

TIBET AND LHASA.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. C. WHITE, ESQ., C.I.E.

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PREFACE.

THE origin of the word "Tibet" is doubtful; it is not a local name, as the natives of the Trans-Himalaya speak of their country as Bodh-yul, or Po-yul; Tibet may be a corruption of "To-bodh," *i.e.*, "the further Bodh" country. However, Tibet, or Tibet Proper, is now considered to be the country comprised in the provinces of "U" and "Tsang," of which the capitals are Lhasa and Tashe-Lhunpho. Up to the end of the seventeenth century Lhasa was accessible for Europeans, and there was a flourishing Capuchin Mission there, but from the middle of the eighteenth century Chinese influence became paramount, to the gradual isolation of Tibet Proper. Father Huc and Gabet were the last Europeans to see the Potala, the Dalai Lama's residence, until the late mission arrived there. From native explorers, particularly Rai Bahadurs Sarat Chandra Das, C.I.E., and Lama Ugyen Gyatsho, a very fairly accurate description of Lhasa and Tibet has been obtained, wonderfully correct when it is remembered under what dangers and difficulties they laboured.

General opinion of the nature of Tibet Proper has been misled by the accounts of Pregevalsky, Bower, Littledale, Sven Hedin, and others, who, travelling on the north, did not succeed in passing into Tibet Proper, and had to wander for weeks in undulating deserts at an average elevation of 15,000 feet. Near the Tsanpoo river, which flows through the centre of Tibet, the country is not a plain but rather a series of wide valleys, in many places remarkably fertile. These are separated from the next series by high mountains, but wide deserts are unknown. It is this country that we are now illustrating.

The photographs were taken during the last "Tibet Mission," which was necessitated by the stupid obstinacy of the Tibetans. China, in the Chefoo Convention of 1876, promised to protect and assist a scientific mission, should our Government decide to send one from India. No advantage was taken of this until 1885, when the late Mr. Colman Macaulay, C.I.E., obtained the necessary

passports from Peking. In May, 1886, the scheme for the mission was sanctioned, but immediately afterwards stopped by the Home Government for whom Lord Rosebery, by consenting to withdraw the mission, obtained from China important concessions on the side of Upper Burma, then but recently acquired. The effect however on this frontier was that Tibetans, in vain conceit that they had inspired us with fear, invaded Lingtu and built a fort there, within sight of Darjeeling. Long and unsuccessful remonstrances ensued, until at last, in March, 1888, the Government of India were forced to send a small expedition to drive the garrison out of Lingtu fort. The Tibetans assembled a force from every part of their country, and made a stand at Tukola and the Jelapla; but in September, 1888, were finally driven across the acknowledged boundary of Sikkim. The Government of India, peaceful as ever, declined to allow any of their officers or men to remain on the other side, although the country was entirely and rightfully at their mercy. Negotiations with the Chinese Viceroy (assisted by Tibetan Councillors), resulted in the Convention of March 17th, 1890, and the subsequent articles of December, 1893. In these later negotiations the Chinese officers were assisted by Penchoo Dorje, Shafe Shate-se, who was lately the trusted minister of the Dalai Lama. For ten years the Government of India strove, by all peaceful measures, to prevail upon the Tibetans to observe (even were it but nominally) the provisions of their own agreement. The Tibetans not only declined to take part in the work of demarcating the frontier, but even destroyed some of the pillars erected on what they admitted was the boundary. In 1902, a small force had to be sent to persuade them to withdraw from the north of Sikkim; and, in 1903, when arrangements had been agreed to, by which a meeting of all parties was to be held at Khambajong, they not only refused to send proper delegates but prevented the Chinese Amban from leaving Lhasa; and finally, to crown all, they seized and carried off into confinement two British subjects, and refused to release them.

The Government were, therefore, compelled to send the recent Tibet Mission Force; and even then gave the Tibetan authorities every facility for negotiation at places short of Lhasa. They obstinately neglected these opportunities, with the result that a satisfactory settlement was only obtained at Lhasa itself.

A short description accompanies each photograph.

KHAMBAJONG.

(TWO PHOTOGRAPHS.)

This is the name of the Fort, which is surrounded by a small village.

It was the first place in Tibet visited by the Mission, and where the negotiations commenced. It is beautifully situated at an elevation of 15,700 feet, and in the summer the climate is perfect.

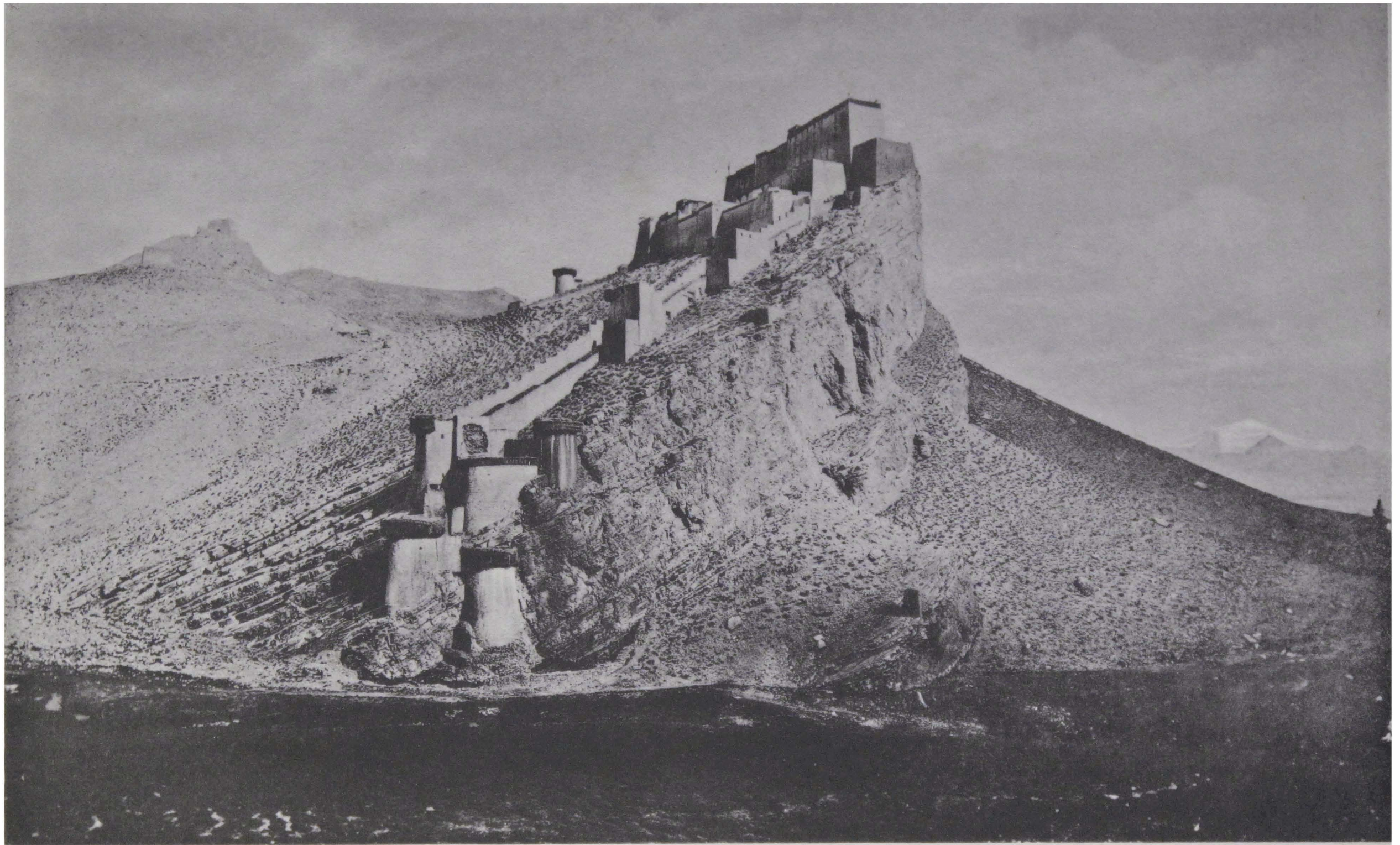
Lying just to the North of the main Himalayan chain, it commands an uninterrupted view for over 150° of some of the loftiest peaks in the world, including Everest, which is reported to be the highest, viz., 29,001 feet.

