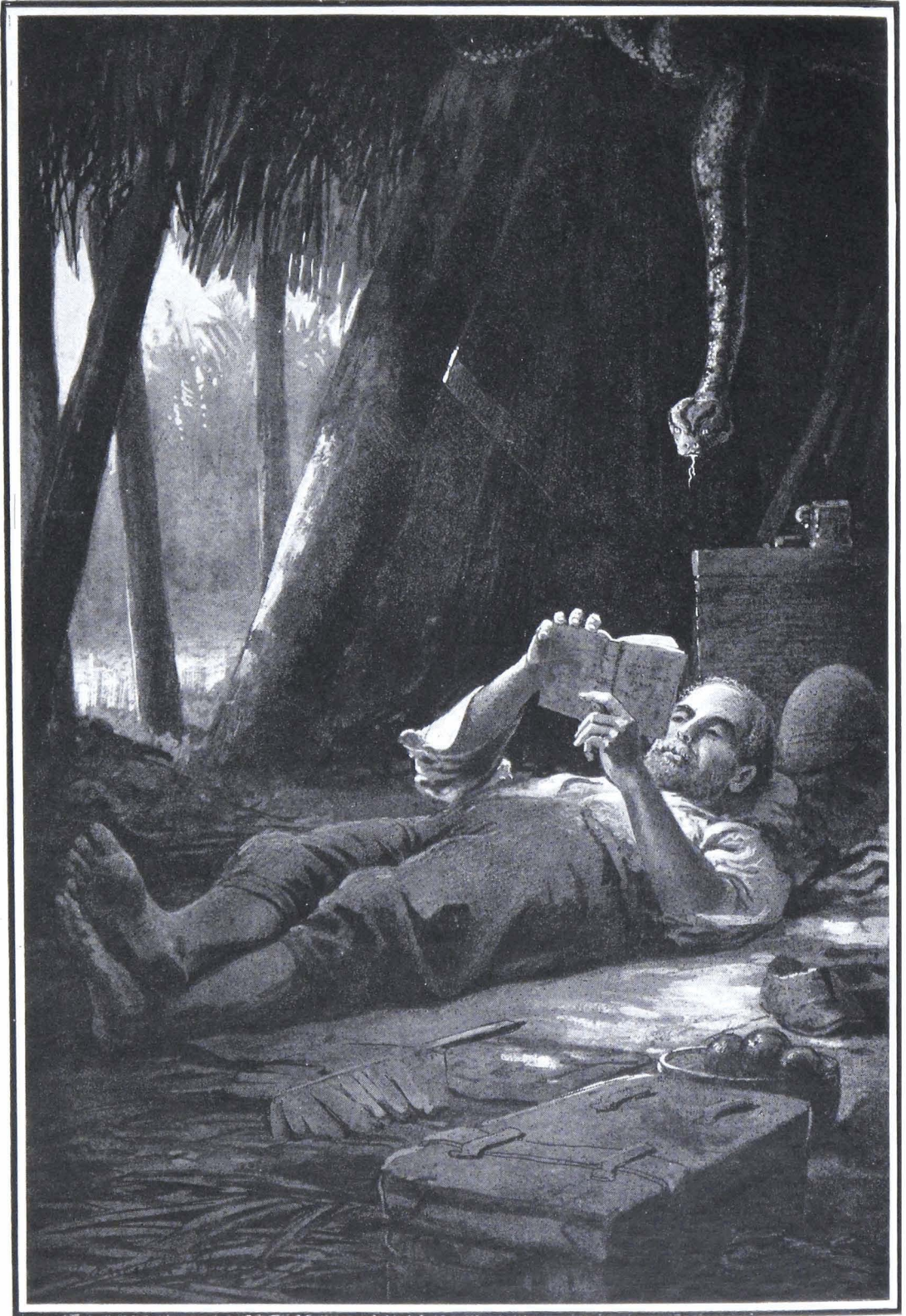


MISSIONARY
HEROES
IN ASIA



LAMAS OF TIBET



DR. CHAMBERLAIN WAS QUITE UNAWARE THAT A HUGE SERPENT
WAS HANGING OVER HIM

Missionary Heroes in Asia

TRUE STORIES OF THE INTREPID BRAVERY
AND STIRRING ADVENTURES OF MISSIONARIES
WITH UNCIVILIZED MAN, WILD BEASTS AND
THE FORCES OF NATURE

BY

JOHN C. LAMBERT, M.A., D.D.

