I hear, however, that there are also a great number settled in Bhutan, but there the life of the people approximates very largely to what they have been accustomed to in Nepal and up to the present time there are few signs of degeneracy among these settlers. This tendency to degenerate is to be deplored but is very real ; it is also very much borne out by what one sees in regimental life. I am certain, too, that every Gurkha officer of experience would agree that hard work suits the Gurkha well ; the harder work he gets, within reason, the better and more cheerful person he is. The one thing he cannot

stand, however, and that is not peculiar to Gurkhas at all, is being nagged. Plenty of hard work, plenty of hard games, plenty of sympathy and comradeship from his British officer and the Gurkha, so to speak, “springs to it.”

For myself I have had the very great luck to be in close relationship with a great number, and I am quite certain that what success I have had, whether professionally or in my travels in the Himalaya, has been immensely due to the loyalty and capacity of those who have been my very best comrades during many years of wandering.

CHAPTER XI

KULU—LAHOUL

THE climbing season in the Alps in 1910 was not blessed with very fine weather. We had been lucky enough to get a six months' leave home to England and we arranged, too, to have a holiday in Switzerland which was to be a family affair. My sister and myself preceded the party and were fortunate enough to get in some climbing in breaks of the bad weather, and were actually on the Dammastock on the very day that the great guide, Alexander Burgener, was carried away by a snow avalanche merely when on his way to a hut. Another little lesson as to how dangerous even the easiest mountains can be when the weather is bad.

When our party assembled it was also joined by Captain Todd of my regiment, a nephew of Cecil Slingsby, whose reputation as an Alpinist and as a great authority on Norwegian mountains remains to this day a part of the history of the Alpine Club. He had been one of Mummery's companions in his guideless expeditions in the Alps and no Englishman could surpass him in his knowledge, not only of the mountain lands of Norway, but of the moun-

tains themselves. It may almost be said that he opened up Norway as a mountain centre. Todd, his nephew, although he had not a very long experience in Alpine work, was a splendid hillman and had the very physique necessary for Himalayan exploration. That is, short and strong and of that type which improves continually with hard work and seems to get better and better the longer one is in the mountains. He also had the capacity, as I may say I have myself (one of the few things on which I prided myself in those days), of being able to assimilate almost any kind of food with advantage to himself.

We had the luck to meet Heinrich Fuhrer, a well-known Oberland guide, who with his brother Ulrich had been Miss Gertrude Bell's guides during a great part of her Alpine experiences, both of them being with her on that very wonderful expedition when they were benighted on the north-east ridge of the Jungfrau and were out for nearly fifty-six hours in bad weather. That wonderful personality, Miss Gertrude Bell, made early for herself a name as a mountaineer, nearly as remarkable as that which she acquired as an authority on Arabia and the Arabs.

After we had all assembled, Todd and myself still managed to put in, despite the weather again, a considerable amount of good climbing, and also among other expeditions ran into shocking bad weather both on the Finsteraarhorn and on the Bietschhorn, which at any rate got our party together

properly and was a very good training for what we were already aiming at, and that was a season in the Himalaya together. This we were able to bring off in 1912 in the districts of Kulu and Lahoul, about the experiences of which expedition this chapter deals.

Before leaving for India that autumn I had the most delightful experience of being chosen to conduct a mountain warfare and scouting class in North Wales, which was attended by numerous fairly senior officers and by the Scout officers of some thirty-five battalions. We traversed, I think, very nearly all the best parts of North Wales and had desperate adventures by day and by night. Schemes and other criticisms were all worked out on the ground, an attempt being made to finish work before returning to the hotel, and in the evening we learned what very fit and very high-spirited young officers could do in the way of self-entertainment between dinner and bedtime. The well-known inns of Pen-y-Gwryd and Pen-y-Pass were occupied completely, and since that time on my numerous visits, especially to Pen-y-Pass hotel, I find that the tradition of our visit there has never been forgotten, and what is more excellent, the innkeepers quite entered into the spirit of our evening romps. Owen, an old soldier of the 14th Hussars, however, beat the whole of us at two or three athletic tricks, though I think that one or two of them could beat him at others. We passed, in fact, extremely athletic evenings.

We finished up by a great comprehensive scheme, taking in what I consider and recommend to anyone who likes a really rough country, a part of Wales which remains to this day quite unspoiled—all the wild country which lies south of Harlech Castle and between that town and Dolgelly, of which the two best-known peaks are the Rhinogs. It is one of the few wild parts of Wales through which to the present time no motor roads run, or in fact any road fit for wheeled traffic, though the well-known passes Bwlch-y-Tyddiad and Bwlch Drws Ardudwy traverse this hill tract.

We arrived back in India in the autumn and took up our usual interesting and active life, though the following spring when up in the hills, long before the snow had melted, I had the misfortune to have a very bad tumble, taking the quadriceps muscles off my knee-cap. Though I was most successfully treated by a skilful doctor many doubts were thrown out that never again should I have a leg fit to carry me on the mountains, and for six months that was the case, but finally I made an unexpected and pretty complete recovery, so that by the winter I was able to walk and run again if necessary.

And how wonderful that winter was and how wonderful was the experience of the King's Coronation at Delhi. Besides all the major ceremonies there was also a Bādshāhi Mela or an Emperor's Fair, at which there was every sort of competition, includ-

ing great wrestling matches, and it was as an official of this fair that I was employed, my own regiment being left on the Frontier. But it also gave me the opportunity of being present at all the great ceremonies, one of the greatest experiences in anyone's lifetime. During this winter I discovered that my particular position in the regiment was such that I had the following summer free, and not being specially wanted I was granted six months' leave in the country. That gave me an opportunity of visiting a part of the Panjab Himalaya which it had always been my ambition to see—that is, the Kulu Valley—and when the monsoon arrived, to push across the main chain into the Tibetan districts beyond it.

Kulu is known throughout India for its fruit, which it exports in considerable quantities to all parts of the Panjab, but I had also heard from many sources of its beauty, my friend Money having travelled there a great deal, and it was very much due to his account of the country that we decided to spend our leave in that district. Not for a moment were we disappointed.

Todd was to join us for his summer leave, for he thought he would be lucky enough to obtain at least two months, and Kulu luckily is quickly reached, and then, too, we further arranged to ask our old guide Heinrich Fuhrer to join us. We were to take on the main camp containing the necessaries and provisions for our climbing, and early in April my wife and I set

off, spending a delightful ten days at the station of Dharmsala, which is the headquarters of the 1st Gurkha Rifles and which is situated in the Kangra district on the slopes of that prodigious rampart the Dhauli Dhar range. We were both of us fairly familiar with the country and both of us delighted in it. I know nothing more striking than that wonderful Dhauli Dhar ridge which forms the wall cutting off the plains from the Himalayas, which is at least 100 miles in length; and although there are not very many striking peaks, the ridge has an almost continuous height of 15,000 ft. with a 12,000 ft. drop to the plains below it and is practically unbroken, the passes across it all high and the peaks not more than 2500 ft. above the ridge. There are few valleys or districts more striking than Kangra—very fertile, beautifully wooded and wonderfully watered by the mountain streams.

It was on this Dhauli Dhar ridge that Money and I made our first climb in 1894, and it was here, too, that I had also climbed with Capt. Minchington, who a few years ago met his death under tragic circumstances when climbing with his men. We had gone then in October, rather late in the year, to try and climb the dominating peak of the ridge which is situated above the station and a little to the east of it, but when moving our camp to the northern side of the ridge into the state of Chamba we were overtaken by a hurricane of snow and wind and had a terrible

time in getting our porters through; taken on as they were for a short time and therefore in their ordinary clothes. One gets in that district some hill men who are shepherds entirely by occupation, who are called Gaddis, first-class carriers and first-class hill men, well dressed in thick woollen clothes but very badly dressed as to their feet and legs. They, too, have a perfectly childish fear of snow, but it was the tremendous cold that we met on the pass which was their undoing, no less than eight of them getting badly frost-bitten. They threw their loads and unfortunately gave way entirely. I do not know what two of my Gurkhas carried, it must have been one-and-a-half hundredweight. I know I was so weighed down myself by portions of load that I had picked up that I could hardly stagger. We managed to camp at midnight, having been preceded by Capt. Minchington, who I found had managed to get a tent up and light a fire. Digging through our boxes of stores I found to my delight a bottle of ginger wine—exactly what we wanted. I poured out a large glass of it for Minchington, remarking at the same time, after a picture in *Punch* of an old farmer dividing a quart of beer with his wife, “Drink hearty, Maria, drink merry nigh ’alf.” Which he did and promptly blew up—it was kerosene oil!

It was a very sorry crew that crept down into the highest Chamba village of Kuasi; the snow had reached even there, the upper forest being deep in it.

And there our poor porters had to be doctored as far as we could do so and forwarded down to Chamba for medical attention, several of them being in a very bad way and few escaping some touch of the frost. In consequence, our trip was cut down, but at the first opportunity we returned, having quite a little climb over what should have been a perfectly easy col, for the middle of October at about 14,000 ft. is already very cold and snow does not melt in the sun with ease. That glorious Dhauli Dhar range holds many memories for me of shooting expeditions and climbing, but on this occasion we had little time to explore it as our business was to arrive in the Kulu Valley as fast as we could get there, and a very delightful and charming journey we had.

Those who travel in Kashmir for the first time are invariably struck by its beauty, but my own particular preference would be given to Kulu and even to the approaches, so rich is the forest and so rich is the colouring of the country. The Beas, one of the five rivers of the Panjab, rises at the head of the Kulu Valley and traverses its entire length on its journey to the Panjab, cutting right through the Dhauli Dhar range at Larji and forming a remarkable gorge on its passage through. In the Kulu Valley are situated estates owned by several retired English officers and others, it being one of the few places in Northern India where it has been found possible for Europeans to settle with advantage to themselves. It is, as I have

said before, noted for its fruit, and there are orchards of English fruit trees situated in many places up and down the valley, and the fruit as found in the valley itself is really first-rate. Unfortunately communications are still in embryo and it is only just lately that the valley has been connected by a decent road with the Panjab through the great Larji Gorge. But even now the fruit through the greater part of its journey is taken by post coolies and in consequence it gets terribly knocked about. I have never had finer white-heart cherries in my life than those which grow in the upper Kulu Valley. Unfortunately, too, for the Kulu fruit farmers these white-heart cherries do not travel at all. Besides fresh fruit there is also a considerable trade in dried fruits.

We made a temporary camp at the second greatest of the Kulu settlements, Sultanpur, and finally travelled up the banks of the Beas, through the most gorgeous alder woods imaginable, to a place of the name of Katrain where we obtained our English mail and where I had news of the arrival of Fuhrer, who was expected in Simla in a very short time. It was impossible to leave him to travel alone, a complete stranger to the country and having no language to communicate with, so I had to do a forced march up the other entrance to the Kulu Valley, again crossing the Dhauli Dhar range but this time by the Jalaori Pass through the district of Seoraj, with a descent to the valley of the Sutlej, followed by a climb up to

Narkanda and so to Simla. A delightful and most enjoyable trip had I not been so hurried.

I found Fuhrer already arrived and we made the best of our way back again, and so to the mountains. Fuhrer's reaction to so strange a country was interesting. He had been brought up as a strict Lutheran and it went greatly against the grain to go through a country so full of Indian superstitions and so teeming with gods of every sort and description as Kulu. In fact Kulu gods do take some swallowing. Originally the country was purely animistic with its local gods and demons of all sorts and kinds, but now these have all been accepted by the Brahmins, who for many centuries have dominated the land, as incarnations of Mahadeo ; but the astonishment of an untravelled person is quite understandable when he meets a little procession of village gods on the road and they are brought up to kiss each other, their palanquins in which they are riding being put side by side in order that they may do so. In Kulu, too, the local gods, or rather the temples of the gods themselves, own land and even have lawsuits which are brought before the ordinary established courts for decision by the priests in charge of the god and his property, and I have even known a case in which the gods were brought in to the Commissioner with a petition from the different villages that as no rain had fallen they should be punished by him and put into prison. Owing to their number this was impossible, but being

a man of resource he suggested that four of their greatest should be chosen and these were given a fortnight's imprisonment in the local police headquarters. Within two days it was raining, and having once started, as so often in the mountains, it refused to stop. Again a deputation arrived and petitioned for their release.