It has a very dry climate, due to the presence of the mountains to the South, which keep off very nearly the whole of the S.E. Monsoon. The rainfall at Khambajong is only six inches in the year.

The contrast of this vast plain was very striking, coming as the Mission did from the deep and very precipitous valleys of Sikkim.

In spite of the very great altitude of Khambajong, barley ripens there, and the crop is by no means a poor one. I fancy it is the highest place in the world for corn to ripen.

These Jongs or Castles are scattered all over Tibet, and it is difficult to obtain any history of them; but they appear more like Feudal Castles, from which in bygone days their owners issued forth to raid their neighbours.





MOUNT EVEREST FROM KHAMBAJONG.

This view is one taken with a telephoto lens from a distance of ninety-one miles. Everest stands up well, and even at this distance looks a veritable giant.



GROUP OF NUNS.

This was taken at the Nunnery of Tatsang, a most desolate spot, from which not a single habitation is to be seen. Our visit was a red letter day to the women, as none of them had ever seen a white man before.

The wigs are made of sheep's wool and, like the rest of their clothes, indescribably dirty.



THE ABBOT AT KHAMBAJONG.

The Abbot was sent by the Tashi Lama to meet the Mission. He was a very placid tempered individual, and said he did not know why he had been sent on this work, as his work was purely devotional and that he knew absolutely nothing of politics or the world. This photograph was taken in his own tent.



CHONGU.

This small but beautiful lake is only twenty miles from Gantok, the Capital of Sikkim. It lies at the foot of the Nathu La, at about 12,500 feet above sea level; it was here that the troubles and difficulties of those who crossed the Nathu La began in the journey to Tibet, and it was here that they ended on the homeward march.



THE AMO CHU RIVER.

This river flows down from Tibet through Chumbi and Bhutan to the plains of Bengal, and comes out near Madan Hat on the Dooars Railway in the plains. A survey has been made of this route, and if a road be made from a point in the Bengal Dooars direct to Chumbi along the course of the Amo Chu it will, perhaps, become the most important trade route between India and Tibet, as it avoids the lofty passes between Sikkim and Chumbi.



PHEMA.

A village on the Amo Chu, from where a bullock transport worked to Chumbi. This is a typical village of these valleys, all of which are most picturesque and beautifully situated.



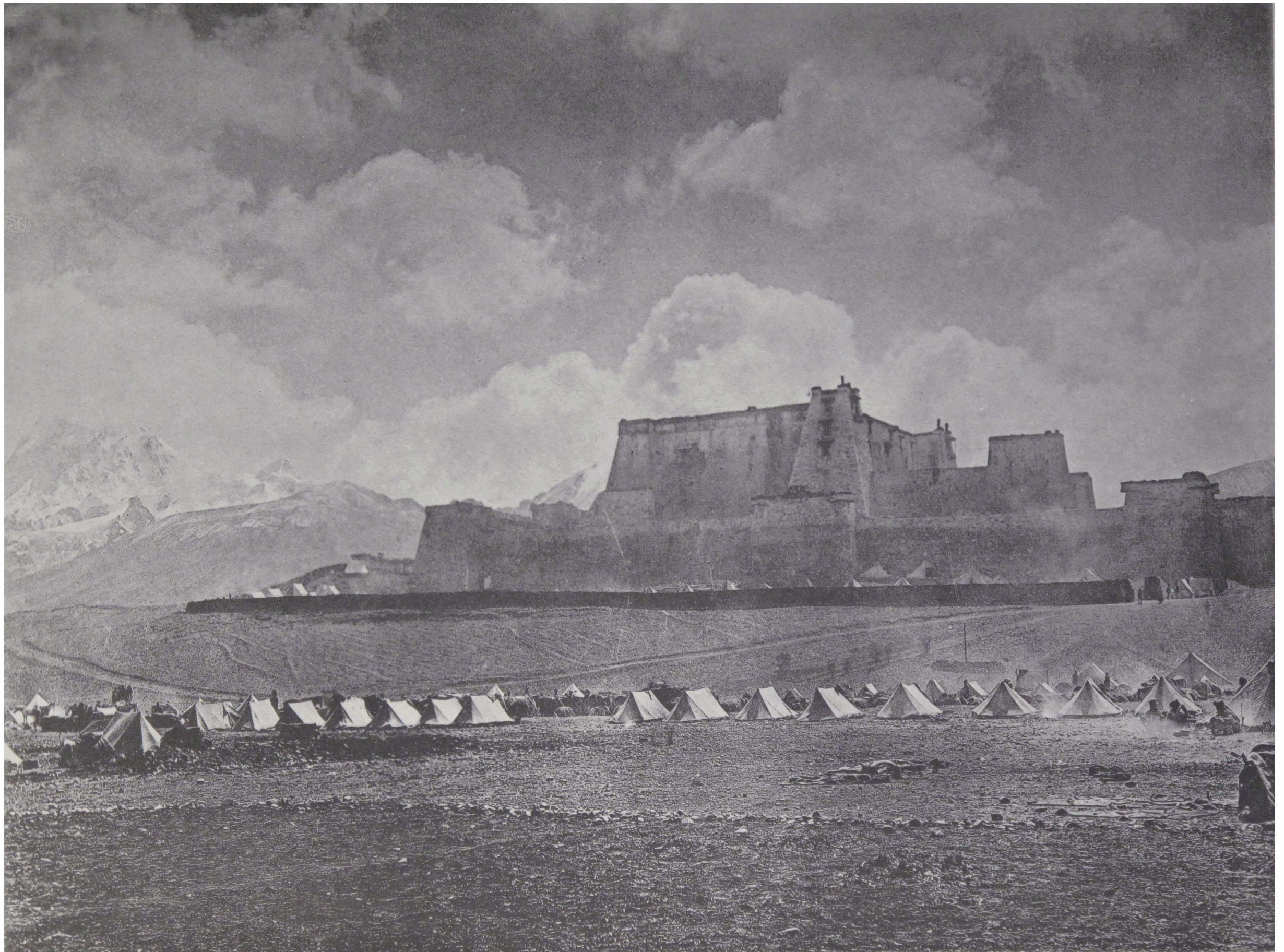
BRIDGE AT PHEMA.

This is a view of a cantilever bridge over the Amo Chu, where one reaches the valley a few miles before arriving at Chumbi.



PHARI JONG.

Also shows Phari Jong, with Chumulhari in the background.



SAMUDA.

A post between Kalatso and Kangmar.



YAKS IN EKKAS.

These great shaggy animals have never previously been used for harness work, and the experiment was looked on as a rash one. It turned out splendidly, as though the newly-harnessed Yak occasionally stampeded and brought destruction to the ekka and its contents, they soon settled down and proved most useful.



GYANTZE JONG.

This photo shows clearly the enormous natural strength of the rock-fortress, which was so gallantly stormed on the 6th July, 1904.