AUTHOR OF

"THE OMNIPOTENT CROSS," "THREE FISHING BOATS"

&c. &c.

WITH TEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE author desires with much gratitude to acknowledge his debt to the following ladies and gentlemen, who have most kindly assisted him in gathering the materials for this book by giving their consent to his use of their writings, by lending him books and photographs, or in other ways :—

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Prefatory Note

publishers, which have most courteously allowed him to make use of the books mentioned in their proper places at the end of each chapter, and in some cases of illustrations of which they hold the copyright :—

The South American Society ; the Religious Tract Society ; The Clarendon Press ; Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier ; The Fleming H. Revell Co. ; Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton ; Messrs. Morgan & Scott.

INTRODUCTION

IN a "foreword" which he contributes to Dr. Jacob Chamberlain's attractive missionary book, *In the Tiger Jungle*, Dr. Francis E. Clark expresses the opinion that one need not patronize sensational and unhealthy fiction to find stirring adventure and thrilling narrative, and then goes on to say :—

"There is one source which furnishes stories of intense and dramatic interest, abounding in novel situations and spiced with abundant adventure ; and this source is at the same time the purest and most invigorating fountain at which our youth can drink. To change the figure, this is a mine hitherto largely unworked ; it contains rich nuggets of ore, which will well repay the prospector in this new field."

The field to which Dr. Clark refers is the history of modern Christian missions. His meaning is that the adventurous and stirring

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side of missionary experience needs to be brought out, and emphasis laid upon the fact that the romantic days of missions are by no means past.

There are stories which are now among the classics of missionary romance. Such are the expedition of Hans Egede to Greenland, the lonely journeys of David Brainerd among the Indian tribes of the North American forests, the voyage of John Williams from one coral island of the Pacific to another in the little ship which his own hands had built, the exploration of the Dark Continent by David Livingstone in the hope of emancipating the black man's soul.

But among missionary lives which are more recent or less known, there are many not less noble or less thrilling than those just referred to; and the chapters which follow are an attempt to make this plain.

There is, of course, a deeper side to Christian missions—a side that is essential and invariable—while the elements of adventure and romance are accidental and occasional. If in these pages the spiritual aspects of foreign mission

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work are but slightly touched upon, it is not because they are either forgotten or ignored, but simply because it was not part of the writer's present plan to deal with them. It is hoped, nevertheless, that some of those into whose hands this book may come will be induced by what they read to make fuller acquaintance with the lives and aims of our missionary heroes, and so will catch something of that spirit which led them to face innumerable dangers, toils, and trials among heathen and often savage peoples, whether in the frozen North or the burning South, whether in the hidden depths of some vast continent or among the scattered "islands of the ocean seas."

In the recently published *Memoirs of Archbishop Temple* we find the future Primate of the Church of England, when a youth of twenty, writing to tell his mother how his imagination had been stirred by the sight of Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand starting for the Pacific with a band of young men who had devoted themselves to the propagation of the Gospel among a benighted and barbarous people. "It is not mere momentary enthu-

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siasm with me," he writes ; "my heart beats whenever I think of it. I think it one of the noblest things England has done for a long time ; almost the only thing really worthy of herself."

It is the author's earnest desire that the narratives which follow may help to kindle in some minds an enthusiasm for missions like that which characterized Frederick Temple to the very end of his long and strenuous life ; or, better still, that they may even suggest to some who are looking forward to the future with a high ambition, and wondering how to make the most of life, whether there is any career which offers so many opportunities of romantic experience and heroic achievement as that of a Christian missionary.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE contents of this volume have been taken from Dr. Lambert's larger book, entitled "The Romance of Missionary Heroism," published at five shillings.

