



The river Tsangpo below Gyala Peri

# NO PASSPORT TO TIBET

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of the Royal Geographical Society  
and of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society*



RUPERT HART-DAVIS  
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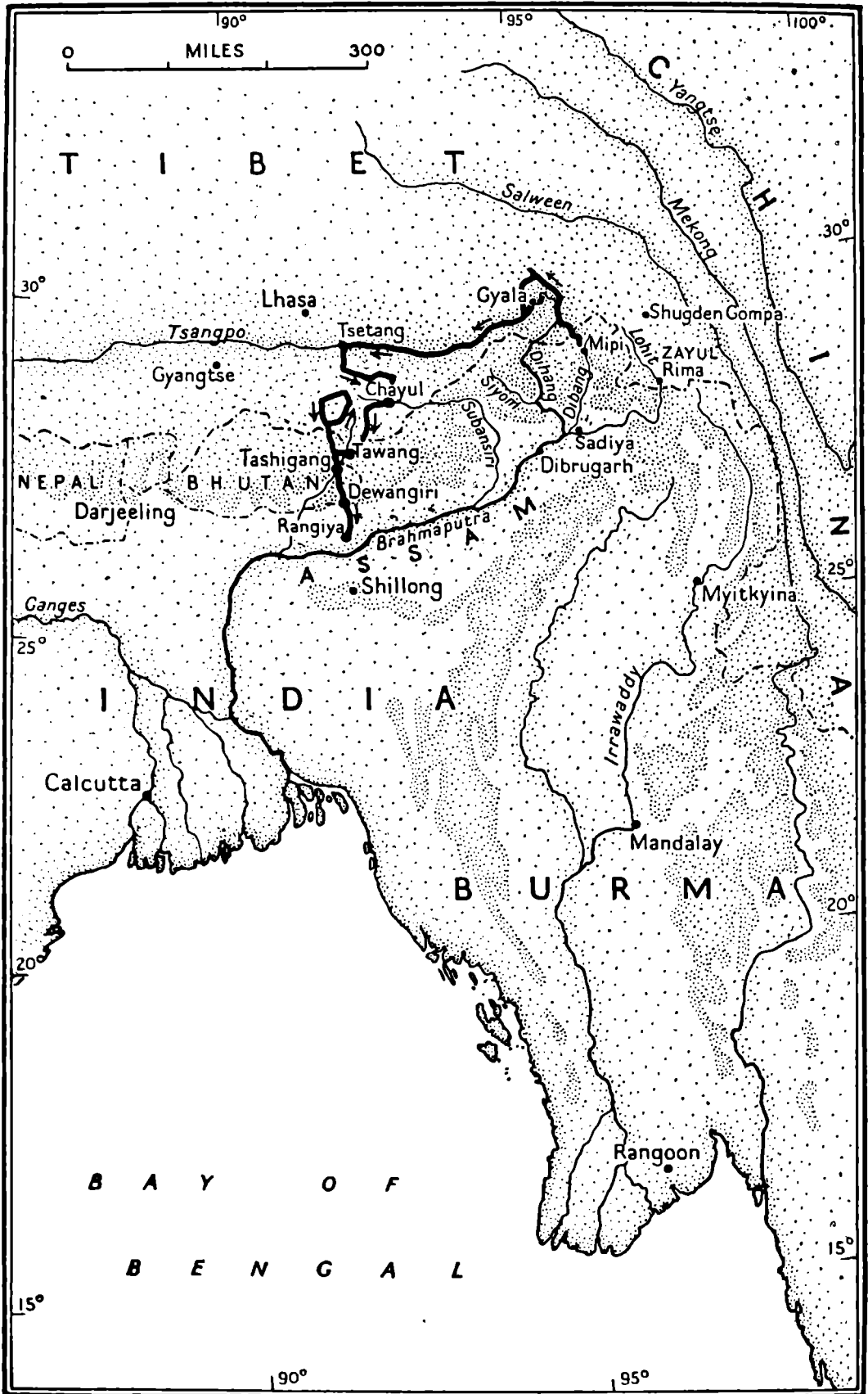
*Drawn by K. C. Jordan*

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*All the photographs, apart from those of Morshead, Bailey and Kintup, were taken by the author*



## FOREWORD

THE journey described in this book was made in 1913. To recall it forty-three years later in my retirement is excuse enough for me, since I have reached an age when I look back more often than I look forward. My reason for offering it to the public is that it is more than just "another" book about Tibet.

In the course of fifteen hundred miles of our journey we were in country hitherto unsurveyed and for the most part unknown except for the accounts of certain Indian pundits previously sent out by the Indian Survey Department. We solved the mystery of the Tsangpo Gorges and mapped the country forming the geographic frontier between Tibet and Assam. We also made some interesting discoveries in the realms of natural history. We brought back specimens of several new mammals, including a goral. We identified the habitat of the eared pheasant, called *Crossoptilon harmani* from the imperfect skin which Captain Harman had brought back in 1881. We collected several new butterflies, and among the flora we observed was a blue poppy, which when Captain Kingdon Ward later brought back the seed was to become a favourite among seedsmen under the name of *Meconopsis Baileyi*.\* But quite as important as the discovery of new specimens was the observation of the fauna and flora characteristic of the different places through which we passed.

There is, therefore, a certain scientific justification in writing up so many years later the diary which I used to make each evening after the day's march. But I will confess that there is more to it than that. To relive that expedition has been exciting, and if I have been able to convey to the reader a fraction

\* Its correct botanical name, however, is *Meconopsis betonicifolia Baileyi*.

of that excitement, I shall feel a pleasure as lively as if I please the experts, for Morshead and I were by modern standards amateur explorers. We did not travel with ponderous equipment supplied cost free by manufacturers avid of publicity. We did not carefully plan our routes or seasons; but, as will be seen, we went where and when we could, happy in the knowledge that every place was unknown.

I have read most of what has been written by travellers in Tibet and been surprised at the accounts of travellers sitting down to play games together after the day's work was done. The reader will find none of these relaxations in this book. Morshead and I were far too busy writing up our reports, making notes, and preparing specimens, to be able to indulge our social life. Indeed, though we travelled together and collaborated in the most amiable fashion, we did not see as much of each other as explorers often do when travelling in pairs.

We split our work in two, Morshead concentrating on surveying and mapping, while I devoted myself to the organisation of the expedition, to making enquiries on all manner of subjects, and to collecting specimens of wild life.

This accounts for the fact that there is so comparatively little about Morshead. He was making his own report, and in mine I did not make notes of those little human incidents which add spice to a travel book. I was sternly concerned with facts which would be useful to the Indian Government and prevent our being severely reprimanded for making this journey.

F. M. BAILEY

*Stiffkey*  
*Norfolk*  
1956

## GLOSSARY

<p> <b>AMBAN</b>   <b>ANI GOMPA</b>  <b>-BA OR -PA</b>   <b>BASAM</b>  <b>BRING (DRING)</b>  <b>CHANDZO</b>  <b>CHANG</b>   <b>CHANG</b>  <b>CHEMBO (-CHEN)</b>  <b>CHÖTEN</b>  <b>CHU</b>  <b>CHUNG-CHUNG (-CHUNG)</b>  <b>DA</b>  <b>DALAI LAMA</b>  <b>DROK</b>  <b>DROK-PA</b>  <b>DRONYER</b>  <b>DRUKPA, DRUKYUU</b>  <b>DZO</b>   <b>DZONG</b>  <b>DZONGPÖN</b>  <b>GOMPA (GÖN)</b>  <b>KALON LAMA</b>  <b>KANGPA (-KANG)</b>  <b>KANGRI</b>  <b>KARPO (-KAR)</b>  <b>KEMPO</b>  <b>KYANG</b>  <b>LA</b>  <b>LAM-KA (-LAM)</b>  <b>LATSA</b>  <b>LHA KANG</b>  <b>LHO</b> </p>	<p> Title of the Chinese representative in Lhasa.  Nunnery.  Suffix indicating an inhabitant of a locality, <i>i.e.</i> Shar = east: Sharpa—an easterner. Pachakshiriba—inhabitant of Pachakshiri.  Cane foot bridge.  Cane rope bridge.  Steward.  Light milky “beer” (made from fermented barley).  North.  Big.  Stupa, pagoda, cairn.  Water, river.  Small.  Lower end of valley.  The priest-king of Tibet.  Grazing camp.  Shepherd, grazier.  Steward.  Bhutanese, Bhutan.  Cross between yak and domestic cattle.  Fort, headquarters of Dzongpön.  Administrator of district.  Monastery.  The title of the monk Sha-pe (<i>q.v.</i>).  House.  Snow mountain.  White.  Abbot of monastery.  The Tibetan wild ass.  Pass.  Road.  Stopping place below pass.  Temple.  South. </p>
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LINGA (-LING)	Garden, park.
LOPA	Savage barbarian.
LUNGBA (-LUNG)	District, valley.
MARWA	Fermented liquor made from millet.
-ME	Lower (in place names).
MÖN	Low-lying wooded valley.
MÖNYUL	A district east of Bhutan.
NAK-PO (-NA)	Black.
NEPO	Steward.
NUP	West.
NYERPA	Steward, headman.
PANG KANG	Hut ( <i>lit.</i> plank house).
PÖ	Tibet.
PÖ-BA	Tibetan.
PU	Upper end of valley.
PUK PA	Cave, overhanging rock.
RAP	Ford.
RI	Mountain.
RONG	Low warm valley.
SA CHA (-SA)	Place.
SAMPA (-SAM)	Bridge.
SHA-PE	A title of the four members of the Cabinet. Three are laymen and one a monk.
SHAR	East
SHIGA	Estate.
SUMDO	Junction of two valleys.
TANG	A plain
TASHI LAMA	The incarnate lama equal or superior
= PANCHEN LAMA	to the Dalai Lama but without temporal power.
TÖ	Upper (in place names).
TRANGKA	Coin worth five-six annas.
TSANGPO	Large river.
TSE	Peak.
TSO	Lake
ULA	Transport, accommodation and sup- plies provided free for an official on a journey.
YÜ	Country.



PART ONE

# Before the Beginning



## CHAPTER ONE

It may seem rather tedious, having already submitted the reader to the burden of a foreword, to superimpose an explanatory chapter; but without it, the journey undertaken by Captain Morshead and myself is not fully intelligible. We were not the first people to be puzzled by the problems of the Tsangpo river, nor the first to attempt their solution. Indeed we were materially helped by information from those who had gone before. So if you want to understand our objects, indefinite though those were, and what was in our minds when we succeeded in setting out from Mipi, you must at least skim through this first chapter, even though it will only get you as far as I was before I started.

If you look at the map of the country north of Burma, about the 29th parallel, you will see a strange physical formation. Following from north to south are three enormous rivers, close to each other, the Yangtse, the Mekong and the Salween. Further west, debouching into the plains of Assam from the north, are three more rivers of considerable size: the Lohit, the Dibong and the Dihang.

Now look at Tibet and you will see a large river, the Tsangpo, flowing due east through the southern and most populous parts of the country.

For many years geographers were puzzled to know where the waters of the Tsangpo eventually flowed. They might have gone to swell the waters of any of these six rivers. Indeed, so vast was the ignorance of the intervening country, they might even have joined the Irrawaddy.

The only way to find out was for someone to follow the Tsangpo river down its course until it became some other recognisable river; but this was more easily said than done.

The Tsangpo river flowed through some of the most mountainous, difficult and inhospitable country in the world. The political obstacles were even more difficult to surmount. The Chinese, having won a precarious hold over Tibet, were eager to prevent any other foreigners from entering what they regarded as their private preserve. The Tibetans, though friendly by nature, were intensely suspicious. Their contact with the foreign power of China had been so bitter and humiliating, that they were not anxious to try experience of any other foreign power.

To the traveller approaching from the direction of India there was a further hazard. In the foothills between the plains of India and the mountain ranges of Tibet lived a number of primitive and savage tribes. Quarrelsome, treacherous and riddled with suspicion, they were continually at war with one another. They regarded strangers as welcome only as possible victims of extortion by pacific or violent means, or as allies from whom they might obtain weapons with which they could massacre their neighbours more efficiently than with their simple implements of death.

A hundred years ago the technique of exploration was primitive. But even if the early explorers had possessed such equipment as Morshead and I carried with us, they would have found difficulty in using it, since they were forced to conceal their real purpose.

In 1854, Sir Joseph Hooker published his *Himalayan Journals* in which he mentions one of the earlier attempts at exploration. Brian Hodgson and Major Jenkins, the Commissioner of Assam, sent out an agent disguised as a travelling mendicant. But he did not even reach the frontier of Tibet. He was speared to death before he got there.

In the eighteen-sixties, the Survey of India set about systematically collecting information regarding the countries lying to the north of the Himalayas, their purpose being ultimately to fix a firm frontier. They trained agents, mostly from the Tibetan-speaking peoples who inhabited the Indian side of the Tibetan frontier. The exception was S.C.D. (Sarat

Chandra Das), C.I.E., an educated Bengali whom Kipling brought into *Kim* as Hari Chunder Mukerjee. He, together with another famous secret explorer, U.G. (Lama Ugyen Gyatso), formed the board which passed me in my Tibetan examination many years ago.

These wonderful explorers, sent to map and report on the northern frontier regions, travelled for years on end, with their lives in constant jeopardy. Without scientific aids, they calculated distance by counting their paces. The information which they brought back, when collated, built up for the officers of the Survey of India an outline of this unknown territory, the detail of which they slowly began to fill in.

One of the best known of these explorers was Krishna, commonly known by the initials A.K., behind which his identity was concealed. In 1879 A.K. travelled through Nepal to Lhasa, thence north to Mongolia, thence south-east to the borders of China, whence he turned south-west to Rima, intending to reach India down the valley of the Lohit. During this part of the journey he crossed from the *left* to the *right* banks of the Yangtse, Mekong and Salween rivers. South of Rima he found the road to India closed to him by the unfriendliness of the Mishmi tribes.\*

A.K. turned back, making a large circuit north and west until, passing Lhasa, he reached the *left* bank of the Tsangpo, crossed it and finally reached Darjeeling.

This journey definitely established that the Tsangpo could not flow into the Yangtse, Mekong or Salween. But a question still remained. Did the Tsangpo flow into the Dibong or Dihang and thence into the Brahmaputra, or did it form the headwaters of the Irrawaddy?

In November 1885, Rinzing Namgyal (whose secret sign was R.N.), one of the landlords of Sikkim and a close friend of mine to the day of his death, was despatched on a journey with

\* The Mishmis some years previously had killed two French priests, Fathers Krick and Bourry, and it was probably they who speared the travelling mendicant sent out by Hodgson and Jenkins. When I came on them thirty years later, I found them unmellowed by time. One of my colleagues, asked to report on them, wrote briefly, "The country is bloody and so are the people."

orders to discover into what river the Tsangpo flowed. In this mission he failed owing to tribal and political complications, though he brought back useful information about the topography of Bhutan.

Doubt persisted for many years. Even as late as 1911, the instructions issued to General Bower, the officer commanding the Abor Expedition, directed him to settle "the question of the identity of the Tsangpo and Brahmaputra Rivers".

Absolute proof would have demanded the following of the Tsangpo down its course until it joined one of the other rivers. This was not feasible. But there was a method of deciding between the claims of the Dihang and the Dibong. It was employed by Captain Harman of the Survey of India in the 1880's.

Throughout its great length in Tibet, the Tsangpo collects the melting snows from the northern slopes of the Himalayas; clearly, therefore, the river into which the Tsangpo flowed would have a greater volume of water. In appearance there was nothing much to choose between the Dibong and the Dihang when they reached the plains of Assam. But Captain Harman carefully measured their flow where they left the hills. He found that the Dihang discharged 56,500 cubic feet per second against the Dibong's 27,200. This practically established that the Tsangpo flowed into the Dihang.

But even when this had been established, another problem remained. At the point where the Tsangpo lost itself in the impenetrable tangle of mountains in south-east Tibet, it was known to be between 9000 and 10,000 feet above sea level. At the point where it flowed into the Assam plains, it was only 500 feet above sea level. The distance between the two points was only 120 miles in a straight line. How did this great river make the descent? Did it wind through a much longer course than was supposed? Were the 9000 feet lost through a series of rapids? Or was there somewhere in the no-man's-land which lay between Assam and the *terra cognita* of Tibet a waterfall which would rival or even surpass Niagara?

This problem had been exercising the Survey Office as far

back as 1878. In that year Captain Harman sent out an agent, whose secret sign was G.M.N., with orders to survey the Tsangpo eastwards from Tsetang. G.M.N. (also known in reports as Nemsing) was a Sikkimese, who will not go down in history as one of the greater explorers. It was not entirely his fault. Owing to bad weather, he was sent out before he had finished his training. Owing to fear of robbers, for which the region in which he was working was notorious in those days, he worked at great speed, keeping his records on scraps of paper which he did not enter properly in the field book. His astronomical observations also were vitiated, because he made an error in his dates. He and his Sikkimese servant Kintup (K.P.) succeeded in tracing the river from Tsetang to Gyala, where his traverse ended "in air".

The next year, the Survey Office selected another monk, this time a Mongolian, to explore the river course below Gyala. With him went the servant Kintup once again. Their instructions were to trace the course of the Tsangpo to the plains of India, and if they failed to get through themselves to throw marked logs into the river from the lowest point reached.

The Mongolian monk and Kintup reached Gyala and followed the north bank down stream a short way. Finding that the track gave out, they returned to Gyala, crossed the river to the right bank and followed it down as far as Pemaköchung, at which point the road petered out.

Once again they retraced their steps to Gyala and made north, intending to make a circuit and strike the river lower down. To do this, they had to enter an unknown and semi-independent region called Po me.

Somewhere at this point the monk decided that he had had enough of exploring. When he reached Tongkyuk Dzong, he made friends with the local officer. He told Kintup that he was going away and would be back in two or three days. Kintup was to wait in the officer's quarters.

In those parts descriptions of length of time are imprecise. Two or three days may mean two or three weeks. But when



two months passed and the monk did not return, Kintup began to suspect that he had gone for good.

During his master's absence he had supported himself as a tailor. He had no money for his mission. To have carried money would have belied their pose as pilgrims and also invited danger from robbers.

Kintup decided that he would have to complete the mission on his own. But when he tried to leave the Dzong, he was told that the monk had sold him to the officer as his slave and he was put to work in the house.

For seven months Kintup worked as a slave watching for his chance to escape. When it came, instead of heading for home as fast as he could, he continued on his mission. He reached the Tsangpo at a place he called Dorjiyu Dzong and followed the river down stream to Marpung. There he was overtaken by men sent by his master to recapture him.

With great presence of mind, Kintup went to the head lama of the Marpung monastery, fell at his feet and explained that he was a poor pilgrim who had been treacherously sold into slavery by his companion. The lama took pity on him and bought him for fifty rupees.

When he had set out, Kintup had been issued with the usual secret service agent's equipment. In the pilgrim's prayer wheel, in place of the rolled paper inscribed with the sacred formula "Om Mani Padme Hum", were a prismatic compass and a roll of paper for making notes. In place of the Tibetan rosary of 108 beads was one of 100 beads for counting paces. But in addition to these normal articles of equipment, Kintup and the monk had been given a number of small metal tubes containing written papers and a drill with which to make the holes for fixing the tubes into the logs they were to float down the river.

During his slavery Kintup had lost the drill but he had kept the tubes. As he worked for his new master, he turned over in his mind plans for floating the logs down to Assam. He was assiduous in his duties and his story that he was a pilgrim. When he asked his master for permission to travel down the

river to a holy mountain called Kondü Potrang, it was granted without demur.

He could not fix the tubes into the logs in the way planned, but he tied them to the outside of the logs with strips of bamboo and then hid the logs in a cave and returned to his master. It was useless to throw the logs into the river without warning the Survey Officers to be on the look-out.

Two months after his return from the holy mountain, Kintup again requested permission to leave the monastery, this time in order to make a pilgrimage to Lhasa. The fact that he had returned voluntarily from the holy mountain had clearly established him with the monks as a man who could be trusted. Permission was given and off he started on the three months' journey to Lhasa, counting the paces on his rosary.

From Lhasa he despatched a letter to G.M.N., the companion of his first journey, asking him to inform the "Head of the Survey of India" that fifty marked logs would be thrown into the river daily, starting from a certain date. From Lhasa to his home in Sikkim was a comparatively easy journey and Kintup must have been tempted to go home and abandon the whole affair. But he resisted the temptation and once more returned to the monastery, one imagines greatly to the surprise of his master. Certainly when after nine months Kintup once more asked leave to make a pilgrimage, his master answered: "I am glad to see you visiting the sacred places, so from today I have given you leave to go anywhere you like."

Kintup went down the river, a free man at last. He threw in the logs carefully as he had said he would and then tried to reach India down the valley of the river. But he was unable to get through the savage Abor territory and was forced to go back to Lhasa and thence to India. He had been absent for four years, much of the time a slave; but he had accomplished single-handed the mission as instructed.

His frustration can be imagined when on return he found that in the meantime G.M.N. had died. His letter had never

been delivered and no look-out had been kept for the logs, which had floated unnoticed into the Bay of Bengal.

On his return he dictated a report. Being illiterate he had made no written notes. In view of this and the fact that four years had elapsed since he had visited some of the places, it was astonishing how detailed his report was. It was so detailed that many people refused to believe it. Those who did believe it sometimes did so from emotional reasons. A man who had been so brave, so persistent and enduring, just had to be believed, the argument ran. And anyway it was the only report, so it must be better than nothing.

Morshead and I were to find, as we covered the same ground as Kintup, that the degree of accuracy under the circumstances was very great. But it was not as astonishing to me as it was to most other people. I have found among many illiterate people a capacity for visual memory far greater than among those who have learned to read and write. Perhaps that section of the brain which is devoted to the memorising of letters and words is the same as that which is devoted to remembering places. Or it may be that when we have the aid of written notes, our minds relieve themselves of the burden of remembering what we have written. At any rate I would always trust the illiterate who has made no notes rather than the literate who has failed to make them.

The most provocative passage in Kintup's report was the description of what he and the monk had seen when they visited the monastery of Pemaköchung, the furthest point which they had been able to reach down river from Gyala.

The Tsangpo is two chains distant from the monastery and about two miles off it falls over a cliff called Sinji-Chogyal from a height of about 150 feet. There is a big lake at the foot of the falls where rainbows are always observable.

This passage from the official account of Kintup's journey seemed to many people incontrovertible evidence that there was a fall which might rival Niagara in height, if not in volume.

From 1884, the year in which Kintup made his report, until

1913, when Morshead and I made our journey, Kintup's story had remained unverified. This was not as extraordinary as it may sound. Theoretically, it was possible to go up the Dihang or down the Tsangpo, mapping and surveying the unexplored stretches of the river. But the approach from India lay through savage territory; and contrary to all the beliefs of doctrinaire anti-imperialists, the Indian Government was very reluctant to provoke trouble on its frontiers. Their policy was anything for a quiet life. Venturesome explorers were disapproved of. They might get themselves killed and so involve the Government in a costly and tiresome punitive expedition.

The Tibetan side, therefore, became the obvious one from which to approach. But the Chinese, who claimed suzerainty over Tibet, strongly resented other foreigners; and the Tibetans in Po me found it hard to distinguish between other foreigners and the Chinese, whose extortion and contempt they strongly resented. The European discovered in Tibet ran danger from the Tibetans as a Chinese oppressor and from the Chinese as an imperialist agent.

In 1899 a party under Major Davies and Captain Ryder attempted the approach through China, but they were turned back by the Tibetans. It was not until Sir Francis Younghusband occupied Lhasa in 1904 that the opportunity occurred to explore Tibet without opposition.

Three expeditions were planned for September 1904 when the Younghusband mission was due to leave. Firstly Wilton,\* who had been a British Consul in China and was attached to Younghusband as a specialist in Chinese affairs, was to travel the main road from Lhasa to China and I was to go with him. The second expedition was to go to Gartok in Western Tibet under Captain Rawling; and Captain Ryder was to take a third party down the Tsangpo to explore the gorges.

Wilton was very friendly with the Chinese Amban in Lhasa. Since it was impossible to get anything except letter mail up from Gyantse by the Mounted Infantry post, Wilton arranged with the Chinese to borrow two drivers and three

\* Later Sir Ernest Wilton.

mules to haul up some special equipment and luxuries for himself and Ryder on their expeditions.

The time came and passed for the arrival of the equipment, and then shortly before our scheduled departure, the M.I. post arrived with news that the two mule-drivers had been ambushed and killed and the equipment stolen.

Sir Francis Younghusband reconsidered his plans. We had only just stopped fighting and it seemed foolhardy to send out these slenderly armed expeditions if even our lines of communication were so susceptible to attack. Wilton's and Ryder's expeditions were cancelled. The one to Western Tibet was allowed to stand, because it was into uninhabited country.

I came down from Lhasa with Sir Francis Younghusband with one of my mounted infantry carrying the treaty in a tin box on his saddle. After we crossed the range through the Karo La, we were going down the valley, when I was told we were coming near to the place where the robbery had taken place. I had imagined that the mules had been driven off by the bandits and I was very surprised to see within sight of the road the three mules grazing alone without anyone in charge.

I rode up to them and not far away were the bodies of the two drivers. I dismounted and examined them. They had been killed by small bore bullets. This, again, was surprising. The Tibetans possessed very few small-bore rifles. For the most part they used matchlocks with round leaden balls.

I tried to visualise what had happened. Two of the mules were still loaded. The boxes with which the third had been laden were lying on the ground. They had been broken open. One of them I remember contained clothes. But nothing had been taken, even though European articles were highly treasured by the Tibetans. It did not seem to me at all like an ambush by Tibetans.

We spent the night at Ralung and I made some discreet enquiries. I found that the M.I. mail, one mule and two mounted men, had left Ralung at six in the morning of the ambush. That meant that they would have reached the place

of ambush about the same time as the three mules and their drivers.

The two men with the post belonged to the 3rd Mounted Infantry who had come up from India after the fighting was over. They had missed the loot of which they had probably heard fabulous tales. Seeing the two drivers in Tibetan clothes with their three laden mules, I guessed that they thought that here was the chance of acquiring some of the spoils which they had been too late to get in war. They attacked and killed the two drivers, but when they unloaded the first mule, they found not Tibetan loot but officers' kit. They did not dare to take it, but made off as fast as they could.

This seemed to me the only explanation which fitted the case, the small-bore bullets, the abandoned boxes, the absence of theft.

I told the officer commanding at Ralung of my suspicions, but whether any action was taken I never heard. Early the next morning we were on the road for Gyantse. There Sir Francis Younghusband detached me to go into Western Tibet, from which I did not emerge until three months later.

If my assessment of the situation was correct, it was purely a matter of chance that Ryder did not go through the gorges, as he could have done without transport difficulties, possessing the written authority of the Tibetan Government. In that case the next nine years of my life would have been very different.

As it was, it became one of my ambitions to solve the mystery of the Tsangpo gorges and I did everything in my power to equip myself for the task. In the early days at Kamba Dzong\* I had gained some knowledge of colloquial Tibetan and a certain familiarity with the ways and thoughts of the people.

The Western Tibetan expedition gave me experience of winter travel at heights up to 18,700 feet above sea level and in temperatures as low as twenty-five degrees below zero Fahrenheit (fifty-seven degrees of frost).

\* I was with the Younghusband Mission at Kamba Dzong for six months in a vain attempt to get the Tibetans to discuss our differences.

A year later I returned to Tibet, being seconded from the Army as a Tibetan-speaking trade agent in Gyantse and Chumbi, where I spent three and a half years. During this time I increased my experience of the language, the country and the people. I won the friendship of the Tashi Lama, considered by many even holier than the Dalai Lama. At the same time I read almost every book that had been written about Tibet. It was all to be of great use later on, but at the time I was sometimes impatient that no chance arose for attempting the exploration of the Tsangpo.

After I had served without leave for nine years abroad, I accumulated two years' furlough. I went back to England, and while I spent my savings faster than was wise I made plans for attempting alone and as a private individual what the party under Ryder and Davies had failed to achieve. A man with my experience of Tibet, I thought, had a good chance of entering the country from the Chinese side, provided that he went alone.

In this I was right, but at the crucial point of my journey I was turned back owing to the outbreak of fighting between the Chinese and Tibetans in Po me. I have told the story of this journey in full in my book *China—Tibet—Assam*. It is enough here to say that I came so near to success that the journey so far from discouraging me merely whetted my appetite.

The chance to make the attempt again at my own expense and in my own time could not recur for some years. In that case it was necessary to see whether it could not be performed in the natural course of duty.



## CHAPTER TWO

WHEN I was on my journey from China through Tibet to Assam, I received a cable from my father, addressed to the Consul-General at Chêngtu. WARN BAILEY MASSACRE SADIYA.

It was an alarming message, because it failed to say who had massacred whom and why, and I had to proceed with great caution. Though there was periodic trouble among the tribes in the foothills of Assam, massacre of any sort was unusual and no European had been killed since Fathers Krick and Bourry had been murdered on the Tibet-Mishmi boundary in 1854, though in 1887 the Political Officer Needham had been forced to retire from a tour under a shower of Mishmi poisoned arrows. I found it hard to believe that Noel Williamson, the British Political Officer at Sadiya, could have come to any harm, partly because he was personally very popular and partly because the tribesmen must know that violence against a British officer would be severely punished.

But when I reached the Mishmis, I discovered that Williamson had been murdered. Later I learnt that Gregorson and thirty-eight others had also perished. I thanked God that the Abors and not the Mishmis had been responsible for the massacre, because if the Mishmis had done it, they would have thought nothing of finishing me off as well.

When I reached India, I found myself in a state of disgrace. I had involuntarily overstayed my leave. True, I had brought information of considerable interest to the authorities; but the risk I had run of being murdered as Williamson was and so placing the Government under the obligation of sending out a costly punitive expedition far outweighed the benefits of my journey. In answer to the report which I submitted

proudly, I was told that I had incurred the viceregal displeasure. At this distance in time I can understand the reasons for caution, but at the age of thirty I felt slightly aggrieved to be reprimanded for what appeared to me a matter for congratulation.

There was, however, a certain lack of consistency in our Indian policy. Noel Williamson had disobeyed orders by crossing the Outer Line into Abor country without authority. By being murdered he had forced the Government to avenge his death. It was very annoying and very expensive. But if it had to be done, the authorities argued, they might get as much value as possible for their money. For the first time for many years, the possibility of entering Tibet from the Assam side had opened up. A systematic survey was to be made of the Abor, the Digaru and Chulikatta Mishmi\* country.

I succeeded in wangling a posting to the Abor Expedition, sent to avenge Williamson's murder in the cold season of 1911-1912. Sir Henry McMahon, the Foreign Secretary, backed me up. Most of the people in Simla had panicked. They knew little about the border territories. They thought in terms of troubles on the Afghan frontier and imagined that the whole north-east frontier might be ablaze. McMahon kept his head and thought that I might be able to do some quietly useful work.

The Abor Expedition, however, was organised not from Simla but from Assam. When I reported at the base camp at Kobo, there was nothing for me to do. I was just "that damn fellow from Simla". To keep me quiet I was sent into the Chulikatta country in order to report on their attitude to the situation. "Find out if they are going to rise too," I was told.

The Chulikattas made their attitude abundantly plain. They were overjoyed that an expedition should be sent against the Abors. The sooner we annihilated the Abors, the better the Chulikattas would be pleased.

\* The Chulikatta Mishmis were a tribe completely distinct from the Mishmis through whose country I had journeyed; and henceforth I will, to avoid confusion, call them simply Chulikattas.