The rock rises precipitously some 400 feet above the plain. All the houses and buildings are of stone and loopholed, and at the foot of the hill is a network of dirty alleys and hovels from which the enemy kept up a heavy fire.



THE GOORKHA POST.

This was an outpost to the house in which the Mission and escort lived, and was held by the 8th Goorkhas. It was very near the Jong for the Tibetans, as will be seen by the numerous holes in its walls. It was the post which was attacked at night, and in which attack the Tibetans lost so heavily.



NISHI KANG SANG GLACIER.

This shows the force encamped just below this magnificent glacier, on the night before the second forcing of the Karola.



After forcing the Karola the force encamped a few miles beyond it, near the place shown in this photograph.



VIEW OF THE YAMDOK TSO.



VIEW OF THE YAMDOK TSO.

This splendid view was obtained from a height of about 18,000 feet, and was taken looking back from above the Khambaha, S.E. across the Yamdok Tso to the snow in the far distance.



THE TSANGPO OR BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY.

This view was taken from the lofty spot from which the previous illustrations of the Yamdok Tso were photographed. From this position the Yamdok Tso is seen on one side, and on the other, but at a much lower level, the far-famed Tsangpo River.



CHAKSAM FERRY.

This view shows the point of embarkation and the crag from which the ropes were manipulated and the crossing controlled.

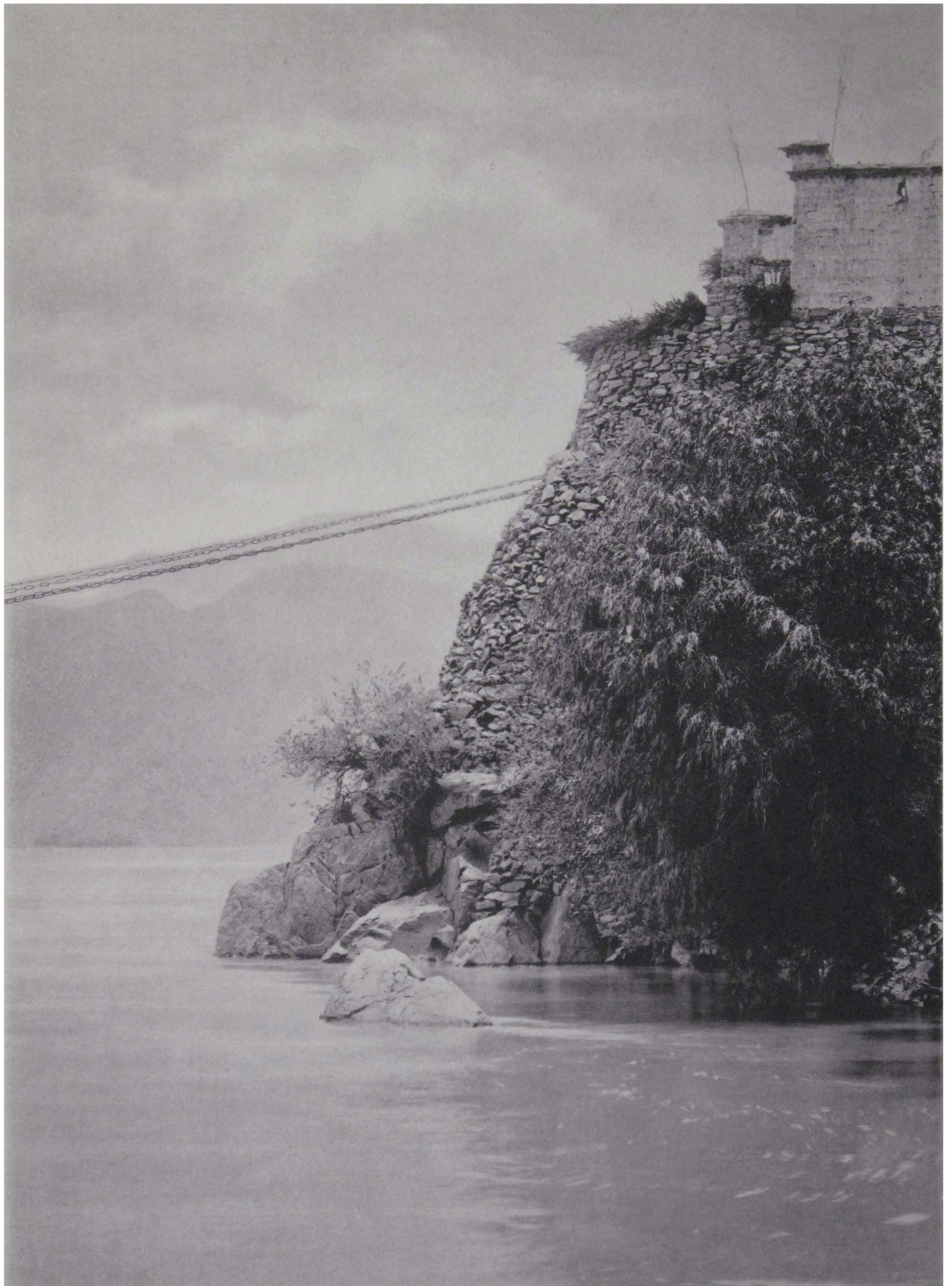
. It was just off this spot that Major Bretherton was drowned.



CHAKSAM FERRY.

The two following photographs show the old, disused iron chains from which hung the bridge long since abandoned.





TWO VIEWS UP THE KYICHU VALLEY.

The Kyichu river flows into the Tsangpo about six miles below Chaksam, and here the force left the Tsangpo and marched up the right bank of the Kyichu to Lhasa.





TROILUNG BRIDGE.



DEBUNG MONASTERY.

This vast building, the largest and richest Monastery in Tibet, is situated in an embayment amongst the hills, about four miles outside Lhasa.

It is officially supposed to contain 7,700 Monks, but there are, as a matter of fact, over 10,000 living there. Debung is a monastic town of steep, narrow stone-paved streets and substantial stone houses. It has one vast hall, 300 feet square, where the whole Monastery assembles on great occasions, and there are also four Gumpas for the four sections into which the Monastery is divided. The hall and the Gumpas are dirty, and contain nothing of exceptional value or interest. The Monastery was built about 500 years ago.



A GROUP OF LAMAS OF DEBUNG MONASTERY.

This photograph was taken on the Parapet of Debung.



AN IMAGE IN ONE OF THE GUMPAS OF DEBUNG MONASTERY.

The appearance of the image in the photograph suggests greater magnificence than really appertains to it. The background is only of wood, covered with gold leaf, and the jewels in the crown are mostly glass or turquoises.



NEJUNG MONASTERY.

(FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS.)

The Nejung Monastery—The Monastery of the Chief Oracle of Tibet lies hidden in a grove of trees just a few hundred yards to the east of Daipung Monastery—only the golden roof shining amongst the trees marks its existence.

On entering the gate one finds oneself in a large square Courtyard paved with stones; with a small granite monolith in the centre, with the usual gilded top. On each side is a large cauldron in which incense is burnt, and between these a small enclosure full of hollyhocks. Round the courtyard on three sides run broad galleries supported on two rows of columns painted red. Round all the middle row of pillars are hung suits of ancient armour made of short flat lengths of steel extremely flexible, bound with leather, and probably entirely arrow proof. Above each suit hangs the steel helmet. Spears, bows, arrows, and leathern quivers also hang along the walls, and the whole forms a most interesting collection, most effectively set off by the long, broad galleries, and by the curious and extremely well executed frescoes which surround the walls. These frescoes are done with water colours mixed with glue and laid in mud plaster. The subjects depicted are gruesome in the extreme, consisting chiefly of fearsome-looking demons torturing the bodies of the damned. Each fresco is perhaps ten feet square, and the prevailing colour is dark red, with green, blue and yellow in various hues.