On the great Gaphan peak, which though situated in Lahoul dominates the whole of the Kulu Valley, there lives a really desperate god. He is rather more of a demon than a Deota, and he has an outstanding feud with the goddess Hirma, who in another age lived north of the range too. In a fit of rage he seized her and threw her over the mountains. She dropped on her head some twenty-five miles away at a place called Dungri at the mouth of the Solang Valley, and there at the present day, vouching for the truth of this story, is her temple. The feud still remains, however, and at the time of my visit up there, or rather a year or two previously, again owing to the want of rain, the villagers determined to punish Hirma and so they threatened her first with bringing the god of the Gaphan over, which they did, then to put them in the same room together, and thirdly, which was most effective, to tie them back to back and stand them on their heads. This treatment proved the correct method for it rained the following day.

The gods, in fact, are everywhere—the god Jamlu of the Malana Valley is the most fearsome of them all

and the most combative, and it was he who having issued a threat against me for visiting his mountains finally worked his revenge on me in a way to be related. We made an excellent camp at a place called Manali in the most gorgeous surroundings, the woods and valleys of the richest possible description and the deodars of a size and shape such as I have seen nowhere else : in fact, we were fascinated by the scene, and also by the picturesqueness of the native Kulu villages and inhabitants. Not a very fine population nor from our point of view very helpful as mountaineers, but evidently a cheerful and happy people, and no wonder they are, from the amount of feast days, apparently one every other day, and the way they celebrate them and the amount of local beer called lugri which they manage to consume.

Manali was an excellent centre where on the arrival of Fuhrer we were able to make out our programme. Kulu had a great reputation as a shooting valley, but the wild game nowadays is very few and far between. But here in this valley one can enjoy mountaineering much in the same way as one can in Europe, with the exception that the hotels are different ; the mountains are not too high, they are easily handled, no great preparation need be made for them beyond what is required for an ordinary shooting trip, and they are progressive, many of them, especially up the valley called the Parvatia, being sufficiently serious propositions to satisfy any ordin-

ary sensible mountaineer who has not got that most dreadful of all aims, one of the great monsters in view ; when one talks of a great monster it implies a siege and its conquest should be acclaimed as an achievement.

In Kulu climbing is a delight and a pleasure and achievement need not be bothered about. There are quantities of peaks, the highest Deo Tibi, the great peak at the head, and Penguri at the head of the Hamta, also the great mountain at the head of the Solang, being above or in the neighbourhood of 20,000 ft., and a great number of other peaks. In fact, the upper snows all over the Kulu Valley are practically unexplored. It was terrible weather again early in the year, and Fuhrer and I with our two Gurkhas had some very exciting but not too ambitious mountaineering. Such was the state of the snow that a very early start was necessary ; not only did the snow make this wise if not absolutely necessary, but also the weather seemed to break every morning regularly after 10 o'clock, which added enormously to the unpleasantness and possibly, too, to the danger of being caught out late. In fact, we always aimed at being back in our tents before lunch time, starting very often at 12 o'clock at night. This statement alone shows we were not in the great Himalaya.

At the end of May we crossed the Rhatang Pass by which the British-Tibetan state of Lahoul is

reached and made an attack on the Gaphan, but too early both for the mountain and for our condition, and after reaching nearly 19,000 ft. we had to beat a retreat. We came back by a route new to us, over the Hamta Pass into Kulu, and refitted again to visit the mountain of Deo Tibi, leaving our camp high up in the Hamta Valley. I started to rejoin my wife at the base camp at Malani. I had been very foolish, as I had been warned by everyone in Kulu to propitiate the god of the Solang Valley with a red goat and the god Jamlu who dominated all the country on the Hamta side with a little silver horse, but I had omitted to do either of these, with the result that coming down from the Hamta, in a heavy thunderstorm, much faster than was necessary, I had a bad tumble on a very steep bank taking a short-cut and dislocated my right arm and tore the deltoid muscles clean off my shoulder—a bad smash made worse by the fact that I could get no medical assistance for five days. So there was I out of action. However, Fuhrer then took charge, and during my early convalescence managed with one of the Gurkhas to climb the great Solang Peak and its neighbouring supporters—a very fine climb and very fine expeditions.

After about a month, when the weather was breaking, we determined to move off immediately into Lahoul and there wait for Todd. I could get along very well for a short distance, my arm being tied

tightly up in a sling and bound to my body, but although I found riding far too painful, I managed to get over the Rhatang Pass down into Lahoul. We pushed on and made a camp at Sissu, from where Fuhrer traversed with the Gurkhas the most westerly of the Gaphan peaks which bore a curious resemblance to the Schreckhorn of the Oberland—a very satisfactory exploit. On Todd's arrival we pushed on to the capital of the district called Kailang, passing underneath one of the great giants of the district, a peak situated exactly on the border ridge dividing Lahoul and Kulu, and forming one of the most terrific mountain faces that it has ever been my good luck to view, descending in immensely steep precipices some 8000 or 9000 ft. directly to the river.

I do not think I have ever been in a country where peaks are less named. There is hardly a single peak in the massif of the Lahoul Himalaya which apparently has any name at all attached to it with the exception of the Gaphan and one or two familiar and minor summits.

Lahoul is drained by the two arms of the Chenab River called the Chandra and the Bhaga. Lahoul has immense advantages for a summer holiday. It is almost beyond the reach of the rains and the monsoon currents, as the principal chain of the Himalaya intervenes, and although one may get some days which are dull and misty with an occasional drizzle, there is no weather there which would stop one from

carrying out a rather extended climbing and exploring expedition. Also its climate is really magnificent ; the sun never too powerful—I wore very little more than a sort of deer-stalking Kashmiri hat the whole of my time up there, discarding my sun helmet altogether—and the elevation is by no means so great as to be uncomfortable.

Kailang, the capital, situated on the steep hillsides at the edge of quite extensive pencil cedar forests, is remarkably attractive in appearance, and further, wherever water can be brought for irrigation and where there is ground sufficiently flat to allow of cultivation of one kind or another, it is extraordinarily fertile. The crops of wheat and barley and the perfectly wonderful grass and grazing to be found there are quite astonishing.

We were then in the middle of a purely Buddhistic country but by no means a homogeneous population ; even the district of Lahoul is divided into three parts, each of them speaking a special dialect of its own as well as communicating with each other in ordinary Tibetan. It is a fine population on the whole, the men being far more virile, pleasanter to deal with and more honest than the ordinary inhabitants of Kulu who, after all, are not a very estimable population. They are also quite a joyous people, dancing and singing at a moment's notice. We were entertained at Kailang by German Moravian missionaries—a very charming and modest little couple

by the name of Schnabel. Moravian missions had been established for a great number of years from Ladak to Spiti and had lived intimately with the people, so that in a way they were absolutely imbued with the spirit of the country. Their knowledge of the language and of its dialects was very profound and they had translated the Scriptures into Tibetan. Schnabel and his wife did not by any means confine themselves to the religious side of their calling, but were Jacks-of-all-trades—engineers, doctors, taught weaving and were ready to turn their hands to anything that came along. They were evidently on excellent terms with all the people and it was really very heart-breaking to think that such harmless people should have had to suffer with many others during the War and to be taken away from their work, and excellent work it was, and which had been passed down from one missionary to another for over sixty years. They were very kind to us the whole time we were in Kailang and put at our disposal a little house some 1100 ft. higher up on the hillside which we made into a little home for ourselves, stored our heavy baggage and finally spent a month in it on our way down in the autumn. Now, unfortunately, their homes are empty, I believe, but I hope their work is not forgotten among these very nice people.

These Lahoul people had nearly all the charm and delightful friendliness and cheerfulness of the Tibet-

ans of the East, and I believe, too, as has been found both in the Kumaon Himalaya and also Darjeeling, that with a little education and encouragement one might make excellent mountain companions of them. At any rate, we made great friends and with none better than the charmingly named postmaster and his brother, Mr. Tuk-Tuk and Mr. Luk-Luk.

Here polyandry obtains. I made great friends with one Lahouli who traded much with Tibet and was a most pious Buddhist. I had several meals with him and saw the family wife shared among nine brothers, most of whom were away either with their flocks or trading at the time. We also from our house visited the monastery above Kailang and made friends with many of the Lamas. It was strange to find there one monk who had taken up photography and owned a Kodak. He and my wife made great friends with one another and she did her best to help him on with his photography. Some eighteen months later Mr. Schnabel sent us some of the products, which were not at all bad.

Kailang is unfortunately cut off from India by the very heavy snowfall which occurs in December and lasts into the spring, but which is in a way of great advantage to the country, which advantage can be seen in the really wonderful crops that are raised there and which I have mentioned before.

Todd had now joined us and we pushed up to the very interesting wool market which is held every

year at Patseo, a place some 12,500 ft. above the sea, to which great numbers of Tibetan shepherds and sheep come down, which are shorn and their wool sold to Lahouli and Kulu traders, the method of marketing being barter. They exchange the wool for sugar, rice, tea and other commodities unobtainable in Tibet. It is very interesting to watch their proceedings—many of the Tibetan camps were picturesque with their embroidered tents, forming quite interesting little encampments, the wool being done up into great rolls like skeins of knitting wool and loaded on to mules, etc., for transport to the Panjab markets.

The hillsides of Lahoul are covered at this time of the year with a kind of bluish tubular grass on which innumerable herds of sheep brought up by the Gaddis are fed. I believe over 300,000 annually pass up the Rhatang Pass on their way to the grazing ground, and I am told that this tubular grass, which actually gives a sheen to the hillside, although only growing in little bunches, is the most effective form of grazing to be found anywhere in the Himalaya. Certainly the Gaddi sheep, though small, are in excellent condition by the autumn. It was interesting at the Chelsea Flower Show some years ago to be shown some plants of this grass as a great curiosity, and it was also very pleasant to see this grass in its new surroundings.

Todd and I had an ambition to explore thoroughly this great mass of the Himalaya, of no particular

importance either to geographers or to mountaineers, which is enclosed in the great arms of the Chandra and Bhaga and also the borders of Tibet and the road leading into the remote district of Zaskar, and truly we had every opportunity of doing so. Todd had only two months' leave all told, and I could only partially accompany him as I was still one-armed. However, he and Fuhrer and the men put in a really first-class campaign, and even with my arm tied to my body but still able after a time to use the forearm and hand, I managed to get in three or four of the easier climbs, often rather an unpleasant performance as adhesions would crack on strain in a rather upsetting and extremely painful manner, but which I had been told was also a very favourable sign.

Todd, however, had a great time. He and Fuhrer and the Gurkhas managed to capture several peaks, on three of which they encountered problems of snow, rock and ice sufficiently difficult to make a first-class climb. Their performance also filled me with considerable confidence in Todd's capacity for dealing with far higher summits. For really steep rocks between 18,000 ft. and 20,000 ft., climbed at the pace at which they accomplished some of their best work, made one certain that given better conditions any of them could have reached to the very highest altitudes. The country is a mass of unclimbed peaks, most of which, however, are snow- and ice-covered. On the whole there are few which

give much extended rock climbing. The greater part of the district, though elevated and rather dry, possibly too Tibetan in character owing to the dryness, is also extremely beautiful, and the outline and general atmosphere, especially at this time of the year when a certain amount of moist wind arrives from the south, gives a colour and beauty to the mountains not encountered further north in Tibet itself. It produces, too, the most wonderful crops of edelweiss that I have ever seen, both the size of the blooms being remarkable and the number of varieties.