Though we did not discover it until later, the whole appreciation of the military situation was unrealistic. The massacre of Williamson, Gregorson and their party was due to a series of misunderstandings. What probably happened was this.\*

On March 22nd, just as Williamson and his party were about to cross the river Dihang from Komlinghat on the right bank to Sissin on the left, four messengers arrived from Takam Gam of Kebang. They warned Williamson not to cross, because otherwise they would be attacked by unfriendly Abors.

Learning that they were from Kebang, where a virulent type of smallpox was raging, Williamson told the messengers to go away, saying that he had already seen Kebang and he didn't intend to go there again.

Williamson went on with his preparations, and the messengers acting on their instructions again tried to dissuade him. Williamson told them to get out of his way and that his movements were no business of theirs.

After they had crossed the river, Williamson's party was forced to halt for some days because some of the coolies fell sick. It was decided to send the three worst cases back to Pasighat for treatment there. Dr. Gregorson was to stay with the milder cases, while Williamson went ahead to Komsing.

The three sick Nepalese coolies were accompanied by a Miri who had three letters which he was to deliver in Pasighat. On the night of March 29th they reached Rotung, where they were given a friendly reception. The Miri, wanting to enlarge on his own importance, flourished the letters in front of his Abor host. They were in white envelopes, bordered with black in mourning for the death of King Edward VII, and sealed with red wax seals. The Abor, having no conception of writing,

\* In his book *In Abor Jungles* (Eveleigh Nash, 1912) Mr. Angus Hamilton related the circumstances in detail. Hamilton's book is very uneven. He obtained a contract to write the book, but when he arrived on the spot, he found that no war correspondents would be allowed to accompany the expedition. The official reporter was a serving officer over whom the Government exercised a tight control, a Major Poole whose discretion was so absolute that he earned the nickname of "The Stagnant Pool". Hamilton was in consequence forced to pad his book in order to meet his publisher's requirements. His account of Williamson's and Gregorson's deaths, however, is more probable than other explanations current at the time.

asked the meaning of the envelopes and the Miri answered. "You see this white. That is for the two white men. And this black line round them is the Indian Military Police Guard which surrounds them."

"And the red," said the Abor, knowing that in his own tribe the symbol for anger was the red of scarlet chillies, "that means anger?"

"Yes," said the letter-carrier. "Great anger."

The headman of Rotung hearing this decided that whatever the price the letters must not be delivered. The Miri and the three Nepalese were allowed to depart next morning, but later they were ambushed and killed.

News of this successful action was sent to Kebang. Takam Gam, who was friendly to Williamson, tried to calm his tribesmen down but he was overruled and about a hundred fighting men from Kebang set out on the warpath. They first came on Dr. Gregorson, all of whose party save one they succeeded in killing. Then they advanced on Komsing, where without any complicity with the men of that place they killed Williamson and most of his party.

The whole affair in fact was caused by the foolish boasting of the Miri letter-carrier. No attack would have come from the men of Kebang had they not been convinced that Williamson had ordered an attack against them. And equally no expedition would have been made against the Abors, unless the Abors had thought that by murdering the Williamson party they could avoid being attacked. It was altogether a concatenation of foolish blunderings, though no more foolish perhaps than the events which precipitate most wars.

When I went into the Chulikatta country I was given instructions to move nowhere without twenty-five Military Police at the head of the line, and I was provided with only ninety Naga coolies to carry baggage.

With such instructions it was quite impossible to go any great distance and I was driven in the end to go forward with only three Military Police.

When I returned to Simla and reported, Sir Henry Mc-

Mahon was very disappointed that I had not got further. But I showed him the orders which I had received from the Assam Government and he absolved me.

At the beginning of the next cold season (autumn 1912), I was just going up for an examination in a series of subjects such as Law and Finance, which I knew I should not pass, when I received a telegram ordering me to return to Assam. When I arrived, I was told that I was to be officer commanding a larger mission than the previous year to go right into the Chulikatta country. This filled me with alarm. I saw myself being tied down by administration and having to fool around with accounts when the mission was wound up. I wrote immediately to McMahan and said that I could produce no results if I did this. I suggested instead that I should be appointed Intelligence Officer to the mission.

Sir Henry McMahan agreed to this. Captain G. A. Nevill was appointed Political Officer and head of the mission, and into the instructions given to him was written a clause which for me was of tremendous importance.

Captain F. M. Bailey will accompany the party as Intelligence Officer, and it is the desire of the Government of India that he should be allowed as much scope as possible for the exercise of his talents as regards exploration.

There were two other neighbouring survey parties, both in the Abor country. One was instructed to survey the courses of the Siyom and Sigon rivers and the other to survey the main range as far as possible east of the Dibong river. For this party there was the specific injunction to "discover as much as possible of the geography north of the main range *without crossing it*" (my italics).

In our instructions there was no mention of our crossing or not crossing the main range. This could mean that the Government of India was not concerned with the geography north of the main range in the Dibong section or it could equally well mean that there was no objection to my crossing the main range. It was one of those slips which occur in the framing of orders. Taken with the special injunction that I was to be

allowed as much scope as possible for the exercise of my "talents as regarded exploration", it could be interpreted as an implicit permission for me to enter Tibet. But if it were queried by the Government of Assam and referred back to the Government of India, I had no doubt at all that I should be forbidden to cross into Tibet. No civil servant would risk authorising a journey which might end as fatally as Noel Williamson's.

These thoughts crossed my mind the moment that Nevill showed me his orders. But the question of going into Tibet was at that time purely academic. It did not arise as a practical proposition until February 1913.

On the 7th of that month I joined the main force at Punli in the valley of the Matun river, one of the headwaters of the Dibong, and we moved slowly up the valley, with the survey party. By the 14th we reached the village of Ilupu, which lies at the confluence of the Matun and Dri rivers. We camped near the village and a number of villagers came out with their children to have a look at the white men. They were very friendly and cheerful and made us presents of small chickens and vegetables. They told us that further up the Matun river, some marches away, there was a settlement of Tibetans at a place called Mipi. I was surprised, because the height of our camp was only 3430 feet and Tibetans find it hard to live below the level of 8000. We questioned the people of Ilupu eagerly, but they could give us very little information. They never went up to Mipi and the road that had existed along the Matun valley had been allowed to revert to jungle.

We decided to camp at Ilupu until sufficient rations had been brought up to enable us to survey the Matun valley. Meanwhile Nevill and I selected a good place to cross the river and there we built a good substantial trestle foot-bridge. So that we could be independent of floods, Nevill at the same time got the Chulikattas to construct a strong cane suspension bridge opposite Ilupu village.

When the foot-bridge was finished, Nevill and I spent several days exploring the Matun valley and trying to dis-





Mishmi boys



Mipi villager



Mishmi girl



Chulikattas

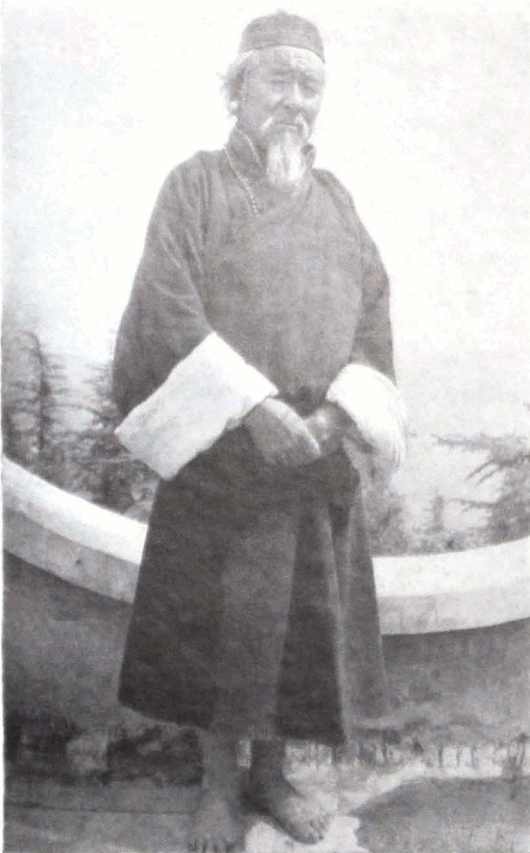




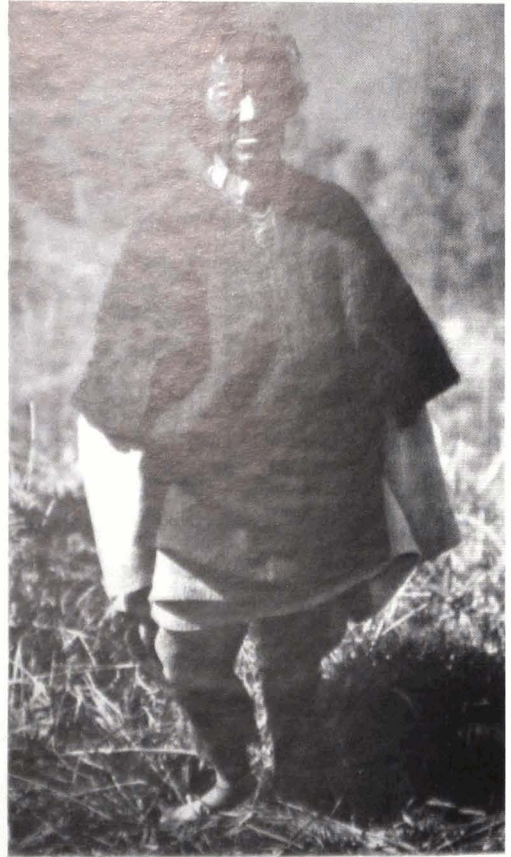
Capt. H. T. Morshead



Lt.-Col. F. M. Bailey



Kintup



Gyamtso

cover the old road. Immediately after crossing the river we were faced by a very steep climb of about a thousand feet. When we reached the top we found an open stretch of country, rolling downland with marshy hollows and streams. On the far side of the plateau there was a steep hill. The Mishmis who had accompanied us said that the road used to run along the side of this hill, but it had not been used for several years and had almost disappeared. We went to look for ourselves and could find traces of it only in a few places.

The Matun valley is fine and open. Along the river there is a fringe of jungle, but above this is grass and in some places high up on the hillside there are excellent forests of pine and fir. We burnt the grass where we could and found it easy to align and cut a good path. In the course of this we kept on finding traces of the old road.

The Chulikattas had proved so well disposed that we had felt little need of cover from Military Police, but in moving up to the Tibetans in Mipi, we considered it wise to have protection, as we had no idea how we should be received. We set out on the 20th of February, with Major Gunter the officer in charge of the survey, and with Captains Hensley and Kennedy and Lieutenant Lane bringing with them the remainder of the Police. We camped each time on the sites of deserted Chulikatta villages. We saw no sign of any human beings, but game was in abundance. On the lower slopes pigs and barking deer were plentiful and at the higher levels serow, goral and takin.

On the seventh day we reached an abandoned village called Imulin. Here we halted and Nevill and I went forward to reconnoitre. About three miles from our camp was a hill from the top of which we could see cultivated fields and a village built in the Tibetan style. We stayed watching for some time, but there was no smoke and we saw no one moving. So we concluded that this village had been abandoned, because news had leaked through of our presence in the district.

The next day we pushed forward for a short march. We had to cross the river, which at the point we chose was about seventy yards in width. We spent most of the day building

the bridge. It was bitterly cold and pouring with rain, but the Chulikatta guides worked magnificently and by 3.30 in the afternoon the whole of our force had reached the right bank. We camped close by the river on a level grassy flat.

Next day, Major Bliss, O.C. Military Police, Captain Nevill and I set out for the village. The road was good but it had not been used for some time and it was overgrown in many places with jungle. As we came near to the village, we passed through several well cultivated barley fields. When quite close, we saw a Tibetan man carrying wood. At this point I left Bliss and Nevill with the escort on a small hillock from which they could see the village. I told them not to advance until I sent for them. I went forward, taking with me one of my Tibetan coolies, a man from Darjeeling whose birthplace had been in Eastern Tibet and who would be most likely to speak the dialect of these people of Mipi.

In case the village was deserted, I had written out a notice in Tibetan, to say that we had come as friends and that a representative of their people should come to visit us at the camp. But the appearance of being deserted was accidental. As we came into the village, a woman suddenly appeared carrying a wooden vessel of water on her back. She took no notice of us, so I called out to her in Tibetan.

She looked over to us, dropped the vessel of water and ran, screaming, into a house. From the noise which continued within, she appeared to be having hysterics.

Two men then came out of the house. They looked across at us and I sat down on a log and called to them to come over.

They saw that I was unarmed and as they approached they ostentatiously unbuckled their belts and each man threw his sword on the ground.

I said that I wanted to talk to their headman. At first they maintained that he was not in the village, but they abandoned this when the headman himself emerged from the same house from which they themselves had come.

The headman, whose name was Gyamtso, asked if I was Chinese. He immediately assumed that I had come to kill him

and perhaps the rest of the Tibetans in the village. I told him that I was British and gradually allayed his fears. They were apparently so cut off from the Chulikattas that they had heard no news of our presence in the district. At this moment Nevill, Bliss and about twenty sepoy appeared contrary to our plan. The Tibetans looked up and thought that I had caught them in a trap, but once again we calmed them down, explaining who we were and what was the purpose of our visit. We said that we wished to have their help in making the survey and that we would move our camp near to the village.

Altogether we spent a month at Mipi and during that time Gyamtso and I became firm friends. From him I learned how it had come to pass that Tibetans should have settled in this comparatively low-lying valley.

I had already read in *Le Tibet Revolté*, by the French traveller M. Bacot, of an old prophecy, that when the Tibetan religion was persecuted in Tibet, the people should go to a country called Pemakö, a sort of "Promised Land". Pemakö was on the frontiers of India and here they would find a land good to live in, their religion would revive and eventually spread throughout the whole world.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, a number of Bhutanese had left Bhutan in obedience to this prophecy and settled in the lower Tsangpo valley. M. Bacot was told that a few years before the Younghusband expedition to Lhasa a holy lama with some monks had gone to this country of Pemakö, and when the Chinese were subjugating the Tibetans on this frontier, many people hastened to join them.

Here in Mipi we had come upon these seekers for the Promised Land. But they had not found it. The exact geographical position of Pemakö was imprecise. All that was known was that somewhere on the Dihang-Lohit watershed there was a holy mountain of glass and around this holy mountain lay fertile valleys.

Gyamtso told me that some ten years before about a hundred Tibetans from various parts of Eastern Tibet entered

these upper valleys, coming over the passes at the head of the Dri, Matun and Tsu valleys.

This first wave of settlers established friendly relations with the Chulikattas, from whom they bought land. There were, however, occasional quarrels and one Tibetan was killed.

The next year about two thousand more set out from Kham, Der ge, Po me and other places in Tibet. Many of these died on the way, because they ran into bad weather on the passes. Those who did get across found that the valleys could not possibly support such large numbers. Many of them decided to return at once, the majority making for Zayul over the pass at the head of the river Dri. In this case the weather held fair, but the travellers had not been able to equip themselves with food and starvation took its toll. On the road up the Andra Chu we found in caves the boxes, utensils and even bones of those who had perished on the way back.

Those who remained paid for their land with swords, spears, etc., and for a couple of years got on quite well with the Chulikattas. Then quarrels arose. The Chulikattas laid ambushes and set traps on the jungle paths and attacked the Tibetans at every opportunity. They also set fire to the Tibetans' houses and crops.

The Tibetans found it difficult to hold their own against an enemy so elusive. They seldom saw the Chulikattas, though they were frequently shot at with poisoned arrows from hides in the jungle. They were especially vulnerable at night, being armed with matchlocks, the glow of the matches giving to the enemy a target at which to aim their arrows.

The Tibetans also suffered from sickness owing to the low altitude to which they were not accustomed, to the excessive rainfall and the vast numbers of bloodsucking flies.

In 1909, convinced this was no Pemakö, the majority of the settlers decided to return to Tibet. The hundred or so who remained behind at Mipi were those who felt they could not make the journey across the mountains in safety, because they were too old, too young or too weak through sickness. A small number of able-bodied men also remained behind to protect

them against the Chulikattas, who having forced the main body of Tibetans to return to their own country seemed determined to pick the remainder off, one by one. Captain Kennedy, our doctor, treated two men for sword-cut wounds which they had sustained in a Mishmi ambush, a day or two before.

A few days before we reached Mipi, the Tibetans had organised a raid against the nearest Chulikatta village. About twenty of their younger men stole down the valley; but being untrained in jungle warfare, they gave away their presence and the Chulikattas abandoned their village and retired to the forest. The Tibetans had to be content with burning down the houses and killing the cattle, pigs and fowls, together with a lunatic, too dotty to take to his heels.

The burning of a village was not the dire punishment to the Chulikattas that it sounds. The houses are built and thatched with bamboo. Their household utensils and agricultural implements are also made from bamboo and are easily replaced. The people themselves move their villages every few years when the fertility of the soil is exhausted. In some ways it is a kindness to burn a Chulikatta village since it temporarily reduces the number of parasites to which these people act as hosts on a lavish scale.

We tried to make peace between the Tibetans and the Chulikattas who had attacked them, but the Tibetans had little confidence in its duration. They argued, with justice, that the Chulikattas had no one in authority over them. Even if they agreed not to fight any more, there was no one to prevent the commission of isolated acts of treachery. Indeed the pattern of the past had not been one of continuous hostility. There were periods of friendliness and then sudden treacherous attacks. Having consulted the lamas and astrologers, Gyamtso announced that it would not be wise for them to go into Chulikatta territory to make peace.

The best that we could do was to fix the Imu river as a boundary between the two peoples. The Chulikattas were told to keep below and the Tibetans to keep above it. The Tibetans

said that if the Chulikattas honoured the agreement for a year, they would try to re-establish friendly relations.

With the Chulikattas of the Emra valley to the west the Tibetans were on better terms. They had been trading, instead of fighting with each other. Admittedly there were difficulties, since their business was conducted by barter, not concluded at once. Gyamtso told us he would like us to help him to recover some debts which the Tibetans were owed. There was a number of *dzos* (a cross between a yak and domestic cattle), but of what quality was unspecified. There were several different sizes of bags filled with different kinds of grain; some rolls of Assam silk of indeterminate length; several different-sized baskets of the febrifuge, *Coptis teeta*, and four muskpods, size and quality unknown.

The Chulikattas of the Emra valley, needless to say, had counterclaims for a number of things which they declared the Tibetans owed to them.

The Tibetans of Mipi did not keep for their own use most of the things which they obtained from the Emra Chulikattas. They transported them over the mountains to Chimdro, the nearest village in Tibet, eight marches distant. In return they received rupees, either Indian or Chinese, with which they bought salt, wool, woollen cloth, swords and *dzos*, which they bartered to the Emra people.

I believe that I won the confidence of Gyamtso during the time that we spent in Mipi. At any rate it was a pleasure to be once more with Tibetans, and I felt compassion for this lonely, harassed group cut off from their native country by the mountains. But even if this natural sympathy had not existed, I should have cultivated Gyamtso; the moment that I had heard of the existence of the Tibetan settlement, the realisation flashed through my mind that here was my chance of getting through to Tibet from the Assamese side.

There was every need for discretion. I could not betray my intentions too quickly and I continued about the business of my duties normally, only broaching the question of the approaches to Tibet after several days. Then finding Gyamtso



forthcoming, I told him of my curiosity about the Tsangpo falls. The information which he gave me tallied well with what I knew from my own experience and that of Kintup and others. It proved very helpful when I got into Tibet, and I put it immediately to good use by compiling a report which was printed as an appendix to Captain Nevill's Report on the Dibong Survey and Exploration Expedition. It provided an excellent justification for the exploration which I proposed to take, because it all seemed so matter-of-factual. I was not going to launch into the blue, but merely to follow certain routes which I had already outlined.

I hid my own excitement as best I could, because I have found there is a perverse element in human nature that prompts people to put obstacles in the path of anyone who has set his heart on something. On the other hand, I needed a companion. The value of the work I had been able to do on my previous exploration from China through Tibet to Assam had been limited, precisely because I was working alone. The man I needed was a first-class surveyor.

In Major Gunter's Survey Team there was a Captain Morshead of the Royal Engineers. Henry Morshead was an old Wykehamist, about my own age. He had been employed in the Survey of India for some six years and as soon as I met him he impressed me with his keenness, efficiency and his extraordinary powers of physical endurance. He was my first, and as it proved my only, choice for a colleague, for as soon as I put the idea to him, he leapt at the opportunity.

The project, however, was not as simple as it sounded. Our plan was to stay on after the main expedition withdrew, which would be some time in April. Gyamtso had promised to provide us with the guides and carriers to cross the mountains to Chindro. There were two possible routes to Chindro, a journey of eight marches during which we could not rely on any food except what we carried, as the country was uninhabited.

The position was complicated by the equivocal attitude of the Indian Government. When Nevill as Head of the Mission



put the project up to the Government, the answer came back, "We approve but the party should not enter Tibet." Since the falls, if they existed, were in Tibet, this was tantamount to saying: We approve of Bailey and Morshead going, provided that they do not go.

Nevill, who was all on our side, discussed with us what the significance of this puzzling order might be. There were two possible interpretations. If the order had issued from McMahan, which we did not know, it meant that he approved of the project, but had added the second part as a cover-up in case the expedition ran into trouble. McMahan had done a lot of exploration himself on the Persian-Afghan frontier, he was sympathetic to us and understood official evasions. On the other hand, the approval might have proceeded from some fathead who had not the slightest idea of the geography of the north-east frontier.

A few days later a second message arrived to say that we should not go "without further orders". This placed us in a far more difficult position, because it meant that if we heard nothing more, we should either return with Nevill's party or lay ourselves open to the charge of insubordination. But we still did not know whether the spirit behind the order was one of official evasion or sheer obstructionism. All that we did know was that Nevill himself would incur responsibility if we went ahead without permission.

Nevill backed us up splendidly. He could cover himself by saying that when he left us, we had still had no counter-orders forbidding us to go. With the main expedition pulling out, supplies were low; but I was able to scrounge rice and flour. In addition there was one tin of ground rice and a small quantity of tea and sugar.

Morshead and I discussed what we should do if orders came countermanding the expedition, and we evolved the following plan. Some twelve miles south of Mipi there were two mountains, Karundi and Dshindi, the tops of which were visible from Mipi. Morshead had to use these heights as survey stations, and we agreed that if a message came through

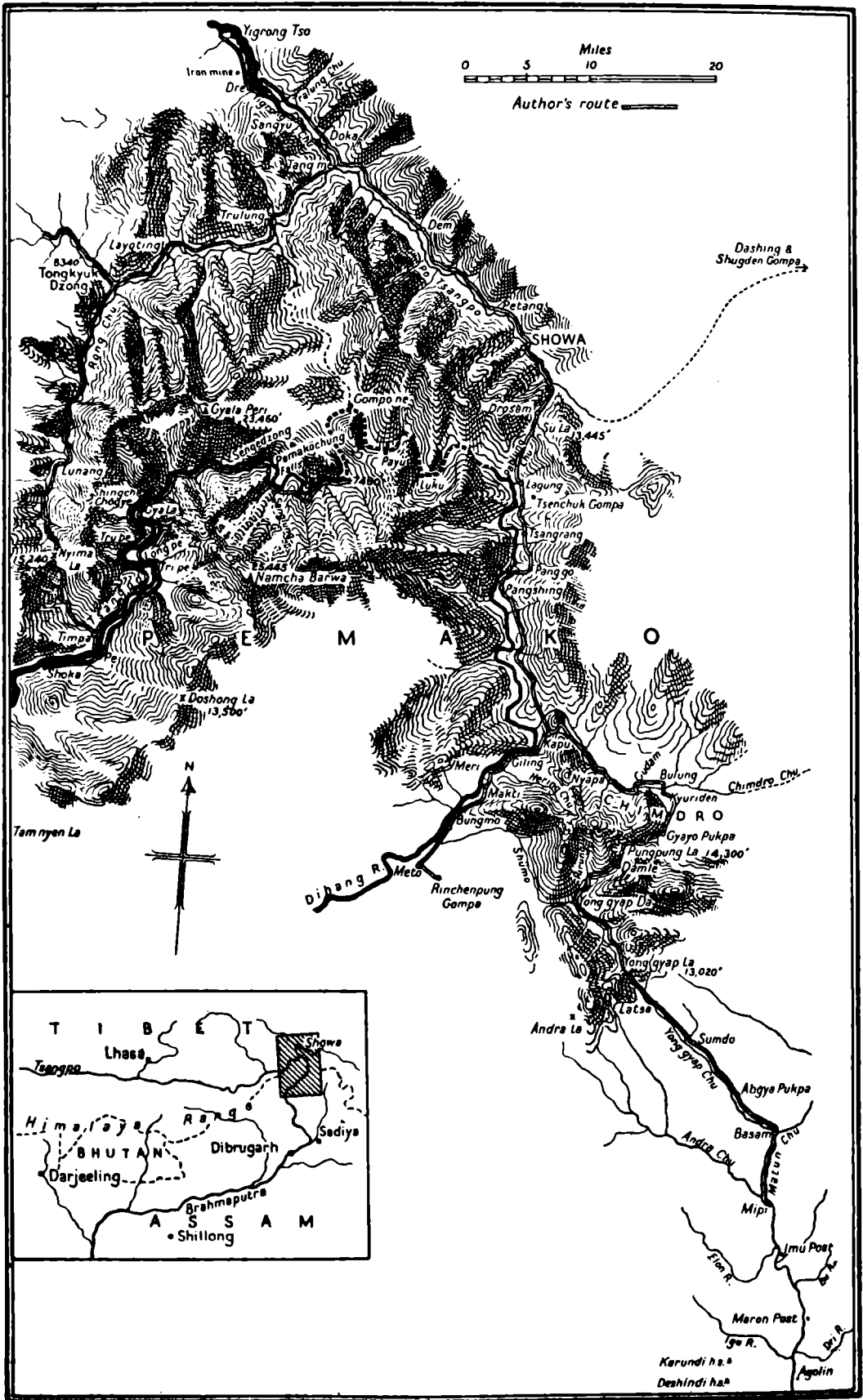
countermanding the expedition, he was to light a smoke signal, on seeing which I could depart immediately for Tibet. This would give at least one of us the chance of getting away in time. But there would be still the charge of insubordination and refusal to obey orders to be faced on my return.

The road we had taken from Ilupu to Mipi had involved crossing from the west bank to the east in one place and then back to the west bank again in another. Supposing that one of these bridges should be destroyed, I would be cut off in Mipi and I could say that I had been forced to enter Tibet as the only way of getting back to India. Shortly after I learnt that there existed a disused track along the west bank by which Morshead could join me, one of the bridges *was* destroyed. How it happened I cannot say.



PART TWO

# The Acceptance



## CHAPTER THREE

THERE were two routes from Mipi to Chimdro. One was up the valley of the Andra river, which flowed into the Matun river from the north-west about three-quarters of a mile above Mipi. The other was up the valley of the Yonggyap, which flowed on an almost parallel course to the Andra but four miles further up the Matun.

I had already explored part of the Andra valley, while the Survey party was at Mipi. I had left Mipi one day in the middle of March in falling snow with Captain Hensley of the Guides in charge of a small escort. A day's march through deepening snow brought us to a small cave, where I made myself as comfortable as I could. Captain Hensley returned and promised to send me more rations the next day. Renewed snow prevented the men reaching me and I stayed for several days in the cave with only a little food.

This did not trouble me unduly. The valley was uninhabited and game was abundant and tame. Flocks of blood pheasants (*Ithagenes kuseri*) came to the entrance of the cave. I shot several of them and even killed one with a stick.

My friendliest visitor was a shrew, which came on to my table as I was working. I grew fond of it as a companion, and yet the more I looked at it the more I felt that it might be a species which had never been seen or heard of before. As a man I wished it a long and happy life; but as an amateur naturalist I felt that the interests of science came first, so just before I left I converted my friend into a collector's specimen. It proved to be a new species and was named *Soriculus baileyi*.

After a few days a party of coolies led by Gyamtso got through to me with provisions. Gyamtso told me that one of the parties which had returned to Tibet from this Land of

Promise had travelled up this valley and we spent several days trying to find the track they had taken.

The forest was of very thick, low bushes, which were covered in snow. For hours on end we knocked the snow off, hoping to find branches which had been clean cut, not broken. But we only succeeded in finding cut branches in one place, and Gyamtso said that this was a false trail, made by the Tibetans themselves looking for the road after they had gone astray.

After twelve days of this we returned to Mipi. Perhaps the Yonggyap valley was as bad as the Andra valley; of that I did not know. But my experience of the Andra valley prejudiced me in favour of the Yonggyap.

When I asked Gyamtso what route he would favour, he was reluctant to commit himself. Considering how much he knew about the routes in Tibet itself, he appeared strangely uninformed about the respective merits of the two routes to Chimdro. Perhaps he thought that if we tried one and could not get across, we would lay the blame for our failure on him. He would say no more than that it would be best to consult the astrologers as to which route would be more auspicious.

While the astrologers were pondering this problem, there was a thaw and the tributaries of the Andra river became so swollen that the valley was impassable. Privately I resolved to take the Yonggyap route whatever the astrologers might say. But as I did not want to give offence to the Tibetans, I was relieved when they too advocated the Yonggyap. (I have found that Tibetan oracles will sometimes take cognisance of local conditions. Their methods even if magical do not run entirely contrary to common sense.)

Having fixed on the route, we still had to determine the date of the journey. The Yonggyap La, the pass at the head of the valley, was free of snow only three months in the year, during July, August and September. We were now at the beginning of May. We could not afford to spend months in Mipi. Quite apart from the risk of being ordered back, we had not the supplies of food.

May 7th, 1918, was the first of the Tibetan fourth month of

the Water-bull year. In the previous year the pass had been crossed with difficulty on the fifteenth of that month, that is to say about May 22nd by our calendar. This year however the snow was lying longer than usual.

Though we wished to start at the earliest possible moment, we knew the need for caution. This first stage of our journey from Mipi to Chimdro was physically the most hazardous. After crossing the Yonggyap La, the Tibetans warned us we would find ourselves in an uninhabited valley. This we were to follow down until we came to a valley joining it from the north-east. Though the Shümo river formed by the streams of these two valleys went down westwards to join the Tsangpo near Rinchenpung Gompa, there was no possible route down this river because of the narrowness of the gorge. So we would have to turn north-east up the tributary valley, crossing at the head of it the Pungpung La.

If we ran into bad weather between Yonggyap La and Pungpung La, we would be trapped; and to supplement the slender supplies which we could carry with us, there would be only what we could shoot on hoof or wing, say takin or pheasant. No doubt Chulikattas and other jungle folk might have found plants and fungi to support life, but neither the Tibetans nor ourselves had the skill and knowledge to do this.

Gyantso told us that a few years previously two parties from Mipi, attempting an early crossing, had been caught between the two passes. Some members of each party had died of starvation and those who reached the Tsangpo valley were in a state of utter prostration. Gyantso and a number of others warned us that with the weather and snow conditions what they were this year, we would be running a very considerable risk if we attempted the crossing before the end of the fourth month.

On the other hand, I was on tenterhooks watching Karundi and later Deshindi, to which Morshead had moved after completing his work on Karundi, expecting any moment to see the tell-tale wisp of smoke which meant that Morshead had received his recall. The sooner we started, the safer we would be



from the risk of being hauled back to India, Morshead to his office in Dehra Dun, I to sit for and fail some intolerably boring examination.