A HEROINE OF TIBET

CHAPTER V

A HEROINE OF TIBET

Mysterious Lhasa—The lady who tried to lift the veil—In the Himalayas—On the Chino-Tibetan frontier—The caravan for Lhasa—Attacked by brigands—The killed Goloks—Among perpetual snows—A Tibetan love story—Noga the traitor—The arrest—Return to China—In the Chumbi Valley.

WHEN an armed British expedition struggled over the Karo-la Pass, which exceeds Mont Blanc in height, and entered Lhasa on the 3rd of August, 1904, there was a brief lifting of the veil of mystery which has hung for centuries around the city of the Grand Lama. But the wreathing snows, which began to fall so heavily around the little army before it reached the frontiers of India on the return journey, were almost symbolical of the fact that Lhasa was already wrapping herself once more in her immemorial veil of cold aloofness from European eyes. Prior to the arrival of this military expedition, only one Englishman, Thomas Manning, had succeeded in reaching

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Lhasa, and it will soon be a century since his bold march was made. Sixty years ago two French missionary priests, the Abbés Huc and Gabet, undertook their celebrated journey from China to Lhasa, which they afterwards described in a very interesting book. But though they reached their goal, they gained little by it, for they were soon deported back to China again. No Protestant missionary has ever set foot in Lhasa, and what is more, no Protestant missionary, with one exception, has ever made a determined attempt to reach it. And to the honour of her sex be it said, the one who made the attempt and all but succeeded was a lady, and a lady with no other following than a couple of faithful Asiatic servants.

The character and career of Miss Annie R. Taylor remind one at some points of the late General Gordon. There is the same shrinking from public notice, the same readiness to be buried from the sight of Europe in some distant and difficult task, the same courage which fears nothing, the same simple, unquestioning trust in the care and guidance of a heavenly Father. Miss Taylor went out to China in 1884 in the

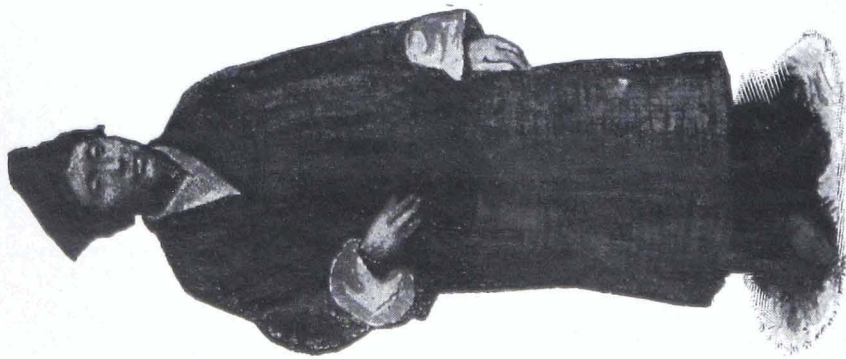
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service of the China Inland Mission, and worked for some time at Tau-chau, a city which lies in the extreme north-west and quite near the Tibetan frontier. In 1887 she paid a visit to the great Lama monastery of Kum-bum, the very monastery in which MM. Huc and Gabet had stayed long before while they were learning the Tibetan language. The memory of these two adventurous priests may have stirred a spirit of imitation in a kindred heart, but what chiefly pressed upon Miss Taylor's thoughts as she stood in the Kum-bum lamasery and looked out to the west, was the vision of that great unevangelized land which stretched beyond the horizon for a thousand miles. That this land was not only shut, but almost hermetically sealed, against foreigners she knew perfectly well. But her dictionary, like Napoleon's, did not contain the word "impossible." She recalled Christ's marching orders to His Church, "Go ye into all the world!" and said to herself, "Our Lord has given us no commands which are impossible to be carried out." And if no one else was ready in Christ's name to try to scale "the roof of the world," and press on

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into the sacred city of Lhasa itself, she determined that she, at all events, would make the attempt.