Before this tour was quite ended, however, my arm had so far improved that I got in at least three climbs together with Todd and Fuhrer, to my great joy, as I had looked upon myself for the remainder of that expedition as only a passenger, speaking in terms of mountaineering. Then Todd and Fuhrer, since leave was over, returned together to India and I was lucky enough to stay on until the autumn, and I really think that of that most successful six months I put in in this country, the last five weeks in the autumn were the most enjoyable, for my wife and I travelled in Lahoul and then through many parts of the Kulu Valley and its side valleys, visiting that perfectly gorgeous home of the god Jamlu and the glorious Parvatia Valley, in my opinion the pick of the whole country. Nor have I ever seen such rich colouring—the brilliance of the autumn tints above

the woods were beyond anything that I had encountered. In order to give an idea of it I can only compare the richness of atmosphere and its richness of colour with the southern Italian slopes of the Alps. At times it was almost overwhelming. The steepness of the country, too, and the romantic situation of these little hill villages and little gods was most inspiring. We enjoyed ourselves prodigiously and we also found in the neighbourhood of the god Jamlu inhabitants of those side valleys far more attractive than the ordinary Kulu people. They made nothing of the weight of my wife, who was carried over the country in the local means of transport—a hammock slung on a single pole—and we were able to do very steep and long marches, she taking, so to speak, ride and tie.

Kulu had a reputation for many years of being a fine sporting country, but in Lahoul, too, game is very scarce—ibex are to be found and those of Lahoul and Spiti are the most easterly ibex in the whole Himalaya. I believe it is absolutely true that on the eastern bank of the Sutlej there are ibex no longer, that they stop dead at the western bank. The ibex are small with short thick heads : they are also few and far between. It is also supposed to be a great Thar country, locally known as Kurt. They too are rather scarce, but there is still, I believe, fair woodcock-shooting in the winter and a considerable number of pheasants—high up, the Monal pheasant and the Tragophan

pheasant and others are in fair numbers. But nowadays the Beas River has been stocked with trout which have done particularly well as they must be among the best fed trout anywhere, and I believe they grow to a considerable size. If that is so, and they fight well in the very heavy waters of the Beas, they must give good sport.

To conclude, our Kulu expedition was a great success. My wife was able to take part in so much of our wanderings that I think her enjoyment was possibly even greater than ours (and that is saying a great deal), as she delighted in the beauty of the country and in the enormous interest afforded by the people and their habits. We made, too, very great friends with Colonel and Mrs. Tyacke, who had been many years retired in the Kulu Valley and knew the country from one end to the other, both of them being redoubtable shikaris into the bargain.

Another point: I had always desired to have a climbing holiday with a little shooting added in the Himalaya, free from that dreadful thing achievement, for a great peak comes under the head of achievement and is a siege—a serious undertaking. Here we could be as light-hearted as we liked: there were so many peaks and so much country to see that when we wanted to climb we climbed and when we wanted to wander we wandered. We owed an enormous lot to our guide Fuhrer, because not even Todd or myself had sufficient snow and ice skill or experience to

handle the sometimes rather difficult problems which even in these insignificant mountains we had to face. We had, too, an entirely new gang of Gurkhas with us to whom snow and ice were a new experience. As a matter of interest, I think our bag of peaks was about fifteen, of which some seven were in the neighbourhood of or above 20,000 ft.

It is a sad thought that Todd and all my Gurkha companions were victims of the War.

CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT WAR

1914 and July. The arrival of the post at our mountain camp, two marches beyond the Zoji La Pass on the way to Ladak. It contained newspapers, naturally many days old, but the news we received was sufficient to make us immediately break up our camp. Although they contained no definite announcement of war, still there was enough to make us both think violently, and my wife and myself immediately exclaimed : “ Back to our station as fast as we can possibly travel. What does all this mean ? ” And fortunate we were to have taken such a decision so early.

I had, as a matter of fact, just returned to the camp, having crossed the mountains behind where we were pitched, climbed a nice little peak and descended on to the Amarnath Caves, and though late in the year had managed to get down the great gorge down which the embryo Sind River flows, and finally merges into the Sind Valley. It is to these Amarnath Caves that every July a great Hindu pilgrimage takes place, where the pilgrims offer prayers to the great Ice in the Caves. This gorge when filled with snow earlier in the year is a walk, but we found it considerably more

than that, as the great accumulations of heavy winter avalanche-snow were largely melted. A delightful expedition altogether and a good scramble, and, though I knew it not, my last in Kashmir territory—that glorious Kashmir made so easy for the traveller. I very much fear that though I am certain one can wander there still, a longer purse would now be required than in our comparatively simple days.

So back to camp and to our disquietening news. We were lucky : we picked up transport, of which we required a good deal, without difficulty and raced down to the Wular Lake, crossed it to Baramula, still without any signs of commotion in the country, continued down from Kashmir, finding the rest-houses at every stage practically empty, and so with comfort to our station some two or three days after the declaration of war. If we had been three days later we should have found the whole road blocked and been overwhelmed with the masses and masses of officers and their families and travellers attempting to escape down the very long and crowded defile which leads in 200 miles to the plains. Such a debacle was never seen—every rest-house crammed and three-quarters of the people sleeping on the floor.

Then began for us the great tragedy, and in time came our orders for overseas. By now I was commanding the 1st Battalion of the 6th Gurkha Rifles. We joined the great convoy leaving Karachi towards the end of October, our final destination being still

a matter of conjecture. I shall never forget the early morning, three days later, when our convoy of some twenty-five ships steaming in two lines saw for the first time the approach of the Bombay convoy of some twenty-eight ships, steaming also in two lines, and how we joined up and formed three parallel lines of ships, some fifty-three in all, escorted by H.M.S. "Triumph" and two ships of the Indian Marine which had been commissioned as armed cruisers.

Those were the days of the "Emden" and the discipline imposed on the convoy had to be severe, but nothing untoward happened until our arrival in Suez, which took place almost exactly at the same time as that of the Australian convoy escorted by H.M.S. "Sydney," which bore on it honourable battle-scars obtained in the final elimination of that most adventurous enemy cruiser the "Emden," and had as its prisoner, too, that most chivalrous and daring of enemies, Capt. Müller, its commander.

On our way, however, we had heard of the outbreak of war with Turkey and had detached part of our troops under our own Brigadier, Vaughan Cox, to eliminate a Turkish outpost at the north of Aden. This little expedition having been successfully and rapidly carried out the convoy proceeded.

Soon we received orders to remain on the Canal owing to the outbreak of war with Turkey, and the headquarters of our Brigadier was at Port Said and Kantara, and there we were employed until the

Turkish invasion of Egypt, in either making fortifications along the coast or in improving the defences of Kantara itself, and we saw, and took part in, the very strange subsequent manœuvres.

There was a special force with its own G.O.C. detailed for the defence of the Canal, a powerful force of three Brigades and a heterogeneous mass of troops, including an Indian Cavalry Brigade at Ismailia where the headquarters of the force was situated. Egypt at the time was overflowing with troops. The whole of the Australian and New Zealand contingents commanded by Sir William Birdwood, a whole division of English Territorials and part of the Naval division were at Alexandria. I should not like to say off-hand the number of cavalry contained in this force but it was certainly very large, besides which, attached to the Canal defences, were two Imperial Service Camel Corps, very useful for desert work.

The Turks, however, in January thought fit to march from Palestine with a most inadequate force of something like a fifth of the strength of the troops in Egypt across the Sinai Desert. They were most inadequately provided for such a march, and I think in consequence that the military authorities responsible for opposing this march must have taken pity on them and thought it hard luck to restrain them in any possible way because, although the army had full information of their proceedings, both as a result of aeroplane scouting and otherwise, apparently no

steps were taken to deal with this advance other than flooding portions of the desert immediately in the neighbourhood of the Canal. In fact, the Suez Canal was used as a fosse behind which our enormous force lay idle. Otherwise, I cannot imagine why the military authorities responsible for the defence of Egypt and especially of the defence of the Canal deliberately on all occasions checked any form of offensive movement against these advancing, terribly fatigued Turks. Not a cavalry soldier moved. The troops at Kantara and the outposts at Port Said were the only ones on the east bank of the Canal, and any local offensives that our most efficient Brigadier wished to take were nipped in the bud as soon as discovered. Further, these poor, dear, tired Turks, having made a slight attack on the Canal and crept slowly and laboriously back, were not followed for at least two days, during which period they had managed to extricate themselves to the extent of retiring about one short day's march, such was the state of their fatigue and want of organisation, although unpursued.

One would have supposed that some few of our thousands of cavalry might have been used in harassing the pursuit, but no, some 14,000 hopelessly weary and disorganised Turkish troops were allowed to walk slowly back again into Palestine. There were certain elements, no doubt, which may have militated against any prodigious activity on our part. In fact, the economic spirit of the Indian Government which

was made so manifest at the beginning of the war had not even then been scotched. I was shown one order which clearly demonstrates that the restraints on ordinary instructional manœuvres were still in being.

Here is a précis of it, more or less accurate, and I put it into my own words : “ Troops are warned, especially officers commanding artillery units, that when taking up positions on the Canal banks they should not damage the trees as they are the property of the Canal Company ! ” And this, too, at the time of an invasion of Egypt ! This appears unbelievable, but for all that it is a fact. I wish the author of that order could have seen the fury in the eyes of my very pushful and enterprising Brigadier.

There was another little incident which occurred on the Canal which is worthy of remembrance. At Ismailia was stationed a Brigade formed of four Battalions of the Frontier Force, who were very largely recruited from Panjabi Mohammedans and from the different races of Frontier Pathans, all of course Mohammedans, and I think I should be correct in saying that ninety-five per cent. of them were Sunnis, that is, the most orthodox of Mohammedans. Apparently it was found politic by the powers-that-be to address them on the subject of the Turks coming into the War as our enemies, and so H.H. The Aga Khan stepped into the breach and addressed this Brigade on parade. Was this wise—yes or no, I have

often wondered—was it? He, however, rose to the occasion splendidly.

During our time on the Canal we had during a slack period a little time for enjoying ourselves and an occasional visit to Cairo. I was determined to be the first to take a gang of Gurkhas to the top of the great Pyramid. I knew that if the 5th got word of this they, knowing my habits, would most certainly forestall me and that the rascals did, for as we got near the top of the Pyramid down came Turner and Beddy of the 5th with a lot of their own people, delighted to have got the better of us, and jeering at us in what they called a suitable manner !

However, as Egypt was in no danger we were able to continue preparing ourselves for what was to come, and that we soon heard, for on 21st April we embarked to join the Gallipoli expedition. There was immense interest in the very fact that we formed part of a large force of Indian troops in Egypt. It was by no means the first time that Indian troops had arrived in Egypt, but this war was the first time that Indian troops were definitely employed in modern war against modern enemies, and the problems which they had to face were extraordinarily difficult. Many of the fields of warfare were, so to speak, in surroundings to which they were accustomed, but very largely, partly owing to the system which had obtained in India for a very long period, the actual troops themselves were at that time quite incapable of realising

what they had to face. They had always been brought up to believe that there was no other nation in the world so well armed, so well equipped as the British nation. It had always, directly or indirectly, been indicated to them that although they were very fine fellows and very fine troops, they could not really expect to compare with British troops or, if one prefers to put it that way, European troops, on the same terms.

There were then at least two Divisions of the 1st Indian Expeditionary Force who went to France, suddenly taken from their surroundings and having that kind of morale and asked to face the finest troops in the world, then at the time of Indian Divisions arrival apparently on the upward grade, who were many times more numerous than themselves and infinitely better supplied with artillery. The results which were obtained, however, and the behaviour of the Indian troops, were on the whole most remarkable.

Everyone realises who has read about the Indian contingent in France the difficulties they had in securing adequate reinforcements of officers who were able to talk with them, but I think no one can quite realise what a moral strain, owing to their previous education, these great experiences involved, and what a strain on their discipline.