So, in our British way, we hit upon a compromise. We decided to leave Mipi, so that if by any chance a messenger had managed to get through to there, despite the broken bridge, he could be informed by the Tibetans that he was too late, we had already started. We would, however, only go up the valley as far as the snowline, which we would follow as it retreated to the foot of the pass. There we would wait ready to seize the first chance of crossing the Yonggyap La.

In this matter of weather we were to be assisted by a grateful lama. When the Mission had been in Mipi, Captain Kennedy, I.M.S.,\* had cured him of a simple but painful ailment. As a thanksgiving for his restoration to health, he retired to a cave above the village where he devoted himself to a solitary meditation in silence. His only visitor was a monk novice, a small boy, who took him his food daily. This boy told us that the lama was "sitting a hermitage". This was a thanksgiving for his cure, but it involved the achievement of a spiritual state in which he could control the weather and he would be pleased to make it fine for crossing the passes, if we would tell him the dates.

We calculated that following up the retreating snow we should with luck reach the foot of the pass by the 23rd of May, and though we were prepared to wait for a good opportunity to cross, we should prefer to have it fine on May 24th. Through the intermediacy of the small boy, the lama assured us that he would lay this on and added that he would also make it fine over the Pungpung La four days later.

Leaving the weather to the lama, I concentrated on the commissariat. I sent our men up the valley with bags of rations which they left in the forest at progressively further distances as the snowline retreated, which it began to do with rapidity. I also went myself for a few days, partly to super-

\* We would have liked Capt. Kennedy to come with us on account of his medical knowledge and his experience of Tibet. But unfortunately he could not be spared from the main expedition.



A cane suspension bridge



The camp and stockade at Mipi





Capt. Morshead surveying



The Nyerpa

intend the dumping but also in the hope of seeing some of the rarer game birds which live in these hills. These included a variety of the blood pheasant, and the crestless Sclater's monal pheasant, *Lophophorus sclateri*. I had collected several specimens of Sclater's monal cocks, but I had never succeeded in bagging a hen.

On this expedition I congratulated myself on shooting a hen. But it fell over a cliff and I was discouraged from trying to get it, because the Tibetan who was with me said that he had once spent a week without success trying to get a goral which had fallen over this cliff after he had shot it.

The Tibetans told me of two other dark-coloured game birds, which they found in these hills, called *Sha Tama* and *Tong Yama*, the latter being the larger. I saw one of them at a distance, but not near enough to shoot. I thought that it might be a variety of Kalij pheasant. Later the same day I obtained a new species of rat, which has been named *Epimys brahma*.

I expected to find takin (*Budorcas taxicolor*). They are large goat-like animals, measuring 13 hands at the shoulders when full grown. They have yellowish-brown hair and curiously curved horns. They are not bad to eat and if they were plentiful in the valley, there was a good chance we should also find them in the valleys between the Yonggyap La and the Pungpung La. But though their tracks were still well marked, they were all old. The Tibetans told me that it was a little too early for them. Towards the end of May, they said, some of these valleys swarm with them making up to the fresh ground uncovered from the snows. It can be positively dangerous for a man to travel, as they have little fear of human beings and will attack if they meet one on their migrations.

I tried again for takin a little later. We went down a stretch of sand beside the river and found the footprints of a large one there. We followed them, sometimes along the bank of the river and sometimes along the edge of the forest. He had kept stopping to eat the bark off trees and this made him easy to track as we could see the blaze on a tree a hundred yards ahead.

After following him for about two hours we came on him about fifty yards off standing facing away from us with his head turned round listening. I shot him.

He was a very big male specimen but unfortunately had one horn broken off. I did not keep the horn, but I was glad of the mask as the skins of those which I had shot south of Rima two years before had been ruined by the damp weather. The Tibetans were delighted at the fresh takin meat I had procured for them, and we sent it down with the skin to Mipi the next day.

One of the men who went up to fetch the meat said that on the way he met a huge takin "with horns as big as a yak's". It appeared completely unafraid. He drew his sword and struck a tree with it and shouted. The animal just stamped its foot and he thought it was going to charge, but instead it walked slowly away.

They confirmed what I had been told when I was shooting takin south of Rima in 1911. They have no fear till they smell a man. But when they get wind of him, they will make off at a great distance and are reluctant to return to a place where a man has been.

That day we found fresh tracks of a tiger, and the night after I slept in a cave at Basam, their dialect word for Cane Bridge. In this cave there were the bones of a tiger which one of our Tibetans, Sonam Chumbi, had killed the year before.

Sonam Chumbi was one of the two men whom Kennedy had treated for sword wounds when he came to Mipi. He was grateful, and I think that was the reason why he volunteered to accompany us as guide as far as Chimdro.

From Basam I returned to Mipi on the 8th of May. I found waiting for me a message from Morshead which he had sent up the secret track on the right bank of the river. He asked me to send him some coolies to bring his stuff in from the survey station to Mipi.

Our coolies during the survey expedition had been Nagas for the most part. But as these unclothed people were unsuitable for travel at high altitudes, we had brought a number of

Tibetans for the high-altitude work and also some Gurkhas. For our projected journey to Tibet I had picked seven of these Tibetans and a Lepcha named Narsing. The Lepchas are the aborigines of Sikkim and a most charming people. In religion they profess a kind of Buddhism tempered with animism. They make excellent servants, as much at home in the drawing-room as in the forest. While making preparations for the expedition I sent Narsing to help in the camp kitchen for a few days so that he could learn the rudiments of cooking. He never got much further than the rudiments but we both survived his efforts in the six months during which he did for us.

Morshead joined me on May the 13th. Just before he was leaving two Gurkha coolies had arrived at his bivouac with packages of mail sent up from the main column. To my relief, they brought a parcel of camera films for me. My previous films had almost all been used.

As the main column had already started back, there was no chance of the two Gurkhas rejoining them, so we took them with us and they returned home six months later by the long way, through Tibet.

By this time the food dumps were in position along the route and we were all set to make the journey to the snow-line, to await the lama's manipulation of favourable weather.

Before we left, Gyamtso gave me a letter which I was to present to the Dzongpön of Chimdro, who would be the first Tibetan official we would meet. I did not know its contents at the time, but in Chimdro I was allowed to translate it. Here is the text.

The British have arrived in Pemakö from Chulikatta land and gave us good presents. They are going to Po me and then to India. As Gyamtso cannot himself go with them, he sends you this information. Please send a man to accompany them. The British Bailey Sahib is going. Please do not stop him but give the necessary orders. There are many British in Zayul, Kala Yong Dzong, the Tsangpo valley, and here also in the Dri, Dibong, Emra, Ahui and Matun valleys. They are in countless numbers. This country is not under the Emperor of China but under Great Britain. Bailey

Sahib knows the Dalai and Tashi Lamas who know he has come so you must not stop him. They will not give trouble to the people. Please help them.

Gyamtso was a good friend, who if he found that truth was unimpressive thought nothing of dressing it up to its proper dignity. He gave us also letters in the same vein to the two queens of Po me whose residence was at Showa, and to Gedrun Rimpoche, an incarnate lama of Riwoche who had spent some time at Mipi before deciding that it was not his idea of Pemakö.

In addition to our ten coolies, we took with us Sonam Chumbi and two other guides from Mipi. We had difficulty in persuading them to start so early in the year, their belief in the weather control exercised by the lonely lama in the cave being apparently slender. When at last they did agree, they refused to carry any loads, so that for the journey to Chimdro, which we estimated would take ten days, our ten coolies had to carry rations for our party as well as our equipment. It increased the danger of starvation from bad weather on the journey. The physical presence of three men from Mipi, we reckoned, would be a better introduction than any which Gyamtso could write.

Morshead and I both had camp beds and between us a small tent weighing forty pounds, which was just big enough for the two beds. If the weather was fine, we did not bother to pitch it.

*May 16th. Basam, 5,600 ft.*

Morshead left Mipi on May 15th and I followed the next day. I joined him at Basam, where I found him down with fever. I was rather worried at this happening right at the beginning of our journey. But next morning he said he was better and he was up before dawn to do some work on the highest hill he could find.

I said farewell to Gyamtso, who had come as far as Basam to see us on our journey, and then I went on about six miles up the valley with all our men and baggage, expecting that

Morshead would join us in the evening. But night fell and there was no sign of Morshead.

*May 17th and 18th. Camp in jungle. 6,500 ft.*

Morshead had gone out alone. He was quite fearless and I would say "thought nothing of taking risks", except that I believe he thought so little about danger that he didn't realise that there was such a thing as risk. I sent men down the road with torches, in case he might have missed his way in the dark, but they returned without having met him.

I hardly slept that night for worrying over Morshead's disappearance. Had he had an accident or another more violent attack of fever? In either of those cases it might be almost impossible to find him in this dense uninhabited country. And even supposing that we did find him and he was in some way incapacitated, what then? This heaven-sent opportunity of exploring the gorges was unlikely ever to come our way again. With only a little delay, our precious stores of food would be exhausted before we even reached the Yonggyap La.

In Basam we had left some food, which we had told the Mipi villagers they could take back once it was certain that we were across the pass and would not need it. So the next morning I took the whole party back to Basam so that we should not be living on the food we had brought up for the journey.

When we reached it, there was no sign of Morshead, but he arrived shortly afterwards in a high fever.

After leaving his survey station he had been led astray by a fresh blaze, which he thought we had made to guide him. Not finding any further traces and being overtaken by darkness, he spent the night without food, trying ineffectually to shelter from the pouring rain under a rock. This not being one of the cures for fever, Morshead began to run a high temperature and so, instead of trying to catch us up, he made for Basam to which he reckoned I would return.

We had planned the expedition as best we could with our slender resources; but we had had to reckon on everything



going forward without a hitch. Now we had lost twenty-four hours and the food at Basam was not enough for us to stay there until Morshead's fever abated. We had to push on at all costs, if we wanted to eat.

We went slowly up the valley for some miles until we reached a nice dry cave. It was plain that Morshead could do no more that day, so I gave him some tea, laced with whisky, of which we had one bottle for such emergencies as these. Then seeing that he was comfortable, I left him and went ahead to my camp of the night before.

*May 19th. Abgya Pukpa. 7400 ft.*

By the next morning he had completely recovered, and he joined us very early and we moved on in heavy rain for about six miles until we reached an overhanging rock which the Tibetans called Abgya Pukpa.\* Here we found the rations which we had sent on ahead, and our temporary shortage of food was over.

The reason why the food had been left at Abgya Pukpa was that when the men had brought it up, they had come on a large stream which they had been unable to cross, so they had dumped it in this, the first dry shelter they could find.

*May 20th. Shakang Camp. 8150 ft.*

The next day we went on as far as the stream, a distance of about five miles. There we halted and sent the men back to bring up all our rations from Abgya Pukpa. While they were gone, we felled a large tree to form a bridge over the stream.

Trees felled across rivers make passable bridges, but only so long as the rough bark remains on them. When the bark has rotted, as it soon does in this damp climate, the wet, slippery surface is very dangerous. There were several such obsolete tree-bridges lying across the stream, felled by the people of Mipi in order to maintain their contact with Chimdro, which though itself a small and isolated community repre-

\* *Pukpa* is a word which they use in these parts to designate any overhanging rock or cave where travellers spend the night.

sented the great outside world to the people of Mipi, a community even smaller and more isolated.

We had in the course of this expedition to bridge so many streams that it would be tedious to enumerate them. Where we could find no tree suitably close to form a bridge, we were driven back on rendering some previous tree-bridge serviceable by chipping and roughening the slippery trunk with a sword. But we were always reluctant to do this, because it took far longer than felling and even then it was dangerous.

We had now climbed high enough to be free at last from those pests of the damp forests, leeches and ticks. While we were still below that altitude, I had noted another characteristic of Morshead's which rather alarmed me. No one can avoid picking up leeches and one cannot stop to remove them while one is on the march. On one occasion described by me\* I found at a halt that I had 150 leeches on me and my clothes. Morshead appeared indifferent to them. I thought at the beginning that this indifference might be a residue of his fever. But later I found this was not the case. When his temperature was indubitably normal, he would stand there covered with leeches and with blood oozing out of his boots as oblivious as a small child whose face is smeared with jam. It worried me, because I felt that I had to be responsible for Morshead's tropical hygiene as well as my own.

After we had crossed the stream, we found more traces of the fatal retreat of the Tibetan immigrants. There were cooking pots, a heavy millstone, fleshless skeletons in rotting clothes. It was a scene of the victory of nature over man. The undergrowth had closed in on the track so that it was scarcely visible, yet in the middle of it all we came on one wooden bridge which was in surprisingly good condition.

*May 21st-23rd. Sumdo Camp. 9150 ft.*

The next day we reached a place which the Tibetans call Sumdo. There are many Sumdos in this part of the world. *Sum* is the Tibetan for three, and Sumdo is used to describe the junction of two small valleys to form a third larger one.

\* *China—Tibet—Assam*, p. 166.

All Tibetan place names are descriptive, usually topographically, so that the traveller can to some extent visualise what he will see on his route from the names of the places. We came for example to a place called Treu Troma. *Treu* in their dialect means monkey; and here after thick bamboo forest through which we had had to hack our way, we came into a flat place in which I saw monkeys of the langur type.

We saw many pheasants also. There were several tragopans and a beautiful cock flew down to within ten yards as we were giving our rations to our men. I shot two Selater's monal pheasants and our men burned incense of pine needles as a thank-offering for this addition to our food.

In the evening we were joined by our three Mipi guides, who had started later than us, because they could travel faster than our party. They said that they had calculated that we would be ready to cross the pass on the day that we had planned, the 23rd of May by our calendar. To assist the lama meditating in his cave, the monks of Mipi were holding a service, interceding for good weather and a safe crossing.

In this camp we spent three nights, bringing up the remains of the food which we had left at the large stream and sending some of our rations forward to the foot of the pass. For food we shot several more tragopans and blood pheasants. Try as we did, we could not be ready to cross the pass by the 23rd. It seemed a great pity considering the output of prayer and meditation in Mipi. But as it turned out, the weather on the 23rd was very bad. We did not see the sun at all.

*May 24th-25th. Yonggyap Latsa S. Camp. 10,600 ft.*

On the 24th we moved on about twelve miles to Latsa, which, as its name implies, was the last camp before crossing the pass. The road was through dense bamboos. In parts the bamboo forest was impenetrable. They grew so close together that it was impossible to push or squeeze between them and we had to hack our way through.

Occasionally we came into fir trees and experienced a tremendous feeling of relief, not merely from the arduous

business of slashing through hard bamboo but also from the sensation of being caged in.

At the Latsa we found the rations that had been sent up. We checked them over and found to our consternation that we had rations only for ten days. Given fine weather between the two passes, we might do the journey in less than that time. But we had calculated that an allowance of ten days' rations was the least which we could permit ourselves as an insurance against bad weather, accidents and other emergencies.

I don't know what had happened. I cannot believe that, knowing the danger with which we were faced, any of the carriers could have stolen the rations. Whatever it was, one thing was certain. We could not wait as we had intended until we had fine weather for the crossing of the Yonggyap La. Whatever the weather might be, we had to attempt the pass by the 26th.

Morshead and I lay in our tent listening to the rain drumming on the canvas, and I joined my prayers to those of the monks and the solitary lama that the next day might break fine. But the first sound I heard on waking was the drumming of the rain, if anything more relentless and persistent than the night before. There was dense cloud on the mountain and one could not see more than a few paces. It seemed as if it was never going to change.

*May 26th-27th. Yonggyap Latsa N. 11,400 ft.*

And by the morning of the 26th it had not changed. But for all that we had to make the crossing. With heavy hearts we broke camp and made up the mountain in what we believed was the direction of the pass, though we could not see it. There was deep snow underfoot and the rain came pouring down, beating the surface of the snow into slush.

At first there were a few fir trees growing out of the snow and under these we saw several monal pheasants. I could not understand why they should stay on the snow, where they could find no food, when they had only to open their wings and plane a few hundred feet down the steep valley to find

excellent feeding where the freshly melted snow had left the ground bare, revealing berries and other food. Our party had to be there, but for the pheasants it seemed mere perversity.

We had with us a Mishmi puppy called Roarer, who grew very excited when he saw the pheasants. He bounded after them across the snow, and they did not take any notice until he was quite close and then they flew up into the trees just beyond his reach. The puppy refused to lose heart, rushing this way and that until at last he caught one which was too weak to elude him.

I was going to shoot some of these pheasants for the pot, but the Tibetans asked me not to fire on the pass. The shot might anger the local spirits, who would retaliate by sending avalanches and bad (or should they have said "even worse"?) weather. Like most superstitions, it probably had some substance. Quite possibly the reverberation of a rifle shot might start an avalanche.

We passed out of the fir belt after just over two miles, on to a flat snow plain through which no vegetation showed. After crossing a small stream, we came to a steep ascent with deep soft snow. It was a very difficult climb and it took us three hours and ten minutes to do 1200 feet. Rain was falling the whole time, but not as heavily as on the lower slopes. The whole place was clouded in mist and we had to send men forward in different directions to find the Lap-tse (which is a pile of stones to be found as a marker on every pass in Tibet).

We boiled a thermometer at the summit. This is not as barbarous a custom as it may sound to nurses accustomed to slipping thermometers under the tongues of feverish patients. What we used was a hypsometer, an instrument consisting, to quote the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "of a cylindrical vessel in which the liquid, usually water, is boiled, surmounted by a jacketed column, in the outer partitions of which the vapour circulates, while in the central one a thermometer is placed". The principle of the hypsometer is that the lower the pressure, the lower is the boiling point of any liquid, and the higher one is, the lower is the barometric pressure. To calculate altitude,

however, is not quite as simple as that, because one has also to know what the temperature of the atmosphere is. Once that is known, the B.P. or boiling point will give a fairly accurate indication of the height. There may however be factors in the barometric pressure which one cannot calculate from a single observation. All the B.P.s which we took on this expedition were checked against the observations of the meteorological stations in India and we were able to correct our altitudes thereby.

The B.P. on Yonggyap La gave us an altitude of 12,020 feet (193·1°). We could not measure the depth of the snow because we had no sticks long enough. On a rock nearby it was twelve feet and on the ground it must have been more.

On the other side of the pass we had a steep descent for 900 feet. The snow was loosely packed and we started several avalanches. Two coolies with their loads went down on one occasion and later another coolie and I were carried down about twenty feet, but no one was hurt.

We soon entered pine forest, where the snow was much lighter and the going far easier. Morshead and I both had been carrying quite heavy weights ourselves to reduce the loads on the coolies, and we had found it hard in the deep snow. Through the forest it was easier, not merely because of the improved going but because we had surmounted our first major obstacle safely.

As soon as we came below the snowline we made camp, resolved to make an early start the next morning. To supplement our rations I took my gun and in some flat marshland shot a blood pheasant, two Brahminy duck and a mallard.

Next morning it was still raining hard and just as we were getting ready to start we found that five of the men had gone completely snowblind. We had given each of them a green veil as protection, but some of them had neglected to wear them, because the weather was so cloudy that they were not conscious of any glare. It was quite impossible for us to travel on that day.

I was very angry because it was a delay which would not

have occurred if the men had taken proper precautions. I told the coolies that we could not spare them more than half-rations. At this they were not at all pleased, though I shot some more game for the pot.

Morshead, also, was not at all pleased because, checking over his equipment, he found that his sight-rule was missing. It must have been dropped as we were crossing the pass. "This is a disaster," he said. "Without a sight-rule, I can't make a plane-table survey. My work will be practically useless." He spent the day trying to make a new sight-rule out of a tin, but without any success.

In the late morning the rain turned to snow. The Tibetans were pleased because they said this was a sign that the weather would clear. Sure enough after a fall of about half an inch, the sky cleared and the sun came out. We had the first fine afternoon for many days. In the evening Morshead was able to get an observation for latitude by the stars ( $29^{\circ} 16' 43''$ ).

*May 28th. Yonggyap Da Camp. 10,590 ft.*

By the next morning the snowblind men had recovered sufficiently and we marched down stream all day, a distance of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles. The road was mostly through fir forest, which was easy going. But there were occasional belts of bamboo jungle, through which we had to cut.

We camped where the Yonggyap river, down which we had come, joined the Rirung river, up which we had to travel to reach the Pungpung La. It was an excellent camping ground, a flat clearing through which the rivers flowed silently. I collected some iris and other seed and saw the remains of many flowers. Later in the year it must be a very beautiful spot.

The ground was littered with fallen trees, which provided excellent fuel. Our guides told us that until a few years previously the clearing had been covered in forest. Then a lake up the Rirung valley had burst its dam and the river had come down in flood, destroying the forest and depositing twelve feet of silver sand through which the Rirung river was busily cutting its way.

Over the Yonggyap river there were two broken cantilever bridges, which had originally been built for pilgrims making the circumambulation of Kondü Potrang, the holy mountain which Kintup had visited when he launched the logs down the Tsangpo. The weather was a variation on the day before. There was no rain, but a small fall of snow, followed by a fine day. This led us to hope that the climate was less rainy on the north side of the Yonggyap pass.

*May 29th. Damle Camp. 12,000 ft.*

In this we were mistaken. Rain fell during the night and there were showers all the next day. We started at 7 a.m., going up the Rirung valley. The first mile was along the steep side of a cliff which had fallen into the river, probably when the lake burst its dam. It was very hard going. Half a mile further on, we came on the lake itself. It was 600 yards wide and a mile and a half long. It seemed shallow, as we could see logs or tree stumps sticking out of the water.

At the far end two streams flowed into the lake; the larger, the Rirung Chu, had given its name to the lake, Rirung Tso. Our guides told us that it was possible to go up it and across a pass to Chimdro, but the road was worse than over the Pungpung La. So we bore right-handed and went up the smaller stream, the Pungpung Chu, soon coming into forest again. We passed two grazing camps with broken-down huts and then crossed the snowline.

On this day we made nine miles and camped at a place called Damle, where, though there was two feet of snow all round, we were lucky to find a bare patch.

Near to the camp I succeeded in shooting a Brahminy duck, but nothing more. Earlier in the day, by the lake, I had missed a musk deer, and I felt worried by our food situation.

I had wanted to push on to a cave higher up the valley, but the guides said there would be much snow and we should not reach it. My diary, written that evening, records my anxiety.

We hope to get over the pass tomorrow but it will be difficult—but as only have food for two days we must get over. Twice parties



of Tibetans have been unable to cross and have had to turn back and go down the river to Rinchenpung where they have arrived after about ten days nearly dead with starvation and the road is hard and there is no food. Some of the party have died on each occasion.

*May 30th. Gyayö Pukpa Camp. 11,000 ft.*

We rose in darkness at 3.30 a.m. It was raining and we did not get started until 5. We hoped that the snow would have frozen hard overnight, but it was very soft and when we left the forest and came out on the rocky hillside it lay deep as well.

We climbed a high spur from which we could almost see the top of the pass, then down again past a lake to the stream which flowed from the Pungpung pass itself. To reach this took three hours and twenty-five minutes.

From there we had a climb of 1000 feet to the top of the pass. The snow was still soft and very deep, and it took us two and a half hours to reach the top. The altitude here by boiling point was 14,395 feet (186.9° B.P.).

When we tried to drop down the other side, we found that this was impossible because the cliffs were sheer. We had to turn to the right and climb another 300 feet above the pass. This proved very difficult because the snow was so soft that we sank up to our waists. Eleven hundred feet below the pass we came to a lake, about a mile long by 300 yards wide, with a narrow waist in the middle.

We had thought that the worst was over, but when we got to the outlet of the lake, a stream which fell steeply down the mountainside, we found what looked like a vision of inferno. We could not see the bottom of the valley. Clouds of dark mist came billowing up obliterating the view. All we saw were steep cliffs in every direction down which, without any firing of gunshots, great masses of snow would break off and avalanche into the mist below.

We searched for some easier descent route, but we couldn't find one. The only way down was by the cliffs into the inferno.

As we went down, we started slides and avalanches of our

own. I had a dangerous fall which I thought was going to be my last, but I saved myself with the handle of my butterfly net. Then Sonam Chumbi started one. It was a very steep slope and as he went down he cried out, calling on Ugyen Rimpoche\* to save him. Suddenly the mists parted and there was a gasp of horror as we saw that the slope ended in a sheer drop. Down he went, shrieking out to the saint, and we could see that the only chance of his salvation lay in an island of bushes which was sticking out of the snow about 150 feet below. Slowly the avalanche gathered momentum. It hit the bushes and piled up and then went on again with a mounting speed and mass and crashed over the precipice. For a moment we could not see what had happened. Then dark against the snow the shape of Sonam Chumbi emerged and began cautiously making its way towards us.

Twelve hours after our departure we reached the shelter of a huge boulder just below the snow level. And there we made our camp. The first thing that Sonam Chumbi did was to gather branches of silver fir with which he made a smoky fire, aromatic enough to pass as incense; and before it he remained a long time, saying prayers and giving thanks for his deliverance.

\* Ugyen Rimpoche is one of the names given to the Indian saint Padma Sambhava, who introduced Buddhism into Tibet in the year A.D. 747. Other titles by which he is known are Lopön Rimpoche and Guru Rimpoche.

## CHAPTER FOUR

WE all woke the next morning with a sense of tremendous relief. We had survived the main physical hazard of our journey. Gone was the fear which had never been very far from any of us that we should never reach Chimdro\* alive. Morshead immediately and imperturbably set to work on his surveying, swearing gently each time he remembered the loss of his sight-rule. Familiar with travel in Tibet, I did not feel quite so calm. I realised that ahead of us in Chimdro lay a hazard as dangerous as that which lay behind. The whole success of our expedition would hinge on whether or not we could induce the authorities to grant us "*ula*".

When a Tibetan official travels on business he is given *ula*. This means that the villages on his road are obliged to supply him with food and lodging for himself and his servants and transport on their journey as far as the next stage. This privilege was abused by many officials, who demanded more transport animals than they needed for their personal belongings and used these extra animals to carry merchandise, thus supplementing their official salaries with the perquisites of trade. I intended to pay fair rates for our transport and supplies, but I foresaw that I might have difficulty in being granted *ula*.

The wonderful thing about *ula* was that once it was established no one challenged your right to it. You could go

\* I prefer the spelling Chimdro to that used by Kaulback in his book *Salween*, Chindru. The principle I advocate, expounded at some length in an article on "The Transliteration of Tibetan Place Names", *Geographical Journal*, Feb. 1941, is that a name once spelt for a traveller by a Tibetan on the spot should not be changed, except for very cogent reasons, which should in that case be explained. In the case of Chimdro, the "n" is changed to "m" for euphony, as in other languages. The name Chimdro is used for the whole district comprised by the Chimdro valley.

on moving around Tibet for the rest of your life if you wanted to without your *ula* expiring.

The trouble was to establish our right to *ula*. I had Gyamtso's letter, the contents of which I did not know at the time. But it was clear when I did read the letter that even Gyamtso, loyal friend though he was, did not regard our party as very impressive. He needed to fortify our importance with numberless Englishmen scattered through Assam and Tibet.

And if we had looked unimpressive on our departure from Mipi, we looked even shabbier and more woebegone now that we were across the passes. And what was more, we were painfully hungry. Our supplies were almost exhausted. In Tibet as elsewhere, that great psychological law applies: "For he that hath, to him shall be given and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath."

I resolved to put on the bravest show that I could. I sent one of the guides forward to announce to the people of Chimdro that we had arrived. Since we had no authority to be where we were, our best tactic was to behave as if we had.

*May 31st-June 2nd. Chimdro. 6450 ft.*

Morshead wished to travel more slowly, in order that he might do his survey work as he went. So I went ahead, making for the chief village in Chimdro, Gudam, the headquarters and residence of the Dzongpön. We travelled down the valley through forest, in which monal and blood pheasants were plentiful. I shot one of the latter for supper that night.

After going eleven miles, we descended sharply until we came on a clearing in which was the first village, named Kyuriden. Half a mile further on the stream which we had followed down from Pungpung La joined the main Chimdro river, across which was a good bridge.

Waiting at the bridge was an old man, a monk, who said that he had been sent by the Dzongpön to greet us. So far, so good. Sonam Chumbi, whom we had sent ahead to Gudam, had produced at least this mark of respect.

I walked on with the old monk to the village of Bulung,

leaving Morshead to come more slowly. He had caught us up, but wanted to do more work at the bridge. He looked bad. We were back in leech country and he was still doing nothing about them.

At Bulung the old monk took me to the house of one of Sonam Chumbi's relations and we had tea and tsampa.

While I was there, one of our coolies, a Mönba called Anay, came and drew me on one side. Morshead was "very ill", he said. How was he ill? I asked. "Very ill," Anay repeated, and then said that Morshead had fainted.

I did not know what to do. It seemed callous to leave Morshead at such a time and yet our position with the Tibetans of Chimdro was so precarious that I did not want to leave the monk or let him know that Morshead was ill. Any betrayal of weakness might tip the balance against us.

I remembered how whisky had pulled Morshead round before. The bottle could probably do him far more good than I. I unpacked it and gave it to Anay. Then with difficulty I managed to borrow a pony, which Morshead could ride in to the monastery at Gudam. I told Anay that if Morshead was too weak to ride, then he himself must come to Gudam to report to me.

By the time the old monk and I reached Gudam, our servants were already installed in one house. Another had been put aside for us. It was very small and dark, and it seemed to me none too clean. I said that we would not sleep there and ordered the tent to be pitched. It was difficult to be certain, but I suspected a slight in this offer of accommodation and in the fact that the Dzongpön did not greet us personally when we arrived at the monastery.

Morshead rode in on the pony soon after this. The whisky had revived him and he was already looking much better. He was a man with marvellous powers of recuperation, but I remembered what had happened in the Yonggyap valley and was frightened that he might have a recurrence of his fever. If he was too ill to travel, it would be disastrous, because everything depended on our getting *ula* facilities established

quickly. While we stayed in Gudam our position would remain anomalous.

When we were settled in the tent, presents of tsampa and tea arrived from the Dzongpön, amends perhaps for the inadequate accommodation which he had offered us. Later still there was an invitation from the Dzongpön to come and see him next morning.

We were grateful for the tsampa, because we had completely run out of food, owing to the day we lost through snowblindness.

Next morning Morshead and I called on the Dzongpön. There was nothing to eat for breakfast and we were ravenously hungry. The Dzongpön, a monk of fifty-five, who was the incarnation of a holy lama named Pongle from Lhodzong, was cordial without being effusive. We skirmished with courtesies for some time and then I asked him outright if he would supply us with transport. He said that would be all right, though without great conviction.

When we left him we bought some unground barley and some butter.

A number of people came to us wanting medicine, and I gave them remedies which if they did not cure were at least not lethal.

A carpenter from Batang also came to see me, whether at the suggestion of the Dzongpön or not I do not know. He said he had been up the Rong tö chu when I passed through Rima in 1911. He had heard all about me and how I had sold a saddle to the Chinese official for sixty rupees. I did not tell him that I had sent the saddle by a Chinese soldier as a gift, because I thought that if the soldier had managed to sell the saddle to his officer, he well deserved the money and in this country gossip travelled far.

The next day Morshead went off on survey\* and I called once again on the Dzongpön. I took with me photographs of Mipi

\* On this day Morshead went up to the last village at the head of the Chimdro valley, a place called Shingke. Kaulback visited the same village some years later, apparently unaware that a highly qualified surveyor had already placed it on the map.

and also of the Dalai and Tashi Lamas, hoping that they might not merely interest the Dzungpön but also improve my standing with him. It was a wise move. He had never met either of the great lamas and he questioned me eagerly about them. He was obviously impressed that I knew them both and his recognition of friends in Mipi confirmed we were telling the truth. The whole tenor of our conversation changed as compared with the day before and he ended by inviting me to witness the annual ceremony of *Pubi druchen*.