Her first idea was to make India her point of departure, for Lhasa lies much nearer to India than to China, though the comparative shortness of this route is balanced by the fact that it leads right over the Himalayas. She went accordingly to Darjeeling, pressed on into Sikkim, which had not yet passed under British rule, and settled down near a Tibetan fort called Kambajong, with the view of mastering the language thoroughly before proceeding any farther. From the first the Tibetan suspicion of all strangers showed itself. The people would often ask her in an unpleasantly suggestive manner what they should do with her body if she died. Her answer was, that she had no intention of dying just then. The intentions of the natives, however, did not coincide with her own, and they next resorted to a custom they have of "praying people dead." Their faith in the power of prayer did not hinder them from giving Heaven some assistance in getting their prayers answered. One day the chief's

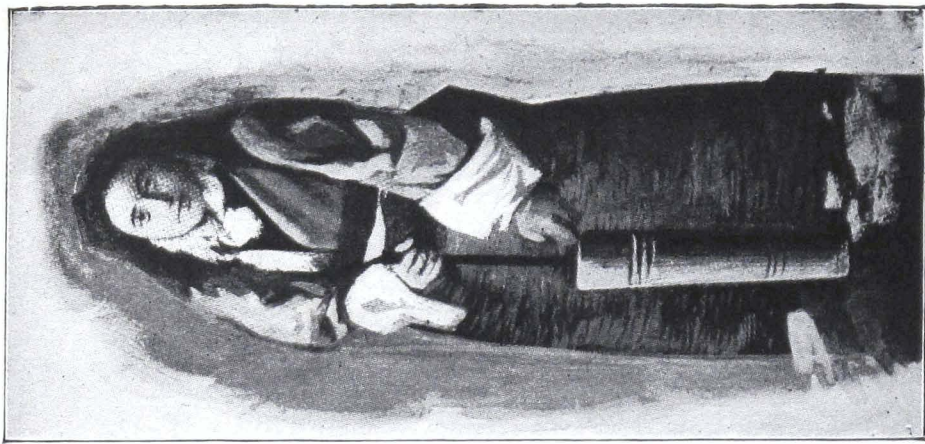


PONTSO
Miss Taylor's servant



TAKING TEA IN TIBETAN STYLE

In the centre is Miss Taylor; at the left is Pontso, holding a leather bag of barley flour; on the right is his wife, holding the teapot. The three wooden bowls are the teacups. At the extreme right is a bamboo churn; in front of it goatskin bellows with an iron funnel; and in the centre, in front, are leather bags for tea, butter, etc.



CHURNING TEA

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wife invited Miss Taylor to dinner, and set before her an appetizing dish of rice and eggs. She had not long partaken of it when she fell seriously ill, with all the symptoms of aconite poisoning. On her recovery she wisely left this district, and settled down to live the life of the natives themselves in a little hut near the Tibetan monastery of Podang Gumpa.

After a year spent in this way, for ten months of which she never saw the face of a white person, she realized the impracticability of making her way to Lhasa by the Himalayan route, which is far more jealously guarded than the one from the frontiers of China. She decided, therefore, to return to China, and to make it her starting-point. Her time in Sikkim had not been wasted. In the first place, she had not only learned Tibetan thoroughly, but had acquired it in its purest form as spoken at Lhasa. In the next place, she had gained a friend and attendant who was to prove of invaluable service to her in her future wanderings. A young Tibetan named Pontso, a native of Lhasa, had met with a serious accident while

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travelling on the frontiers of India. Some one directed him to the white lady for treatment. He had never seen a foreigner before, but the kindness and care with which Miss Taylor nursed him in his sufferings completely won his heart. He became a believer in the religion which prompted such goodness to a stranger, devoted himself thenceforth to the service of his benefactress, and justified the trust she placed in him by his unfailing courage and fidelity.