Leaving the galleries one comes to the stone steps leading to the Gumpa itself. These are flanked by two huge dogs made of tin, and one coloured green and the other blue. The steps lead to the verandah of the Temple, which is perhaps sixty feet long and fifteen broad, the floor is

of small stones, polished, and very slippery, and everything is most beautifully clean. Two rows of pillars, eight in each, support the roof. These pillars are painted red, and are covered round with dark red cloth. The tops of these pillars and the cornices are beautifully decorated, being hand-painted in a most exquisite pattern of blue, red, and gold; no large splashes of colour, but each little portion beautifully finished off, and the whole blending in a delightful colour scheme which forms, together with the frescoes round the walls and the brilliantly coloured panels of the doors, a most vivid, pleasing, and artistic combination.

There are four frescoes, two on each side of the doors; the latter, facing the steps, are five in number, the centre with two panels, with two doors of one panel each on either side. These frescoes are similar to those in the galleries, but brighter in colour.

The pattern of the border which runs along the top is common to all. It is a chain of hands, skulls, and arms entwined, and, between them, inverted heads, with the hair painted hanging down to make an effective (?) break in the line of the border. To describe the subject of one fresco is to indicate the nature of all.

In one a huge black monster is depicted standing in the middle. Round his shoulders hangs a robe of gold embroidered in red and green, and golden chains hang round his neck. In his right hand is a long spear with which he is just beginning to pierce the middle of some lost body at his feet. Around him are numberless smaller demons, some skinning bodies alive, others shooting with bows and arrows, and still others engaged in forms of torture too gruesome to describe.

The six panels of the door are exceedingly handsome. Each panel is about twelve feet high;

and on each is painted in red and white a human body of immense size, skinned and disembowelled. The head is at the bottom of the panel, and the legs twined round each other decorate the top. Along the top, and round all the lintels, little wooden skulls are placed, so that every panel is bordered on every side by these skulls. Three brass chains divide the panels across, and in between are two great brazen knobs, so, when all six panels are closed, the three rows of brass and twelve great brazen knobs, with the background of red and white, make an extremely handsome entrance to the temple behind these doors. The description of the design on the panels does not sound handsome, but it must be remembered that the details of the design take some time to realize, whereas the colour effect is immediately striking.

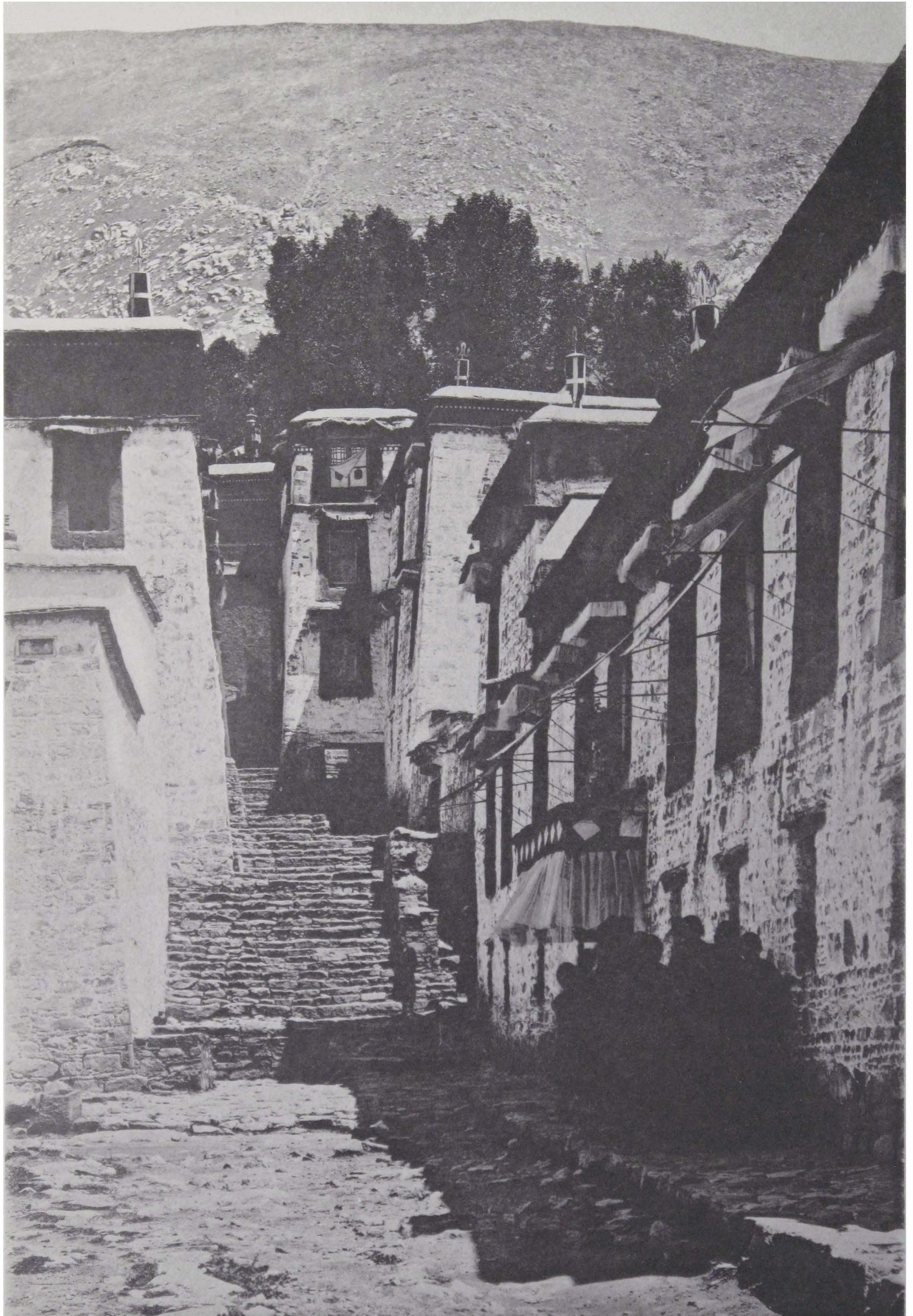
The temple itself is a large square room with four rows of pillars, coloured red, from which, as also from the roof, hang numerous silken banners. The walls here are also covered with frescoes, but the interior was too dark to enable the subjects to be distinguished.

At the end of the room, on each side of the brass gates leading to an inner temple, stand two great altars of lacquer work, and on each of them are seated three large brass Buddhas, dressed in silks and ornamented with turquoises, corals, and other stones. In one corner is a large Chorten, made of brass, and round the base are set in great bits of amber and turquoise. Yellow banners on lacquer poles stand against each of the foremost pillars, and along the walls hang ancient specimens of Tartar bows and arrows. On the floor are slightly raised wooden platforms covered with cushions on which the Lamas sit, and by the brass gates of the inner temple is a high pile of cushions for the head Lama himself. Opening the brass gates one finds oneself in a small dark temple just lit by the flare of the perpetual light burning on the altar. Behind the

altar stands the chair of the great astrologer himself. This is covered with silks, and his sword, with large hilt of brass, stands on the left side. Behind is a very handsome breastplate, a silver disc set in brass. The back wall of the little temple is filled by a splendid bit of brasswork, the shape and size of a huge mantelpiece, and polished so that it shines out brightly in the darkness. It serves as a sort of covered altar in which many images of brass, some covered in silks, are placed.