The monks first of all dressed the lama in a yellow cloak with a yellow cap. This surprised me as the monastery was of the Nyingma order, the monks of which normally wear red caps. But they told me that the cap had come from Lhasa and they hadn't troubled to get the colour changed.

In the middle of the temple they had a square table on which were placed in a circle small bowls of rice. Grains of rice were arranged to form some mystic pattern in the centre. I was not close enough to see what the pattern was. The lama stood beside the table with a brass bell (*tribu*) in one hand and in the other a *dorje*, the bronze thunderbolt. The monks, in number thirteen, recited prayers, after which the band played.

The instruments in the band consisted of two *gyalings* (a form of clarinet), a big drum, a pair of cymbals and two conch shells, which were blown by young boy monks.

Recitation and music alternated for some time. Then all the rice was removed from the table and placed in five brass bowls, each of which was then filled with a different coloured sand. In each bowl they placed a thread of wool of the same colour as the sand which the bowl contained and twisted the five colours into one while the lama and one of the monks executed a rather clumsy dance to the music of clarionets, cymbals and conch shells.

At one time the lama changed his robes and came in wearing an apron, which is called a *rukyaen*, and armlets carved from human bones.

Some years later I visited the monastery of Samye, some miles south-east of Lhasa. At this monastery were four

Chötens of different colours, white, black, green and red; the white representing good, the black evil, the red fire and the green water.

At Chindro, the colours were white, *yellow*, red and green, while the bowl in the middle contained blue sand.

At one time in the ceremony the lama wrote a sacred letter with his finger in the sand of each bowl, at the same time droning out a word in a deep voice. I tried to catch these words, but they were impossible to understand.

At one stage the lama and the thirteen monks had a lively argument about the positions of the different coloured sands. A manuscript book was produced in which the details were shown in a coloured diagram. Reference to the book had to be made several times during the ceremony, from which I assumed that this ceremony, though annual, was seldom performed.

They finally put some grain on the table, saying a word each time. I thought that these were the same words which the lama spoke as he wrote upon the sand, but I could not be sure.

At last the lama took off his special vestments and donned an ordinary red monk's robe. The throne was brought forward and they continued the ceremony, chanting and playing their instruments. Sitting next to the Dzongpön's throne, on a slightly lower throne, was a seventeen-year-old boy monk, who was an incarnation of a relative of Gyamtso's who had died on the Doshong La.

Considering the informality of the service and the consultation of the sacred manuscript to make sure that they were doing it right, I was rather surprised that when a dog came into the temple it was chased out by one of the monks.

In the afternoon I returned to the monastery, because I wanted to confirm the Dzongpön's rather vague promise of transport. I found the monks busy making new *tormas*. These *tormas* are designs, made sometimes out of tsampa ornamented with butter, at others out of pure butter. They are offerings to the gods or saints, and each has his own emblem. The



material is usually pressed into a mould and then mounted upon a bamboo stick.

The *tormas* at Chimdro were made of butter, coloured and designed with great beauty. One of the monks, a master at the art, had made a delicate picture from coloured sands (the same sand perhaps which had been used at the morning's ceremony). He had devoted a skill and care which I thought would have been employed better in a medium more lasting. But in that perhaps I betrayed my western attitude to art. The monk was content that it should serve its purpose at a ceremony in two days' time and then be rubbed out, because for him it was not a work of art at all but merely a religious implement.

The Dzongpön told me that he had sent a message to the Nyerpa, a representative of the Poba queens, who was at the moment in Rinchenpung. He had told him to come up at once and take us over the Sü La.

It was clear to me from this that the Dzongpön did not want to assume responsibility for giving us *ula* and was trying to pass the buck to the Nyerpa. This did not please me at all, since I have always found that if there is anyone more timorous than a civil servant, it is two civil servants. I said that we could not possibly wait until the representative of the Poba queens arrived and I was sure that the Dalai Lama would agree with me.

This was rather unfair, but it had its effect. The Dzongpön asked in a resigned voice when we wanted to start, and I replied firmly that we must leave the next day. Finally the old man agreed.

That evening the Dzongpön asked us to come to his room immediately. He was—or seemed to be—in a state of some agitation. He said that he had just received a message from Kopu, on the lower Tsangpo, to say that the British Abor Expedition had arrived there—many hundreds of them, and that four of them had come up one day's march further.

Morshead and I were uncertain whether the Dzongpön had actually received this message or whether it was an im-

provisation based upon Gyamtso's letter, which the Dzongpön produced at this meeting and allowed me to copy. What was certain was that the Dzongpön was alarmed at the prospect of a British invasion, if not of Tibet itself, of the country bordering on it. He asked if we were going to place officers in Mipi or in the Lohit valley. I said that an officer was being stationed at Walong in Mishmi country. Were we then going to station officers in Tibet also? I assured him that we were not. I do not know whether he believed me. He merely answered that in Tibet, their only experience of foreigners was of the Chinese and they were a cruel people.

He did not however withdraw his promise of transport and the next morning he invited us to take a stirrup cup of barley beer (*chang*), and wished us well on our journey. I suspect that he had reached the conclusion that less risk attached to his granting us *ula* than to withholding it.

*June 3rd. Nyapa. 5700 ft.*

We had bought barley grain, which had to be parched and ground into tsampa. As we had not managed to get all this done in Gudam, Morshead went ahead with our own coolies to the next village down the valley, Nyapa, where we were told there was a mill which could grind it. I stayed on talking with the Dzongpön until the *ula* coolies arrived.

I arrived at Nyapa while the barley was still being ground. It was done at a watermill, the upper stone of which was turned by the stream. The parched barley was placed in a basket fixed over the revolving stone and a clever device allowed just the right amount of grain to trickle down a hole through the upper stone, so that the mill could work without attention.

It took so long to grind the barley that we only travelled  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles this day. When we were not in thick forest, we had magnificent views to the north-west of the 25,000-foot peak of Namcha Barwa, which had been unknown to Europeans until the surveyors of the Abor Expedition found and fixed its position and altitude in 1912. In clearings where cattle were

being grazed I caught a number of butterflies, among which there were two new species (*Erebia tsirava* and *E. pomena*).

*June 4th. Domgyur Pukpa. 5650 ft.*

The second day we continued our journey down river in the direction of the Tsangpo. We made eight miles and halted for the night at a large cave called Domgyur Pukpa. Our guides warned us that snakes were liable to take shelter in the caves along this road, so that it was necessary to search with torches before settling in. Their torches revealed not only two snakes but also so many fleas that the floor of the cave appeared to be shimmering. We massacred vast numbers of them by burning the grass which previous travellers had taken in for bedding, but enough survived to give us a sleepless night.

*June 5th. Kapu. 4800 ft.*

On the third day out, instead of following the river to its confluence with the Tsangpo, we turned left away from the river, and after crossing a spur of 1900 feet we reached Kapu, the first village in the Tsangpo valley. Our journey from Mipi was over.

The falls for which we were seeking lay up river, but before heading north, we decided that we had better contact the Abor Survey Party, partly to find out what their intentions were but also to ask them for a replacement of the sight-rule which we had lost coming over the Yonggyap pass.

The people of Kapu told us that it would take ten days for us to receive an answer. So we decided, instead of remaining in Kapu the pleasures of which would quickly pall, to leave some of our baggage under seal and journey down river as far as Rinchenpung, there to await the reply.

Rinchenpung lies near the confluence of the Tsangpo and the Shūmo river, formed by the two streams flowing from the Pungpung and Yonggyap passes—along the valley down which I was afraid we might have to travel if we failed to cross the Pungpung La.

The three days which we spent going down the left bank of the Tsangpo we were following in Kintup's footsteps, and I made all the enquiries I could about the existence of any falls, but it was hard to get any precise information. An old man told me that a day below Sengdam there were falls. "How big?" I asked.

He pointed to a walnut tree which stood near the house.

"Twice as big as that tree," he said. The tree was fifteen to twenty feet high.

"What about Gyala?" I asked.

"Well," he said, "seven days' march below Gyala, there is a temple with one monk, called Pemaköchung."

"And falls?"

"No," he answered, "no falls." And he added: "Maybe the monk is dead."

I found that even the place names which I knew were not constant. I referred to Gompo Ne, which Gyamtso had given as the name for the place at the junction of the Nagong river with the Tsangpo. "Gompo Ne?" he said. "Perhaps you mean Ketsa."

Perhaps I did, but I could not be sure. I could not be sure how much the old man told me was true and how much the confusion was due to the havoc wrought by old age.

From Kapu the river Tsangpo was not visible. It flowed through a deep gorge about 2000 feet below the village. The pattern of the Tsangpo valley here is roughly 1000 feet of forest above the river-bed, a cultivated belt of about 2000 feet, and above that more forest.

The inhabitants of the valley were comparatively recent. It was the story of the prophecy of Pemakö, the Promised Land, all over again, but an earlier chapter. Up till about a hundred years before our journey, the whole valley of the Tsangpo below the great bend was inhabited by Abors. But in obedience to the prophecy which later sent Gyamtso to Mipi, numbers of people from eastern Bhutan and Mönnyul, the low-lying district east of Bhutan, set out in search of the Promised Land. One of the men to whom I spoke said that his

grandfather had been one of the original immigrants from Bhutan, "a hundred years ago". But in that sort of case a hundred years is just another way of saying "a long while".

The time at any rate had not been so long that the immigrants were truly settled. The Bhutanese, called Drukpas by the Tibetans, still considered themselves the subjects of the Trongsa Penlo (who in the time since their ancestors emigrated had become the Maharaja of Bhutan). Similarly, the people from Mönnyul, called Mönbas by the Tibetans, called themselves by the name of the country from which their ancestors had come rather than by the place in which they were.

They appeared however to be in the process of destroying the thin barrier which divided Drukpas from Mönbas. They dressed in similar clothes, talked in the same language, and instead of wearing their hair in a queue like most other Tibetans, wore it short. Their racial origins were becoming obliterated by their need to distinguish themselves from the Lopas, who lived in isolated villages throughout the same country.

The term Lopa meant to the Tibetans what barbarian meant to the Greeks, pagan to the Christians and to Kipling "lesser breeds without the law". When the Drukpas and Mönbas came in search of the Promised Land, they did not drive, so much as elbow, out the Abors. The Abors who remained here adopted the Mönba dress, learned to speak their language and became converted to a very corrupt form of the Buddhist religion.

To the untutored eyes of Morshead and myself, the immigrants and the aborigines were almost indistinguishable. Their villages looked alike, the houses built of bamboo on piles with roofs thatched with split bamboo in the Abor fashion, and their granaries built on piles a little distance from the houses. They wore the Tibetan *chuba*, but short as the Drukpas and Mönbas favour, and in that warm climate they usually slipped it from the shoulders so that most of the time with their bare legs they really wore clothes only around the waist. They drank rather more liquor fermented or distilled than was the Tibetan

custom in other parts of Tibet. From Kongbo, the adjoining province of Tibet, they obtained salt and exchanged it down the valley with the Abors to the south in return for cotton.

The southern frontier between Tibet and the independent Abors had never been defined, with the result that there was a state of sporadic war between the villages on the border, very like that which existed between the Tibetans of Mipi and the Chulikattas.

All the villages through which we passed, whether Drukpa, Mönba or Lopa, were technically subject to the Poba government in Showa, the capital of Po me. But the Pobas did not apparently pay much attention to the valley at this part. They allowed the villagers on the frontier to settle their own quarrels with the Abors, unless things showed signs of getting out of hand.

We were told that in 1905 the Abors had made a more serious and concerted raid than usual and had reached the village of Giling, which lay between Rinchenpung and Kapu. This roused the Poba government. A punitive expedition was despatched down river. The Abors were defeated and compelled to recognise a frontier below the village of Jido, with rights of surveillance granted to the Tibetans even south of this point.

The Poba government exacted a house tax of 3 tre (about 6 lb.) of rice a year for each house and in addition one rupee or its equivalent in cotton cloth every other year. Far more onerous than these direct taxes, of course, was the tax hidden in the *ula* system, which made an incalculable drain upon the time and resources of the villagers. One village to which we came was abandoned except for a couple of houses, because the villagers had fled the year before rather than face the approach of the Chinese.

Hatred and fear of the Chinese was the great unifying factor in this region. We met a group of Mönbas on the road, who had been carrying loads for the Nyerpa. They wore Tibetan *chubas* round their waists, and about their necks Tibetan charms in small bamboo tubes.

They had seen the Abor Survey party at Jido, where they were impressed by a wire suspension bridge which our people had made over a river tributary. But they immediately assumed that we were Chinese, going to fight the Abor Survey.

I explained that we were friends.

“Are you under the same king?” one of them asked.

I said yes, and showed him our king on an Indian rupee.

They immediately tried to probe us on our attitude to the Chinese. “If you met a Chinese coming along the road here,” they asked, “would you kill him at once?”

“No,” we answered. “Not at once.”

These people came to visit us again when we had camped and we tried to find out who the officers were in Kopu, the village where the Dzongpön said the Abor Survey now was. The answer was characteristically vague. “There are two,” they said. “One has white hair all over his arms but very little on his head.”

### *June 9th–11th. Rinchenpung. 6700 ft.*

After travelling leisurely down river for three days we climbed 3000 feet on the east side of the valley and spent two nights at Rinchenpung, a small monastery which Kintup had visited in the course of his pilgrimage round the holy mountain of Kondü Potrang, when he went to collect the logs for launching down stream.

The monastery was delightfully situated on a grassy spur in the middle of a cup-shaped hollow which was covered with grass and rushes in the centre and girt with jungle round the sides. Part of the roof was gilt and we saw it glittering in the sunshine when we came out of the forest.

Round the monastery were clustered huts for the accommodation of pilgrims, who come in numbers at a certain season to visit the holy mountain. The road up from the valley was steep but good and every few hundred feet there were resting places for the pilgrims. Each of these resting places had a name with a religious significance. They were

provided with platforms of such a height that a man could lean back and take the weight of his load off his shoulders. They reminded me of the resting platform which for some mysterious reason has survived in London outside Green Park opposite No. 127 Piccadilly.

When we arrived at the monastery, the pilgrimage season had not started because there was still snow on the high, difficult pilgrim roads round the holy mountain; but where we were it was high summer. The leeches had found the lower valley too hot and had moved up to the jungle round the monastery. Whenever we went out we were plagued by them, while if we stayed in the monastery we were attacked by every species of fly which bit or stung.

This did not prevent Morshead carrying out his relentless survey. In fact he worked all the faster, because life in Rinchenpung was so unpleasant that we abandoned our intention of remaining there until we received an answer to our message to the Abor Survey party.

We were, however, very glad that we had made the diversion down river to Rinchenpung, for many reasons. Morshead was able to link his work up with that of the Abor Survey. At Makti village he had obtained a latitude observation ( $29^{\circ} 24' 24''$  N. Lat.). Most important of all, at two points in the Tsangpo valley we had obtained boiling point observations for altitude at river level of about 2600 feet. We had hoped to get more but we were prevented because the road we travelled at no other point dropped to the river-bank.

But the value of the work done did not prevent us from starting back towards Kapu with equal gladness. Our last night in Rinchenpung was hideous. As it looked stormy we did not sleep in our tent. (We had brought only the outer fly with us from Kapu to lighten the load.) We moved into the shelter of the monastery porch. At 11 p.m. we were awakened by thunder, torrential rain and a high wind. Before we could get into the house, which we used as a kitchen, we and our bedding were soaked. It was some time before we could get our things dry enough to go to bed again.



*June 13th. Bungmo. 3950 ft.*

The second night on our way back from Rinchenpung we camped at a village called Bungmo. Shortly after arriving there, we heard fifteen shots coming from the direction of Meto, the village in which we had spent the previous night. We asked the villagers what the meaning of the shots could be, and they answered that some of the Abor Survey party must have reached there and these shots were fired to salute them. No hunters would fire so many shots, they pointed out. We were very heartened by this, because we were making very many short marches to enable the messenger to catch us up. We were tired of dawdling and decided to send Anay back to Meto early the next morning to meet the messenger.

The next day proved very frustrating. It was very hot and we moved slowly to enable Anay to go to Meto and then catch us up. As we were going along the road, we were met by a messenger bringing us a letter from the Nyerpa, representing the Poba queens. It was very roughly written and I could not read it. In Makti I tried to find someone who could read it and nobody could. Or rather nobody said he could. The people of Makti had been agreeable to us on our way south from Kapu but this time we had great difficulty in buying a chicken from them. It might have been coincidence, but it occurred to me that they could read the letter and it was antagonistic to us. This seemed the more likely as they were afraid of the Nyerpa, whose mission was to punish those who had collaborated with the Chinese the year before and killed the Poba king. Perhaps they were afraid they might be punished for collaborating with us.

*June 14th. Meri. 2950 ft.*

The same thing happened with the people we met on the road and at Meri where we camped for the night. They looked at the letter and then handed it back saying that they could not read it. It was certainly illegible to me. But even if they could not read it, I suspected they knew its gist.

The final frustration came with the arrival of Anay back

from Meto. The firing we had heard had nothing to do with the Abor Survey party. It was merely part of a religious ceremony. What was more, a party had come in to Meto from further down river and had no news of any message being sent up to us from the Abor Survey party.

Sonam Chumbi arrived from Chimdro Gompa that evening. I thought that he wanted to see us because of the letter from the Nyerpa, though of course he refused to say so openly. He said that there was a lama at Giling who might be able to read the writing. Later he added that he had heard a rumour that the letter was to tell us not to go up the Tsangpo to Po me, but to leave Tibet.

Knowing from this that Sonam Chumbi had certainly been sent by the Dzongpön of Chimdro and that he would report back to him on his return, I told him very forcibly that such an idea was out of the question.

When we set out, Sonam Chumbi and I, early the next morning in order to find the lama, we found that the bridge over the Hering river had completely disappeared. I had noted when we came across it on our way down river that it was in good condition. There was only one explanation. The bridge had been removed. It made me uneasy. The Tibetans were an oblique people. Their refusals were never open, but always advanced with arguments which were patently implausible. It was possible to bluff one's way through that sort of opposition, as I had done with the Chimdro Dzongpön. This removal of a bridge was in quite a different idiom. If they proposed to put obstacles in our way, they could force us to go back without even the threat of violence. The incident of the chicken at Makti took on an even graver aspect. Perhaps I was wrong that the people of Makti were merely afraid of possibly giving offence to the Nyerpa. It was conceivable that they were acting under his instructions.

It took two hours for us to build a new bridge; and as we were doing so, I reflected on how precarious our position was. We had no official standing of any sort and if we were driven back to India, we would not merely have the humiliation of

our failure, but we would have to face the charge of undertaking a journey without orders from our Government.

In Giling we found the supposedly literate monk. I think that he found it as impossible to read as I did, but he knew the message from hearsay. "It says that the people of Kapu are fools," he said. "Last year they killed several Chinese. You must not trust them. You must return to Chimdro and from there you can go to Tibet by the Dashing pass."

The whole thing was a tissue of lies. The Nyerpa was engaged in punishing those who had not opposed the Chinese the year before. From his point of view therefore the people of Kapu were not fools but good men if they had killed Chinese. We ourselves had found them very friendly and were determined to collect the stuff which we had left with them under seal.

It was quite plain that the whole thing was a trick to get us back to Chimdro. The Dashing pass was very high and would not be open for weeks. But there was no intention of letting us go across that pass into Tibet. The pass they intended us to cross was the Pungpung back to Mipi.

Morshead and I talked it over. Open defiance was out of the question. Nor could we appeal to higher authority. The only point in our favour was the illegibility of the Nyerpa's letter. We sent a message to him to say that unfortunately we could not read his writing, but we proposed to come and see him to find out in person what it was he wished to tell us.

The Nyerpa was at the moment at Lagung, up the river Tsangpo. Even if we got no further than there, we would have explored and surveyed another fifty miles. And surely no one could put obstacles in our way if instead of penetrating deeper into Tibet we were merely going to find out what the Nyerpa wanted.

## CHAPTER FIVE

*June 15th. Kapu. 4800 ft.*

There was no trouble at Kapu. The people were helpful and the stores which we had left under seal were intact. We hoped that we would hear from the Abor Survey party before we left but there was no word. So on June 16th we set out from Kapu for the second time, now making up the Tsangpo.

At the confluence of the Chimdro and the Tsangpo rivers Morshead got a hypsometric reading at river level of 2606. This was in fact eighteen feet less than the reading he had got on our furthest point down stream, at the Shümo confluence near Rinchenpung. The Abor Survey, we learned later, took a reading midway between the two points and got 2500 feet, so that the figure of 2606 was probably more accurate than our reading at Shümo confluence. For us it was an important reading, because for reasons which will appear, we were not to get another reading at river-bed level for a long time.

The road beside the Tsangpo was "stony and undulating", to use the quaint phrase given to A.K. by his translator. From crest to trough the undulations were as much as 3000 feet, and even in the troughs we had no opportunity to reach the Tsangpo itself. The villages on the opposite bank which we passed fitted in well with Kintup's report. If he remembered these so well four years after he had visited them, we told ourselves that he could hardly have been mistaken about the Great Falls.

The culture of the people below the Chimdro confluence had been predominantly that of the Abor tribes. When emigrants from Bhutan and Mönnyul had settled down there, the emphasis had been on the word "down".

Above the confluence the change was marked. Instead

of being thatched, houses were roofed with wooden shingles weighted down with stones. The headman made us presents of useful little baskets woven from split cane, a craft which had survived the journey from Bhutan where such baskets are much used. We were also presented with garters woven from cotton yarn, hanks of roughly spun cotton thread, chickens and eggs. The chickens, whose bodies bore evidence of the struggle for existence, we ate with rice, varying our diet with eggs, when these did not explode malodorously in the cook's hand, which was not often. The importance of the egg, however, was more as a symbol of culture than a culinary aid. Below the Chindro we never got even a rotten one.

The invisible opposition which we had felt building up after our receipt of the Nyerpa's letter seemed to be relaxed as a result of our reply that we were going to see him personally. Morshead did his work as unobtrusively as possible and in each village we reiterated our desire to meet the Nyerpa in person. We were entertained with beer by a friendly incarnate lama, who being a member of the Red Hat order possessed a wife. Nothing could have been more cordial.

But when we came to a village called Pango, I saw Sonam Chumbi drawn aside by some of the villagers. (Sonam Chumbi had insisted on accompanying us to the Nyerpa, a gesture which we took not as a tribute to us, but a direct commission from the Dzongpön of Chindro.) The people of Pango were obviously suspicious, but Sonam Chumbi was vociferous in his answers, and when I questioned him he said that they had asked whether we were "the same as the Chinese" and he assured them that we were not.

*June 17th. Pangshing. 3950 ft.*

On our second day out we did eleven miles and reached a small village consisting of only three houses. We intended to spend the night there, but we learnt that the Nyerpa was already collecting his transport at Tsenchuk preparatory to crossing the pass back to Showa, the capital of Po me. We took sudden alarm. It was quite possible, it seemed to us, that the Nyerpa

had decided to set out for Showa after receiving our letter and that he would leave instructions behind him that we were to go back to Chimdro as he had said in his letter. The only thing to do was to hurry ahead and take him by surprise. We changed our *ula* and announced that we were going on. We only succeeded in making a further  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles that day. It was a terrible road, a steep climb of 800 feet from the village, from the top of which we could see the gorge, though the tops of the mountains were hidden in cloud. The sides of the valley run up for 5000 feet at a slope of forty-five degrees or steeper. (It is astonishing how steep a slope of one in one appears to be.)

The slopes were covered in forest except where the cliff was sheer. Two thousand feet below us we could see a cane rope bridge made out of several separate strands in the way that was common over the Lohit river. This bridge was the first we had come to since Meto, 36 miles further down. The bridge over which Kintup had crossed at Puparong was no longer in existence.

We pushed forward as hard as we could, but what took us more time than the actual travelling was the system of *ula*. Each village was responsible for one stage. It might in some cases be for only half a mile; in other parts of Tibet which I had visited it might be as much as twenty-one days' journey. Each village was as jealous of not exceeding its allotted stage as a trade unionist is of not doing the work of another craftsman. So at each village we came to we had to off-load and load up again. At the end of one stage we came to a village where everybody was away; not a soul to be seen. It might have been chance, but equally it might have been due to the instructions of the Nyerpa. Morshead and I had visions of being left there, in a tumbledown village called Gabang, until the Nyerpa had made his escape and gave instructions for us to be turned back.

I used all my powers of persuasion and at last the men from Tsongrong agreed to take us a further stage, provided that they could find the headman of Gebang to inform him that this

departure from custom formed no precedent. As the headman was working in a field some way away, there was a further waste of time; and when we reached the next village, we learned that the Nyerpa was planning to leave Lagung next day.

Once again there was trouble in getting coolies, whether on the Nyerpa's instructions or not we did not know. But we finally prevailed and reached Lagung that day.

*June 19th-20th. Lagung. 6050 ft.*

We sent a man ahead to announce our arrival, and to greet us the Nyerpa despatched two of his men. When we were a hundred yards from the house, another man came bearing a bamboo tube full of *chang*.

I say "the house" designedly, because there was only one house in Lagung. Since the Nyerpa was staying there with his servants there was very little space for us and ours. But we were given one room.

We called on the Nyerpa, who was at pains to impress us with his own importance. In his room he had several matchlocks and also some rifles which had been captured from the Chinese. He told us about the glorious fighting two years ago, in which they had killed seventeen hundred Chinese. I said that I was interested to hear that, because I had been at Shugden Gumpa at the time and there the Chinese had put their casualties at three hundred. The Nyerpa remarked that it was customary for a defeated enemy to minimise his losses. I agreed and said that the losses were certainly heavy enough to prevent my being allowed to enter Po me, which, I added, had been my desire then as it was ours now.

The Nyerpa quite ignored this hint and turned the conversation to Captain Dundas of the Abor Survey party. He had advised Captain Dundas to go to Gyala Sindong, using the Tamy La rather than the Doshong La because the road was better.

It was news to us that any of the Abor Survey party was trying, as we were, to find the Tsangpo falls. What the

Nyerpa's policy would be towards us we could deduce from his advice to Dundas. The Doshong La led to Pemakö country for which the Nyerpa was responsible. The Tamya La led to Kongbo, which was outside his area. That and not the state of the roads was the reason why the Nyerpa had advised the Tamya.

I produced my photograph of the Dalai Lama, saying that it might interest him. But the Nyerpa was not as easily impressed as the Dzungpön of Chimdro. He had seen the Dalai Lama at Samding before he went to Lhasa, and proceeded to enlarge upon that time.

We left the Nyerpa with a feeling of frustration. He seemed a nice enough man behind his curtain of formality, but the curtain did not part while we were with him. The only thing on which we could base hope was that there had been no downright refusal. But how long he would keep us hanging around we had no idea, and all the time we had the vision of the Abor Survey party beating us to the falls.

We were too disturbed in mind to sleep well, and even if we had been at peace with the world, we should have found sleep difficult, as it rained during the night and the roof leaked.

The next day was fine in every way. Perhaps the Nyerpa's roof did not leak. At any rate he sent us some foul butter and some wheat flour, which was a luxury after the barley flour we had been using. Then he came to see us and said that it was not in his power to grant us permission to travel through Po me but he would take us to Showa so that we could put our case there. There was no need for us to trouble about the journey to the capital, because he would look after us, incidentally of course keeping us under observation. The curtain of formality was gone and he was very affable. I showed him the skins of some Sclater's monal and he said a bird like that with long feathers on the head was to be found on the Sü La, which we would be crossing.

After this we had some target practice. I fired a few shots with my pistol. He and his people used the Chinese rifles and the matchlocks. We found the Chinese rifles rather puzzling.



They had English numbers on the barrels and the back sights but a Chinese stamp on the butts. They might have been British rifles acquired by the Chinese; or alternatively Chinese copies down even to the numbers of the originals. It was all very friendly, though not half so friendly as when the Nyerpa reeled into our room that evening, drunk as a lord on *chang*. After a little while his servants discreetly steered him to his own room.

We were ready for an early start the next day, but the *ula* did not arrive. Perhaps they had been warned that the Nyerpa did not feel like an early start. When we called on him, he did not appear at his best. He went back over the old ground in more detail. Apparently the correspondence with Dundas had been initiated by the Nyerpa, who when he heard of the Abor Survey party, wrote and advised Dundas **not** to come up the Tsangpo.

“What did you say to him?” I asked.

“I said the people were bad and had killed the Chinese and there were no Chinese here now.”

The Nyerpa clearly had no idea what the Survey party was doing and could only think that anyone coming to that part of the country was interested in the Chinese as friends or enemies.

Dundas had answered that he did not want to come but only wanted to go to Gyala Sengdam. He had also sent a letter to be given to “the Poba queen” (apparently unaware that there were two of them).

Both his letters were sent in Chinese envelopes, each with a red band down the middle. We learnt later from Dundas that he had gone to enormous trouble to procure these, under the impression that the sight of an English envelope would alarm the Tibetans with its strangeness. The familiarity of the Chinese envelope alarmed them even more and the Nyerpa asked us why Dundas used such an envelope if he was no Chinese. Their suspicions were still further raised by Dundas describing himself as “Ying Ko Ge Kup Bara Sahib”.

“What does that mean?” asked Nyerpa.

“Ying Ko is the Chinese for English,” I said.

“But if he is English, why does he write Chinese?”

“Perhaps he did not know the Tibetan,” I answered.

“Perhaps,” said the Nyerpa, but I could see that he suspected that Dundas did not even know the English.

It gave us ground for hope that if, when we reached Showa, we could prove that we had nothing to do with the Chinese, we might get permission to proceed.

We started at 1.30 p.m., went up the Tsangpo for two miles, crossed the Pablung river by a bridge and then struck up it along the right bank. Morshead was sorely tempted to try to take a hypsometer reading at river level before we left the Tsangpo, but we did not dare, for fear of arousing the suspicions of the Nyerpa.

*June 21st. Domkar. 6850 ft.*

After travelling four miles up the Pablung valley we reached a rest house called Domkar, consisting merely of a large roof without walls. There we stayed for the night.

We encouraged the Nyerpa to talk, feeling that the more we knew about the position in Showa, the better equipped we would be to deal with it. During the fighting with the Chinese, the Poba king fled from them and was killed by order of the Chinese by the Mönbas of Bungmo. For this assassination the Mönbas were subsequently fined 3000 rupees and three of them were executed. The king's two wives, who were sisters, were taken into custody by the Chinese and removed to Lhasa, whence the Nyerpa had fetched them the previous winter. During their absence their mother acted as queen but on their return had shut herself up to spend eight months in meditation. The precise power of the two queens was difficult to decide. One of them had a daughter aged nineteen who was to marry one of the two small kings of the Nyelo district of Po me. When that happened, they would rule as king and queen.

What the relation of Po me was to Tibet proper I never accurately discovered from the Nyerpa. It appeared to enjoy a semi-autonomy which had not been defined. Within Po me

itself the situation seemed to be feudal, there being a small number of small kings or overlords, subject to the sovereign of Showa. The least of these overlords controlled fifteen families, and the greatest, Nyelo, a hundred.

For each of the issues of Indian rupees the Pobas had a different name. The William IV rupee was "Pong go", literally Man's Head. The uncrowned Victoria was "Mo go", Woman's Head. The crowned Victoria was Lopön Go, because the crown resembled that worn by the saint, Lopön Rimpoche. King Edward was Lama Go, because his bald head was like the close-cropped pate of a lama.