Our time in Egypt and the complete futility of the Turkish attack had enabled our troops to settle down.

We knew, too, by this time that our enemy must be the Turkish Empire, and we officers knew that the type of warfare which we had in front of us was not likely to be so strange to our men as the type which they would have had had they gone to France. Speaking, too, of Gurkhas and Sikhs, it must also be remembered that their previous experiences had been largely against Afghans and Frontier tribes and that Turkey was the head and hub of the Mohammedan religion. Religion is, of course, inextricably mixed up in the Oriental mind with all phases of life, but it was very wonderful, during the whole course of the War, to see how little the Mohammedan troops in the Indian army allowed their feelings for the Turks as co-religionists to interfere with their duty to their own land and to their own Government.

But in judging the Indian army fairly, considerations of this kind must be given their place in estimating the behaviour of the troops.

So to Gallipoli, where we, the 29th Indian Brigade, were joined to the glorious 29th Division of undying memory, and formed part of the hopelessly inadequate weapon handed over to Sir Ian Hamilton for the subjugation of the Turkish Empire. Was ever a Commander given a more difficult task? Read the preliminary naval attack on the Straits, read all the accounts that have been written of the equipment, the amount of artillery and ammunition, the arrangements for transport from England, and ask yourself if

any General that you can think of had a more unpromising task offered him !

But there were other drawbacks. No attempt apparently had been made to prevent the enemy from obtaining every kind of information about the objects of the Expedition itself. Egypt was a hotbed, full of spies of every description—Grecian, Egyptian, Turkish, and others—almost impossible to eliminate. We had taken apparently every possible care ourselves to see that the Turks had full information of our intended movements. As a set-off to this, read and compare the action of the troops themselves, the landing of the 29th Division, the landing of the Australians and New Zealanders—what a soldiers' fight it all was !

I do not propose to give more than a few personal experiences of my short time on the Gallipoli Peninsula, although I was spared, so to speak, to have the enjoyment of that experience considerably longer than the average officer commanding a battalion. Most of what I have to say has to do with my own immediate surroundings. Alone to be attached to the 29th Division was a glory in itself, to form part of that Corps who had effected the landing from the "Clyde" at Seddul Bahr, and its heroic establishment of itself at Helles, has been to me a continuous congratulation. But as this work is not one of serious criticism, I shall only try to tell part of what befell the troops under my immediate command.

The great landing was effected on the 25th April—an epic in itself. There are probably few incidents in the whole history of the Great War more dramatic or where the British soldier shone to greater advantage. I shall never forget three days later, steaming into Helles in the early morning of a glorious spring day, and watching the bombardment of Achi Baba and the neighbouring hills by our fleet—the gorgeous colouring and tranquillity of the sea and the masses of shipping and the great warships in action. Even as we steamed in we could see the earth rising from the sides of the hills where the shells broke. Our own landing was effected under the lee of the “Clyde,” and even that was to us sufficiently uncomfortable as we were lightly shelled from the Asiatic shore in our rear as well as from the Turkish positions on the Achi Baba slopes.

We camped in the open that afternoon and night and listened to the fighting which was going on some mile and a half to our front, where the 29th Division was putting in their fourth day and night of continual fighting ; that night a tremendous Turkish attack was made on them, only to be driven back with terrible loss. In the meantime the Australians had established themselves further up the coast at what is now known as Anzac, and we heard, too, of the splendid behaviour of the two Indian Mountain Batteries which had accompanied them. Nothing shows more the difficulty of such a landing than the fact that the

Australians for at least two days after they first landed were dependent on these two batteries (of ten-pound mountain artillery), as it had been found impossible to land their own field and other artillery from the transports before.

During that period these two Mountain Batteries with their Panjab and Sikh gunners did yeoman's service, continually moving their guns and behaving as if they were a whole brigade of artillery and more so. They deservedly earned a great reputation.

We found the terrain quite suitable, which was a relief to us. In a few days we were moved on to the western coast of the Peninsula and most of our work was over broken and accidented ground with a good deal of scrub. This suited our men perfectly. Our neighbours, too, part of the Brigade, were the 14th Sikhs, and a harder time they had than we, being so much bigger than our people and having so much harder work in digging themselves in, in consequence. We worked side by side for the earlier part as it was not until the 4th June that we were at opposite ends of the section held by our Brigade. On that tragic day the behaviour of the 14th Sikhs was such as might form a pattern to any battalion in any army. Our experiences, too, on that 4th June were rather dramatic. As I am telling you stories only of my own experiences I must confine myself to my own people.

Previous to the 4th June, my regiment had carried out a little duty which exactly suited the genius of the Gurkha. Jutting out into the sea, almost a headland, was a bluff which dominated the left of the line of our force and we had been given the task of turning the enemy off this and advancing the line up to and beyond it. A very successful little action was carried out at night and the hill secured with very little loss, though in completing our advance on the following day the losses were very much greater. But this action had allowed us to utilise a ravine steeply cut back into the mainland which enabled us to bring up troops and ammunition entirely under cover and completely out of sight of the Turks, and it was owing to the fact that we held this ravine and the line beyond it that we were enabled to take the action we did on the 4th June. To commemorate the Battalion's success the hill received the name of Gurkha Bluff.

The action on 4th June and the attempt to advance our line much further into the Peninsula was to a large extent abortive, though the losses inflicted on the Turkish army were extremely heavy.

The truth of the matter was that the G.O.C. was obliged to attempt the impossible with quite inadequate means. The amount of artillery and ammunition available, not only for keeping up a pretty continuous daily bombardment but for providing an intensive effort such as was required for the advance

of the army on 4th June, was entirely and absolutely ludicrous. For ordinary purposes the amounts were down to two rounds per gun of ammunition a day, and even the amount saved to prepare for the battle of the 4th was hopelessly inadequate. Considering the amount of artillery at the disposal of our troops it appears, too, that the bombardment was spread over far too large a front. At any rate the attempt to break up the front line of the Turkish defences was entirely abortive and the barbed wire to the front of the 29th Brigade and in front of other troops of the 29th Division was practically untouched.

Our own task was quite sufficiently formidable, but I do not intend to go into details of the action with the exception of the little minor success which we achieved in the early morning. Our Scout Officer, Capt. Birdwood, had worked out with his Scouts and with one of the Companies, a way by which he could cross the cliff faces and enter the second line of Turkish trenches, over ground which was difficult enough to require complete familiarity with it, to render a surprise attack feasible. He effected his purpose, entered the enemy's trenches according to plan, but on the failure of the main advance was obliged to evacuate, which he did at a cost of many men, including his own life, his advance into the trenches in the early morning having been practically without loss.

After a very unpleasant day, in the afternoon it was

announced that the 5th Gurkhas were coming up to support us, having only landed in the Peninsula the day before. It was my old Battalion, and naturally I knew all the officers intimately and a very large number of the men into the bargain. To our surprise we received information that the G.O.C. at Helles had ordered an advance up the ravine known as the Gully Ravine on our right to be undertaken by Dublin Fusiliers, and that at the same time the 5th Gurkhas were to repeat the surprise attack carried out by Birdwood in the morning, and further that an officer was to be detailed to show them the line of advance across the cliffs.

I may here say that the Turkish guns were in such a position now that they covered the whole advance at a distance of less than 2000 yards, and that they could watch the progress of troops along the coast-line without difficulty. This awkward and broken ground, too, was unknown to the advancing troops. As by this time only a very few officers were left in my Battalion I was obliged to go down myself and do my best by creeping out on the cliff faces to show the officers commanding companies of the 5th Gurkhas in turn the line of advance. I don't think I ever had a more unpleasant task given me in the whole of my life, knowing full well the most hazardous nature of their task under these conditions and the practical certainty that I was saying goodbye to my best friends. Naturally the attack was a complete failure

and the heavy loss in officers and men a very great trial for a battalion to have suffered on their first action.

It is worth remarking, too, that the only troops in reserve along the whole of that section of the force consisted of two companies of the Inniskilling Fusiliers and no more.

Among the many thrilling incidents of that day, I may mention that after the complete failure of the attack along the coast while the companies were trying to extricate themselves, being very hard pressed by the Turks, was the escape of a gurkha rifleman who had been taken prisoner. He had been seized by the Turks, but slipping off his kit suddenly got away, and rushing down the steep face of the cliffs, followed by the Turks, dived into the sea, and being a good swimmer, notwithstanding that he was shot at, managed to rejoin his Company at Gully Ravine when night had fallen—an extraordinary escape and good swim.

Another remarkable incident was that of a Havildar (Sergeant) of the 5th Gurkhas, who had thrown off his pack as he was being carried away wounded, in which was his notebook containing lists of duties, etc., with his own name in it. He went to hospital, returned to India and finally with the same battalion was present at the Battle of Ramadie in Irak in September 1917. Here he obtained his notebook, which had been taken off a Turkish prisoner by a man, I believe, of the Dorsetshire Regiment who

belonged to the same brigade—a very remarkable coincidence.

Luckily for my own regiment, the orders for our advance were modified and the main attack countermanded before the whole regiment had been engaged. One Company that did advance lost nearly the whole of its strength.

I still remained one of the lucky ones, and it was not until 30th June, after our advance and re-establishment of our line some 1000 yards nearer Achi Baba and the village at its foot, Krithia, that my time arrived. We had formed part of the advance which had successfully established itself at a great bluff or headland running down to the sea, afterwards named Fusilier Bluff, where we had been continuously engaged for two days and nights, and had attempted without bombs to hold the trenches, down which the Turks came freely supplied with bombs of their own. It was here that I got my little present which took me off the Peninsula and sent me to England to hospital for a year or nearly so.

The following three or four days were among the triumphs of the Battalion or, I should say, the two Battalions of the 5th and 6th to the joint command of which I had succeeded before I was wounded. It was a curious bit of luck to find oneself in command of two Battalions of which one knew personally not only the officers who were still left but also a very large number of the men as well.

On the 3rd and 5th July the Turks launched very heavy attacks on our line, the heaviest part of their attack being directed on the coast immediately on to the front held by the 5th and 6th Gurkhas. Luckily, with proper artillery support, our musketry was adequate to destroy completely the advancing Turkish columns. On the morning of the 6th it was calculated that in front of the portion of the land held by these two Battalions there were over 1400 Turkish dead.

One rather dramatic incident was that when the great attack on the 5th July was launched in the night the Adjutant, Captain Ryan, discovered that the torpedo-destroyer which was watching the coast of Gallipoli on our left front had been withdrawn for some reason, but finally he was able to call it up by merely using his electric torch and the Morse Code, and it came into action at the very nick of time. He described to me later how wonderful it was to watch them turn the searchlight on to the advancing Turks and that he could see their shells bursting inside the light thrown by the searchlight as the torpedo-destroyer advanced at full speed towards the coast.

For two days I felt a shocking traitor, but let me say that after that the real feeling I had was relief—relief from the continual noise and relief from the continual strain and rest at last, for we had been virtually two months in the firing line. We were evacuated to Mudros by a tug, but were delayed in

the open sea waiting for the arrival of General Gouraud, the French commander, who had been most desperately wounded on the same day as myself and was evacuated by the same tug. Years after, to wit the winter of 1922, when lecturing on the Everest Expedition with Colonel Strutt at the Sorbonne in Paris, I was accorded the accolade by General Gouraud in front of the audience who had arrived to hear the lecture. I have always considered that one of the greatest honours I have ever received, from a very great man.

Yes, it was a relief to get to Mudros, to be carried into hospital and an Australian hospital, and to receive all the kindness and attention which was there offered to me. But there are always little irritations, and a prodigious questionnaire which was presented to a very tired and rather suffering officer, finishing up with a demand to know exactly his religion, only produced an access of naughtiness, for a Neo-Animist I became on arrival and a Neo-Animist I remained until I left, and nothing would move me, to my own comfort and amusement and to the officials' bewilderment.