Round the wall are brass Buddhas and ornaments of various sorts; but far finer than all is the head-dress of the astrologer. This is a mitre of brass, heavily padded, and covered with gold and jewels. Belonging to it is a necklace of brass also highly bejewelled, and these he wears on occasions of high ceremony, together with the sword and brass disc already mentioned.







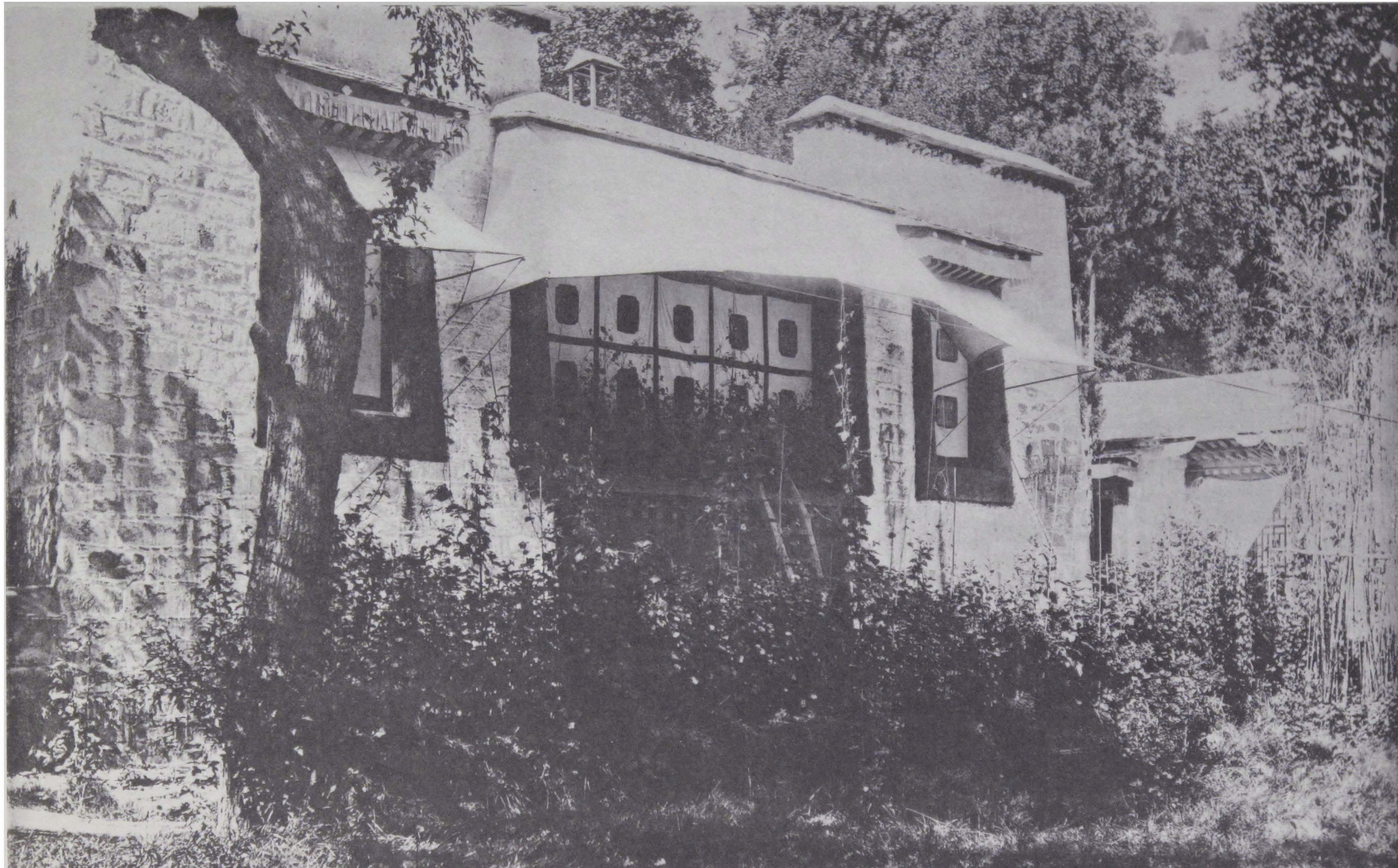


THE ASTROLOGER'S SUMMER RESIDENCE.

This lies only a few yards behind the Monastery, slightly higher up the hill-side. It is surrounded by a high and very well built stone wall, outside which is kennelled a splendid black Tibetan mastiff. Passing through a little gate in the wall, one finds oneself on a small grass lawn surrounded by a clump of bamboos, with hollyhocks and nasturtiums growing in profusion.

In front is the house built on a raised stone foundation; a neat little square stone house, slightly higher at each side than in the middle, with many windows covered with fine cloth, but with panes of glass in the middle of the cloth, and with clear white awnings of curious shape over each window and over the porch. The entrance to the house is up some stone steps, railed in, and the door is of bright red with a brass knocker. The interior is lovely; consisting of three little rooms, the first two opening one into the other and on the same level as the door; the third opening off to the right of the first with no dividing partition, but some two feet above it. The floor of the second room was beautifully polished wood, so polished that one slid across it on cushions to avoid scratching it. The partitions between the rooms are of fretted woodwork set on cretonne, the latter coloured in the brightest and prettiest of patterns; and on the floor of the sleeping-room were the softest and warmest of woollen rugs.

The tiny raised room is the astrologer's dressing room, and contains a very handsome long low wardrobe of lacquer work. The whole house is spotlessly clean, and every window is filled with flowers. It is a perfect gem and equal to anything of the kind in Japan, and it was indeed a surprise to find such artistic taste and refinement displayed in the building and decoration of the residence of such an official as the chief astrologer of Tibet.



SERA MONASTERY.

This is another large monastery outside Lhasa, similar to, but smaller than Debung. It contains about 5,000 Monks.



STREET SCENE IN SERA MONASTERY.



THE TWO STEWARDS AND SENIOR LAMAS OF SERA MONASTERY.

On the right of the photograph are the two steel maces which are the emblems of the stewards' authority, and are carried aloft before them on occasions of importance.



THE ENTRANCE TO LHASA.

Through this Chorten, Colonel Younghusband and escort marched on the 4th August, 1904, when European troops for the first time in history entered the city of Lhasa. Just inside the Chorten one finds oneself right at the foot of the Potola.