*June 22nd-23rd. Sü La. 13,445 ft.*

We continued up the valley to the Latsa south of the Sü La on June 22nd and crossed to the northern Latsa the next day. There were relics of the fighting with the Chinese on both sides of the pass. In one place there was a skilfully sited ambush, where the roads crossed a steep cliff, and on the far side of the pass was the main ambush. Here the road, covered in snow, passed through a gorge with cliffs either side. As the Chinese were going through it, their coolies set on them and killed them, to the number of ninety-nine, almost without resistance. The Chinese were so numb with cold they found it hard to fire their rifles.

From the Nyerpa the story of the conflicts between the Chinese and the Pobas continued to emerge. It began, he said, with people who came from China into Po me, who counted their paces and wrote them in a book. (The Nyerpa told me this after he had seen Morshead taking latitude at the top of the pass and making various other observations.) The Pobas did not like people counting their paces and writing them down in books, so they sent the people away and told them not to come back.

I did not tell the Nyerpa this, but I thought that he had come very near to the mark. This story obviously sprang from the journey of the Mongolian lama and Kintup; when the lama found that he was not able to survey, he probably thought

that he would not be paid by the Indian Government and so made what money he could by selling his instruments and Kintup and went back home.

The Chinese did not come back to Po me for some years, said the Nyerpa. Then they came in and announced that they were going to make a road to Lhasa through Po me. The Pobas resisted and killed seventeen hundred of them.

The Chinese sent more troops and defeated the Pobas and beheaded many of them. But the Pobas rallied and once more they were victorious, killing many Chinese, ninety-nine on the Sü La and many stragglers all down the valley. When the Chinese who were in Pemakö and Chimdro heard of this, they all ran away over the Doshong La.\*

This had happened only the previous year and they were clearly expecting a third expedition this year, because, he added, "In Tong Rong (a village through which we had passed) one of your coolies said that many Chinese were coming up the Tsangpo valley from India."

"That is not true," I said. I could not tell whether the Nyerpa thought that it was true or whether he was just flying a kite. Every time I thought that I had allayed his suspicions finally, I would find they would return again like a recurrent fever.

*June 24th. Drosam. 10,450 ft.*

The Nyerpa went back over the Dundas story once again; and this time he was obliquely suggesting that the Abor Survey party, if not Chinese, was allied to the Chinese. "The Burra Sahib promised that he would not come into Po me territory," he said, "but would go into Kongbo. And I told the Kanam† Depa of this promise."

And then Morshead and I had appeared. We might have come over the Pungpung La, but we announced our desire

\* In fact, the Chinese troops in Tibet at the outbreak of the Chinese Revolution in 1911 murdered their officers and tried to make their ways home to China.

† Kanam had been the seat of Poba government many years before, and even after moving to Showa, the Pobas talked of government officials as anam Pa and dated their documents from Po Kanam.

to go up the very part of the Tsangpo into which Dundas had promised not to penetrate. "That is why I told you to go back to Chimdro and across the Dashing La," he said. "And now you have refused to do what I told you, the government in Showa will say that the Burra Sahib has broken his word."

I did not believe that the Nyerpa had told us to go via Chimdro for that reason. If we had done, he would have headed us off from Showa without much difficulty. But I had to believe that the Nyerpa was now if not our friend, at least not inflexibly opposed to us. "What must we do then?"

"You must wait in Showa," he said. "You will write a letter to the Burra Sahib and we will write a letter too, and if the answer is satisfactory or if as you say the soldiers go back to India and it is certain that they will not come here, then you will be allowed to go on, I think."

There was nothing I could do but agree; but we did not relish the idea of being kept virtual prisoners in Showa. "At least," I asked, "we can travel around, while we are waiting for the answer of the Burra Sahib?"

"I don't mind where you go," said the Nyerpa. "But the people whom you visit may mind. Since the Chinese came, they feel very strongly." But he promised that he would ask the people of Dashing and Sumdzong if they would object. They were both villages independent of Po me.

I felt conscious that he was still holding something back and then he said that the next day he would like us to go only halfway to Showa, while he went ahead to explain what had happened and what we were doing.

I said nothing, because I was trying to assess what was going on in his mind. If he was our friend, it was quite reasonable that he should go ahead and prepare the queens and his colleagues for our arrival. But it was quite reasonable for him to do that if he was really our enemy. Whatever the case there was nothing to be gained by insisting on going with him.

"Perhaps you will tell me what you *are* doing?" he went on.

It was a subject that we had carefully avoided, but he had seen Morshead taking observations and what he said about the

Chinese writing down the number of their paces in a book showed that he understood something of what Morshead was at, but perhaps not why. I said, "We have made a map of the country through which we have come, and we wish to do the same thing in Po me."

Morshead produced our maps and we showed him what we had done and explained something about the instruments.

He was interested in the instruments and also in the map itself. But the suspicion remained in his mind. "For soldiers these maps are useful," he said.

Then I told him of the curiosity of our people in whether there were great falls on the Tsangpo, and that when we knew the land which lay between Tibet and India we could fix the frontier between the two countries and there need no longer be fighting between the savage tribes and the Tibetans. I spoke with some passion, because I believed that apart from the scientific interest of our journey, there was great practical benefit to be gained. On our side we did not want any more political officers assassinated as Williamson had been; on the Nyerpa's he did not want a Chinese expedition to be an annual event—he had just heard that the Chinese had advanced from Shugden Gompa as far north as Pashuk.

We had the impression that we had convinced him of our sincerity. But he could only answer that he could explain to the people who came directly under the government of Showa and perhaps they would understand. But he thought that the people under the small kings or overlords would object.

With that we had to be content; though we realised that just as the Showa government might have only a limited authority over the overlords, so the Nyerpa might have only a limited authority over the government of Showa. We just had to wait until we reached the capital.

As we approached Showa, I went on ahead of Morshead. I was walking through the fields, which were high with wheat, barley and peas, when suddenly there was the noise of a shot behind me.

"My God!" I thought, "have they ambushed Morshead?"

I did not know what to do. If they had ambushed Morshead, the next thing they would do would be to shoot me. But there was nothing I could do about that. If they wanted to shoot me, they would.

So I went on, walking past the ruined houses and through the fields, as if nothing had happened, thinking that if I had to die, I had better look as if I didn't expect to.

It was just as well. I found out later that the shot was fired by someone scaring parrots from the crops. If I had gone running to Morshead's assistance, I would have felt such a fool I could never have faced the Nyerpa again.

As it was, I made no mention of the incident to Morshead or in my diary.

*June 25th-27th. Showa. 8520 ft.*

Showa was a sad sight. The monastery and the palace had been destroyed by the Chinese; though, judged from the ruins, they must have been substantial buildings. We could understand from the havoc which the Chinese had wrought that our chances of being allowed to proceed with our exploration were slender unless we could establish beyond all possible doubt that we had no connection with them. Though we assured ourselves that we had nothing to do but to convince the Poba queens of the truth, we realised that the truth would not be easy to establish, since we had no documents apart from Gyamtso's letter and no authority from the Indian Government to do what we were doing. Gyamtso's letter, if it were anything like that which he sent to the Dzungpön of Chimdro, far from reassuring the queens, might alarm them with its wild statements about the presence of countless soldiers.

This fear was confirmed on our arrival at the rest house which had been prepared for us. We had completely run out of food for ourselves and our coolies, and I sent Sonam Chumbi immediately to the Nyerpa to say that I wanted to see him at his earliest convenience, thanking him for having helped us on the road and asking if he could send food over at once. The Nyerpa came himself with a monk and presents of grain, yak-

meat, butter and rice from the queens. In return we sent the queens a present of forty Indian rupees—and some red broadcloth which we had brought up on purpose. But when we said that we would like to wait on them in person, the Nyerpa said that they were both of them engaged in religious meditation and anyway one of them had toothache.

Either of these excuses might have been plausible, but not both. We must have betrayed our disappointment, because the Nyerpa told us that early the next morning there would be a meeting of the ministers, after which either we should be asked to go to the meeting or the ministers would come to see us and examine us on the purpose of our journey.

The Nyerpa then produced the two letters of Dundas in their Chinese envelopes. Even to us it appeared most suspicious, this inept excursion into diplomacy; and when the Nyerpa asked us why Dundas should have used a Chinese envelope except to indicate that he was acting in concert with the Chinese, we could think of no reply. It was so utterly incomprehensible.

For some minutes it looked as if our fate was to be decided there and then, without any recourse to the council of ministers. I opened the letters to read them, trying to gain time and even perhaps discover in their contents something which would give us a reprieve.

“Well,” I said, “you can see the writing paper isn’t Chinese. It’s quite different, isn’t it? Perhaps the Burra Sahib had used all his English envelopes and these were the only ones he could get.”

The Nyerpa looked unconvinced, though he agreed that the two papers were quite different.

Then I suddenly had an inspiration. There was a watermark on the paper. I held it up to the light and said to the Nyerpa: “Look. Have you ever seen that on Chinese paper?”

He had never seen it on any paper and for a moment he was impressed, as he had been impressed by Morshead’s surveying equipment. “But what does it prove?” he asked.

“The writing in the paper is English,” I said. “Choose any



letter in the watermark and I will match it in the English column of my dictionary."

He chose a letter and I matched it. Then another, and I matched that. "Don't you see," I said, "this proves that we are English, not Chinese?" And I went on to demonstrate with the dictionary English words and Tibetan words, repeating over and over again: "This is not Chinese."

The Nyerpa agreed that it was not Chinese and he went away apparently satisfied. But before he left, he made it quite plain that we should regard ourselves as prisoners, until our position was clear. "I know that you will not try to go away," he said, "because where is there you could go?"

We thought that we had established with the Nyerpa that we were not Chinese. But that evening as Morshead and I went for a walk along the banks of the Po Tsangpo, past the shingle-roofed houses with walnut and peach trees growing in their gardens and the boys beating the fences of the fields to scare away the parrots and the doves, we could not disguise from ourselves that we had proved little or nothing, because really the matter at issue was whether the British and the Chinese were in alliance against the Pobas.

When we came back, Sonam Chumbi was waiting for us. He had seen the Nyerpa, obviously, though he did not say so. He said that we must abandon our original story that we were officers on leave travelling for our own pleasure and interested in collecting birds and butterflies and taking photographs. Nobody would believe that, he said, and it would only exacerbate their suspicions. What we must say was that we had come by special order of the Viceroy in order to gain the information necessary for agreeing the frontiers between India and Tibet. He also said that the Pobas would like the Viceroy to send them a letter, ordering the Chinese to leave Po me, so that they could show it to the Chinese if they invaded. With characteristic British understatement I said that I could not promise that the Viceroy would do this.

Sonam Chumbi warned us that we should find it difficult unless we could in some way help the Pobas against the Chinese.

After Sonam Chumbi left, Morshead and I discussed what we should do and decided that frankness was the best policy. We could not possibly pretend to an official position which we did not enjoy. On the other hand there was no need to mention that our position *vis-à-vis* our own government was, to say the least, equivocal.

The next morning the ministers came to see us and we realised that the depredations of the Chinese had not been confined to buildings. The ten ministers had been executed by the Chinese in the previous year and their successors were a scruffy lot, totally lacking in the distinction generally to be found in Tibetans of importance. The only exceptions were our friend the Nyerpa, who clearly exercised an authority almost as great as that to which he had pretended when we first met him, and the Head of the Council, who had been sent to Lhasa to be educated and had remained there until the two queens whom the Chinese had taken to Lhasa returned to Showa. He told us that on his return he was dressed in the Lhasa fashion with a queue and earrings, but the people of Poba had made him take them off. He regretted, we felt, that he could not resume them for our benefit.

The ignorance of the ministers was a help to us. They regarded our possessions with curiosity and wonder. They had never seen a watch before and this appeared to them, because they could understand its use, even more surprising than Morshead's incomprehensible equipment or my camera.

But just as we thought that we had won them over with all the strangeness of our things, their voices changed in tone from wonder to anger. I was talking to the Nyerpa and I turned to see what had happened.

They had got hold of a small stick of Indian ink, which Morshead used to mix with water on a little pallet to make the ink for filling in his map. On it, we saw to our horror, there were three or four unmistakable Chinese characters in gold.

The Nyerpa took the ink and turned to us. "You can't deny that you have nothing to do with the Chinese now," he said.

It was a situation which would have been ridiculous if it had not been so grave. All the good we had done was suddenly destroyed. Their suspicions flared up anew and their voices grew harsh and accusing.

We let them talk for a time. Their suspicion was a sort of poison left in their system by the Chinese war and they had to get it out. Then we explained that many things were made in India to be sold in China in return for things made in China. This ink was one of those things. This explanation seemed to allay, but not obliterate, their suspicions.

When we got down to discussion, it soon became clear that they had made no decisions about us or what they should do. This decided me to disobey the advice which Sonam Chumbi had relayed to me. I merely said that we had come from Mipi to travel about for our own amusement, that we were friends with the Dalai Lama and that the Indian and Tibetan Governments were now on friendly terms. They seemed surprised to hear that we were of the same race as the foreigners at Gyantse or even of those coming up through the Abor country. When I said that I knew Gyantse, they asked about the Kusho Sahib (O'Connor)\* and also about Shabdung Lama who was Tibetan clerk to O'Connor and later to me. It seemed to reassure them when I said I knew them both and O'Connor was my friend.

They asked if the Viceroy would send troops to help them against the Chinese. I said that I did not think he would send them so far from India as this, but I could not say. Anyway I would tell the Viceroy how the Chinese had burned all their homes and killed their king and their ministers. I added that Morshead was making a map of the country and that would help to fix the frontiers.

This idea was too abstract for them. They wanted help immediately against the Chinese. Would we give them a letter to show the British to say that they had been good to us and

\* O'Connor had been my predecessor as Trade Agent in Gyantse. He was the only officer who had achieved a nickname among the Tibetans. Although he had been away from Tibet many years, his name and reputation lingered on. "Kusho Sahib" was the equivalent of "Monsieur Mister" as a French nickname.

another letter to the Chinese to tell them to go back to their own country? I answered that I would give them a letter to the British though I did not think any of them would come to Showa; and if they wished, I would give them a letter to the Chinese, but I did not think they would go away because of anything I wrote.

At last they said that we could travel where we liked in their country. But the Head of the Council added that they were at war with Dashing three marches up the Po Tsangpo. There was a wall between the two districts, they said, and anyone approaching from either side was shot at. I got the impression that they wanted to take no chances that we might go through to the Chinese at Shugden Gompa. We had no particular desire to go *up* the Po Tsangpo. We wanted to go *down* it to where it joined with the Tsangpo proper. But I pretended that we were very anxious to go to Dashing so that when we went in the opposite direction, they would be so relieved that they would help us.

In the evening the long-awaited messenger from the Abor Survey party arrived. He brought two letters; one from Trenchard giving Morshead some triangulated points and a sight-rule to replace the one we lost on the Yonggyap La, the other from Dundas, saying that about June 23rd they were starting to make a twenty-day trip above Kopu and would be returning to India about July 12th. They did not expect to get beyond the Doshong La, he added. As it was now June 26th, there was little chance that we might meet them.

Shortly after the Head of the Council visited us again bringing us food. He was still worrying over our visiting Dashing, so I suggested that we should only go two marches up river, one day short of Dashing. The Chief Minister said he would have to consult the other ministers about this.

He came back in the morning with the Nyerpa. They brought loads of food, flour, rice, tsampa, butter, salt meat and *chang*, together with musk pods and thirty-eight rupees. The money embarrassed us and we protested that we wanted to pay for our food, but they would not hear of it.

They repeated the request that the Viceroy should send them a letter to show to the Chinese, and produced an enormous sword which they wanted us to present to His Excellency. The thought of carrying it across Tibet was horrifying. So I told them that I would inform the Viceroy of their desire for a letter and their wish to present him with a sword. I had written the letter they had asked of me, to say that they had treated us well. When I had given it to them, they begged us once again not to go towards Dashing.

With signs of reluctance we agreed to go down river instead, following the Po Tsangpo. They told us that we would not be able to get down to the confluence with the Tsangpo, because the rope-bridge below Trulung was carried away every summer and the journey could be made only in winter. We answered that if we found it impossible we would go into Kongbo and reach the Tsangpo higher up. We were not certain whether they were telling the truth, but we found out later that their information was correct. We arranged to leave next day, June 28th.

Later in the day some people brought us honey, for which we paid. They explained that Tibetan honey was of two kinds, tree honey and rock honey. The rock honey was poisonous unless it was boiled or else kept for some time. As we were not certain how long "some time" was, we boiled it and it turned into rather good toffee.

Morshead went ahead next morning early, with seven *ula* coolies and most of our own. I stayed to say good-bye to the ministers. I presented them with fifty rupees as a gift and in payment for the food and musk, and twelve rupees as a donation towards rebuilding the monastery.

The Nyerpa and the Chief Minister insisted on coming some of the way with us. I found it hard to believe it was only a fortnight since I had received the illegible letter from the Nyerpa telling us to go back to Chimdro. So much had happened, so many conflicting suspicions had been met and overcome and now we were friends, with the Nyerpa warning me of the dangers ahead, the bridge that had been washed out at

the junction of the Yigrong Tsangpo and the Po Tsangpo, which would necessitate another day's march up the Yigrong in order to cross by ferry, and telling me of the short cut from Lunang in Kongbo to Gyala Sindong.

"When we first heard of you," said the Chief, "our ears were very hot. And even when we saw you, we were full of suspicion. But now we understand you, we do not mind your coming."

They asked if one of them could come to Sadiya to see Dundas, hoping no doubt that from him they might secure the promise of aid against the Chinese which we had not been able to give. I answered certainly and the best way would be through Zayul and the Lohit valley. "Well," they said, "if we are invited, one of us will come."

Then as we parted, the Nyerpa said: "Since the Chinese came, we cannot be certain of our people. Go down the valley and you will be safe. Try to come back and there may be danger."

And so I left them, hurrying forward to catch Morshead, glad in my heart that at last we had won recognition in Po me. But before we could search for the falls without fear of being turned back, we had to win acceptance from the Tibetans themselves, from the Dzongpön of Tsela and perhaps others, his equals in other districts or his superiors in Lhasa.



PART THREE

To the Falls





## CHAPTER SIX

I AM often asked how Morshead and I *planned* our itinerary. It is the question which immediately occurs to anyone living in this age of long-term plans and universal confusion. But in 1913 the idea never occurred to us that any expedition should be routed and highly organised. There was so much to discover that once we left Mipi wherever we went and whatever we saw was important. Each new place, each new bird or flower or animal, each trigonometrical point or hypsometer reading was an addition to the sum total of human knowledge. So we did not set out and say, "We will do this or that, but not the other." We were happy in being opportunists, and though we were sorry that we had to leave the Tsangpo valley at Lagung in order to gain permission to travel in Po me, we both agreed that it would be silly to retrace our steps to Lagung and then try to follow up the Tsangpo valley where we left it. It was far better to travel down the Po Tsangpo through country unexplored and unsurveyed by Europeans and join the Tsangpo at the confluence, or if the Nyerpa was right and this was impossible, it was almost as good to strike the Tsangpo still higher up and work down river, as Kintup had, as far as we could go and perhaps even to Lagung. The great bend which the Tsangpo took would make it comparatively easy, if we did reach Lagung, to strike west again and explore up the Tsangpo from the point we had reached on our journey from Showa.

I think it is fair to say that this idea existed in our minds as something which would be good to realise. But at no point did we feel committed and we certainly at the moment of leaving Showa had no conviction that we would succeed in doing what we finally achieved. If we had been granted a vision of all that lay ahead of us, we might well have flinched. Coming on it as

we did, day by day and hour by hour, we found it often difficult to bear; what rendered it tolerable was that we never did see far ahead.

Certainly as we travelled down the Po Tsangpo, we felt only exhilaration at having won over the Pobas to our side, and the only sadness was the condition to which the people had been reduced by the devastations of the Chinese. In such country even a small armed force could wreak havoc, because though for purposes of *ula* the people were organised into "villages", the houses were in fact scattered all down the valley with very little concentration. The Pobas had been able to offer little resistance in this valley and the evidence was everywhere of the ruthless progress of the Chinese soldiers, the houses in ruins, many of the fields uncultivated and in those that had been sown the people plucking the barley when it was still green in the ear, because their reserves were exhausted.

It would have been little wonder if people driven so near to the verge of starvation had felt rebellious to the government which had failed to protect them. If it had been so hard to convince the Nyerpa of our harmless intentions, it might prove harder still to convince the village people. We could understand their feeling suspicious of strangers when we saw what the Chinese had done.

*June 28th. Petang. 8000 ft.*

Yet the people of Petang, at which we spent the first night out from Showa, were very friendly and we were joined there by Chang Dorje, a representative of the Showa government, who was to stay with us and look after us as long as we were in Po me.

The Nyerpa had not exaggerated. Everyone we met had suffered from the Chinese. The two monks *en route* for Lhasa who joined us at Petang came from Chamdo Gompa, which the Chinese had burnt to the ground. In Dem they were lucky because though seven houses were burned only one man was killed, the rest having fled. That others had fared worse was testified by deserted houses standing in uncultivated fields.

*July 1st. Gyadzong. 7250 ft.*

On the fourth day out from Showa we came to a good stone house undamaged, the palace of the king who had been beheaded at the order of the Chinese. A little further on, the Po Tsangpo, which had been flowing north-west, turned suddenly south-west. But as the Nyerpa had said, we had to continue north-west up the left bank of the Yigrong Tsangpo, because the bridge had been washed away.

Morshead's energy had been redoubled by the acquisition of the sight-rule, which enabled him to do plane-tabling. During the day he climbed every knoll and steep hill to take his observations, and yet in the evening, as I was working on my notes, I saw him running round a field. "What's wrong?" I shouted. "Nothing," he shouted back. "Just taking a little exercise."

At this point we did have some trouble with our *ula*. The stage from Tang me ended at a place called Doka (two houses just off the road). Seeing us coming, some of the people ran away and some of the Tang me people had to continue for another stage. Morshead and I went on, through a place called Pe Pe, and then, as it was getting rather late, we waited for the coolies to catch us up. After waiting some time, we went back to see what had happened. Eventually we saw some of our own coolies. They said that when the *ula* coolies had reached Pe Pe the same thing had happened, but this time the people from Tang me refused to go any further. After a time they had got a pony and some coolies, but two of our loads had been left behind with one of our coolies to look after them.

*July 2nd-3rd. Dre. 7300 ft.*

Shortly before we reached the ferry across the Yigrong Tso (lake), we came to a stream called the Tralung, which was about fifteen feet across and two feet deep, rushing over a rocky bed. We had to ford it, because the people had given up trying to bridge it. It was a wicked river, they said, liable to sudden floods which carried all bridges away.

Twelve years before (on the twelfth day of the seventh

month of the Monkey Year), the Tralung formed a dam higher up the valley and for three days ceased to flow. The people remembered it well, for it was the year of the Tsari pilgrimage, which is always in the Monkey Year, and the Nepo or headman was away on the pilgrimage. Those living in the valley below were frightened, because they knew that the water was building up behind the dam and the time would come when it would break through, and they went into the hills to wait for it.

On the third day in the afternoon the dam broke and rushed down the Tralung valley in a great avalanche of water, earth and rocks, which continued for one hour. Earth and stones were carried right across the Yigrong valley in a fan some two miles wide on the right bank of the river and some 350 feet thick as we measured it by the aneroid. On the left bank of the Yigrong three villages were buried, Chara, Chado and Chakong, and on the right bank Kating and Wanden. And there was a strange thing. At the time of the avalanche, the stones and the earth were so hot that the people said their feet were blistered, but by the next day they had cooled. We asked them if there were hot springs up the Tralung valley, and they said there were not. But they had not been up the valley themselves.

The trouble did not end there. The mass of the avalanche lay across the Yigrong river and dammed it; and now the Yigrong river was stopped and began to form a lake which rose and covered many houses of Dre village and drowned many cattle and horses. But no people were drowned because they climbed on to the higher ground.

For a month and three days the lake rose and then the top of the dam broke and the level of the lake fell. But even when we came there, the lake was still large, running up the valley for five or six miles, and at the point that we crossed it in the ferry it was six hundred yards in width.

This disaster must have been the one which Bentinck noted when in 1901 there were big floods in Abor country and the bodies of strange people were found. We were asked by the



A road in the Yigrong valley





Pobas at Mipi



Crossing the lake at Dre

villagers whether we could not take away the lake and give them back their fields.

Some of the people from the lake villages had gone down to the Mishmi hills trying to make a new life there, but they had been forced to leave by the Mishmis. They recognised Gyamtso and some of the other people in the photographs which I had taken at Mipi.

Morshead wanted to map the lake, which fitted in well with my plans. During my China–Tibet–Assam trip, I had searched without success for any examples of *Crossoptilon harmani*, the “eared pheasant without a home” whose skin Captain Harman had found in a native hut on the Bhutanese frontier in a locality which this bird could not have inhabited in view of the elevation and climate. In Mipi I had asked Gyamtso about the eared pheasant and he told me that it was to be found on the eastern side of the Yigrong Tso; and he added a most curious item of superstitious lore to explain the bird’s colouring. Most animals die after eating aconite. But Gyamtso swore that the effect of eating aconite was not to kill the eared pheasant, but merely to turn its plumage blue.

I arranged to get up early, the first morning after we had crossed the lake, in the hope of finding the eared pheasant and perhaps some goral on the eastern side. But unfortunately the guide did not arrive until 7 a.m., by which time cloud had made the visibility poor.

We crossed back to the eastern side of the lake and climbed the cliff. Though bad, the ground was not very dangerous. On a cliff I saw a red goral and could have taken a long shot at him, but I decided to climb above and get closer.

The clouds now were helpful; under the cover of one I climbed up the only possible place, which but for the cloud would have been in full view. I took up my position above and waited twenty minutes for the clouds to clear. Then I saw that I was really no nearer, so I moved forward and again waited for the cloud to clear.

I got a shot at him at about 100 yards. The bullet went into



his back and out at his hind leg. He jumped forward and fell some 400 feet.

It took some time to get to him, and then we found that the fall had broken off one of his horns which was hanging by the skin. We measured him and sent him down to the boat which was a thousand feet below, and went back to look for pheasants, but saw none.

Eared pheasants, I was told, were plentiful during the winter but went away in the summer. On the other hand, Morshead had seen one the evening before as he crossed the lake. "That's the trouble," he said, "I see all the birds and you get all the fun of collecting them."

Morshead found that his compass was affected here due to iron in the earth. There was an iron mine near, which I did not examine, but Morshead went in for about 200 feet, which he was told was about a quarter of the way to the face.

The way they smelted the iron was to build a small house of stone about ten feet square. This they filled with wood and charcoal and then sealed the entrance. Into the walls on opposite sides they built bellows and in the top they left a hole into which they fed the ore. The fire was lighted and three men worked turn and turn about on the bellows, keeping them going without stopping for 24 hours, by the end of which time there were two lumps of iron, one at the mouth of each bellows.

The Nyerpa of Showa had given me a letter to the Nepo, Penzog Rapden, and on the evening of our second day at the lake, just as we were sitting down to dinner, a young man came in who said he was Penzog Rapden's son. He asked me to come outside with him and there I found Penzog Rapden himself with another man. I gave the Nepo the Nyerpa's letter and explained to him at length what we were doing as I had explained it in Showa. The Nepo told me that they had heard from Kongbo that the British and the Assamese were helping a Chinese force to come into the country from the south. I tried to reassure him but I don't know whether I succeeded. The Chinese invasions had left such a mark on the Pobas, that we suspected that we would meet this suspicion all through

Po me. Dorje, the guide whom the Nyerpa had sent us, was rather the same. He talked about the Chinese all the time. The people of Kongbo had submitted to the Chinese and no harm was done to them. Dorje was proud that the Pobas had resisted even at such losses to themselves. He never tired of telling us of the fighting at Chabji La, where he killed four Chinese with his own hands.

*July 4th. Sangyü. 7250 ft.*

After two days at the lake, we set off down the right bank of the Yigrong river to its confluence with the Po Tsangpo. On the road we saw evidence of the great flood twelve years before when the lake-dam broke. In one flat place we saw the remains of a village which had been washed away apart from the foundations. We climbed the cliff face and measured the flood mark by aneroid 170 feet above the normal flood level.

At Tang me we found ourselves at the south-west end of the broken bridge, the north-east end of which we had seen at Tang tö five days before. It brought home to us the penalties of trying to explore this part of Tibet in summer, when all the bridges made during the winter have been washed away. The Nyerpa had been right about this bridge, but we hoped that through some miracle he would be wrong about the bridges of the Rong river at Trulung.

*July 6th. Trulung. 6450 ft.*

One day's march down the right bank of the Tsangpo brought us to Trulung and there we found the Nyerpa was right again. Both the bridges over the Rong river were down and there was no possibility of our following the Po Tsangpo down to its confluence with the Tsangpo river at Gompo Ne. Instead, we should have to make a wide detour up the valley of the Rong river, across the watershed and down into the Tsangpo valley much higher up.

We tried however to do a little simple arithmetic. We had three boiling points on the Po Tsangpo: at Showa, at the Yigrong-Po Tsangpo confluence and at Trulung. These gave

us a fall of fifty-four feet a mile. From three different Tibetans we estimated that the distance from Trulung to Gompo Ne, where the Po Tsangpo flowed into the Tsangpo, was 23 miles. Assuming the average fall per mile between Trulung and Gompo Ne was the same as the fall between Showa and Trulung, the height at Gompo Ne would be 5350 feet.\*

The last boiling point we had got at river level on the Tsangpo was at the confluence with the Chimdro river. That was 3070 feet. From the Chimdro river to Gompo Ne was about 70 miles (42 miles from Chimdro river to Lagung according to our own reckoning, 28 from Lagung to Gompo Ne according to native information). This gave us a fall of 33 feet per mile of road, which was nearly the same as per mile of river.

Therefore we reckoned, if there *were* falls on the Tsangpo river as Kintup said, we should find them not between Lagung and Gompo Ne, but somewhere above Gompo Ne.

As we travelled up the left bank of the Rong river we soon came to the famous Chabji La, where Dorje once again explained to us the battle in which he had killed the four Chinese. It was the route of the first invasion, the Chinese coming from Lhasa via the Tsangpo valley, in order as they said to make a road and lay a telegraph line between Lhasa and China. The Pobas maintained that they were subject neither to Lhasa nor to the Chinese Emperor and told them to leave them alone. The Chinese paid no attention, so the Pobas attacked and killed five hundred of them at Chabji La, sustaining only six casualties themselves. The Pobas combined old methods with new. Those who had rifles fired them; those who had not, rolled rocks down on to the enemy.

From the Chabji La Dorje told us that we could see the mountain above the confluence of the Po Tsangpo and the Tsangpo. But though we waited there two hours, we never got a proper view. Once the clouds parted and we saw the dim outline of a mountain, but soon even that faded from view.

\* Kingdon Ward and Lord Cawdor when they went there in 1924 found it as 5427 feet. A pretty good guess on our part.

Though we were on a good road, which had been made by the Chinese during the invasion, our progress was slowed down by one of the coolies who had developed a sore foot. We were still using the *ula* from the lake and they stayed with us five days until we reached Layö Ting, a village which had been comprised of thirty houses until the Chinese came and burnt them. Two-thirds of them had been repaired, but very roughly, as if the people did not yet feel sufficiently secure to do more than rig up temporary accommodation. It was the same with the fields. Many of them were uncultivated, the people having been killed or having fled.