Shortly after leaving the Peninsula the 5th and 6th Gurkhas went into retirement at Imbros, then still attached to the 29th Division, who were later sent round to join the forces at Anzac for the great actions fought on the 8th, 9th and 10th August, and the subsequent attempts on the Anzac front, and there

probably, too, they fought their hardest fights.¹ The Battalions showed their mettle again in the way that they withstood the great blizzard at the end of November, when so many thousands of our troops were frostbitten. They took part also in the final very marvellous evacuation.

Dare I here express the intense debt of gratitude and admiration which I feel for all the officers, whether British or Gurkha, with whom I was associated, and who served me under such trying conditions? It is impossible in writing so short an account as I have given, to enter into details which would carry specific names. Suffice for me to say that the reputation which they had obtained was infinitely enhanced by the still greater trials they were put to in the even more desperate fighting that occurred on their front at Anzac.

We were lucky in one way that our reinforcements of officers consisted largely of those who had been intimately experienced in the handling of native troops, which was of very great benefit to the regiment and was not always the experience of other less lucky corps of the Indian army.

By August the good hospital ship "Loyalty" reached the Isle of Wight, not without incident, as a

¹ The 6th Gurkhas and details of the South Lancashire Regiment were the only troops to reach the great ridge looking down into the Straits at Chanak. The Battalion lost all its officers, excepting the Doctor.

German submarine put down two ships within a mile of us off Ushant and that by gunfire and then came and examined us. The action was so close that it seemed just outside my cabin windows, and I can assure anybody who has not tried it that lying helpless in bed while ships were being sunk and a visit paid one by a submarine into the bargain is not the way to spend a happy half-holiday !

On arrival at Southampton Water the naval authorities who boarded us told us that we were lucky, as that same afternoon another hospital ship had been fired on and chased into Southampton Water. Our submarine commander was at any rate a gentleman. I may mention, just to add to our comfort, that while sinking the other two ships the submarine signalled to us to stop, which we did ! This also added to our comfort.

Home, hospital and convalescence, and by the middle of the following summer my wife and I, for she was willing naturally to face the journey again through the Mediterranean, returned to India. Part of my time at home had been spent in my cousin's house at King's Weston, outside Bristol, which he had turned into a great hospital and where for a time my friend, Major Abbott, another of the 6th Gurkhas, joined me. He had been far more severely wounded than myself, I being one of the lucky ones and my wounds showing every sign of completely recovering.

While at King's Weston we heard that a lone-lorn Gurkha had been discovered in a hospital in the New Forest. He had arrived in England under rather curious circumstances, and this is the story. He had been badly wounded by a bomb on the Anzac front and had apparently been left for dead on the beach, where he was found by some Australians who took him for a Maori. They picked him up and took him to an Australian hospital ship which was sailing directly for England. He did not recover consciousness for several days, and when he did so woke up to find himself on an Australian boat and unable to communicate with a soul, and was finally produced at Southampton dressed in pyjamas alone, for all the rest of his kit had been lost, and so in pyjamas he was placed in a hospital until he was identified. We promptly obtained the services of a local Boy Scout. He journeyed with a letter to the hospital in the New Forest and brought back the Gurkha, who turned out to be no less than a Havildar who had been in charge of a section of machine guns belonging to the 6th Gurkha Rifles. He lived with us for some three weeks and turned himself into my own special hospital orderly. For the benefit of those who are interested in this tale his name was Chandra Singh Rana.

So to India by the end of July. Very shortly after my arrival I was appointed to the command of Bannu Independent Brigade. The Frontier had be-

haved fairly well during the War, but at this particular time was in a very disturbed condition, raiding going on up and down the whole length of it. Luckily for us though, up to that time there had been no actually great risings. I was in charge not only of the Frontier in the neighbourhood of Bannu but also of the Tochi Valley, which runs west through Waziristan up to the Afghan Frontier, and a large part of my command was stationed in the Tochi Valley at an advance post called Miran Shah, where there was a fortified camp. I may add, in military parlance, “ or words to that effect ” !

The climate of Bannu itself in hot weather is extremely unpleasant. It lies in a basin through which the Kurram River flows, and although the rainfall is very light the climate is always damp owing to the fact that the Kurram River is used for widespread irrigation, and on it beats down that terrible Frontier sun. The climate of the Tochi Valley is infinitely superior—hot in the summer, undoubtedly, but dry. It is a curious fact, however, that Bannu itself and the Tochi are very malarious—in fact, Bannu during the first period of my arrival there headed all stations in India and Burma for unhealthiness. The fortified camp, too, at Miran Shah was probably one of the worst laid out to be found in this poor demented world, and the task of providing a healthy camp took a very considerable time. However, I spent at Bannu on the whole an active and interesting and

enjoyable period of my service, notwithstanding a breakdown in health which occurred later. Prevention of raiding and watching the tribes on the Frontier was the chief interest and also the training of the young war regiments of the Indian army sent up there to learn the elements of mountain warfare. Luckily for me, however, I had some of the intact old Panjab regiments, who were thoroughly efficient in their work, to assist. Without them the task would have been hard indeed.

The Tochi and advance posts were also held by a most efficient Corps of Frontier Militia, composed of many different tribes of Pathans, largely from the Wazir tribes, and during the early part of my time from those very wild but attractive people the Mahsuds, the first cousins of the Wazirs.

All went well until 1917, when it was found necessary to commence operations against the Mahsuds to prevent the continual raiding which was going on. A column advancing from Dera Ismail Khan entered the Mahsud country under the command of Sir William Beynon, I having charge of a smaller column which watched the northern frontier of the country.

Sir William Beynon's advance was made in the middle of summer. Perhaps that does not convey very much to an English reader, but the Frontier in summer time is a terror. At the station from which he advanced, Dera Ismail Khan, temperatures of over 120° were common ; many nights never going below

100° at any time. The rocks got so hot that pickets going out to take up positions were obliged to take blankets with them to sit on and separate porters to carry extra water for them.

The interior of the Mahsud and Waziristan country being at a greater elevation there was a slight amelioration of conditions as the columns proceeded, but always that burning sun.

There were one or two incidents which show the cleverness and wiles of the Mahsuds which might be worth describing. One of the little outlying forts, Tutnarai, lay close to the Mahsud border and was held by a militia garrison. One morning when all appeared to be quiet and still, the fort being surrounded with heavy barbed wire entanglements, and the men out in their gardens, the sole occupants of the fort being the strong quarter-guard and the only supports being pickets high up on neighbouring hills at some considerable distance from the fort and also in little fortified posts, there came along some old women with two or three girls of fifteen or sixteen and a couple of boys and sat down near the entrance to the fort and rested. After a time the men having spoken to them for a little and then got friendly, rather foolishly allowed them to go up to the fort gate, and then seeing that they were apparently only women and young things allowed them to call the native shopkeepers who were in the fort and to buy food and sweets from them.

As soon as the door was open each poor thing produced knives and pistols and in a moment all the men of the quarter-guard were stabbed or shot. Every one of these creatures was a male and armed. They seized the arm racks and opened fire on everybody within reach immediately, and from the ilex woods which cover the hills in the immediate neighbourhood of the fort came a rush of Mahsuds fully armed who, in a moment, had ransacked the fort and got away with arms and ammunition. The fort was not held for more than an hour by the Mahsuds, and the garrison excluded from the fort left looking completely sheepish. The Mahsuds escaped with exactly what they wanted—rifles and ammunition, for which every tribesman is ready to risk his life.

It sounds like an incident from old Scottish history. Naturally the fort was quickly in our hands again, but chagrined as we were by what had occurred I do not think there was one who had not a soft feeling for the skill and courage and sportsmanlike effort that the Mahsuds had made. What a queer race they all are !

Sir Francis Humphreys at that time was the Political Agent in the Tochi and he had dealings with, and was often visited by, a man who came from across the border and whose name, I believe, was Altamir. He was a professional Mahsud killer and a professional assassin, and what is more he had sworn on the Koran to kill every Mahsud at sight—a family blood feud in fact ! When I first went up there, there were still

Mahsud recruits. Altamir was always brought in to see Sir Francis wrapped in a blanket and taken away again with the same precaution so that his eye should not light on a Mahsud recruit.

However, there is something very attractive about these wild people : they are wonderfully active, many of the young men extremely good-looking and most picturesque. Fighting and robbery and raiding are their chief objects in life. And why should not a Mahsud raid ? His hand has been against everybody and everybody's hand against him from time immemorial.

His country produces just enough to keep him alive and no more, but he is a fine fighter with a wonderfully hardy physique and is a splendid mountaineer, in the natural sense and not in the sense that is understood by a climbing club.

Far more serious disturbances occurred later in this country. During the period of the Afghan invasion in 1919 the whole of this part of the mountain frontier showed signs of rising, but luckily also for the Indian Government the great risings did not occur until the Afghan invasion had been disposed of. Then the Militia regiments lost the whole of their Wazir contingents, the other classes of Pathans remaining faithful, especially the Khattak Pathan, who did yeoman's service during this very terrible period. For a time we lost the whole of the Upper Tochi, and the plains in the neighbourhood of Dera Ismail Khan

were actually invaded by the Mahsuds. In Southern Waziristan, beyond the south border of the Mahsud country, our outpost at Wano, too, had to be abandoned and there occurred a most dramatic incident.

It was the headquarters of the South Waziristan Militia, which was commanded at that time by a Major Russell. This is roughly what occurred. It was discovered that the Wazirs and Afridi soldiers of that corps were on the point of mutinying, and the outline of the steps taken by Major Russell was as follows. He determined that his officers and the Khattaks, who had remained faithful, should leave the fort and escape to the south in the direction of the Zhob and towards Fort Sandeman, but it was to be a surprise retreat as they were being watched by the doubtful classes whom he knew might mutiny and destroy him and his officers at any moment. The officers came down for several nights in succession to dinner in uniform, hoping to be able to make a sudden dash from the fort, for which all was prepared. Unfortunately the night they fixed on was also the night fixed for the rising of the mutineers, and their escape was immediately the signal for them to be set upon. However, out of the fort they got and fought a most terrible running fight during the whole of that night and the following day, passing on their way an outpost which they hoped would support them but which unfortunately proved also hostile. For nearly fifty miles the fight continued ceaselessly through this

difficult country. Russell was shot through both legs, but was tied on his pony and conducted the fight the whole time. Two of his officers, terribly fatigued, went back and fought till killed ; the remainder were finally rescued by troops from the south.

The final subjugation of the whole Mahsud country, the hard fighting that occurred in its accomplishment, the establishment of a new station at Razmak and the building of roads, is part of the history of the Frontier, and as usual the establishment of roads through a wild country is the first real step to its pacification.

Had you seen these roads before they were made,
You would lift up your hands and bless General Wade !

True now as it was after 1745.

Unfortunately for myself, my health gave way in the early summer of 1918 and, after a period of sick leave, a special Medical Board was appointed to report upon me, at a time when I had hoped and rather considered myself to be restored to health. In fact I had no doubt made rather a nuisance of myself, *vis-à-vis* the medical authorities. Hence the Special Board appointed to report on my case, which Special Board unbeknowingly did me a particularly good turn, but I was the last person in the world to realise it at the time. There was a comic side to it, too. They discovered that I was suffering, as far as I could make out, from every known disease except housemaid's knee, or words to that effect. It really was a

very formidable indictment. I was also given this counsel by the charming members of the Board with the most beneficent intent : “ Under no consideration whatever are you to walk uphill.”

“ May I go to Darjeeling and write a book ? ”

“ No, you might walk uphill if you do, and that would kill you. Now we counsel you always to go about with trinitrine in your pocket. If you feel oppressed or giddy take it.”

This early in August. At the end of August, depressed and careful of my health in a way that I had never been before, with trinitrine in my pocket and a dhooly¹ always in attendance, I found myself in Naini Tal, the hill station of the United Province. There I met a great friend, a doctor, who arranged for me to see a most eminent physician, then civil surgeon. He was a man of few words and those to the point. He spent some three-quarters of an hour examining me. After many questions I asked him about my disabilities. I had been carried up.