Taking Pontso with her, Miss Taylor now sailed to Shanghai, made her way up the Yangtse for 2,000 miles, and then on to Tau-chau on the Tibetan frontier. By way of preparing herself still further for her projected march into the interior, she visited a number of lamaseries in that region, made friends with the lamas, and learned everything she could about the Tibetan religion and ways of life and thought.

About a year after her return to Tau-chau the opportunity came for which she had been waiting. Among her acquaintances in the town was a Chinese Mohammedan named

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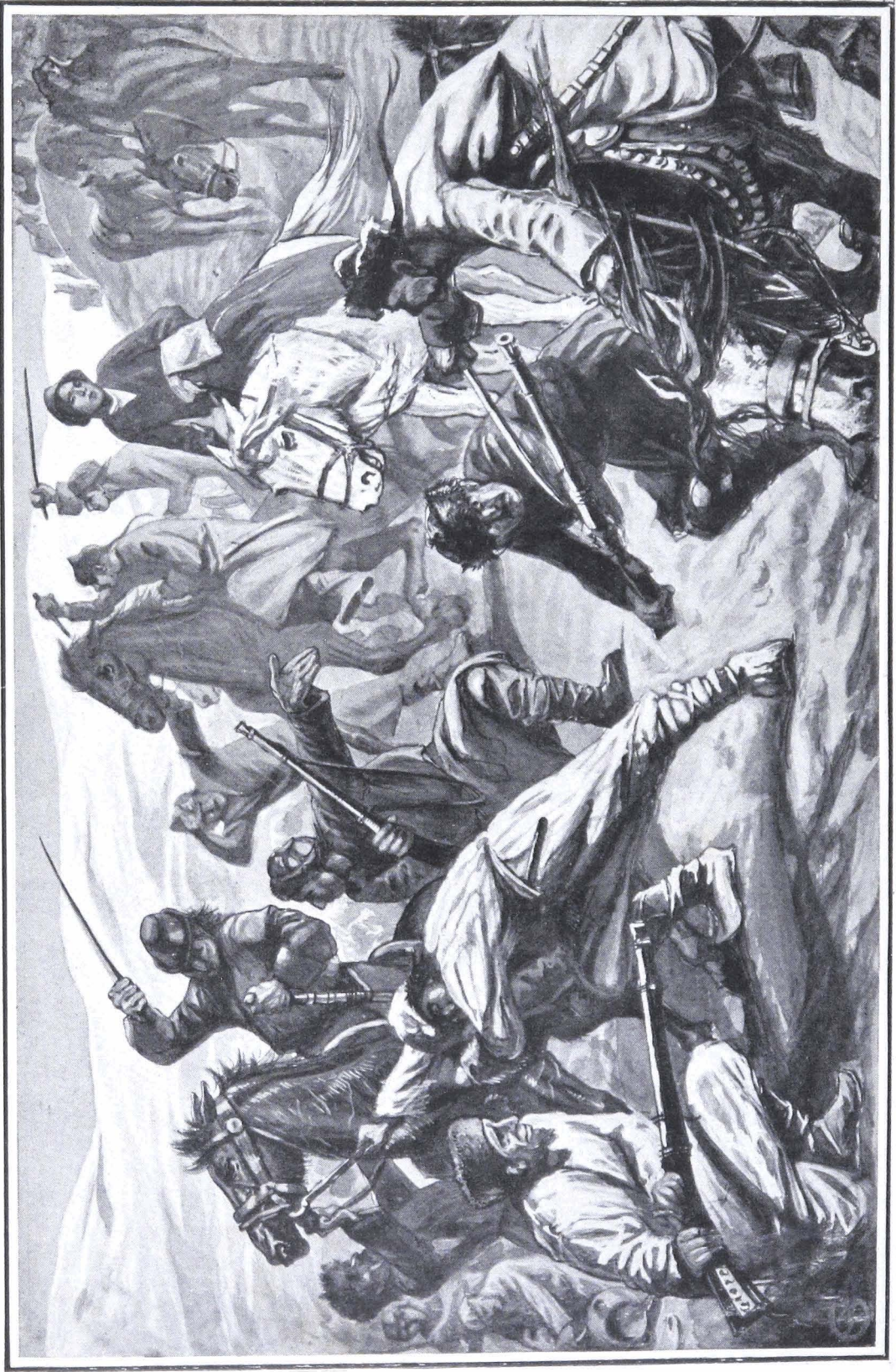
Noga, whose wife, Erminie, was a Lhasa woman. Noga was a trader who had several times been to Lhasa, and on his last journey had brought away this Lhasa wife. According to a Tibetan custom, he had married her only for a fixed term, and as the three years named in the bond were now fully up, Erminie was anxious to return to her native city, and Noga quite willing to convey her back. The only question was one of ways and means, and when they found that Miss Taylor wished to go to Lhasa, Noga made a proposal. He would himself guide her all the way to the capital, provided she supplied the horses and met all necessary expenses. Miss Taylor at once agreed to his terms, which, if the Chinaman had been honest, would have been advantageous to both parties. But Noga was a deep-dyed scoundrel, as Miss Taylor soon discovered to her cost.