We were right in the Kintup country. Layö Ting was the village which Kintup called Lha-Ye. Later in the day, having chatted with an incarnate lama sitting in a tent who said that he had come from Lhasa many years before, we passed the Dzong of Tongkyuk where Kintup was sold and kept as a slave. It was a mile off the road and we did not turn aside but went down and across a cantilever bridge 120 feet long across the Rong river. On the right bank was a guardhouse and we could see the remains of Chinese entrenchments. The Pobas had crept close and fired from a large rock only fifteen yards from the entrenchment. The marks of many bullets were still visible on the rock.

*July 8th-9th. Tongkyuk Bridge. 8340 ft.*

At the guardhouse we met a petty Poba official named Chura. As he was over seventy, I asked him whether he knew anything about Kintup, but the name meant nothing to him, nor the story.

He told us however that the Abor Survey had reached Doshong La and were coming down the north-west side. He said we would meet them; though unless Dundas had changed his plans since he wrote us that letter, we reckoned they should have turned back already. He also said that the rumour that Dundas's party was Chinese had been started by a monastery at Temo, the monks of whom were under Tengyeling, a monastery in Lhasa which sided with the Chinese. For a time

the rumour was believed, but Chura said that it had been discredited.

We halted for a day at the bridge so that Morshead could survey a tributary running into the Rong river from the north-west. While Morshead was gone, I resumed my search for the eared pheasant, which a hunter said he would show me. To be precise, he said that we would not see them but we would hear them call if they saw us, and then he would let his dog go and the pheasant would fly up into a tree and I could shoot it. We went to a village about two miles off where I saw potatoes growing, but there were none to eat. Then we went along the hillside through bracken under pines, but never a sight or sound of a pheasant; only some blue feathers that belonged to a crossoptilon and a number of butterflies, which I caught.

*July 10th. Lunang. 11,290 ft.*

The following day we managed to hire ponies and made a record march of sixteen and a half miles. The ponies had Tibetan saddles which we found rather uncomfortable. One of the owners of the ponies rode with us to bring them back at the end of the stage. He also had been a soldier and he talked a great deal about the fighting.

I asked him whether he had heard of fighting at Dashing and he said no. Our impression was that at Showa they were frightened that there would be trouble if we went up to Dashing and back again.

Five miles after leaving Tongkyuk bridge we came to a single house among fields, and just beyond that there were some grassy meadows covered in Alpine flowers, on which I caught a number of butterflies.

In describing these meadows, I find myself in a quandary. I have attempted throughout this book to present things as they appeared to me at the time, making quite clear the few occasions when I intrude information gained at a subsequent date. In this aim I have been assisted by the diaries which I wrote at the time. But at this point I realise the inadequacy of my method.

I realise that for every one person who may be interested in the story of this journey, there are ten thousand or more who are interested in the blue poppy, described in seedsman's catalogues as *Meconopsis Baileyi*, which is today so easy to buy and so rewarding to grow. If I am to perpetuate my name at all, my best chance is as the discoverer of the blue poppy; and in gratitude, I feel that I ought to write of the emotions which were stirred by the first sight of that wonderful turquoise blue flower with its wonderful golden centre.

Yet when I consult my diary, written in Lunang on the evening of July 10th, 1913, after riding for sixteen and a half miles on a very uncomfortable Tibetan saddle, I find the following entry.

Among the flowers were blue poppies I had not seen before and purple iris and primulas. There was also a good deal of aconite.

What a pedestrian way to record one's assignation with the immortality of a seedsman's catalogue! Not even a sentence to itself.

Yet there are several reasons why this now famous discovery should have appeared at the time so small in my diary. We were travelling as I have said through country unexplored by western man. Each day brought new discoveries, new sights, new marvels. My natural history specimens, I knew, would be of scientific value, but an expedition like ours was not equipped to collect, treat and transport vast quantities of botanical and zoological specimens. In the report which I prepared for the Indian Government on my return, I did not even mention the discovery of the blue poppy, though I thought fit to include such information as "The people of Lunang wear a peculiar felt hat made of yak's hair; it has a broad brim and is shaped like that of a clergyman. They make a kind of tea from a yellow-flowered plant (*Hypericum patulum*) which grows wild here."

Though it was the first time that I had seen the blue poppy which has become the *Meconopsis Baileyi*, I had previously seen many different blue poppies in Tibet, and many of them beautiful, though not so beautiful as these. If I had been a

plant-hunter, I might have been struck by the possibilities of growing these blue poppies elsewhere. But I could have done no more than I did, because I saw them in the glory of the flowering season and there was no means of gathering seed.

It was not until 1924 that the plant-hunter Captain Kingdon Ward, who had read of my discovery of the blue poppy, brought back the seed of the flower which is now so common that it can be bought by the packet at any good seedsman's in Britain or the United States.

The fame of my discovery is due, therefore, more than anything to Captain Kingdon Ward's enterprise. If he had not marked the flower and returned to collect the seed, and then introduced the plant into cultivation, the *Meconopsis Baileyi* would have remained as obscure as the butterflies and other specimens which we brought back.

Fourteen miles from Tongkyuk we crossed the river to the right bank by a cantilever bridge and in doing so left Po me and entered Kongbo. All below the bridge is Po me, all above Kongbo.

At this point the valley opened out. We went up it, across a stream, and climbing a steep cliff entered the broad valley of the Lunang, where several streams join to form the river. It was quite different in character from Po me. There were cattle in the pastures, the arable was well cultivated and the houses were undamaged. This was the reward for submission to the Chinese.

We put up at a house in the lower part of Lunang village. The men as I have said were different from the Pobas, in that they wore on their heads clerical shovel hats made of thick grey or brown felt. Their hair was done in the fashion used elsewhere in Tibet only by women, two plaits crossed behind the head and fastened above.

There was a man who had come from Pe. He said that there had been forty Assamese soldiers there with two British officers but they had left for the Doshong La five days before. Morshead and I were sorry to have missed them, but I'm

afraid we were rather glad that they had not succeeded in finding the falls we were after.

*July 11th. Tumbatse. 11,050 ft.*

We had experienced comparatively decent weather considering that the monsoon reaches Tibet in July, but on leaving Lunang on the 11th it began raining very hard and we decided, instead of crossing the Nyima La into the Tsangpo watershed that day, to halt at the furthest house up the valley.

*July 12th. Timpa. 9750 ft.*

The next morning the rain was even worse and the going deteriorated when we turned up a side valley towards the pass. We had left the Chinese invasion route and, as we climbed higher, the trees grew smaller until there was only the stunted rhododendron a foot high with turf in places on which I saw marmots.

There were patches of snow near the top of the Nyima La. We boiled a thermometer and got a reading of 15,238 feet. The visibility was good, the rain having ceased, and we could see the mountains on the far side of the Tsangpo with the valley leading up to the Doshong La, across which the Abor Survey party had returned. But we did not see the Tsangpo river itself until we reached Yang-Ngön, a village six and a half miles from the pass, with a shrine covered in prayer flags in the middle of a clump of trees. The river looked very wide and we could see broad acres of cultivation and trim villages with whitewashed houses.

In this village we were met by our first Kongbo officials, a fat monk from Chamna and a thin layman from Gyala, who presented us with scarves and *chang*.

The thin layman had seen the Abor Survey party, two officers and about thirty men and coolies. The monk had gone from Chamna to see them, but arriving too late and hearing of our approach he had waited to see us instead. They did not try to sound us on our intentions, for which I was glad as I was suffering from an attack of mountain sickness, brought on by crossing the pass.



*July 13th. Shoka. 9800 ft.*

They accompanied us on our way and next day we crossed the Tsangpo in a ferry like that we had used across the Yigrong lake, two long dugout canoes lashed together, which held all our coolies, kit and the Chamna Dzongpön in one load.

At Pe on the opposite bank we were met by the Dzongpön of Tsela, who had with him as interpreter an Indian I had known as a shopkeeper in Chumbi.

I was rather surprised to see the Indian there and when we were alone later I asked him what had happened. He started off with a lot of lies, saying that he came from Kabul. But when I spoke to him in Persian, he said that he had forgotten how to speak it. He said the reason why he had left Gyantse was that his wife hurt their daughter by boring holes in her ears; so he beat his wife and she complained to Inspector Laden La who was at Gyantse. The Inspector gave orders that he was to be taken and brought to him in handcuffs. So he ran away to Lhasa.

“Well, what are you doing here interpreting?” I asked.

“Oh,” he answered, “I earn my living by vaccinating people. But the Dzongpön of Tsela heard of the Abor Survey party and asked me to interpret for him.”

“Where do you get your vaccine from?” I asked curiously.

“Oh, I don’t use vaccine for these people,” he said with scorn. “I use butter. They don’t know the difference.”

I saw to it that the Dzongpön of Tsela learnt the difference, as soon as I had a talk with him. Like the monk from Chamna, he had arrived too late, but stayed on to meet Morshead and me. He was an intelligent man, whose son of seventeen was one of four Tibetan boys we had sent to England to be educated at Rugby. This was news to the Dzongpön, who thought the boy was in Darjeeling.

We sat for a while near the landing place drinking *chang*, and then rode three miles upstream, passing the village where the Dzongpön was staying, to the house which had been prepared for us in Shoka. Soon afterwards the Dzongpön arrived with a present of two sheep, some eggs and tsampa. He stayed

talking for some time and in the evening we went to return his visit.

The Dzongpön was friendly and open with us. In 1904, he said, he had sent seven of his men to fight against us. Two of them were killed and the rest taken prisoner. "If the Chinese had captured them," he said, "they would have cut their heads off. You took their photographs and sent them home." He was very bitter against the Chinese, who had killed women and children and taken all the horses and cattle they could lay their hands on.

We were equally open with him, telling him exactly how we had come and waiting as he wrote it down. He had heard from Pemakö by letter that the troops with the Abor Survey numbered 26,818, one of those figures which attempt plausibility by exactness. He did not seem to find it hard to believe me when I said it was nonsense. But he wanted to know why we were suddenly sending all these troops into Abor and Mishmi territory. I explained that for years we had kept a loose control through our political officer at Sadiya and that the murder of Williamson had decided us to tighten up; but it did not mean that we wanted to annex new territory.

I told him that we wanted to get down to Pemaköchung, and he promised to make arrangements. But he warned us that the road was very bad.

He then told me that the Shatra Lönchen\* had gone to Darjeeling where he was to confer with a British and a Chinese official about Tibet. He said it, expressing the hope that a treaty to which the Indian Government was a signatory might guarantee future peace between China and Tibet. But to Morshead and myself, when we discussed it later, it meant very much more than this. The whole question of the frontiers between Tibet and Assam would be wide open and no agreement of any value could be reached while the borderlands were unmapped. The question of whether or not there were falls on the Tsangpo was still of great interest and we were determined to answer it beyond all doubt if we could. But after that we

\* "The Great Minister" literally. Usually translated Prime Minister.

decided that we must at all costs come back up the Tsangpo at least as far as Tsetang so that on our return we could present McMahon with a map on which he could draw frontiers which corresponded with ethnic and geographic facts.

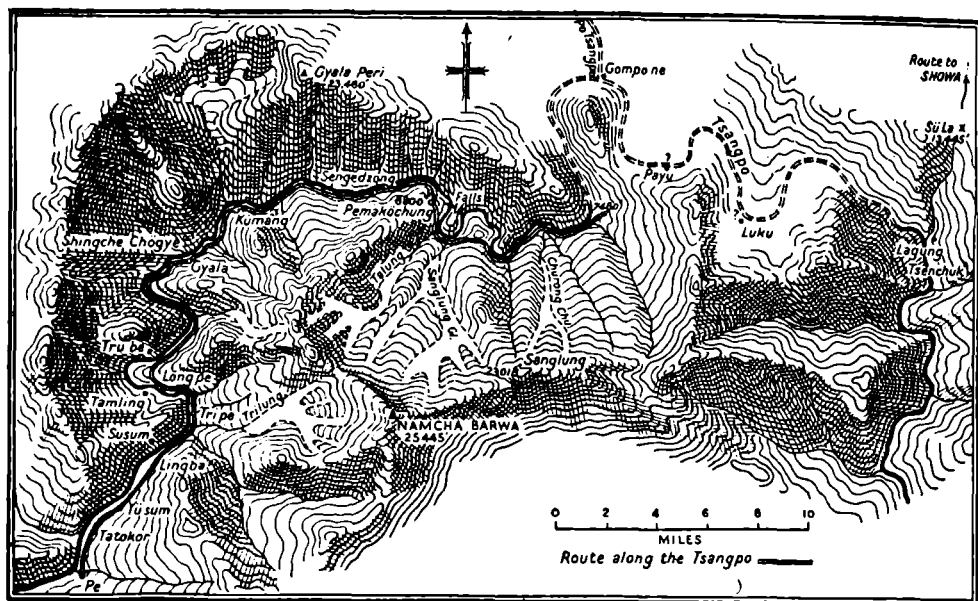
## CHAPTER SEVEN

As our intention was to go down the Tsangpo as far as Lagung if possible and then return and go up the Tsangpo to Tsetang, we left some of our supplies under seal with our host at Shoka. We also took the opportunity of redressing a wrong which we had found had been done by Captain Trenchard's party when they were there. Their coolies had brought with them from Darjeeling a new Indian coin, the freshly minted one anna piece with the head of King George V. This they had told the local people was a trangka, a Tibetan coin worth about five or six annas. Without disclosing the fraud, we changed these for the correct rate in the few cases we came across.

The Dzongpön of Tsela ordered the small official from Gyala Dzong, whose official title was the Gyala Depa, to go with us and give us any help we might need.

The country through which we now went was much drier than any through which we had passed. On the left bank the hills were covered with firs at the top. Below that were prickly oak (called *Parto* in Tibetan) and scrub. At about 600 feet above the river were upper terraces with rocky spurs jutting out at intervals with sometimes a lower terrace near the river. The terraces were cultivated by a system of irrigation and each had its own tiny village. The right bank was similar, except that instead of trees at the top there were rocks which went up to the snowclad peak of Namcha Barwa, which was covered in cloud the whole time we were there. Indeed the local people told us that they saw it only three or four days every summer.

The river two miles below the ferry broke into rapids and continued in this way for the remaining eight miles of our march. The level, we were told, was abnormally low for the time of year. This heartened us, because it held out a chance



of our getting further below Pemaköchung than Kintup and the Mongolian monk had succeeded in doing.

*July 15th-16th. Tri pe. 10,000 ft.*

At the end of the first day's march down the Tsangpo we reached Tri pe, where there was a pleasant camp of tents pitched ready for us on turf in a grove. A mile up the Tri pe stream which we had just crossed we saw a large glacier. We spent the next day exploring it. After climbing for an hour and a half, we reached a grazing ground where Morshead got a fixing.

While he was doing this, I found a guide from the house on the edge of the grazing ground, who said there were pheasants up the hill. He took me up along the lateral moraine and we were in the middle of a sturdy growth of nettles, when there suddenly rose before us a large bluish-grey bird with a good deal of white on the head. It was Harman's pheasant at last!

I could have kicked myself. I had given the shotgun to the guide to carry.

But the nettles from which the bird had risen were still moving. There was something there and I fired blind into the nettles, hoping to kill what was there or get a flying shot, if a bird rose.

The nettles stopped moving and going over I found a dead chick. This was a stroke of good fortune. The juvenile plumage of many birds shows affinities with different species which are often not apparent in the adults. This *Crossoptilon harmani* chick was speckled with brown of which the adult shows no trace.\*

When I returned to the house, Morshead had gone on; so I drank a good dish of rich milk and then followed him, going down from the grazing house to the stream and then up about 400 feet to a ridge from which we saw the glacier half a mile wide below us.

We dropped steeply on to it. It was covered with earth and boulders, some of which were several yards across. In places a little ice was showing where the earth and stones had slipped off. It was very rough and corrugated into hills which rose up fifty feet in height and depressions with pools in them. On it were growing larch and birch trees about ten feet in height.

Morshead crossed to the left bank of the glacier and said that the ice and stones did not reach to the side of the valley; between them was a deep ravine down which an icy stream descended. I myself went down the glacier for about a mile to the snout, very hard going. The glacier was receding. Below the snout for 200 yards were boulders like those on the ice and below that what I imagine was an old moraine, earth full of stones with large fir trees growing from it.

The moraine was much higher at the sides and the plan of the snout was concave. Even as I watched, stones kept falling from above and sliding down the steep ice slopes of the terminal terraces. There were several small blocks of ice lying in the stream, which had clearly fallen from the snout of the glacier.

There was no movement on the top of the glacier when I was there. But all the stones showed freshly broken edges, especially at the corners, as though they had rolled violently

\* This chick, together with adult Harman's pheasants which I obtained several days later, is figured on p. 332 of *The Game Birds of India, Burma and Ceylon*, vol. iii, by E. C. Stuart-Baker.

down and been split. Near the snout were several huge boulders, some sixty feet long, lying on the ice, and on top of the ice I sounded one hole with a six-foot pole and failed to find the bottom.

*July 17th. Gyala. 9300 ft.*

The next day we set out for Gyala, but before doing so, I went out to get the nest of a redstart (*Ruticilla aurorea*) which I had seen two evenings before. While I was waiting for the bird, I saw some partridges (which they call *Che Tra*) fly from the hill to the fields. After I had waited for an hour and a half the redstart arrived and I collected it.

I started off to catch up Morshead, but I had not gone far across the fields when I heard the cry of an eared pheasant (which they call *Changa*). I looked round and not far up the hill there were two of them. I climbed after them and on the rocks I came on a large troop of monkeys, very like the common Indian monkey but some of them with grey hairs round the face. I also saw a smaller game bird than the eared pheasant, black with a white head. What it was I don't know and I did not try to shoot because I was after the pheasants. It was a mistake, because when I was struggling in thick jungle on very steep ground, they rose very suddenly and flew away before I could fire.

I gave it up after that and rode on to Lum pe village where we were changing transport. Lum pe consisted of three houses and a good deal of cultivation. On irrigated fields, they told us, they got two crops a year; without irrigation only one.

Leaving Lum pe we climbed to a plateau which was not cultivated, probably because it was too dry. A few hundred yards over this and we dropped steeply through a forest of prickly oak with here and there a field in a level clearing. The road was very rough and rocky. Only at one place did it reach the bank of the Tsangpo and here I halted for lunch.

A little further on we came to a stream called the Tsalung flowing through an extraordinarily narrow cleft. It was fed, as we saw later, from a glacier higher up the valley.

Half a mile further on there was a place where the road was forced into the Tsangpo by a high cliff. We managed to scramble round on the dangerously slippery rocks, but the ponies had to be taken into the river and swum down past the cliffs.

The river at this point was still and calm, flowing between cliffs forty feet high—the rapids had ceased about a mile and a half back. We could see the flood water level, which is reached in September, twenty feet above us.

On the opposite bank were several houses with a monastery called Gyala Gompa and a small stream, which falls through cliffs. Chained in the stream we were told was a god called Shingche Chö Gye, who was visible through the water when the stream was low in February and March.

This clearly was the waterfall that Kintup and the old monk at Mipi had been referring to, but Kintup had said that it was the Tsangpo itself and not just a small tributary which made the fall. We resolved to investigate further on our return from Pemaköchung.

When we reached Gyala, we found tents prepared for us and a meal for our coolies. The people of Gyala warned us against the people of Po me, who were unscrupulous and unreliable, bad people, unlike the people of Kongbo. In Po me we had received the same warnings against the people of Kongbo. It seems to be universal, the inability of human beings to feel virtuous except when surrounded on all sides by rogues and villains. What astonished us both in Po me and Kongbo was the degree of security which we felt, though we were carrying with us a considerable sum in money and were very lightly armed.

So we continued our march for four days to Pemaköchung; and though it would not be true to say that one day was just like another, because the country was continually changing, there was a pattern common to each day, especially of birds and butterflies.

The snow-clad peak which Morshead and I had discovered from below Mipi half hidden by its rival Namcha Barwa was



now revealed in its true magnificence. Its name was Gyala Peri, and it towered to 23,460 feet. In itself it was one of the great mountains of the world; but what made it so astonishing was that only thirteen miles away was the peak of Namcha Barwa, 25,445 feet, and between them flowed the Tsangpo over 14,000 feet below Gyala Peri and 16,000 feet below Namcha Barwa.\* It was an example of the power of water as startling as that of the Colorado river in the Grand Canyon.

It was a fantastic landscape, with its different glaciers, some covered in rock and earth and others just masses of dirty ice. There was a stream which reeked of sulphur coming from a hot spring, and a little further on a sulphur mine with gas bubbling out of the rocks and depositing sulphur all about.

One night Morshead was ill and, the sky clearing to reveal the mountain peaks, I took the bearings for him. Another night we camped in a cave under a high precipice with a stream coming down in a cataract, a couple of hundred yards away, and wild white strawberries, raspberries and gooseberries growing in the clearing. There were also red currants, which we were told were uneatable. But Morshead ate them all the same. His digestion seemed to be as insensitive to food as his body was to leeches. He ate any fruit he found.

In some places the road went over notched logs, in others the road disappeared altogether because it was submerged in summer and we had to climb over rocks or cut our way through jungle. In one place the only passage was through a tunnel, and the timing had to be correct and a good speed maintained because every now and then a large wave from the river rushed in and made it impassable.

The variations in temperature were as strange. One day I halted for lunch beside a great snowdrift on the banks of the Tsangpo, and then we climbed up to Sengedzong on a great overhanging cliff and the sun beating down on it made it unpleasantly hot. Senge means "lion" in Tibetan, and on the vertical wall of the Dzong were said to be the footmarks of a

\* The two peaks are supposed to be the breasts of Dorge Pagmo, the Diamond Sow, whose incarnation lives at Samding Monastery on the Yamdrok Tso.

lion, which were smeared with butter by pious or apprehensive pilgrims.

*July 20th. Sengedzong. 8550 ft.*

We had cause to remember what the Dzongpön of Tsela had told us about the road being hard and rough. Every day it grew harder and rougher as the valley grew narrower, closing in on the great river. Over and over again we sighed and wished that we had been making the journey in the winter when the streams and rivers were low. We did not admit it to one another, but each of us knew in his heart that we should never get right through the gorges along the river-bank. It was getting worse and worse.

When we left Sengedzong on the last day's march to Pemaköchung, we actually had a path for three-quarters of a mile through forest. This petered out in the river and we had to climb over boulders in the river-bed for half a mile. A steep spur barred further progress along the river-bed, so I had to climb the spur, entering the forest, through which there was no road. (I left Morshead working at the river.)

It was very hard going, rough and overgrown, and we had to do a certain amount of cutting of the forest. We had left the river and for five and three-quarter miles we went through the forest, occasionally dropping down to a stream but never in sight of the Tsangpo.

Then I found a path leading down to the Tsangpo at the end of which I could see a cloud of spray. I went down the path half a mile, dropping about 400 feet. I first went out on to a rock about 100 feet above the water, which was rushing through a narrow chasm about fifty yards wide. To my left there were violently swirling rapids, below and to the right the river plunged over a ledge and dropping about thirty feet sent up clouds of spray which formed a cloud about twenty feet above the top of the fall. Morshead, who came to it later in the day, saw a rainbow in it and since the Tibetans had no name for it we nicknamed it the Rainbow Fall.

I took some photographs from the rock and then I climbed

down and took another photograph from river level just above the fall. The coolies told me that pilgrims in the winter went along a path at the edge of the fall and then climbed to the Gompa by a circular road. But this path was submerged in summer and I was forced to go back the way I had come and then a mile up the way I had been going to Pemaköchung.

*July 21st-22nd. Pemaköchung. 8800 ft.*

As I came round the corner of the courtyard, a woman looked up and thinking that I was Chinese fled screaming into a house. It was not a very auspicious arrival.

There were five monks in the small monastery, two of whom were doing religious meditation. Apart from the monastery and the monks' houses, there was one house in which lived the woman with her husband. They kept *dzos*, a cross between yaks and ordinary cattle.

To the south-east and about eight miles distant was the magnificent peak of Namcha Barwa, occasionally appearing from behind the clouds and then disappearing again as soon as Morshead tried to take a bearing.

Pemaköchung was a depressing, dead and alive sort of place. There had been an epidemic of smallpox there three months before and several people had died. The loss of "several" in a place so scantily inhabited had almost depopulated it and we saw the departure of our coolies back to Gyala with sinking hearts. It was as if we had reached one of the world's dead ends. When we asked about the road down the river, they said there was no road. When I said, "Then how do you get down the river?" they said, with some satisfaction, "We don't." We knew that the confluence with the Po Tsangpo at Gompo Ne could only be about ten miles away in a straight line. But they had not the least idea where it was. Or they said they hadn't.

My impression was that they had no men to spare for *ula* and they regarded our arrival as a most unwelcome event, almost as "a complication" following smallpox. We resolved however to stay at Pekamöchung for a few days and see

whether it was not possible to find a way through the gorges.

In the afternoon I went down to the river. I could see a big glacier coming down from Namcha Barwa, but I could see no way along the river.

The next day I left Morshead trying to get a fixing from the azimuth of Namcha Barwa and a star latitude and explored the possibility of finding some track down the valley higher up the mountainside. The view of the river course was blocked by a spur coming down from Namcha Barwa and it was essential to get on to this spur to see how the land lay. I took with me some of our own coolies and Dorje, the man who tended the *dzos*.

We went a mile and a half along a rough cattle track through the forest until we reached a glacier stream. This we crossed by a bridge and half a mile further on we came to a hut, called Siti, perched on a hillside above a stream flowing from the glacier I had seen the day before, which is called Sanglung Glacier.

I went down to this stream and looked for a way to cross it. There were logs lying around which the Tibetans had cut, trying to make a bridge, but it did not seem at all an easy task. I climbed up the stream-bed hoping to find an easier place, but I was soon stopped by sheer cliffs and we had to abandon the river-bed for the forest.

Here we came on another cattle track which we followed for a mile and a half until we reached the Sanglung Glacier itself. The glacier was like the other we had explored, except that the ice was much cleaner with very little rubbish or vegetation on it. The ice was thrust up in pillars and some of the stones were from the bed of a river, being smooth and water-worn and mixed with sand. Its snout was concave, the sides projecting beyond the place where the stream came out and the ice sloping back in terraces.

Dorje told me that there was a grazing valley the other side of the glacier to which the people drove their yaks. This was encouraging, so we crossed the glacier; but on the other side there was dense forest through which we had to cut our way.

Foolishly I was wearing shorts, wishing to save my worn riding breeches for the later stages of our journey when we got ponies. On the tough rhododendron twigs my knees were stabbed and cut.

After penetrating the forest for about a mile, in which it was extremely hard to maintain a sense of direction, I decided to return. The Sanglung Glacier would at any rate make a site for a camp, from which we could try to get down the river or at least reach some points from which it would be possible to trace the river's course.

On this march we saw tracks of takin, bear and tragopan pheasants. The bears had turned over a lot of stones looking for food. Blood pheasants (called *Seto* by Dorje) and monal (called *Dang*) also came down the glacier.

On the way back Dorje told me how deserted Pemaköchung was in the winter. One man stayed to look after the *dzos* and two monks looked after the Gompa and all the rest went to Kongbo, to avoid the deep snow. The great time in the year was when the pilgrims came, arriving on the 14th day of the third month, going round the falls on the 15th and returning the day after, to Kongbo. Then Pemaköchung was crowded with thirty to fifty people. I did not tell Dorje that Morshead and I did not put Pemaköchung at the head of our list of desirable summer resorts. But I persuaded him to take me next day down to the lower side of the Rainbow Fall, before we went up to the Sanglung Glacier camp.

Morshead was not too pleased when we got back. The cloud had prevented him doing all he wanted, but he had discovered that the peaks we had seen when we crossed the Sü La with the Nyerpa on June 23rd were those of Namcha Barwa.

Both nights we were at Pemaköchung it rained heavily and it was still raining desultorily when I despatched four coolies with my kit to the site on the Sanglung Glacier that I had selected for a camp the day before.

Dorje and I set off for the Rainbow Fall, using the pilgrim path and at times losing it, because it had not been traversed since April and in places was completely overgrown.

On the way down I shot a hen tragopan (*Tragopan temminckii*), which I regarded as a contribution as important to gastronomy as to ornithology—we were clean out of meat.

We went down about 700 feet to the river level and then up a stream, passing a place where the pilgrims had made many small cairns of stones. Then after scrambling up a steep rock we reached what you might call a tunnel, but was really a sort of two-entranced cave. The entrance on our side was so small that we had to go down on hands and knees and crawl in. At the far end I could see the other entrance, a round coin of light in the darkness. I could sense from the echoes that the cave had opened out, but there was not enough light to show what shape it was, the height of the roof or the surface of the floor, which sloped steeply downwards towards the other entrance. It was very damp and one could hear the water dripping from the roof.

Dorje said, "There is a rope. It is fixed to a root." He stood up and I followed suit and struck a match, shielding it from the draught that blew through the cave.

Dorje did not wait for the match to burn up but went forward and said, "Here is the rope."

I went to him and took the rope, which was made of creeper and fastened to a great root which had grown down from the roof of the cave. "You go first," Dorje said.

I let myself down the steep slope and suddenly I came to a place where I was hanging into space in utter darkness. I was alarmed and I called out, "I cannot stand."

"Let yourself drop," Dorje called. "It is not far."

But I did not trust him. I remembered the little smallpox-stricken village and their resentment at our arrival and I thought, "This is a plot to get us out of their way so that they will not have to help us." I called out to him, "Take my matches out of my pocket and strike one."

"I do not know your pocket," Dorje said, "and I do not know how to strike a match."

I hung on to the rope, the weight of my body tugging at the joints of my arms until I knew that I would have to let go at

any moment. It seemed impossible that he could have failed to notice where my pockets were or how I had struck a match and yet it might be true.

“Let go,” Dorje said; “it is not far.”

His voice was very calm, but the reason for that, I reflected, might very well be because he knew there was no hope of my escape.

There was nothing for it but to drop. So, preparing myself to take the weight of a heavy fall, I let go. A most fearful shock went through my body and for a moment I did not realise that it was caused by my having braced myself to fall ten to twenty feet and instead I had fallen only three or four inches. In its effect, it was rather like treading on a stair that isn't there, though its causes were the opposite.

I was so filled with revulsion from my distrust of Dorje that the remaining fifteen yards to the mouth of the cave, and the climb down the long notched log once we came into the open, were performed almost without my noticing it.

We were now on a terrace, with the raging river on one side and on the other three steep cliffs. The pilgrim road went to the cliff opposite and disappeared into a hole two feet across which led down to the river-bed immediately below the falls. After my experience in the previous tunnel, I was not wholly disappointed to find that the exit to this tunnel was blocked by the flood water, even though it meant that the photographs that I was able to take after climbing a cliff and cutting away the jungle were of rather poor quality.

*July 23rd-24th. Sanglung Glacier Camp. 8950 ft.*

When we reached the Sanglung Glacier camp, I found Morshead was in very good spirits. The clouds had co-operated and allowed him excellent observation for latitude. We were both excited, because until this moment we had been largely following in Kintup's footsteps down the Tsangpo, confirming his information, correcting it in places, adding what information our instruments gave us and, what was most important of all, making a map.

But from Sanglung Glacier downwards, we, as far as the western world was concerned, were exploring country of which nothing was known, but much was speculated; one of the last remaining secret places of the earth, which might perhaps conceal a fall rivalling the Niagara or Victoria Falls in grandeur. The thought of what we might find in the next few days would anyway have kept me awake, even if it had not been for the pain and throbbing of the cuts in my knees.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

*July 23rd–24th. Sanglung Glacier. 8950 ft.*

It rained again heavily during the night and when we woke in the morning we could see little because we were enveloped in dense cloud.