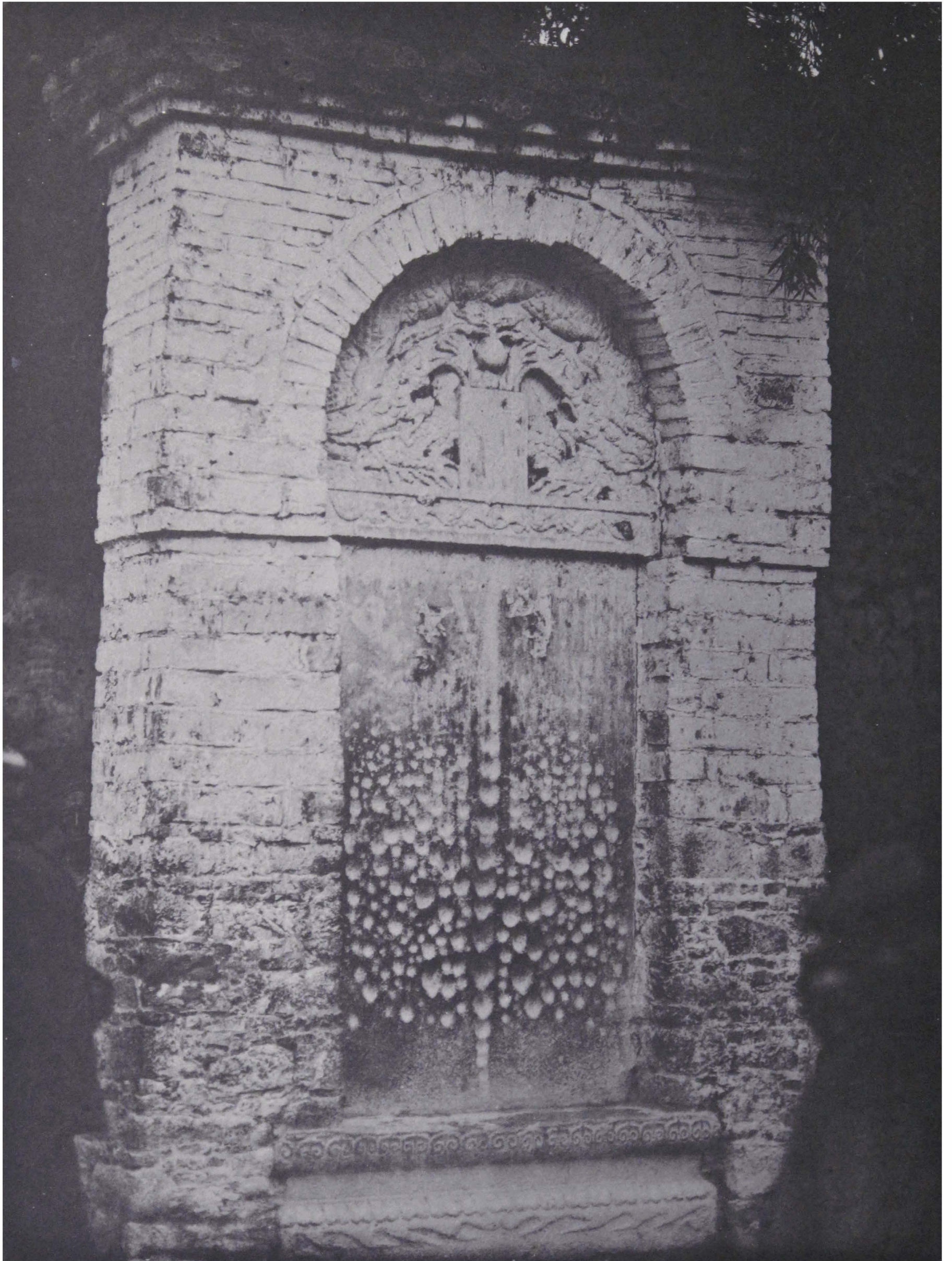


A STREET SCENE IN LHASA.

This view was taken outside the doors of the Jowo Khang or Cathedral. The man in the foreground is a lay official, and the men in flat round hats are members of the Lhasa police force, who are paid (sometimes) eighteen-pence per annum.



A "DORING," OR MONUMENT, OUTSIDE THE JOWO KHANG.



THE LINGKHOR, OR SACRED CIRCULAR ROAD OF LHASA.

The pilgrims can be seen wending their way round the sacred road, turning their prayer wheel, and acquiring merit by avoiding the puddles. To acquire the greatest merit of all, some pilgrims prostrate themselves at full length all round the road, but this is usually done by poorer pilgrims, on behalf of rich ones, on payment.

Above the road is a vast rock, on which are carved Bhuddas innumerable, large and small, painted in every colour imaginable.



THE POTOLA.

(EIGHT PHOTOGRAPHS.)

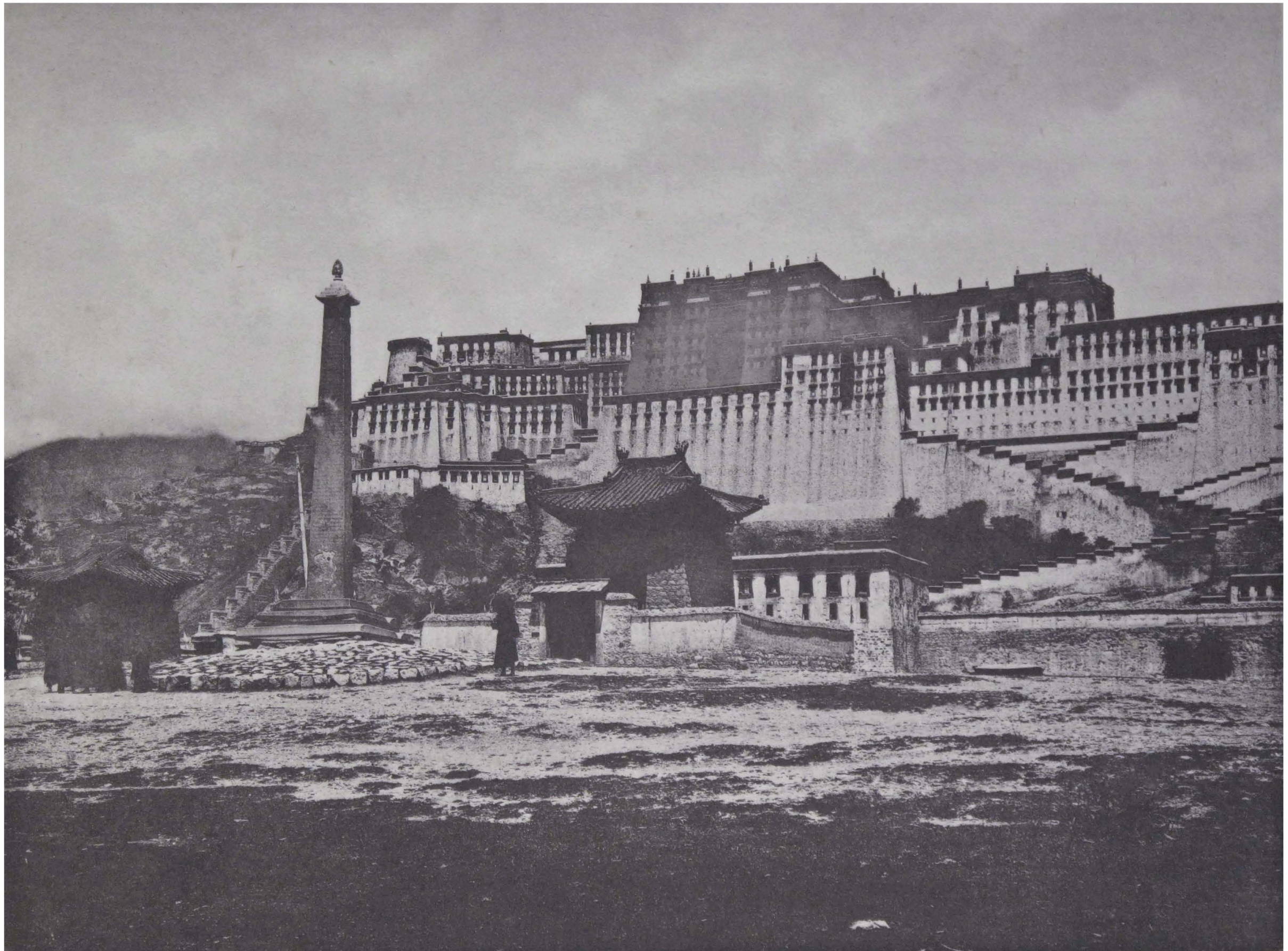
This wonderful building, the palace of the Dalai Lama, was built about 260 years ago, and entirely dominates Lhasa and the surrounding plain.

Unfortunately, the photographs of its numerous temples, shrines, and halls were unsuccessful, but the following description of the whole building may serve to explain the series of views connected with it.