I said : “ What shall I do with the trinitrine ? ”

He said : “ Try it on a dog.” I spared the dog.

I said : “ What about my heart ? ”

He said : “ I wish I had got it.”

I said : “ I was carried up here. May I walk home ? ”

He said : “ Yes, run if you like.” I ran.

I said : “ May I go up a hill again ? ”

¹ litter.

He said : “ Yes.”

From that day to this I have been continually going up hills. That early autumn I travelled freely through Kumaon : that late autumn I made a far more extended tour with my wife through Sikkim ! If one travels through Sikkim one walks uphill ! The last sentence of my condemnation read : “ General Bruce should go home and lead a quiet, regular life.” I don't know whether my life has been quiet, but it has been regular. Ten seasons in Switzerland and three visits to the Himalaya point to its regularity.

Good old Medical Board ! What fun you have given me, and if you had not condemned me I should never have had the prodigious felicity of the great adventure to Everest. I take my hat off to the members of my Board !

CHAPTER XIII

HIMALAYAN WANDERINGS

THE various Everest expeditions have brought the Everest group right out of Asia into Europe. Even the first reconnaissance, which was sent out in 1921, seemed to take the public imagination more than any other expedition which had left England to explore the Himalaya, and the subsequent expeditions of '22 and '24 which followed with their many dramatic incidents and their story of strange lands, strange customs, and especially the account of the daring and determination of the members of the expedition, still greatly increased the interest that had been previously aroused. I am afraid, too, that all that was required to complete the drama was the much to be regretted loss of life which occurred. It is rather terrible to say this, but there, it is the truth, that the tragedies of Everest also made people realise more than ever what the severity of the trials had been and also the sacrifices that were made by the party to achieve their end.

It is interesting, too, to think at the present time how much less condemnation there was by the general public occasioned by the loss of life, than appeared,

say, in the correspondence in most of the English papers after the Matterhorn accident of 1865. Now it was understood that in order to obtain great ends it is necessary very often to run great risks, and that the exploration of the most difficult and most distant points of the globe may often take toll of the explorers, but the ogre Everest, the dominating point of the world, has however pushed matters to rather an extravagant degree. Many have paid for their enthusiasm. Kellas, the explorer, in the first expedition, a mountaineer and Himalayan traveller unsurpassed in enthusiasm ; and the splendid couple Mallory and Irvine, not to mention some eight or nine Tibetan and Sherpa followers and Gurkhas. Truly rather a severe sacrifice to offer to the gods of the mountains.

Tibetan and Nepalese, too, have a proverb that the gods of the mountains demand a sacrifice when their habitat is desecrated. "*Deota ko bālidan bhayo,*" said the Gurkhas after the porters were carried away by the avalanche in 1922. ("The sacrifice to the god is complete.")

The tremendous experiences of 1933 occasioned, luckily, no loss of life. Possibly the local inhabitants considered that the sacrifice had already been paid and further loss was unlikely. Let us hope that that is the case.

The many attacks on Everest, the attacks on the other giants, such as the Bauer expeditions to Kangchenjanga, and Merkl's expedition to Nanga Parbat,

the conquest of Kamet and many other great efforts, are the result of the gradual evolution of mountaineering in the Himalayas. It would not be a very great stretch of the imagination to compare this evolution with the history of the Alps. The first slow overcoming of the natural superstitions and the supernatural dangers which were always connected with the mountains in old days, the first experience by daring spirits having courage and imagination enough to push into the great mountain confines, the gradual opening of the passes and the exploration of the mountain country round them, all more or less common to the early exploration of both.

Naturally, Alpine mountain history covers a much longer period of time, due probably to the difference of population. For the Himalayas at the present time, as far as its indigenous inhabitants are concerned, are far and away behind what a Swiss or a Northern Italian population was like 200 years ago, and further, the scale of life, clothing, food, etc., still remains far beneath European standards.

The analogy may be further continued in that the necessary knowledge, not only technical knowledge of mountaineering but knowledge of conditions throughout the great range of the Himalayas and methods of travel, and also a knowledge of the native inhabitants of different parts of that great range, has slowly and carefully been acquired. There were great mountaineers and very experienced ones work-

ing in the Alps among the great Alpine professional guides as long ago as eighty years, men who were thoroughly qualified to deal with difficulties of snow and ice in particular, but I do not think that at that time, even given their great technique, they would have made any impression on the Himalaya at all, because of the innumerable other experiences for the exploration of those mountains which are necessary for such success and have since been acquired.

All the earlier exploration of the Himalaya was done by men whose knowledge, as we should consider it, of the craft of mountaineering was completely in embryo, and yet they carried through, with the help of local natives, what at that time must be considered very remarkable expeditions. Such were the Gerard brothers who as long ago as about 1818 travelled the Himalaya continually for four years, and made an attempt on Leo Pargyal in Spiti, the mountain climbed only last year by the Pallis expedition. Even in those days they reached a height of over 20,000 ft. and climbed several peaks of 18,000 ft., probably easy from a technical point of view, but the whole history was very remarkable; also Traill's passage from Milam in Kumaon over a high pass in the Nanda Devi group somewhere about 1830, for Traill lived in the Kumaon from 1817 to 1835. Then the continual travels of the indefatigable Schlagintweit brothers, who also for four years travelled on the Tibetan border, not only making

their great ascent of Ibn Gamin, the satellite of Kamet, but also visiting Nepal. And later Colonel Smyth, one of the trio of Smyth brothers who were the first party to reach the highest summit of Monte Rosa ; he travelled the Kumaon Himalaya for many years, where he was employed and where he found his Alpine training stood him in good stead. In the 'sixties, too, Mr. Johnson, a subordinate of the Survey party, did some very remarkable climbs in the neighbourhood of the Chang Chen Mo while on survey duty and reached a height of 23,800 ft. odd, the highest point up to then ever reached. He also made a number of ascents of over 20,000 ft.

To give an idea of the general attitude towards mountaineering, its utilities, etc., as a help to survey, he received a very considerable reprimand for wasting his time climbing peaks during the course of his work ! So slowly the exploration of the great range proceeded. It would be impossible even to refer to such exploration without due praise being recorded to the perfectly magnificent work of that very small but very efficient Department, the Indian Survey, but during this period of all the people who have really penetrated into various parts of the Karakoram-Himalaya it is naturally to the Survey that we must accord the palm. No doubt things were made comparatively easy for them by the mere fact that it was their duty to go there, but the extraordinary efficiency of their maps and the enterprise of their officers is

beyond all possible praise, especially when one remembers the enormous size of the country that was covered by them and the orders that they generally received to pay more attention to valleys that were habitable than to the great glaciers and peaks which dominated them.

As everyone knows, Everest owes its name to the Surveyor-General of India at the time it was first measured—General Everest. It is not well viewed by any responsible authority that mountains of any considerable importance should receive the name of any particular individual, but on this occasion not only was it given as a special mark of honour to one of the most scientific and most efficient of all Surveyor-Generals, but luckily it is a name at which no one can possibly cavil.

When the second highest mountain in the world was found and measured by the Survey party led by Colonel Godwin Austen, it received two names—it became K.2, the Survey name, and was also, in honour of Colonel Godwin Austen, named after him, but that name is dropping out of use, and much as one would like to honour a great Surveyor it is hardly suitable that the second highest mountain should be commemorated in that way.

The technical side of mountaineering since those days in the Alps has advanced by leaps and bounds, the reason being the immense interest taken by nearly all European nations in one of the finest of



THE EVEREST PARTY, 1922

all sports, considered too by many of its followers as more than a sport, almost a religion. It is a very highly technical craft, learned with difficulty, and its first exponents became professional guides drawn from many of the finest of the mountain races of Europe—the Swiss, the mountain French, the mountain Italians and the Austrians. This art has now been acquired by great numbers of amateurs, at this day as equally well trained and as equally proficient as the professionals, but it has been learned with difficulty, and efficiency acquired in the only way it is ever acquired in any great craft, by continual study and training, mental and physical.

Now among the Himalayan tribes this still remains an unknown craft. This may, to many travellers in the Himalaya, sound an exaggeration. There are from one end of the Himalaya to the other splendid mountaineers in the natural and not in the educated modern sense : men of the greatest possible stamina and activity and sure-footedness, but men who are filled with a terror of the great summits in different degrees according to the conditions of their life and according to the geographical position of their homes. There has been little up to date to egg them on, until quite, quite recent years ; to struggle for the conquest of peaks which to their minds leads to nothing, is terribly dangerous and may involve them in supernatural disaster into the bargain. There is little, too, in the way of money gain to attract them.

Among these men there have been many accustomed to deal with all kinds of difficulties and make-shifts in following game, and indeed to follow game in many parts of the Himalaya requires cragsmanship of a very high order. In many parts, too, of the range they are accustomed to deal with simpler forms of snow questions, crossing passes on business or in some parts of the Himalaya in old days on raiding expeditions, shepherds taking their flocks from one valley to another in the early part of the year and so forth ; men who have lived a hard-working mountain life, but in no part of the whole range are they properly booted and seldom clothed fit to face the exploration of the mountains.

Besides the great record of the Survey Department, we have also to remember the enterprise of sportsmen in old days. Sportsmen penetrated in search of game into many of the parts of the mountains most difficult to reach and underwent very considerable hardships in so doing. They learned how to size up mountain country, to travel well and to face difficulties and dangers which to them loomed quite as large as much greater difficulties do in the eyes of the modern trained mountaineer.

Just as in the Alps in the old days great numbers of the guides were drawn from the ranks of the chamois hunters, so in our own time over a great part of the Himalaya the old shikari who knew his way from one valley to another, or could give any account of the

heads of valleys or possibly of the way of ascending some of the local glaciers, was the man on whom one depended. And to continue another analogy, the attitude towards the supernatural is very much the same among all mountain peoples. Quoth the celebrated old Swiss guide of forty years ago, referring to the wisdom or otherwise of doing mountain ascents on Sunday : “ To attempt a difficult climb is flying in the face of Providence and unjustifiable, but with a man such as I am on an easy climb I can hold you on, no matter what they do.” (By “ they ” meaning the adverse supernatural agents.)

Quoth my Gurkha Karbir, after much experience both of the Alps and many parts of the Himalaya : “ It is curious how in these mountains there are no bhūts and no danger from the gods. In my country ” (the Nepal Himalaya), “ one could not possibly do what we are doing here. There are bhūts on all mountains and the gods do not like being invaded and the deotas get upset. Of course, too, there are bhūts in the rivers as well.”

When one compares the two there is very little difference in the attitude.

Of the earlier expeditions by far the most serious pure mountaineering expedition was undertaken by Graham, who was accompanied by the guide Imboden and after the latter’s return to Switzerland, by Emil Boss of the family of the Bear Hotel of Grindelwald and the guide Kaufmann from the

same place. Their explorations of the valleys round Nanda Devi, their attempts on Dunagiri and the Monal peak are part of the history of Himalayan mountaineering, while the actual climbing of Kabru in the Sikkim Himalaya, which is just over 24,000 ft., was their most complete performance. There was a great discussion whether they had really reached the summit of Kabru, but in the light of modern knowledge it is perfectly evident that they succeeded in so doing.

But Mr. Graham's method of describing his really remarkable record in both these districts obscured the great results which he obtained, for I think no one was a worse historian of his own deeds than this most determined and skilful mountaineer.