I started out early with three coolies and cut a way up the hill on the right bank of the glacier, the spur which cut off our view down the river. We found great difficulty in seeing where we were going and at one time I thought we were climbing a much higher hill further up the spur. For a moment it cleared once and we could see down to Pemaköchung, but almost instantly the clouds closed in again.

At last we came to a place where someone had cut a way through the forest. Dorje was very surprised. "No one comes here from Pemaköchung," he said. "It must be hunters from Gyala."

"Why not hunters from down the river?" I asked, thinking hopefully that this might provide us with the path we were seeking.

"No," said Dorje. "The Mönbas and Lopas are thieves. If it had been them, they would have stolen my cattle."

One of my coolies, called Dawa, was very angry at this, because he himself was a Mönba. How justified he was to be angry, we were to discover later on.

The way had been cut two or three years before. The leaves had all fallen from the cut branches, but there was little moss growing on the cuts. Whoever had cut it, we blessed them as we made quickly forward until we reached the top of the ridge. Here providentially the clouds cleared a little and for a few minutes we could see a reach of the Tsangpo (but no falls) and about five miles off a very sharp peak. The lower

hills were still covered in cloud which soon clamped down on us again.

It had taken us seven and a half hours to reach this point, which was 2400 feet above our camp on the glacier. We did the return journey in a third of the time.

That night Morshead and I decided to leave our tent, beds and bedding, etc., at the glacier camp and with very light kit to move up to the point on the ridge which I had reached that day, taking with us eight coolies, seven for carrying and one to cut the road.

Once again it rained very hard during the night and almost continuously. It was still pouring with rain when we got up but later in the day it cleared. We made good going up the track I had cut the day before and having reached the top of the ridge we continued on the track down the other side. It seemed to be well worn, but most of the branches were broken with only an occasional cut. We deduced that it was a track made by takin but used and improved by human beings. We lost it several times and finally altogether. So we cut our way down through the jungle until we reached a large stream, which we bridged, and then camped on the right bank. It seemed as if by a stroke of luck we had come upon the track again.

*July 25th Camp. 8400 ft.*

The weather had cleared and we could see that we were about 700 to 800 feet above the Tsangpo, down which we got a good view. In the distance were mountains with patches of snow on them which looked as though they were on the opposite bank of the river below the confluence with the Po Tsangpo at Gompo Ne.

We started at 6.45 next morning, following the track uphill. It petered out very soon but we kept on, as far as possible in the same direction, cutting our way through the jungle. By eleven in the morning we came to some water, but among fearful precipices and with no possible place for a camp. So we pushed on, looking for somewhere to camp where we could

have fresh water. It seemed a ridiculous situation after the days and nights of rain we had suffered and the vast river in the gorge below. We were anxious to find a camp early and then prospect the route for the next day's march while there was still light.

At last one of the coolies returned to say he had found water. "How much?" I asked.

"As much as would fill a hat," he said.

The man who had been with him protested. "It isn't as much as would fill a dog's bladder," he said. "And a small dog at that."

But it had to be enough for us, a little trickle over a rock from which we could replenish our bottles.

*July 26th. Camp. 11,050 ft.*

It was not an ideal camping ground. The ground was not level and overhung a precipice, but the coolies built it up with sticks and stones to form a fairly level sleeping platform.

This was about three o'clock. We had had no meat for two days and felt a ravening desire for it. So when the coolies spotted a solitary takin, Morshead went after it eagerly, intending to get a fixing at the same time.

I pushed up the hill, trying to find a road for the next day. We were camped on the left bank of a precipitous ravine, which we wanted to cross. I climbed a good way, having to cut through thick sharp rhododendrons which stabbed at my already raw and festering knees. I climbed almost perpendicular rocks, but still there was no way of getting across. So I went on up until I reached the top of the spur.

From here I had a magnificent view, from which Morshead would be able to profit next day, if it were fine. Beyond where the Po Tsangpo must run rose a snow range to the north-east. There was a very distant high double snow peak, the left half being pointed, while the right was a blunt square block. I could see a spur which must go down to the Po Tsangpo confluence. To the south the whole majesty of Namcha Barwa was revealed and over to the north-west was the

peak of Gyala Peri. The sky was clear, almost without a cloud; and I cursed myself for having, because I was merely reconnoitring the next day's route, left behind camera, compass, aneroid, etc.

I went back feeling very hungry, but Morshead had not found the takin and though there were tracks of bear, serow and goral near the camp, they were old.

Before going to bed, we had a talk about commissariat. That morning we had sent back three coolies from what we called Camp 8400. One of them was to bring from Pemaköchung thirty pounds of flour which we had left there. The other two plus the coolie we had left in charge of the glacier camp were to remain at Pemaköchung, drawing food from the monastery. The coolie with the load of flour would reach Camp 8400 by July 30th (having started on the morning of July 26th).

We had with us enough flour to carry us through to the 30th with our depleted party, but unless by a miracle we found a village, we should have to return to Camp 8400 by that time.

It was still fine the next morning and on the hill I had climbed the previous day Morshead got a fixing (at 12,180 feet). While he was doing this, I went on up, cutting through rhododendron jungle, in the attempt to get on to the next spur.

At one point I climbed about 800 feet from the fixing and saw into the next ravine, which was very large and deep and contained a glacier. I climbed down until I reached a knob about 1200 feet below from which I could see a part of the river below a prominent sharp point on a spur opposite. It was still flowing in the same way. There was one short quiet stretch followed by a rather steeper fall with a good deal of spray, but not so much as the Rainbow Fall at Pemaköchung.

From the knob it was impossible to get down into the next ravine and I went back to where Morshead was working higher up the spur. It might have been possible for a party better equipped than we were to make a steep and rather dangerous road higher up and cross on to the glacier. One day might take

us on to the glacier, but even that would not be certain and from there we could only go out and back. This would avail us nothing, because the other side of the glacier ravine was very steep and it would take us all day to find a road out of it. Beyond that spur was another large ravine, into which we hadn't seen; and on the far side of that a long flat spur running down to the Po Tsangpo confluence. It was the flat spur which we ought to reach, but we hadn't enough food. Besides that, all our hands, Morshead's and mine as well as the coolies', were blistered and raw. Rhododendron trunks as thick as a man's leg are as hard as any wood on the hands and the edge of a knife. We didn't think we could have cut our way through, even if we had had the food and water, which was an even more serious problem.

Reluctantly we had to admit ourselves beaten. We might perhaps have got through if we had tried making our way nearer the river.

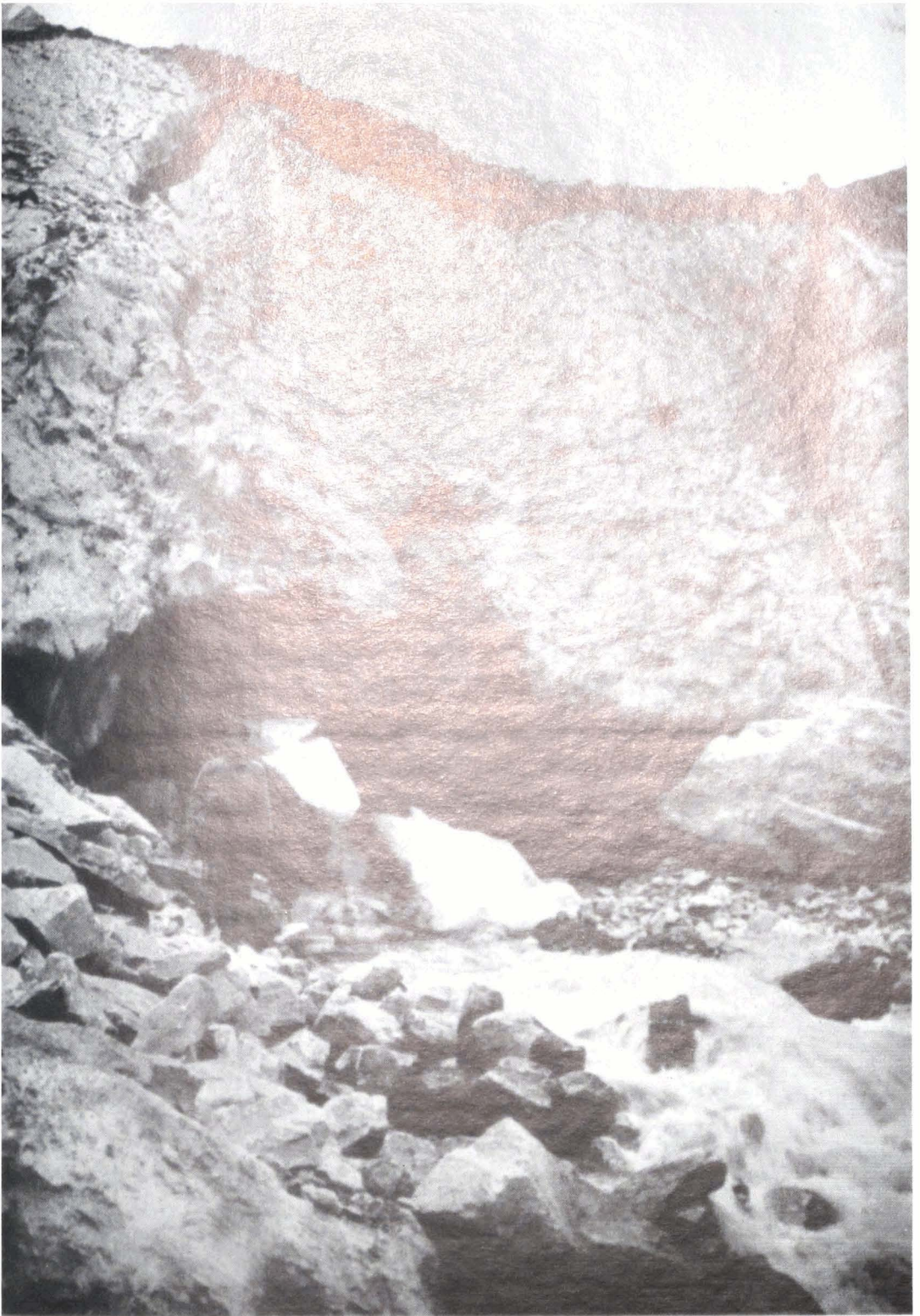
*July 27th. Camp. 11,050 ft.*

As we returned, we felt that we had not been entirely vanquished. The course of the Tsangpo as marked on the map might be in discontinuous lines to show that it was conjectural in certain places, but the amount that we had achieved was worth it.

Reading my diary written that evening, I can see even now the traces of fatigue with which the entry ends.

I don't think any of us can cut any more. We saw traces of blood pheasant, takin and musk deer. (It was owing to a rumour among the people that we were Chinese that the officials of Po me would not let us travel about—they were afraid the people would kill us.) We have been living rather cheaply lately, as we can get nothing down here. I was out twelve hours without water.

We returned to Camp 8400 the next morning, to find Anay, the Camp 8400 coolie, waiting for us with the rations and even more importantly with the most exciting information. Dawa, the coolie who had brought the rations from Pemaköchung to Sanglung Glacier, had met about thirty people who had come up the valley all the way from Lagung with a lama who was

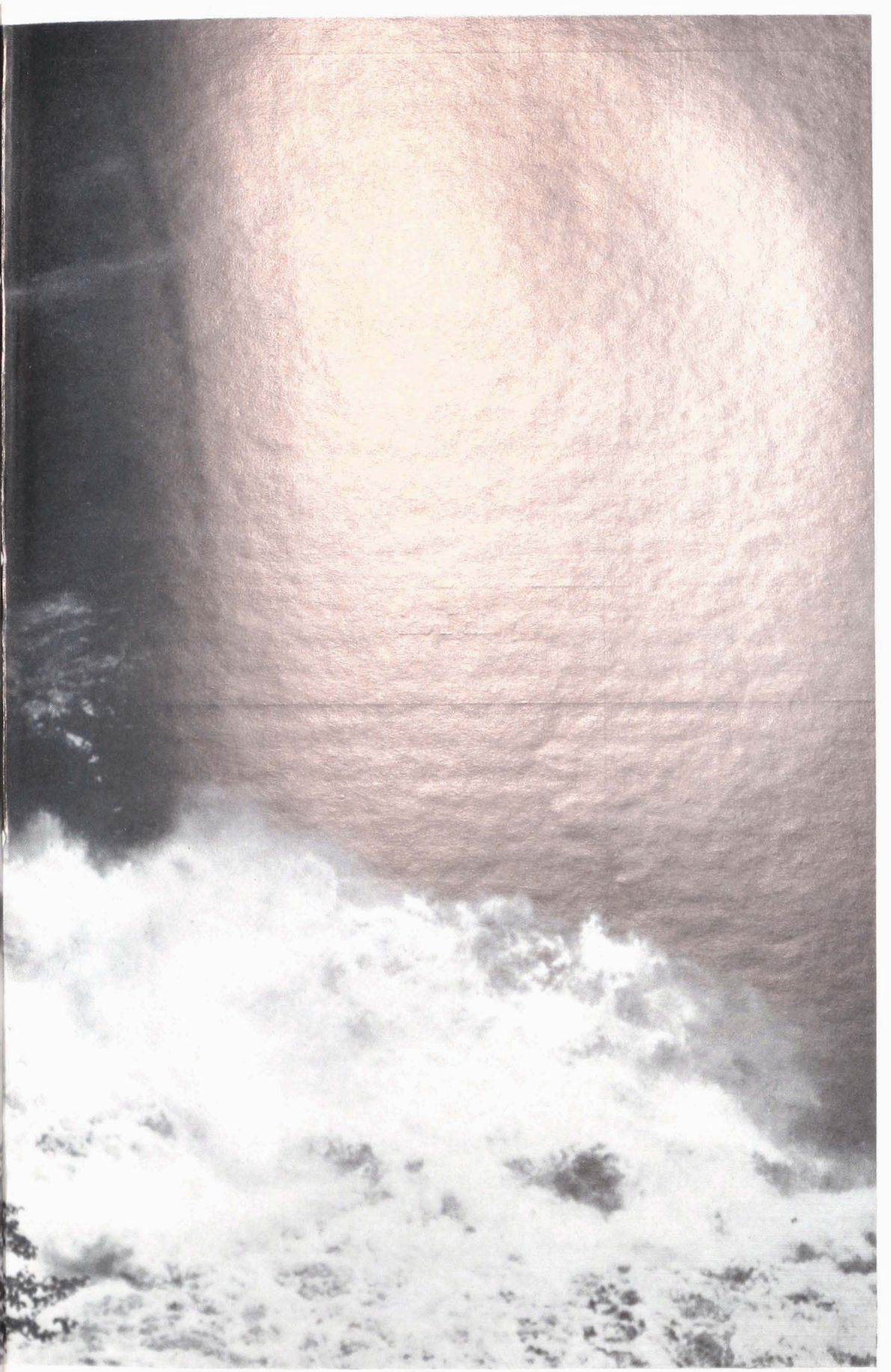


The glacier on Namcha Barwa





The Rainbow Fall



*(Composite photograph)*





ata Peri



The Rainbow Fall



going to Lhasa. They had journeyed along the side of the river by an old path they knew of, which they had opened up with their swords. Some of them had started back the day before.

It was typical of Tibet. After all these protestations that the journey down to Lagung was impossible, thirty people arrive with a lama, having done it. Here was the chance of doing near the river what we had failed to achieve on the upper route.

We had between us about twenty-eight pounds of flour. If we both went down the river travelling light, we could go one and a half days down. If one of us went, accompanied by one coolie, he could do three days down and three days back. He could perhaps do even more, if he succeeded in getting through to the first village on the Pemakö side. Morshead and I discussed the implications of this, of arriving without passport, *ula* or money. It might be dangerous and the chances of a return by the same route were threatened by the summer rise in the river. It might mean a long and arduous detour, perhaps even going back over the Sü La and through Showa, the way we had originally come. Or alternatively the one who went down might continue on the right bank past the lowest point we had reached at Rinchenpung and then strike north across the Doshong La to hit the Tsangpo again at Pe.

I offered to toss Morshead to decide who should go, but in the end we agreed that it would be more useful if I went while he returned mapping slowly back to Gyala. My Tibetan was much better than his at this time, though by the end of the journey he had gained a mastery of the language. In any case he could go ahead with his survey, supposing that I did have to retrace our route through Showa.

I set off immediately with Anay, about fifteen pounds of flour and some blankets, dropping straight down from the camp to the Tsangpo, hoping to find the path the returning party had taken.

It was even easier than I had hoped and we marched down river in their tracks. After two miles we came to a cave by a stream of water where they had slept the night before. Further on again I saw right above me some men taking honey from a

bees' nest in a rock. They had made a long rope ladder and let one man down, who filled a pail with honey, which they hauled up.

The road was difficult here and hard to find as it went over boulders and there was no jungle cut to show the way. I shouted out to the men to ask them the way and they pointed the way to go and I soon came on the party, sitting by the road. There were eighteen of them, Mönbas from Payü village.

They did not seem at all pleased to see me and I thought of Dorje's remark, "All Mönbas are rogues and thieves."

I talked to them for some time. They told me that they expected to be in Payü in three days. It would not help me to go along with them, as their road left the river where it swung north to Gompo Ne. It was important to reach Gompo Ne if I could, as I could see more of the river and get an important boiling point in the river-bed there. I asked what the possibility was of reaching it and they said that was out of the question, because the rope bridge over the river had been destroyed by the floods.

I found it very hard to estimate the truth of what they were telling me. It was quite plain that they were out to discourage me from travelling with them; but it was possible that they felt they could do that merely by telling me the truth. I regretted the fall in my estate. If we had met them at Pemaköchung with the *ula* which we brought from Gyala, they would have been sufficiently overawed to take us right through to Payü. As it was, the sight of me with only one coolie and him not a local man, convinced them that I was a person of no consequence.

At last they agreed to help Anay with his load as it was heavy, but they made no attempt to move. They said they intended to camp in a big ravine; so I went ahead to the ravine, the same one which I had seen the day before from the hilltop.

*July 28th. Churong Chu. Height undetermined*

The Mönbas did not arrive that night and I was up early the

next morning. I knew that they wanted to give me the slip, but I was confident that they had not passed me in the night and provided that I kept ahead, I felt that I was safe as they would have to pass me before they could make off with my things. My knees were hot and swollen from the poisoned cuts of the rhododendrons and I was pretty sure I was running a fever. But this was an opportunity that would never recur; and the supplies of food which must last us either through to the first village in Pemakö or back to Pemaköchung were dwindling. Between us, Anay and I had the remains of the fifteen pounds of flour, a small Kodak-film tin of tea and a little salt in an envelope. I cursed the fact that when I was lightening our loads, I had at the very last moment removed my small pistol. In the uninhabited country in which we were, birds and animals have no fear of man. If I had kept my pistol, I could have shot the tragopan pheasant sitting in a tree above my head and no doubt others besides. After all, in a similar uninhabited valley near Mipi, I had even been able to kill a blood pheasant with a stick. It was tantalising to be worried about an empty belly with the means of filling it so close at hand.

I found the bridge over the glacier stream but on the other side I lost the road. While we were looking for the road, I heard something fall. I was pretty heavily laden and I could see nothing that I had missed, so I thought that it was probably a stone that I had dislodged. Though it did not sound like a stone, I kept thinking in the way one does.

Then I suddenly realised that my camera was missing and the thought of losing the only means of taking a photographic record that we possessed between us—Morshead having discarded his camera at Mipi owing to lack of film—so distressed me that I insisted that we should go back to where I had heard the noise of something falling. It was a steep slope covered in tall nettles, just the sort of place in which one does lose a camera. But though we searched high and low for two hours, we could not find it.

I say, *we* searched. But Anay's efforts were perfunctory. I

don't think he regarded the little black box which took pictures as of any importance; and his temperament was like a child's, who having lost something doesn't really believe that it can be found again. But perhaps Anay's attitude was no more irrational than my own. Light-headed with fever, I regarded the regaining of the camera as a matter of supreme importance. The only thing which made me abandon the search was that in the course of it I rediscovered the road. That reminded me that it was even more important to press on down it as fast as I could, and I called to Anay.

There was no answer. Anay had vanished as completely as the camera.

The fact that he had gone off without a word meant that he intended to abandon me. He would not, I was sure, return to Pemaköchung. That would be too dangerous. His alternative was to join up with his fellow Mönbas. If I found him with them he could pretend that he had gone to fetch them; and if they eluded me, as they would certainly try to do, he could remain with them until all danger of being arraigned for leaving me had passed.

I went back along the trail and there was Anay with the Mönbas. He came up to me and said that while I was looking for the camera he had gone back to see what was delaying the others.

I knew that was a lie and he knew that I knew it. But we silently agreed to accept it as the truth.

*July 29th. Churong Chu. Height undetermined*

That night I made a point of camping with the Mönbas, a move which they heartily resented. I found it difficult to understand why, since I offered to pay them for their portage. My theory that they did not regard me as a person of any standing did not really explain their surliness and their evident desire to avoid my company. I was ill. The poison from my knees had entered the blood stream and I was conscious of a pain and swelling in the groins, which during the night had got no better.

Not that I had time to think of buboes the next morning. I woke at 4.55 and found the Mönbas stealthily making off without having had anything to eat. So I snatched a couple of chupattis and hurried after them. I expected that they might hurry ahead trying to outdistance me. But they didn't. We went together through rough jungle for four miles and then the path dropped steeply on to stones in the river-bed. I wanted to take a hypsometer reading, but I was afraid that if I did I should be left behind. Providentially the Mönbas wanted to rest and watched me boiling my thermometer as though it was a great joke, my breakfast! The boiling point was  $198.53^{\circ}$ , air  $62^{\circ}$ , which gave me an altitude of 8090.

We then had a steep climb of about 800 feet and dropped down to the river-bed again, where on a broad stretch of sand we all halted and had breakfast. There was a certain relaxation of tension, the sort which inevitably accompanies the intake of food. I watched carefully to see whether there was any conspiratorial conversation. There did not seem to be any. But I knew that I must be on my guard.

We climbed very steeply in thick jungle, forded one stream and went up the steep bed of another beside a waterfall, where we rested again. I asked the people about the road. They said they came from two different villages, Luku and Payü, both on the right bank of the Tsangpo. The people from Luku continued up the waterfall valley in order to reach their village; those from Payü had to go a little further along the Tsangpo before turning off. They had promised that they would take my things to Payü, where they would sell me food for the return journey and send two men with me. But now as they were sitting by the waterfall, they said that none of them could return to Pemaköchung and they begged me to go back there at once.

"I can't understand what has made you change your minds," I said.

They answered that if it rained, the streams between here and Pemaköchung would rise and carry away the bridges they had just made.

I said that they would have good money from me, but they replied that two men could not build bridges and that no amount of money could help a man who was stuck on the road and dying.

This did not convince me, because these were things which they must have known when they made the promise to take me to Payü and help me to get back. "I am coming on," I said.

They urged me not to, saying that the road ahead was very hard. We had seen from the sandy place where we had breakfasted an awful cliff further down the river. This, they said, they had to cross and it was difficult enough for them to help each other over with ropes, but Anay and I could never get back alone.

"I will come and see for myself," I answered, and refused to listen to any of their further protests.

We went on with very bad feeling on both sides and when we reached the cliff, which was quite as bad as they had said it was, they flung down the things of mine which they were carrying and hurried on.

I waited and made Anay hide some of the flour in a cache against our return. He just took enough to last us through to Payü. If we reached there without help, I reckoned that the people could not refuse us food and shelter.

I managed somehow to get across a very steep smooth face of rock. But then I came to a very bad bit down which I could not get without a rope. I called to Anay who was waiting with his load at the beginning of the cliff. Even with his help I could not manage the corner, partly because my boot was worn out.

Anay had bare feet and I told him to go to the Mönbas who had got down and were resting the other side, and ask them which way the river flowed, as I was not certain. Anay managed to get down in his bare feet and went over and talked to them.

When he came back, he said that their reason for rushing on and leaving us was because they had been frightened that I

would fall and kill myself and they would be held responsible. I had been thinking it over while I was waiting for Anay and I had come to the conclusion that the reason why they did not help me was because they were reluctant for some reason to go back to Pemaköchung.

At any rate we learnt from them that the Tsangpo at this point made a big bend, passing a deserted village called Shatri Dzong and Gompo Ne at the Po Tsangpo junction; and since it was clear that we could not get down the cliff with our load and Anay was very frightened, I decided to go back and try the road the Luku party had taken.

We returned to the waterfall but we could not find the Luku road. Perhaps this was as well. I would not have been able to resist the desire to follow it, though by then I was in no physical condition to do so. We had just enough food for our journey to Pemaköchung. If we had gone on to Luku, there was no guarantee that they would give us anything to eat. Compared to them, the people from Payü were courteous. And besides, until we actually reached Luku, we would have seen nothing more of the Tsangpo, having by-passed the bend in the river in which any falls were more likely to occur.

On my way back, I took a boiling point at river level a mile above the furthest point we had reached. It gave me 7480. We pushed on past the sandy place where we had breakfasted, the beach where I had boiled in the morning, and camped in the jungle above.

*July 30th. Camp. Height undetermined*

That night as I lay under my blanket trying to get shelter from the rain, I went over and over the events of the day, trying to think how we could have done more than we did and cursing the Mönbas for an unfriendliness so uncharacteristic of Tibetans.

We started at daylight without having breakfast and pushed on three miles to the place where we had camped, waiting for the Mönbas to catch us up. On the way I had another look for my camera but again without success.

On my way down the river, I had suggested to the leader of the Mönbas that we should blaze the trail so that it would be easy to find on our return. He had said that it was quite unnecessary as they would be sending men back with us who knew the road. Now I cursed myself for not having insisted. The Mönbas themselves had frequently gone astray and the signs of their sword cuts was no indication that we would not find ourselves suddenly coming to a precipice. Indeed we seemed to have an instinct for repeating their mistakes, exhausting all the wrong ways before we found the right one.

I was still puzzled by the behaviour of the Mönbas. If when they gave us their promise of taking us to Payü and sending two men to conduct us back, they had no intention of doing so, it could only mean that their telling me not to blaze the trail against our return was a deliberate part of their plan. They had wanted us to find it difficult to get back to Pemaköchung. And yet if that were so, why hadn't they tried to shake me off earlier on instead of waiting till we reached the waterfall? This seemed to me very puzzling, until we came to a vertical cliff, with a ledge along it, from which there was no apparent descent.

We could not see how the Monbäs could have used this path, but though we searched for another, we could find none. So with some trouble Anay let me down to the ledge with a rope, after which he let down the kit and then followed himself. The same process had to be repeated to get from the ledge to the next foothold. There we found the notched log which the Monbäs must have used. It had been deliberately broken to prevent its being used again.

It occurred to me that when the Monbäs tried to give me the slip, they knew of these hazards which they had made and in fact really did want me to get back safely to Pemaköchung. Their earnestness increased as we went on for that reason. I remembered what Dorje had said, "If it had been Mönbas or Lopas, they would have stolen my cattle." The Mönbas had obviously stolen something from Pemaköchung, and in order to avoid pursuit they had destroyed the notched log and left



the trail unblazed. My happening along had merely been an embarrassing coincidence. Quite innocently I had been offering them money to return to the scene of their crime, while they had been begging me to go back because they were afraid that the obstacles they had laid against their pursuers would prevent our reaching the monastery with the slender supplies of food we possessed.

I wondered how much of all this Anay had been told or had guessed. But I did not ask him. I did not trust him sufficiently to be able to reveal the slightest distrust.

*July 31st. Camp. Height undetermined*

On this day the boot, which had given me trouble on the rock the day before, appeared about to disintegrate. So I strapped the sole to the upper with a hypsometer strap. Our diet of flour was enlivened by some nice raspberries and some boring blackberries.

We started next morning at 5 without having anything to eat. After a mile and a half we reached the stream flowing from the Sanglung Glacier. If there had been a bridge over it, it had been destroyed. But we found a huge boulder balanced on others, which bridged the unfordable part of the stream. Our method of crossing was slow but effective. I pushed Anay to the top of it. Then he pulled me up with a rope, and when I was in position I let him down again so that he could fasten the load. Then I pulled the load up and let it down the other side. Up came Anay from his side, down I went the other side to help Anay down. And so we were across. It was very slow and surprisingly cold because of the glacier stream.

We climbed up the jungle until we reached the hut called Seti, where Dorje's wife was now living, grazing the cattle. She did not run away screaming this time. As Anay made some chupattis, she poured out the whole terrible story of how the Mönbas, the rogues and thieves, had stolen a lot of pots and pans from her house and made off, breaking the bridges and ladders behind them for fear of being followed. They had also, I found later, stolen a pair of boots from one of my coolies.

But I didn't care about that or even the state of my own boots. For here we were back in a place where somebody actually lived and here was Dorje's wife with a wonderful jug of fresh milk. And then down below was Pemaköchung, which just over a week before had seemed to me an abomination of desolation, but now represented the last outpost of civilisation.

PART FOUR

Mapping the Frontier



## CHAPTER NINE

PEMAKÖCHUNG did not improve on second acquaintance. Perhaps the advent of an unaccustomed tourist season so soon after a smallpox epidemic was altogether too much for them. My kit and the tent were awaiting me, but there were no coolies to carry them. I was given a note from Morshead in which he said that he couldn't leave any coolies behind, because the monks refused to feed them. So there I was, stranded at the monastery with three loads and only Anay, who was feeling like myself, none the better for his trip down the gorges.

Of course I could have put myself in the monks' shoes. They were entirely unprepared for this invasion by ourselves from Gyala and the incarnate lama from Lagung. Their supplies of food and manpower were short. I suspected that the lama, despite the fact that he was the incarnation from Tsenchuk, was in the same plight as I was. I noticed faces familiar from Lagung. But I was assured that the incarnate lama had already left and was now well on his way to Gyala.

I could have put myself in their shoes, but I was uncomfortable enough in my own boots patched up with the hypsometer strap. I lost my temper and told them that if they wanted us to leave the monastery, they would have to provide me with food for the journey and two men for portage. When they refused, I threatened them with unspecified punishments from Gyala, Tsela Dzong and even Lhasa. At last they agreed to give me Dorje and one of the monks.

We set off at 11.15 a.m., and we had not gone very far when we met the *ula* coming up from Gyala to bring the lama down. To serve His Incarnation right for having hidden away in the monastery, I commandeered one of these men and sent the monk back to Pemaköchung.

*August 1st. Sengedzong. 8500 ft.*

I had enjoyed my conversation with this monk, who told me that when he was a boy he had heard that an Assamese had gone to Pemaköchung and then down the Tsangpo valley to Pemakö. This clearly was a garbled version of Kintup's attempt.

*August 2nd. Kumang. 10,350 ft.*

The next day I was able to send back Dorje, because we were met by one of our own coolies, whom Morshead had sent back to help me with my kit. I had eaten no meat for days and I was very pleased to run across a man and two women who had been up a hill above the camp to bring in meat from a takin which they had killed a couple of days before. They were very furtive because the Dalai Lama had issued orders that no animals were to be killed. They spun me a story about going up the hill to collect sulphur to pay their taxes and coming on the animal dying. It was an obvious lie, but I was willing to accept it, as long as they were willing to accept my money in return for a steak.

*August 3rd. Gyala Gompa. 9300 ft.*

The day after this I arrived in Gyala to find Morshead busy trying to get our stuff across to the left bank of the Tsangpo. There was a ferry which was used at Gyala during the winter and on our way down we had heard it was still in use because the water was so low this summer. We rejoiced at this because the rope bridge was a very difficult one, with a slight drop from the right bank and a long, steep pull up to the left.