It was on the 2nd of September, 1892, that this brave Englishwoman set out on her heroic enterprise. She was accompanied by five Asiatics—Noga and his wife, her faithful attendant Pontso, a young Chinese whom she had en-

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gaged as an additional servant, and a Tibetan frontiersman, Nobgey by name, who asked permission to join the little company, as he also was bound for Lhasa. There were sixteen horses in the cavalcade, two mounts being provided for most of the travellers, while there were several pack-horses loaded with tents, bedding, cloth for barter, presents for chiefs, and provisions for two months.

They had not proceeded far into the wild country which begins immediately after the Chinese frontier is left behind, when their troubles commenced. They came suddenly upon a group of eight brigands who were haunting the mountain track for the express purpose of relieving travellers of their valuables. Fortunately the brigands had not noticed their approach, and were seated round a fire enjoying the favourite Tibetan meal of tea—a meal in more senses than one, for Tibetans thicken the beverage with a handful of barley meal, so that it becomes a kind of gruel. Moreover, the robbers were armed with old-fashioned matchlocks, the tinder-boxes of which it took some time to light, and as Miss



MISS TAYLOR AND HER PARTY ATTACKED BY TIBETAN BRIGANDS

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Taylor's party, though weaker in numbers, were better armed, they succeeded in beating off their assailants.

Three days after, they overtook a caravan of friendly Mongols travelling in the same direction as themselves, and in view of their recent experience, thought it wise to amalgamate their forces. Their satisfaction at being thus reinforced was not long-lived. Almost immediately after a band of brigands 200 strong swept down upon the caravan, entirely surrounded it, and began firing from all sides. Two men were killed and seven wounded; resistance was hopeless, and the whole company had to surrender. The Mongols and Nobgey were robbed of everything, and had to turn back; but as the brigand code of honour forbids war upon women, Miss Taylor and her four attendants were allowed to pass on their way, not, however, without being deprived of two of the horses and a good part of the luggage.

The next stage of the journey lay through the land of a strange people known as the Goloks. This is a fierce and warlike race, bearing some resemblance both in habits and dress to the

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Scotch Highlanders of other days. They draw up their sheepskin garments by a girdle so as to form a kind of kilt, and leave their knees bare, while covering the lower part of their limbs with cloth leggings fastened with garters of bright-coloured wool. Like the Highlanders of long ago, they have a great contempt for law and authority, and acknowledge neither Tibetan nor Chinese rule. The chief delight of their lives is to engage in forays upon people of more peaceful tastes and habits than themselves. Issuing in large bodies from their mountain glens under some fighting chieftain, they sweep down upon the people of some neighbouring tribe, and carry off as booty their cattle, horses, sheep, tents, and other belongings. Among the Goloks Miss Taylor would have fared even worse than she had already done at the hands of the brigands, but for the fact that the part of the tribe with which she first came in contact was ruled by a chieftainess, a woman named Wachu Bumo. On discovering that this white traveller was also a woman, Wachu Bumo took quite a fancy to her, and not only saw to it that she was treated courteously so long as she

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remained in the Golok valleys, but insisted on furnishing her with an escort of two Golok horsemen to see her safely on her way for some distance after she had left the country of these marauders.