However, the Conway expedition of 1892 really brought the Himalaya home to Europe. On the whole, it was more of an exploration than purely a climbing venture, but a great deal of climbing was done and a fair number of summits attained. It was not, therefore, necessarily the mountaineering records which had such excellent results, it was the fact that Conway himself was, besides being an experienced climber and traveller, also a first-rate observer and wrote a book which immediately took the imagination of the public ; and it was because the Himalayas for the first time really came to Europe that the subsequent expeditions to them occurred. He was quickly followed by Mummery's historical attempt,

as before described in this book, on Nanga Parbat with its tragic results, by Mr. Freshfield's travels in Sikkim during which he marched right round the great massif of Kangchenjanga and wrote a very fine account of his travels into the bargain which was also magnificently illustrated. Already the indefatigable Bulloch Workman couple arrived in India and begun their series of travels through the Karakoram in Baltistan and in Ladak.

It will be quite impossible to draw attention to every single expedition that has been made, but they came one rapidly following the other as soon as the taste for mountain adventure in the Himalaya became popular. It was not only in the great mass of mountains north of Kashmir and in its vicinity, but to my mind possibly the more beautiful regions to the east also drew the attention of climbers and explorers.

Thus gradually was the Himalaya attacked and at the same time other explorers, from want possibly of time and money, began to interest themselves much more seriously in the lesser peaks and the lesser districts. Dr. Neve's travels in the Pir Panjal are typical. Then slowly, and by degrees, mountaineering has from that time on obtained a footing actually as a sport in a country which, in those days, looked rather askance at anybody who took to the mountains unless he had a rifle in his hand. It was very little understood what the attraction could be in merely wandering and climbing and looking at scenery with-

out the great pursuit of game to egg one on. In fact, I myself was often told that all I cared about was "bumming up" hills, as they called it. Personally I agreed: I spent most of my time in that quaintly described amusement, but this attitude has now given way to the more intelligent view of the mountaineer.

The Himalaya has now been photographed, written about and described to a great extent, but I think that it is still hardly taken in that of the whole length of the Karakoram-Himalayan system included more or less within the British purview, say some 1700 miles of mountain chain from Chitral in the west to where the Brahmaputra breaks through in the east, at least 800 miles of this is practically unvisited or unvisitable. Of that, some 500 miles belong to the State of Nepal and 300 miles of the Eastern Himalaya is almost unexplored, which latter also has a climate which does not for the moment encourage mountain enterprise. I should be very surprised, too, to hear that there is any stretch of 300 miles of mountain range, except possibly in Southern Chile, which has a more terribly humid climate.

In that great kingdom of Nepal which, as I have said, stretches for some 500 miles, travel is not allowed: it is, in fact, shut against Europeans with the exception of one single route which leads to the capital of Katmandu, but we have seen quite a portion of it photographed, either showing the tops of the mountains or taken from Katmandu and its

neighbourhood, or by the different Everest expeditions, and especially from the magnificent photographs of the Flight over Everest, but that indeed is but a small portion of the range. We know, naturally, as the maps of Nepal are comparatively good, what gorgeous country there must be waiting some day for the future explorer ; the first one who has the great luck to penetrate this beautiful country, to follow the course of the Kali Gandak and see the gorge of the Kali formed by the great mass of Dwalagiri on the west and the equally magnificent mass of Anna Purna on the east (both mountains of over 26,000 ft.) between which the river Kali has cut its way, would indeed be fortunate. That will be only a taste of the pleasures that await the future explorer.

It is very interesting to know that at last we have a supply in the Himalaya of inhabitants of Eastern Nepal with whom mountaineering has become almost a tradition. The Bhotias and Tibetans and especially the Sherpa Bhotias of that part of the world have shared in such a number of expeditions that now many of them are becoming almost expert in handling snow and ice questions. But the fact must not be lost sight of that this did not arise all at once—it was not a miracle that these people were suddenly found who had all the qualities that were required for high exploration. When they were first taken into the high mountains, irrespective of their habits of crossing high passes—which habit is also common

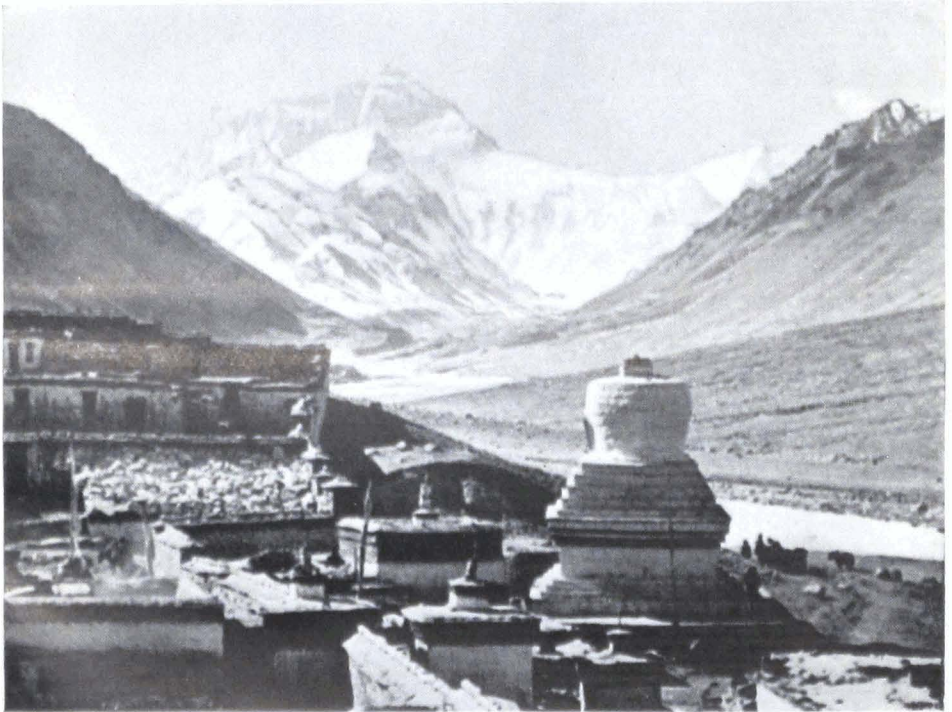
from one end of the Himalaya to the other—they were difficult to handle, terribly frightened of the supernatural inhabitants of the high mountains, difficult about their food, difficult in many ways. In country to which they were accustomed, even when one reads Hooker one finds what willing assistants they were, but in the history of Sikkim mountaineering one reads of all kinds of reports of them. Mr. Freshfield's accounts of his own porters contain much the same complaints as those made by the travellers in Kashmir—the trouble they gave about their food, their unwillingness to get up early, deserters and so forth. In fact, they went through a long period of evolution until they finally arrived at their present attitude.

During the last few years men from these races have done such excellent service that mountaineers are inclined to believe that they were born that way, but it has been the outcome of a general education, following the lines of the history of mountaineering in nearly all parts.

Now that they have arrived, glowing accounts have been given of the best of them by such tremendous warriors as the Bauer expedition, Professor Dyhrenfurth on Kamet and by the several Everest expeditions. It must be remembered, however, that even in '21 there were many complaints of them, that they failed terribly in Mallory's first attempt on the North Col, but practically the same men who then



GENERAL BRUCE ADDRESSING THE PORTERS
1924



EVEREST FROM THE RONGBUK MONASTERY

failed have since, time after time, carried loads to 25,000, 26,000 and even to 27,000 ft. Nor are they by any means the only inhabitants of the Himalayas who are capable of these efforts. Their own cousins in the Kumaon and Garhwal Himalaya, given the same opportunities, chances and practice, would develop in probably exactly the same way.

We have, for instance, the excellent Kesar Singh who did first-class work with Mr. Smythe on Kamet, and again last year (1933) accompanied Mr. Oliver on the second ascent of Trissul. But the country from which the hardest and toughest people come is the great ranges of the Hindu Kush Karakoram. Among them, the inhabitants of Baltistan, known as the Baltis, have done wonderful carrying work for every explorer who has visited that country from the time of Colonel Godwin Austen and also for innumerable shikar parties. They are a hard, tough, dependable people, but have not really either the character or the go that the true Hindu Kush man has, but curiously up to the present time some of the best representatives of the Hindu Kush and Himalayan races have failed badly when taken to the higher mountains, with the exception of those splendid porters who accompanied the Visser expedition in some of the most difficult country of the world beyond the Shimshal Pass between Hunza Naga and Baltistan.

And again even further west among the Chitralis who are nearly equally as enduring as the Hunza men

and who are accustomed, as are the latter, to cross their high local passes. They freely showed every sign of despondency when with Captain Culverwell, whose expedition was the first to explore the last great group of immense altitude, that of Tirich Mir. These mountaineers, however, were deterred by the terror of the local fairies. Time is the best medicine for that and also experience, but the terror of the supernatural has always loomed larger in Asia than it has in Europe at any time.

In my own wanderings through the Himalaya I have noticed among the inhabitants of different districts how very much better they are and how much more difficult propositions they will tackle in their own immediate neighbourhood than even when taken a short distance from it. So in many parts of the Himalaya I have found men who have failed me at problems which were really for them perfectly simple, and over country which, difficult as it was, they would have thought nothing of had it been near their own accustomed district. One of the little mistakes that travellers from Europe are likely to tumble into when referring to the natives of the Himalaya whom they have employed, is to give one the impression that they were the only natives of the Himalaya, whereas no range in the world contains a greater variety of people, different in religion, in physique, in language, in habits and customs and especially in their outlook on the mountains.

When Dr. Longstaff and Mr. Mumm and myself were up in Garhwal and employed the Marcha Bhotias, many of whom were really first-rate people, they always made a point before starting on a big expedition of getting very, very drunk the night before and being perfectly hopeless the following morning. One cannot imagine such an attitude in the Hindu Kush, nor can one imagine in the Hindu Kush such events as we saw at Mana. These same Marcha Bhotias gathered round their local priests while the priest himself became possessed by the local deotas, threw fits and foamed at the mouth, while he gave out the message of the god or goddess as to whether it was propitious to carry out any particular work.

One of the great advantages of using Indian soldiers who come from mountain districts is that they have so enormously advanced in their mental attitude. I have been lucky naturally myself in having spent most of my life in a Gurkha regiment among whom I was able to find men from suitable districts, and lucky enough to pitch upon a number of extremely enthusiastic ones. But they are by no means more natural mountaineers, more gifted or more suitable than many other mountain races included in the Indian army; take, for instance, the men whom Capt. Morris in his attempts on Kamet took with him and who did such excellent service: they were men from the Murree Hills and first-rate.

It is, however, naturally discouraging to try and

train soldiers as, being men with a profession, one cannot expect to have them always at one's disposal ; and just as a man begins to show signs of a proper understanding he is, as he is also likely to be very intelligent, promoted or otherwise employed and becomes unavailable. This, too, is more likely at the present day than ever before owing to the very high standard of education required in the army and through the greater number of activities required from soldiers.

I must say, however, that my luck was particularly good, as I got from among my men what one would call one's leaders in the actual mountains, for I was never myself, though no doubt a plotter of adventure, sufficiently skilful a mountaineer to lead a party with safety and address, where the technical difficulties were really considerable. In fact, of the great number of new peaks, great and small, which I have had the luck to ascend, I should never have got up if it had not been for my companions, nor do I think they would have got up if it had not been for me.

The Conway Expedition drew attention to another great want in the outfit of travellers whose object was to tackle great mountains, and that was the selection of foods. I think for the first time he carefully laid out a proper programme when ordering his supplies. In many ways his ideas were first-rate and I have no

hesitation in saying that the actual kind of supplies which he took with him have since been comparatively little improved upon. Naturally, of course, as the finances at his disposal were limited the expedition was obliged largely to live on the country, but for high places and where food was difficult to obtain he had made an excellent choice of foods which had been prepared in England.