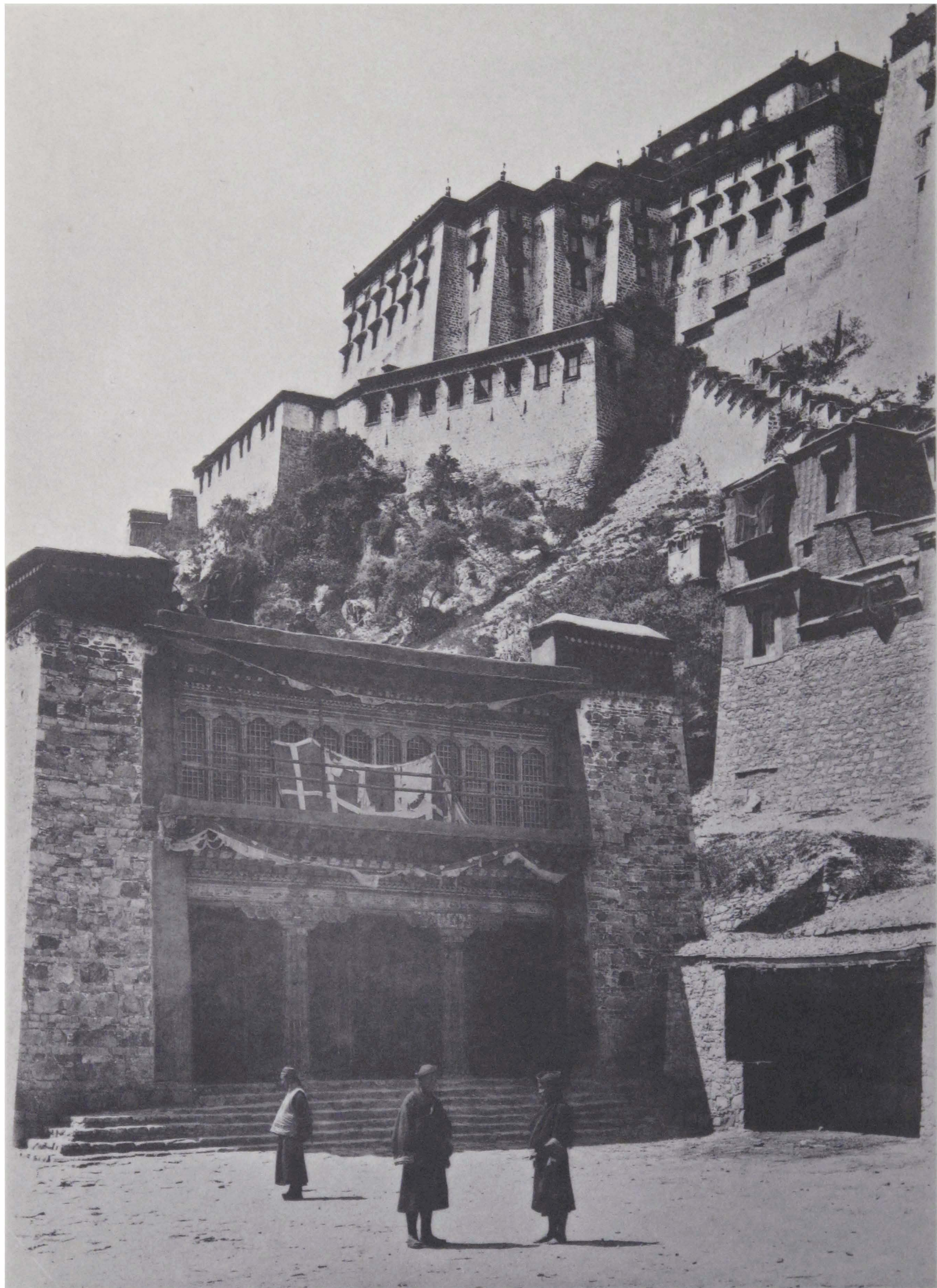
Entering the building by a steep stone approach from the northern side, one climbs up a flight of stairs, through a gallery and up a ladder on to the roof of the dark red or almost maroon coloured Gumpa, which forms the central block of buildings of the Potola. From the edge of this one looks sheer down perhaps 400 feet to the granite monolith at the very foot of the Potola Hill, and also has a lovely view over miles of country in every direction. The roof itself is worth describing. There are in all six gilded pagoda-shaped domes; three in a line on the west side and three on the north side. They are not placed symmetrically either with regard to position or size, and they vary also in pattern. At present they roughly form two sides of a square, and another row of three on the eastern side would produce a more finished effect. A wall over three feet in thickness and about four feet high surrounds the roof, and from the wall on the southern side a broad cement parapet extends inwards. Part of the roof is some thirty-six feet wide, and from the edge, steps lead down some four feet to another parapet about twelve feet wide. A similar parapet extends round all sides, and the centre is open, forming a sort of huge well, made hideous by the zinc roof of the large temple hall of the Potola, the floor of which is on the ground floor of the red temple. This hideous

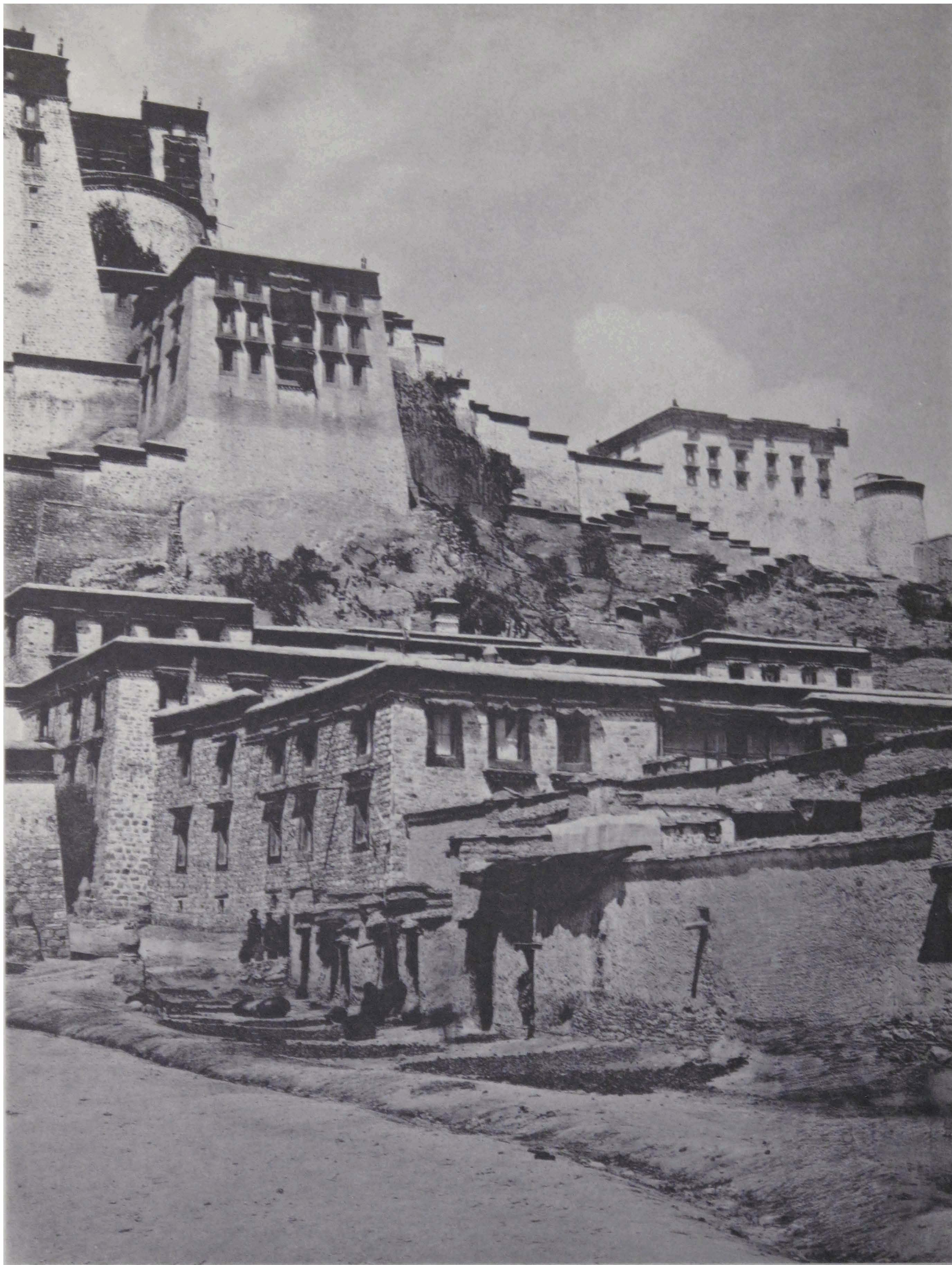
or granite monolith, some fifteen feet high. It is built crossways, up the hill, first going east to west, and then higher up from west to east, branching off once more to the west, and here again back to the centre, where a long balustrade stretches along the parapet at the foot of the red palace, where two roads branch off to the eastern and western porches.