It is characteristic of Miss Taylor that in her little book, *Pioneering in Tibet*, she says hardly anything about her own hardships and sufferings in that long march through one of the wildest regions of the world. For a great part of the way, it must be remembered, the route ran among mountains covered with perpetual snow. Rivers had to be crossed which knew neither bridge nor ferry nor ford. Winter too was coming on, and they had often to advance in the teeth of blinding storms of sleet and snow. In England Miss Taylor had been considered delicate, but a brave spirit and a strong will carried her through experiences which might well have broken down the strongest physique. Shortly after they had left the land of the Goloks the cold and exposure proved too much for her Chinese servant, a tall, powerful young man. Miss Taylor does not dwell upon the circumstances of his death, but a

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glimpse like the following is suggestive by its very reticence : “We buried him at noon. A bright sun lightened up the snow-clad hills when the men dug up a few hard sods in some swampy ground close by, laid down the body in its shroud of white cotton cloth, and covered it as best they could with the frost-bound earth. At night the wolves were howling round the grave. This was in the Peigo country.”

In a little mountain town called Gala Miss Taylor made the interesting acquaintance of a couple, Pa-tegn and Per-ma, whose marriage had a flavour of romance unusual in Tibet. From infancy Pa-tegn had been dedicated to the priesthood, and had been brought up accordingly in a lamasery. But when about twenty years of age he suddenly fell in love with Per-ma. The course of his true love could not possibly run smooth, for celibacy is as binding on a Buddhist lama as on a Romish priest. But “one fine day,” as Miss Taylor puts it, “this Tibetan Abelard disappeared, and in company with Per-ma made his way to Lhasa.” Here he discarded his priest’s robe and became

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a tailor. After a child had been born to them they decided to return to Gala, and by means of a judicious present succeeded in soothing the outraged feelings of the local chief. In the house of this couple Miss Taylor stayed for some time to rest from her fatigues, and when she was setting out again persuaded Pa-tegn, who was an experienced traveller and knew Lhasa well, to come with her in place of the Chinese attendant she had recently lost. It was fortunate for her that she secured his services. He proved a capable and devoted follower, and it would have gone ill with her, as she soon found out, but for his presence and help.

They were now in the very heart of the mountains, and Noga, the Chinese guide, feeling that Miss Taylor was thoroughly in his power, began to appear in his true character. Both he and his wife had behaved very badly from the first, but it now became evident that his real purpose all along had been to rob and murder his employer before reaching Lhasa. More than once he made deliberate attempts on her life, but on each occasion the vigilance of

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Pontso and Pa-tegn defeated his villainy ; and at last he contented himself with deserting her altogether, carrying off at the same time, along with his wife, a horse, a mule, and the larger of the two tents.

The little party of three—Miss Taylor and two Tibetans—was now reduced to such straits for lack of food that the only remaining tent had to be bartered for the necessaries of life ; and though it was now the middle of December in that awful climate, they had henceforth to sleep in the open air. When night fell they looked about for holes in the ground, so that they might have a little shelter from the high and piercing winds which in those elevated regions are constantly blowing. A march of several days brought them to the Dam-jau-er-la Pass, one of the loftiest and most dreaded passes in Tibet. Here the cold is so paralysing that it is not uncommon for some travellers in a caravan to be completely overpowered by it, so that they drop down helpless by the wayside. There they are simply left to perish, since any halt on their account might mean death to others of the company.