Since then the whole question of the supply of high mountaineering parties has naturally advanced, but again based on the experience of the early travellers. It was considered for many years that an expedition to the Himalaya required a prodigious expense and special outfit. This, however, is only necessary for parties that go for the greatest peaks, for to tackle these one has to adopt practically Arctic methods. It is, in fact, a siege : in all likelihood ordinary cooking cannot be accomplished, special fuels have to be taken and suitable foods for the very diminished powers of digestion which humans suffer from beyond a certain altitude. But even now, with our knowledge of acclimatization and of the adaption of the human frame to high altitudes, no less in fact than the true training of the mountaineer, a much greater latitude has been found possible. At the same time, a scientific and properly balanced diet is what is necessary for great altitudes. What people in the old days lost sight of was the fact that their bodily condition was such that their appetite had to be specially

tickled in order to make them adequately nourish themselves, but it has now been found that the training of the body and properly applied methods of acclimatization to those specially gifted people who are able so to acclimatize, gives us a far greater latitude in foods to the very great benefit of the climbers themselves.

But to my mind the true enjoyment of the Himalaya—its life, the beauty of the mountains and the enormous scope there is for mountaineering of a lesser degree of strenuous endeavour than on the great mountains, but at the same time sufficient to satisfy even the boldest—is to be found in the lesser ranges; and if it is mountaineering that is required there is plenty of adventure and plenty of peaks to be found in the smaller ranges, and to visit them an infinitely smaller outfit is required. There is, however, one point to which I must again draw attention, and which is the most important of all for the explorer of the Himalaya and especially for the mountaineer—that is to have a really dependable digestion, because to travel light and to travel efficiently one should live on the country, and that one can do without cutting oneself too low. It is true that a small party of young mountaineers or sportsmen, owning very little of this world's goods, can, if they are sufficiently sound in health, have a magnificent time on the very roughest food, especially if they are lucky enough to be stationed anywhere

near the mountains themselves. And it is wonderful what splendid expeditions can be carried out, even combined with a little shooting, in short spaces of fifteen days if one is willing to face a very light camp, food probably cooked by oneself or one's immediate attendant and the possibility of having to carry one's own load. Luckily porters (or coolies) are generally easily and cheaply obtained, but there have been many occasions in my own experience where I have been in districts or under conditions when it was necessary for me and my men to move our own camps, and in the future that will very likely be more frequent than in the past if, as I hope, the enterprise of the explorer of the lesser ranges and lesser valleys continues to flourish. Prices of transport all through India are greater than before, and also the whole system of "bigar" or forced labour is now practically done away with.

Originally, I believe, the system arose from the fact that the settlement of land also carried with it the duty of providing transport for travellers at a fixed price and that the head-man of villages was obliged to fulfil the reasonable desires of travellers. In nearly all districts now this is in abeyance, even I believe in Kashmir, and in consequence, the rates of porters have generally been fixed higher, and their demands often higher than the rates. This may cause hardship to many mountaineering parties who cannot spend much money, and it will mean harder work on the part of the mountaineers themselves.

In my old days I have often done short trips into the Kaghan mountains in the following way. My men would be sent on with my light camp two or three days ahead and I would follow later, driving when it was possible to drive, then by pony and then by legs until I caught up my camp. Then we would move on and in the space of a very short leave of ten to fifteen days would come back, often having traversed across a ridge, seen new valleys, got a peak or two and a couple of passes. In order to do this, however, I lived practically with my men and drank and ate too anything I could get from villages. I think the milk and buttermilk which I have drunk from many shepherds' encampments would be enough to poison half London, but luckily the little gentlemen inside me, who deal with this question, had got extraordinarily proficient after a course of long and strenuous training in coping with the most ferocious enteric or other enemies.

Let us take, too, the history of Dr. Kellas. Dr. Kellas lived harder than almost any mountaineer that has ever visited the Himalaya. His camp was hardly a camp at all: he lived entirely with his Bhotia porters and his success, not only as a traveller and an observer but actually as a mountaineer, was phenomenal. I put down very largely the success of the Sherpa and Bhotia porters whom we have used so much on Everest and who have been used by other expeditions, to the splendid training which they had

under Dr. Kellas and the confidence which they thus obtained. But poor Dr. Kellas was a little too old for that very hard life, and extreme exposure and rough feeding was his downfall. But what an explorer he was and the most modest man that ever travelled the Himalaya.

One of the most difficult things of all in arranging an attack on one of the giants is the psychological question. Every time there has been an Everest expedition, one of the most difficult duties of the Committee has been the choice of members. It is very hard to find suitable people for such expeditions: there are so many qualities required, especially as the question of the individual reaction to great altitudes can never be determined until the mountaineer himself reaches these altitudes, and the reaction of each individual seems to be very different indeed.

The ideal party has undoubtedly been the members of the Bauer expeditions to Kangchenjanga. I believe they all came from the same city, Munich, they belonged to the same mountaineering club or clubs in that neighbourhood, and they deliberately under their leader set to work to train themselves for a long period to undertake their great effort. They worked together as friends, they trained as mountaineers, they trained themselves to carry loads and to stand great exposures. They worked together as a team and they went out to India as a team on both expeditions, a team already tried, knowing each

other's capacities and being accustomed to work together and, besides that, they were all first-rate mountaineers and excellent travellers. That was the ideal outfit.

In England our situation has been more difficult, and if it were possible, and it might be possible, for first-class mountaineers to form themselves into a team or even to work together for a season or so in the Alps, both winter and summer, in many ways that would be the ideal we should aim at. But it is terribly difficult to arrange. Our amateurs are so scattered, and they are so individual that it would be almost impossible to carry out such a preliminary preparation as that undergone by the Bauer teams.

This ideal, however, should never be lost sight of, and if when the time comes and Tibet is once more open and we are again able to send out another expedition, it would be splendid to think that they went out like a boat-race team, with the leader possibly representing the cox and every other member of the expedition, no matter what his side-show might be, an experienced and thoroughly qualified mountaineer into the bargain. What an ideal! but terribly difficult for us to achieve. Of course by "side-shows" I mean the doctors, the transport officers, botanists, etc., but each member of the party should be a skilled mountaineer too.

One lives and learns and that is one of the things we have learned from our past experience. But no doubt

every Everest expedition learned and profited immensely by the previous ones, and in nothing more than in their psychological outlook. It is curious to think that before 1921, as far as it is known, the only outfit that had spent a night at 23,000 ft. was that of Mr. C. Meade's expedition to Kamet, and when in 1922 we were face to face with Everest 23,000 ft. was looked upon as a very serious undertaking indeed. When the expedition was over, some of the members had actually spent as much as fourteen days and nights at that height, and not only had all records in altitude been broken, but many of the prophecies of the physiologists in England had been shown to be wrong.

But the experiences of 1922 were again immensely advanced in 1924, and, as it happened, the weather and general conditions then were infinitely more trying to the climbers. By the experiences of these two expeditions also, the 1933 expedition profited and again raised the standard of what first-class men are capable of undertaking.

I have often been asked by those interested in India—sportsmen and others resident in the mountains—why Himalayan trained men should not be taken and why it should be necessary to go to Europe and the Alps. That is a question which is extremely easily answered. The training country *par excellence* is the Alps. Every young man who wishes to qualify as a mountaineer will be taught more by a

season of a couple of months under first-class exponents in the Alps than he would learn in half a dozen years in the Himalaya where he will have to dig out his own experience. And in those two months in the Alps he will do quite treble the amount of climbing that he could expect to do even in the nearer ranges of the Himalaya. To begin with, one must travel in the Himalaya to get to the mountains, and travel takes time however delightful it may be, and it is nearly always quite delightful.

Then again one must remember that the snow line itself is so infinitely higher. Unless one is prepared to handle one's own light camp oneself, under present-day conditions one might find it very difficult to obtain porters in some districts even to go as high as 15,000 ft. Then the types of climbing which one would get in two months in Switzerland of all sorts and kinds, one would find practically impossible to obtain in the Himalayas without going back to the nearly great ranges.

Again, although, as I have before stated, there are plenty of very, very capable, independent scramblers and magnificent load-carriers in the mountains, they are asked to do what they are unaccustomed to as a rule and it takes time, too, to weed them out. It must not be supposed, however, that one season in Switzerland is sufficient to provide a real knowledge of mountaineering; that is a little warning on my part.

The ideal qualification for a Himalayan moun-

taineer is, first, that he must be thoroughly experienced, which should mean that he must have had several seasons of first-class work, probably as a leader, in the Alps or other mountains. Secondly, he should be in his full strength and young. These are the two qualities which together are so difficult to find. To be efficient as a rock climber takes a comparatively short period : to be a really efficient snow and ice man is a very, very much more difficult and lengthy undertaking.

It is therefore apparent that for the great sieges in the mountains where any of the members of the party may at any time be called on as a leader under difficult and dangerous conditions and often, too, to help heavily laden porters to move their loads over difficult country at high altitudes, there should not be a single weak member.

Of course, I have not made these remarks to discourage, because with a very little practice and very little experience magnificent days of scramble and exercise can be obtained in the much smaller ranges, as I have before stated, without real risk if ordinary commonsense and a little experience is there. There is, after all, nothing like an apprenticeship in the great centres of mountaineering. I may say, looking back on my own experience, that I would have given very much to have had it before hurling myself at even the minor ranges as a complete and absolute beginner. My one snow mountain was the Wetterhorn, as before

referred to in this book, dragged up between two large and experienced guides who had probably climbed the mountain a hundred times apiece.

Since the foundation of the Alpine Club in England (actually the first Alpine Club which was born to this world, to the great benefit of mountain life and adventure), mountain clubs have been formed in Europe and America and nearly everywhere where mountain adventure is possible, and the latest but by no means the last of these children and grandchildren of the parent club is the Himalayan Club, whose headquarters are in Simla. It has been founded on the wisest of wise lines. It is not purely a mountaineering club, nor does its name lend itself to such interpretation. It is interested in all that is related to the great Asiatic chains and to mountain life, in all the possible activities of the mountains, in the life of the people, botany, zoology, biology, travel, sport and mountaineering as well. It has been splendidly organised and suffers from only one great drawback, and that is, that its active membership, naturally considering the conditions of life in India, is always changing, for it is from a floating population that its membership is drawn; but so virile does the infant appear to be and so quickly is it growing in strength and so interesting is the Journal that it produces, that it is at the present time extremely flourishing. It occupies itself, too, with all attempts to explore, whether done by Britons or by visiting mountaineers,

and it is hoped in time that it will assist, also, by the establishment of huts at suitable places. It is almost impossible to describe to people accustomed to European conditions the difficulties which the club must encounter in carrying out its ambitions to the full, with the small amount of money it has at present at its command.

It is strange at the present time, that the most gorgeous part of the Himalaya, the starting-place for which is, after all, only twenty-four hours from Calcutta, cannot be reached except by the roughest of mule paths and tracks, and up to now no real attempts have been made to develop its possibilities as a playground.

The Himalayan Club are doing their utmost to facilitate access to many of these glorious countries, and it will undoubtedly be a work worth doing. Mountain sport has filled the eye so largely for so long in England, and no doubt there has been a certain feeling about vulgarising the mountains, but one cannot possibly vulgarise the Himalaya—that is out of the question; but there has never been any effort on the part of Government to encourage ordinary travellers to enjoy a beauty second to none to be found in the world. It is this attitude that the Himalayan Club has set itself to counteract, and may good luck go with it.

There has been much futile talk of late in the English newspapers of the want of enterprise among

the younger generation. The history of Himalayan mountaineering in the last ten years gives the complete lie to such an insult to young Britons. At any rate, never in the course of the history of Himalayan exploration has the young man shown up better. The history of Everest alone points to that, and records of similar expeditions in different parts of the range only confirm this statement.

Yes, the very great mountains are for the young man, but the old men when they get beyond facing even the lesser summits and perhaps when the call of comfortable hotels and comfortable beds or, at any rate, comfortable camps is too strong, can still enjoy the mountains, or as Professor W. P. Ker used to say, "sit and glower," and where can man glower better than in viewing these glories ?

In a hundred days of the good I could not tell the
glories of Himachal,
As the dew is dried up in the morning so are the sins of
mankind
By the sight of Himachal.

Many, many years have I worshipped at this shrine.
Can it be that my sins are too great to have profited
by it ?

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