This splendid staircase is thirty feet broad, probably over 200 feet high, and balustrades three feet in thickness, with maroon coloured edges, rise up its side in tiers to the very top. What a pity it is that such a magnificent building should have such a wretched approach. All round the foot of the hills, within twenty feet of the "Doring," are numerous evil smelling hovels. The jail is near here, and its only means of light and ventilation seems to consist in half a dozen little round holes in the roof. A great wall surrounds the precincts of the "Potola," and inside this wall are nothing but miserably squalid buildings, with correspondingly dirty inhabitants—a most deplorable misuse of space, which should be converted into a lovely garden or park, and made into a fitting foreground for the wonderful building which towers above it.

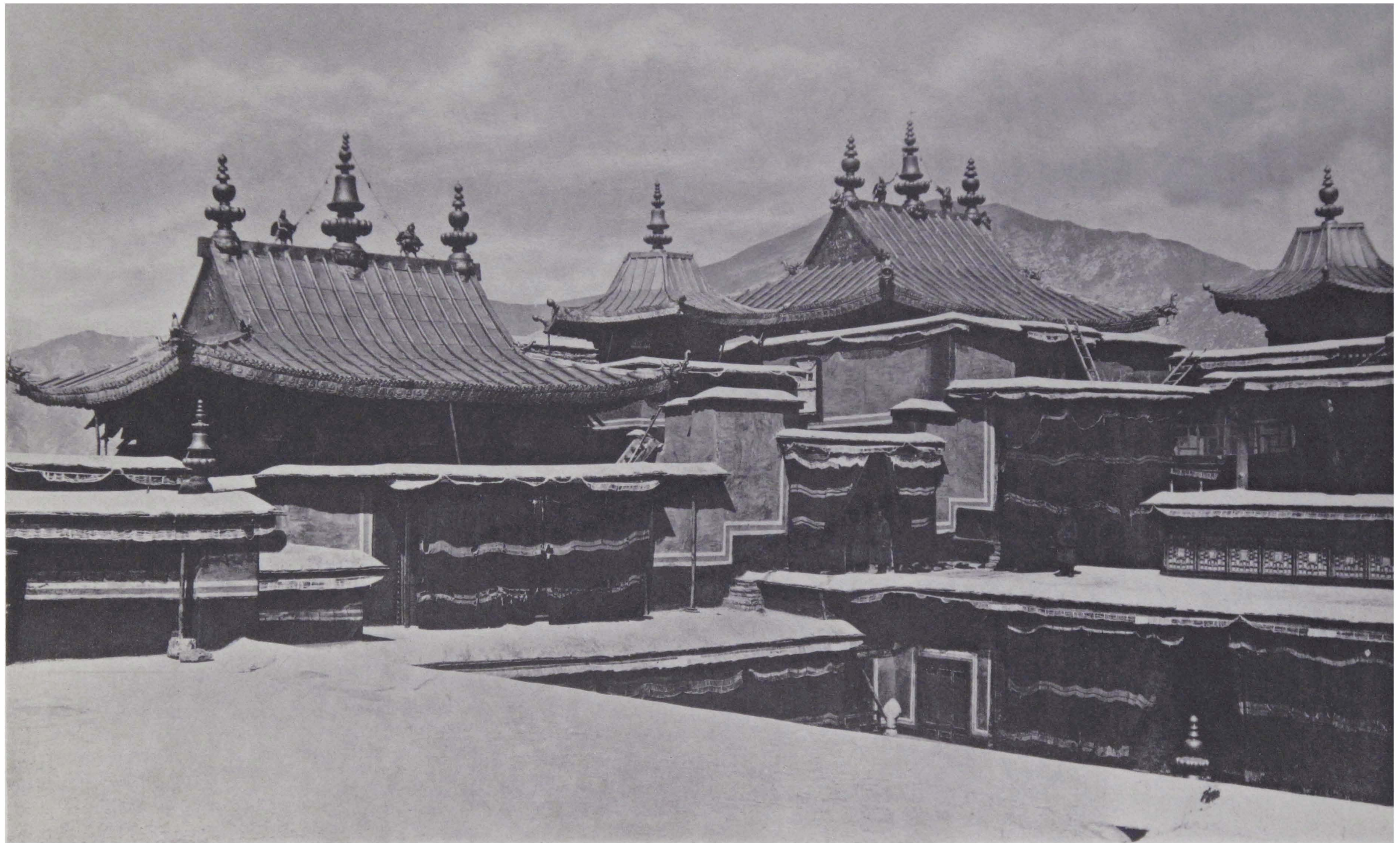
















THE REGENT.

Ti Rimpochi, of Galdan Monastery, who has risen from the lowest ranks of the priesthood to be the most learned and revered Doctor of Divinity throughout Tibet, and who now, by virtue of a decree of the Chinese Emperor, is acting as Regent.

It was with him that the Dalai Lama left the ecclesiastical seal when he fled, and it was he who affixed this seal, and his own, to the Treaty signed in the Potola on the 7th September, 1904.



THE SHAPES.

These officials may be described as the Executive Council of four, though they apparently had no Executive power, and were not summoned to the Councils.

Their names, from left to right, are Utuk, Sechung, Tsarong, and a Tunyik Chanpo (this is his title, and not his name).

The one on the right is a Lama, and has been to China and home *viâ* India.

For this reason, probably, he was the most obstructive and talkative of them all. He is dressed in the dark red dress of a Lama, whereas the others are dressed in bright yellow silk robes.



TONGSA PENLOP AND HIS RETINUE.

The Tongsa Penlop is the virtual ruler of Bhutan, the mountainous borders of which lie only a few miles to the east of Phair Jong. He accompanied the Mission to Lhasa and was unceasing in his efforts to promote a settlement. He was a most cheery person and thoroughly enjoyed his trip. The tall man on the right is Ugyen Kazi, who resides at Kalimpong, near Darjeeling, but has a big estate in Bhutan, and acts as British intermediary with that Country.



THE CHINESE AMBAN.



PANORAMA OF LHASA.

In this can be seen the Potola in the foreground, with the small, insignificant looking town of Lhasa beyond. Sera Monastery is visible at the foot of the hills to the north, and an extensive view of the Kye Chu river to the south, and the surrounding country, is also obtained.