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At length the waters of the Bo-Chu were crossed, the boundary of the sacred province of Ü, in which Lhasa stands, and the goal of the journey seemed almost in sight. But alas for their hopes! In the middle of a deep gorge through which the path ran, two fully armed Tibetan soldiers sprang out from behind the rocks, ordered them to halt, and took them prisoners. This was on January 3rd, 1893. Miss Taylor soon learned to what this arrest was due. Noga, after deserting her, had hurried on in front for the purpose of lodging information that he had met two Tibetans conducting a European lady towards Lhasa. Guards were accordingly placed at all the approaches, and Miss Taylor had walked into a prepared trap. For several days she was kept a prisoner, surrounded by about twenty soldiers, and having no better shelter by day or night than a narrow coffin-shaped hole in the ground. At last she and her two attendants were brought before some chiefs who had been summoned from Lhasa, and a trial was entered into which lasted for days, communication with the capital being kept up all the while by special messen-

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gers. Word came from Lhasa that the white lady was to be treated courteously, and this injunction was carefully attended to. But the issue of the trial was never in doubt. When only three days' march from the Sacred City, nearer than any of the later European travellers had succeeded in getting, Miss Taylor had to turn back and retrace every step of the weary way from the frontiers of China.

The return was even more trying than the advance, not only because hope was now turned to disappointment, but because winter in all its rigour now lay upon the land. The Tibetan authorities, though firm, were not unkind, and supplied Miss Taylor with provisions, some money, and two horses. But the Tibetan climate made up for any gentleness on the part of the Lhasa chiefs. The cold was almost unspeakable, and the food they tried to cook over their dung fires had often to be eaten half raw and little more than half warm, since at the great elevations of the mountain passes water boiled with very little heat. For twenty days at a stretch they had to sleep on the ground in the open air, the snow falling around them all

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the while ; for tent they had none, and there was no sign of any human habitation. Their greatest difficulty, however, was to keep their horses from starving in that frozen land. In Tibet the emergency ration for horses in winter is raw goat's flesh, which they eat greedily ; but Miss Taylor could not afford to buy goats. All that could be spared to the poor steeds was a little tea with cheese and butter stirred into it, with the result that the famishing animals ate the woollen clothing of their riders whenever they got a chance.

Miss Taylor reached China safely once more, seven months and ten days after she had set out for Lhasa from the city of Tau-chau. She made no further attempt to penetrate to the Sacred City. The very year (1893) which witnessed the discomfiture of her heroic effort was marked by the signing of the Sikkim-Tibet Convention, which secured a trade-mart at Yatung, on the Tibetan side of the Indian frontier, open to all British subjects for the purposes of trade. In this political event Miss Taylor's discerning eye saw a missionary opportunity. From China she returned once more to the Himalayas, and

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started her remarkable mission at Yatung, in the Chumbi Valley, where by and by she secured the assistance of two other ladies—Miss Ferguson and Miss Foster. Nominally she is a trader, this being the ground of her right to settle down within the borders of the Forbidden Empire, and in point of fact she carries on some trade with the people of the district, who much prefer her dealings to those of the Chinese merchants and officials. But first of all, as both Chinese and Tibetans know, she is a missionary, partly to the bodies (for her mission is provided with a dispensary), but above all to the souls of her beloved Tibetans. “The trading is not a hardship,” she writes. “If Paul could make tents for Christ, surely we can do this for our Master. So those who are ‘called’ to work for Tibet must be prepared for the present to sell goods to the Tibetans or attend to their ailments, as well as preach the Gospel to them.” Seldom surely in the annals of Christian missions has there been a more romantic figure than that of this heroine of Tibet, who nearly succeeded in reaching Lhasa, but having failed, turned, with a sanctified common sense which might almost

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be described as apostolic, to the open door offered by the trading regulations of the Sikkim-Tibet Convention of 1893.

The story of Miss Taylor's march upon Lhasa, together with some account of her pioneer mission in the Chumbi Valley, will be found in her book, *Pioneering in Tibet* (London : Morgan and Scott).