Unfortunately, while we had been down in the gorges, a woman had elected to make the passage in the ferry-boat on her own. It consisted of two long dugout canoes lashed together and she lacked the force to drive them. She and the ferry were last seen entering the rapids *en route* for the Rainbow Fall. Since when, despite the low level of the river, the rope bridge had been used exclusively.

Rope bridges vary in Tibet. The best type is the two-rope

system, which consists of one rope for crossing in one direction and a second for crossing in the other. In each case the maximum advantage is taken of the force of gravity. The point of departure is fixed just high enough above the point of landing for the traveller to slide most of the way—at an alarmingly increasing speed—and then be gently braked by the slight rise at the far end. One's natural impetus carries one right across.

The rope is made of twisted bamboo bark two to three inches in diameter. Over this is laid a piece of wood a few inches long, hollowed out into a semicircle, called by the Tibetans with some justice a "saddle". This saddle slides over the rope with the load slung beneath it on leather thongs. The saddle for a man is about six inches long; for a pony it is longer. As a method of transport it is exhilarating, but there is a knack to it. One has a natural tendency to raise one's head and body upright. If this is not discouraged, one may bring one's head or shoulder against the rope and slice off an ear or inflict a deep wound with a splinter, flashing down the rope.

The more arduous bridge is the one-rope one, which having to serve both directions sags in the centre of the river. Having slid down to the centre by force of gravity, one has to pull oneself up hand over hand to the opposite bank. This was the sort of bridge they had at Gyala and it was good going for three men to cross in an hour. Baggage could be hauled across a little faster with the use of a rope. But even that was tiresome.

Before starting the next day I went down to see the place where the god Shingche Chö Gye lived. There was a fall of water about thirty feet, behind which the god, carved, lived in a cave. There was too much water to see him. The best time was in the middle of the fourth month, when the snow had melted from the lowlands but before the great thaw had started in the mountains. Above was stretched a chain with several bells hanging on it, and below, where we stood, was a small natural platform on which pilgrims burnt butter lamps. Some of the people, the *Kanyer*, or house steward, told me,





burned butter lamps and made donations for days and never saw the elusive god. Others were granted the epiphany at once and to them he appeared in various colours, red, blue, black, white or whatever other colour they might fancy.

Luxury is a comparative term. The going from Gyala was hard, but it was luxurious to be met at the two houses which comprised Trube village with bowls of curds for ourselves and the coolies. It was luxury to ride again on a pony and be greeted with gifts of *chang* and fresh eggs, and be met as an old friend by the landlord of the house in Shoka with the kit and the puppy Roarer we had left with him.

The country through which we passed after Gyala was also a welcome change from the thick, steep, almost tropical forests, with their dense rainfall and the violent unevenness. Here the valley broadened out and the hills rose more gently, with scrub for the first 1000 feet and above that forest. Compared with the previous entries, the suspicions at Chimdro and Showa, the disaster of the flooding of the Yigrong, the continual references to the fighting with the Chinese and the rigours of the gorges, my diary for these days between Gyala and Tsela Dzong was positively pastoral.

*August 6th. Dzeng. 9500 ft.*

At Dzeng we got a good camping ground on turf under willow trees. I shot a partridge (*Perdix hodgsoniae*) and saw several more, one with a brood of chicks of which Roarer ate one.

From Dzeng we turned off our path to visit Temo Gompa, a great pile of white buildings on a small hill, housing 250 monks of the yellow hat order. Most of the buildings were pent-roofed with wooden shingles, but two or three were roofed with gleaming gold.

Half a mile from the monastery we were met by monks and also by the agent of the Temo Depa, who was away. By them I was treated to *chang* before entering the monastery. At the gate the head lama was waiting for me. We had met him before at Pe and he treated me first to tea in the publicity of the courtyard and then in the privacy of his room plied me

with arrack. Feeling slightly bewildered by this mixture of drinks, I left the head lama and went up to see the Lhakang or temple where there were large idols. In the library I asked whether they had any books in Sanskrit, but was shown one with a Sanskrit title. By the time I returned to the head lama, Morshead had arrived, having finished his surveying.

We were in need of supplies. I tried without success to buy a saddle, but succeeded in buying hemp string soles for three pairs of boots, with which to repair my worn-out footwear. The lama wanted to give us a lot of eggs, flour and tsampa, but knowing that we should be next day in Tsela Dzong, I said we could not carry them. From the Temo Depa's agent, however, we accepted as we left a sheep, tsampa, eggs and *chang*. What a contrast it was with the monastery at Pemakö-chung the week before!

When we said good-bye to them, they told us that the Pobas were always stealing their horses and cattle. The Chinese had commandeered three hundred to four hundred ponies and taken them up to Lunang, where the Pobas had captured the lot. I promised that I would talk to the Dzongpön of Tsela about it. But I remembered how in Po me the Pobas had complained that the people of Kongbo had collaborated with the Chinese and so escaped lightly.

Now that we were on the main road in relatively thickly populated country the *ula* stages were infuriatingly short. From the monastery to Tsela Dzong, a distance of ten miles, there were seven stages.

Miri	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	mile
Sekora	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	„
Makuto	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	„
Gonjo	.	.	.	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{2}$	„
Yutro Dzung	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	„
Luting	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	miles
Chugor	.	.	.	.	.	.	$1\frac{1}{2}$	„

We grew very irritated at these changes and when we arrived at a place where we found the ponies were not ready, we refused to wait and pushed on with the ones we had for a further stage. At Sekora we were caught up by the agent of

the Temo Depa. He had with him an "English" saddle made in China from cheap leather. A Chinese officer, he said, had taken his saddle and left him this in exchange. It wasn't very good, but it seemed less uncomfortable than a Tibetan saddle, so I bought it from him for 35 rupees.

*August 7th-8th. Tsela Dzong. 9700 ft.*

Tsela Dzong is an important place, situated at the confluence of the Gyamda river and the Tsangpo. It is on the right bank of the Gyamda, which spreads out into a wide delta at the confluence. The maze of waterways at this point is very complicated and most people wishing to cross go, as we did, up the Gyamda to Po Chu where the crossing is simpler.

On the alluvial plain cattle, sheep, pigs and ponies were grazing on the fine turf, which was divided into pastures by rows of willow trees, with here and there a field under the plough. Kongbo seemed a great place for breeding ponies and mules.

At Chugor we caught up with the coolies, who had found a man selling cigarettes (a commodity forbidden by the Dalai Lama), and bought a large number of them. The people had brought out cushions for us which they placed by the roadside and we sat on them and drank *chang*. They also gave us presents of eggs, which we accepted in the spirit in which they were given, though all of them were explosively bad.

We crossed one branch of the river by a wooden bridge. It was eighty-five yards long and made of huge wooden piles, four together joined by a platform. There were four or five of these platforms, which supported the log road bearers.

Later we had to use coracles. They were far better made than the dugout ferry-boats we had seen up till then. They were about seven feet by four, made of yak hide stretched on a bent willow frame. Seven were needed to carry us and our loads across. It took us about twenty minutes to cross, going diagonally across the river with the current. Immediately opposite where we embarked was the fine gold roof of the temple of Po Chu up a branch of the Gyamda Chu.

As we crossed, Morshead looked enviously up the Gyamda

river. He said, "One day you and I ought to come back and survey the Gyamda." "We've still got quite a lot on our plate with the Tsangpo," I said. But I agreed with him and I have a letter written three years later, in the middle of the war which was to rock our civilisation so very soon, laying plans for a Gyamda survey, which perhaps we would have made if he hadn't been murdered in Burma in 1923.

At the landing-stage we were met by our friend the Tsela Dzongpön, who had had a house prepared ready for us, not far from the ramshackle building which was the Dzong. He invited us to lunch the next day and we ate rice, fungi, vegetables and vermicelli with chopsticks. He had obviously been worrying since our conversation at Pe.

He was anxious to explain to us the frontiers of Kongbo, clearly being frightened that in taking over the Mishmis and Abors, we might grab a lot of Kongbo into the bargain, even though the main Himalayan range intervened.

I said that I did not see how any difficulty could arise since the top of the Himalayan range south of the Tsangpo formed a natural frontier. But it was not as easy as that, according to the Dzongpön, since south of the Nayü La there were some Lopas who paid a small tax to the Tibetan government and south of the Nepa La were the Mönbas, who were called Pachakshiribas\* and they were under a big Lhasa family, by the name of Lhalu. There seemed, in fact, two objections to the acceptance of the natural geographic frontier, the ethnic spill-over (which for example led to the settlement of Tibetans in Mipi) and the sovereign spill-over, which led to the collection of taxes from non-Tibetans by the Tibetan government.

I told the Dzongpön that this information would be of interest to the Indian Government and I would tell them about it when I got back, though clearly it would be conveyed by the Tibetan representative at the Darjeeling conference.

\* Pachakshiribas. At the time of the immigration of the Mönbas and Bhutanese to Pemakö in the early years of the 10th century, some of the immigrants halted in the upper valley of the Siyom and formed a colony there, rather similar to, but more prosperous and permanent than that of the Tibetans at Mipi. Pachakshiri remained unexplored until 1936, when Mr. F. Ludlow and Dr. K. Lumsden went in to make a study of the avifauna and flora.

When we gave him the message from Temo Monastery about the depredations of the Pobas, he said that the people of Po me were always stealing from the people of Kongbo and that they would certainly have killed us and stolen all our things if they had not been afraid of the consequences.

He clarified for me the confusing relation of the Pobas to the Tibetan government. The Nyerpa of Showa had always stressed the independence of Po me. This independence was apparently purchased by the Pobas by the payment of an annual tax of one thousand Ke of butter (12 Ke = 1 load). This was collected by the Dzongpön of Tsela.

I asked him about the administration of Kongbo and he said that it was divided into four districts. His own was the largest, stretching down the Tsangpo as far as Pemaköchung (with a watching brief on Po me) and up the Tsangpo about six days' journey as far as Kong Chung Rakar. The other districts were all in the Gyamda watershed, Chomo one day up, Shoga four days up and Gyamda seven days up.

We are accustomed to British people collecting curios from the east. It was rather strange to see the reverse, when the Dzongpön after luncheon showed us his English curios. There was the Christmas number of the *Sketch* for 1911 and an assortment of Sheffield knives and scissors, the *pièce de résistance* being one with the mark of Rogers, which he called "Rachi". In this the Dzongpön was not alone. Throughout Tibet "Rachi" was regarded as the master cutler.\*

The Dzongpön told us that another name for the Temo Gompa was Temo Chamkar, or the White Temo, to distinguish it from Temo Chamna on the opposite bank, the Black. The names come from the colour not of the buildings but of the surrounding country. The contrast between the north and south banks of the Tsangpo was quite extraordinary, the north dry and scrubby, the south dark, damp and forest clad. We noticed ourselves that it appeared to rain

\* The Rogers Knife was so coveted because it could sharpen the tough bamboo pens which the Tibetans used. The Japanese were copying the trade mark and their product was called "Japanese Rachi". It was quite useless.

much harder on the south bank than on the north, almost as though an invisible weather line had been drawn down the centre of the river. Perhaps a slight contributory factor was that trees help to make their own climate, but of course the main reason for the difference was that the north bank, exposed to the sun, dried off far quicker than the shady south bank.

We took amiable leave of one another the next morning, the Dzongpön to visit his counterpart at Chomo up the Gyamda river, we to continue up the left bank of the Tsangpo. We favoured the left, so that Morshead could see peaks which Trenchard had fixed during the Abor Survey and which would be hidden if we were under the hills on the right bank.

We felt pleased with our meeting at Tsela. We had reassured the Dzongpön and while we were in Kongbo we had nothing to fear from authority, and there seemed no reason why we should run into any difficulty when we entered Takpo. The fact that we had been accepted in Showa and Tsela would be our recommendation in Tsetang.

If it had not been for the surveying, I would have chosen to march along the other bank. I wanted to find out all that I could about the regions which might be in dispute on the fixing of the frontier; what people lived where and whose authority they recognised. Seven miles out from Tsela we saw on the opposite side of the river the ruins of the village of Lamdo which had been burnt by the Chinese and the mouth of the Paka valley which led up into the Abor country. If I had been the other side, I might have talked to Abor traders and verified what I was forced to take on hearsay, namely that they were independent people, not under the authority of Po me.

I was told that the Abors came over the pass three or four times a year, travelling in parties of between eighty and a hundred. They were not permitted to sleep in Tibetan villages, but camped on the hillside, doing their business, exchanging rice in return for salt, and returning again immediately.

*August 9th. Dowoka. 9600 ft.*

The latitude which Morshead had taken at Tsela the day before had upset his calculations, so we made a short march the first day to allow him to revise his map.

With an afternoon's holiday, I made enquiries about getting zoological specimens. The prospects were wide. Near the village itself, they told me, there were lots of partridges, and Harman's pheasants. Up a side valley a mile down river were bears, monkeys, musk deer and serow. Up the top were snow cock and blood pheasants. While we were waiting, some people shouted from the house that some pheasants had gone down the valley towards the river.

So off I set with three guides and a hunting dog, going down the valley. We soon found the pheasants, but the hunting dog ignored them. The three men however started to make loud dog noises, barking and snuffling.

"What are you doing that for?" I asked.

One of the men stopped barking and said: "It makes the birds fly on to the trees." Then he started barking again.

The birds took no notice, but I saw one, a Harman's pheasant, which had been sitting on a branch watching the whole operation with some astonishment. After a time it got bored and flew away. I shot at it as it went. It fell like a stone.

The guides, though they were familiar with rifles, had never seen a shotgun. They were very curious and asked me how the cartridges worked.

As we walked over to the bird, I explained that there were only two ways of killing a bird instantly, with a shot through the head or a shot through the heart. I expected to find blood on the pheasant and as I picked it up I lifted the wing, sure enough there was a drop of blood. "You see," I said, "this time I chose 'the heart shot'."

Perhaps it wasn't quite fair, but I felt that there should be special latitude in dealing with three men who pretended they were dogs.

*August 10th. Lutö. 9550 ft.*

The next day we passed opposite the valley leading up to the Nayü pass, beyond which lived the Lopas who, the Dzongpön of Tsela had said, paid taxes to Tibet. I could get no information about them on our side of the river, and there was no means of crossing.

*August 11th. Kangsar. 9850 ft.*

But the day after when we were changing transport at a village called Shoteng, I was told that at Gyama, a village on the river-bank a mile off our road, there was a raft on which people crossed to Miling.

Off I went to Gyama, where they confirmed that there was a raft on which people crossed to Miling. But they only crossed in winter. Since the river was so low this summer, I suggested, mightn't they cross in summer? They agreed that they might, but as the raft was in Miling, they couldn't. They told me however that the Lopas had not yet arrived that year. They knew little more, as they said that the people on the north bank were not allowed to go over and trade with the Lopas on the south bank.

*August 12th. Tü. 9950 ft.*

I made another attempt the next day, when we found that there was a ferry at Sengpo. But there was no point, because to get the information I wanted I needed to go back down the right bank; and the bridge which I would have had to cross over the Lilung river had been destroyed the year before to stop the Chinese, who were returning from Po me, burning and killing as they went.

The Lilung river itself came down from the second of the two passes to which the Tsela Dzongpön had referred, the Nepa La beyond which the Pachakshiri Mönbas lived, whom he said were subject to the Lhalu family.

The passport which had been given us by the Dzongpön was most impressive. News had gone ahead to Sengbo that we were coming and tents were pitched and the local official and



his clerk were awaiting us with a large meal of tsampa, honey and a stew of meat and vegetables. A mile and a quarter further on and in Tranda there were more tents and this time milk.

We didn't fare so well in Tü, however. We arrived there after a short march of seven miles and said that we wanted to cross by the ferry to the south side. But a messenger from Tsela who had passed through rallying the soldiery to go to Tsela to meet a General of the Tibetan army, had taken the ferry-boat and left it on the other side. There was a groggy old dugout on the left bank, but they refused to use that, because they said it would turn turtle. Morshead and I didn't press the point, because they were obviously right. "In that case," we said, "give us the *ula* to go up the left bank."

There was no *ula*, they answered, and anyway the messenger would be coming back on the ferry very soon.

I waited by the river for some time, while Morshead did some work; but when he had finished and no messenger had come, we went up to the village and despatched a man for the Depa, who was living in a monastery some way up the hill.

The Depa was an old man and he sent his son as a deputy. But the son did nothing and we got more and more angry until the old man himself appeared. I was sharp with him and produced the Dzungpön's passport. He immediately started to apologise to us, breaking off every now and again to abuse his people and then returning to his apologies.

By this time it was too late to go on, so we decided to stay the night and we became quite friendly with the old man. He had the usual war story, how the Chinese who escaped from Po me—a bare seventy out of five hundred—came through Tü. Most of the people fled. But the Chinese, having burnt the Dzong, discovered sixteen persons, old men, women and children, hidden in a cave and put them to the bayonet. "I'm not surprised," I said, "if they treated the Chinese as badly as you've treated us."

In Tü we saw the first evidence of Indian trade, cloth, knives, candles, matches, cigarettes and enamelled ironware.

There was no point in staying on the left bank any longer as we had now passed all the peaks which Trenchard had fixed. On the right bank I could acquire far more information useful for fixing the frontier. So next morning, the messenger having returned the while, we crossed by the ferry. (The capacity of the two lashed dugouts was five men, four horses and some kit per crossing.) I had hoped to collect some specimens while the rest of the party got across, but arriving on the left bank I found that the people of Gyapang who had to provide the next *ula* had not been warned, so I rode ahead.

This was poorer country. The road ran over sand and through scrub, narrow and rocky in places. After Gyapang, I reached Chukor only to find that our *ula* requirements, five pack animals and four mounts, were beyond their capacity; so I rode on to Gacha and sent my pony back to be used by Morshead.

*August 13th. Gacha. 10,200 ft.*

I was greeted by the Depa of Gacha, whom we had already met at Pe. He gave me a verbal picture of the country round. The Dzong of Orong which I had passed just before reaching Gacha was the property of the Shatra family. Gacha Dzong, on the other hand, belonged to the great Lhalu family, in whose Lhasa house the Younghusband Mission had lived in 1904. The Depa was their representative and responsible for collecting their taxes. The estate consisted of a hundred villages in the Tsangpo watershed.

The Pachakshiri Mönbas, living on the south side of the Nepa pass, had to pay 2 trangkas\* a man to Lhalu, but nothing in taxes to the Tibetan government. Altogether there were about a thousand tax-paying Mönbas.

Both Lopas and Mönbas came over the pass to trade, bringing musk, rice, chillies and animal skins and taking back salt, wool, woollen clothes and swords. The Mönbas understood money and were prepared to buy and sell. The Lopas would not touch it and stuck to barter.

\* Trangka = 5-6 annas or pence.

The Gacha Depa possessed a tin which had contained Huntley & Palmer's biscuits (on sale in Lhasa, he said, at 5 trangkas a tin); also a parrot which said "Om Mani Padme Hum", and "Drink some tea" and "Give a walnut to the parrot", but nothing else. It was a limited parrot but rather pathetic as it had no feathers, only down. The Depa had absentmindedly left a light beneath the bird and burnt its feathers off.

The next morning, just as we were starting, a letter came for us from the Kalon Lama, Commander-in-Chief of the Tibetan army. It was written from Pembar Gompa in Kham and had been sent to Showa. There it had been put in a fresh envelope, sealed and sent to Tsela, where it was sealed up in another cover and despatched to us. The total effect was very impressive. It was to ask us who we were and what we were doing; and to make sure that we couldn't say that we were unable to read it, an English translation was attached. We replied that we were private travellers on our way back to India via Tsöna, and I sealed the letter with a sovereign. The Depa, seeing the sovereigns, of which I had five in my belt, begged me to sell him two to melt down for earrings. I had kept them against an emergency, but I reflected that this was an emergency, since a report would go from the Depa to the Kalon Lama on what sort of people we were. So I agreed.

When we were leaving Gacha, Morshead said to me: "It's odd to think of, isn't it? But it's true."

"What's true?" I asked.

"I've been thinking that we were going up the Tsangpo making a map," he said. "But really we *are* going back to India via Tsöna, in a way."

"Yes," I agreed, "but rather a long way."

On the way to Tro me I met a Lopa from Pachakshiri and I fell into conversation with him, hoping to check the information which the Gacha Depa had given me. He wore a cane helmet, something like those of the Mishmis and Abors, and a coat made from serow skin with cuffs of cloth about six

inches wide upon his wrists. He carried a bow and quiver and also a sword. He spoke Tibetan quite well and was anxious to talk. He said that he was a Tibetan subject and paid taxes. In Pachakshiri there were Mönbas and Lopas and they both paid taxes; but to the south of his country there was a tribe of Lopas speaking a different language from his and paying no taxes.

I tried to sound him about the country beyond; but it was like sounding a pool with a soft muddy bottom. Beyond the tribe that paid no taxes there was a valley called Lingbu; and beyond that another called Tongpu, and beyond that a third called Bo le, which was not far from Assam.

He knew of Assam all right. It was twenty marches from his village, which I distrusted because twenty is too round a figure. But, he said, a few Assamese traders came to his village, people with black faces who sold cooking pots, enamelled iron-ware and concertinas. That was authentic. And I believed him when he said that it was two and a half days from Lilung village to his own, but in summer when days are long a man travelling fast without a load could do it in one march.

Near Gacha I saw them harvesting barley. They had a kind of iron fork fixed to the ground in a wooden frame on which a man struck a sheaf of barley. The prongs of the fork were too close together to let the ears through. They were pulled off and fell into a trough.

I noticed another refinement of this region. Tassels were tied in the ears of the cattle to help them flick the flies away from their eyes.

*August 14th. Tro me. 10,050 ft.*

We continued up the right bank for a couple of days, Morshead mapping, I collecting any information which might be useful. In one place, Tro me, they had to bring our ponies across a small river. Their boats were made of skins, and if they had stood up, the ponies would have put their hooves through the bottom; so they tied the ponies' feet together and threw them into the boat.

In another place I met a man and woman walking along the road. The man had a sword at his belt and a gun slung over his arm, and the woman was meekly leading a mule. "My wife ran away," he said. "I had to travel many days to catch her. But she's back."

## CHAPTER TEN

ON August 16th we crossed Kong Chung Rakar, the small stream which formed the boundary between Kongbo and Takpo. Immediately we came to a gorge, up which we marched for six and a half miles. It was very desolate without a single house and with very little vegetation. The only trees were cypresses and they were sparse. But when we reached the village of Shu, where the Kyimdong river joined the Tsangpo, there were fine walnut trees and apricots.

*August 16th. Shu. 10,400 ft.*

At Shu we halted because Morshead wanted to take the latitude and an azimuth to set the compass. He wasn't fully successful, because in the afternoon the sky clouded over and then it came on to rain. I had gone up the ravine to look for specimens and by the time I returned I was drenched through. I was told that in summer there was no game but in winter there were serow, bharal, snow cock, eared pheasants and another they called "Kuling", which sounded from their description like some kind of jungle fowl.\*

They were keen that I should shoot bears for them. The bears came down every night and ruined their crops. I saw many of their tracks and in a tree beside a field the bears had made two "nests" or lairs, by bringing together the leafy branches to form platforms about three feet by two, so dense that I could not see through them. But the bears themselves were not to be seen, though I sat up in a tree for some time, hoping they would come.

The villagers were poorer than further down the river. Their

\* Specimens obtained by Ludlow in later years proved that kuling is *Tetraophasis Szechenyii*.

houses were inferior and none of them was whitewashed. When we retired to bed, they were still at work, threshing barley with flails as they sang, and parching the grain in the fire. This parching they did by putting the grain in a pan with sand and stirring it above the fire until it was done. Then they separated it by pouring the sand through a sieve.

As we lay there, listening to their singing, a man came from Kyimdong Dzong to say that transport was being arranged for the morning but it would be late in arriving.

At Shu we were faced with a dilemma. Hitherto, we had been able to combine the mapping of the Tsangpo river with that of the southern range, which formed the geographic frontier. But where the Kyimdong river joined the Tsangpo at Shu, the southern range receded and the natural frontier was to be found to the south-west, while the river proceeded more or less due west.

If we were to concentrate on mapping the frontier, we ought to proceed by Kyimdong Dzong to Trasi—which incidentally was the more direct route to India via Tsöna. But it meant abandoning the Tsangpo survey, which was dear to our hearts,\* as we had done so much already. We decided to continue along the river, at any rate for the time being, on the principle that if the Kalon Lama insisted that we should leave Tibet, the longer distance we had to go to reach India, the better it would be. Then if we continued uninterrupted, we could map the mountains to the south-west through Takpo into Mönyul and so out to Bhutan, the way we had planned.

The next morning we asked about the lead mines which Kintup mentioned at Kyimdong. The people told us that they were nearly exhausted, but they were still being worked, the lead being extracted by heating the ore with charcoal.

*August 17th. Nge. 10,600 ft.*

Our journey that day lay once more through poor country. We had passed from Kongbo, the centre of whose richness was

\* Especially to mine, as in 1904 when I was with the Ryder and Rawling Expedition to Western Tibet, we had followed it from Shigatse four hundred miles to its source.

Tsela Dzong, and we were making through the impoverished outskirts of Takpo, still distant from Tsetang. That evening, arriving at Nge, eleven miles nearer to Tsetang, we began to notice signs of improvement, a grove of willows where we camped, a vine tree (but no grapes, alas, until October), a well-built *trokang* or summer house. The apricots were riper. There were yaks in the fields, the first we had seen in the Tsangpo valley; and for the first time I felt that I was in the same country as I had known at Gyantse. In one field there was a small crop of hemp, from which they said they made fuses for guns and string of the type which bound the tobacco they bought from India.

At Tro, a village which we passed *en route*, I found in the river-bed rocks coated with a shiny black metallic deposit. Sometimes it was on one bank and sometimes on the other. I took a sample of it for analysis on our return.\*

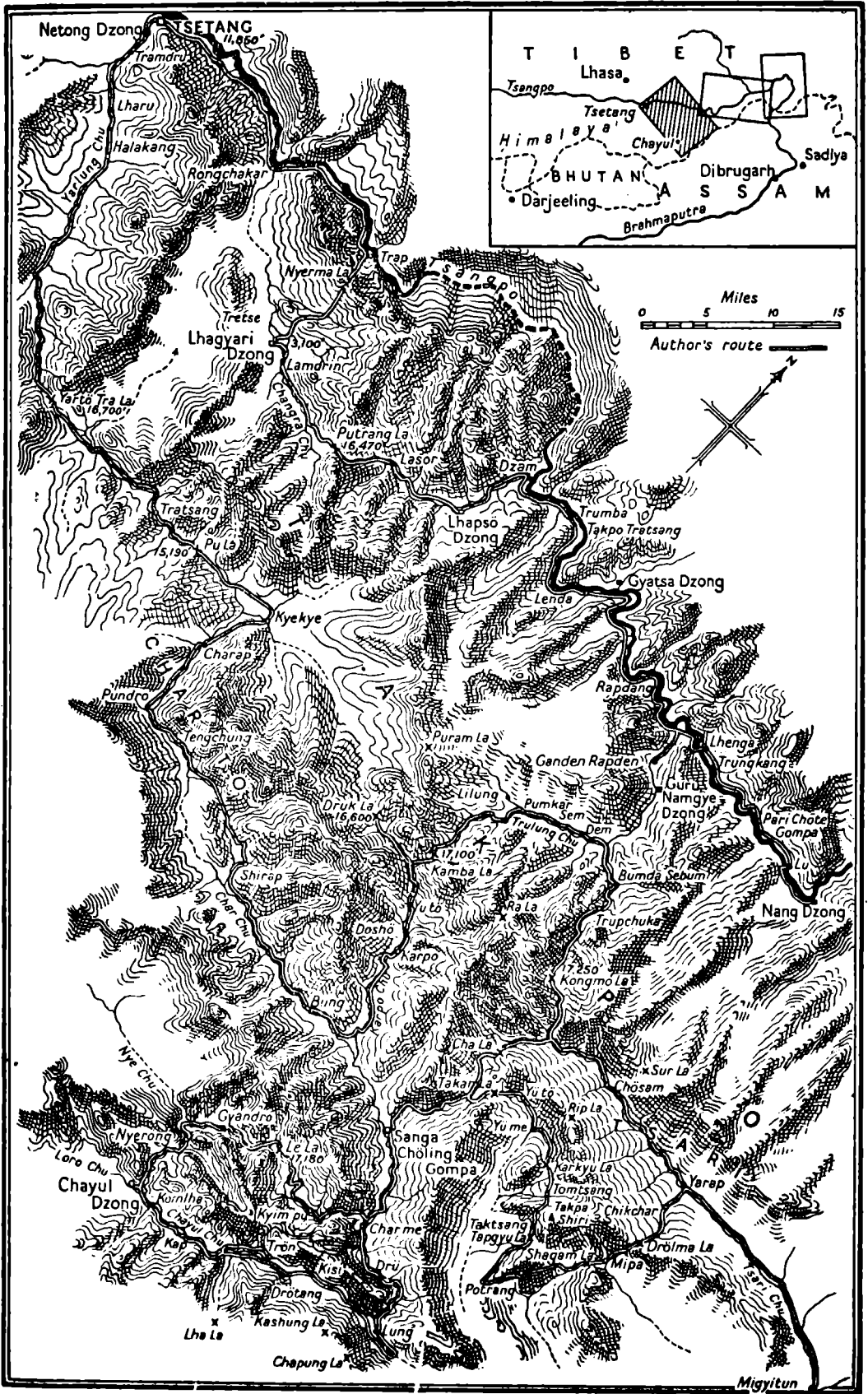
At Nge the Tsangpo turned abruptly north through a precipitous gorge and then bent round in a horseshoe. It was quite impossible to follow the course of the river in summer. There were rapids, we were told, and boats could not pass down. So we took the road across the mountains which joined the south-western prong of the horseshoe at Nang Dzong. We climbed over 4000 feet in five miles to the top of the Kongbo Nga La, through country very different from that of the Tsangpo valley. The forest was thick, mostly larch and birch, but with some rhododendrons and an undergrowth of rose thickets. It rained the whole time we were crossing, and from the state of the country it seemed a very rainy spot.

Outside Nang Dzong I was met by some villagers who took me to a rather dirty house, which I did not like at all. I was assured that we were not to stop there, but to go on further. I imagine that new arrangements were hurriedly made for our accommodation, as I had to stay there for some time, while the Dzongpön staved me off first with tea and then with *chang*.

At last the new arrangements were completed and I went three miles up the right bank, and then arduously crossed to

\* It proved to be a mixture of the oxides of manganese and iron.





the left bank of the Tsangpo in a skin boat to a large house which was called Lu.

*August 18th-19th. Lu. 10,700 ft.*

At Lu we stayed for two nights, because Morshead wanted to make further observations and carry out the periodic task of inking in the work done on his plane-table. While he was doing this, I climbed the mountain in search of bharal. Two thousand feet up I came to a house called Komba, from which while I was resting I spotted a herd of them. I immediately climbed in pursuit. It was very hot and there was no water and after a time I began to feel sick because of the height, which was around 15,000 feet. I climbed level with the bharal but I could not get near them. To stalk them properly I would have had to climb another 500 feet very steeply. I felt that it was not worth it and decided to take a chance by walking across an open patch. Immediately they saw me and made off.

The man I had taken up with me from the village said, "Bharal do not mind the smell of man; but when they smell gunpowder, they run."

"Perhaps," I said, "they hear gunpowder too."

Resuming our march on August 20th, we overtook a monk returning from Pari Chöte Gompa to the parent monastery of Sera Gompa in Lhasa. He was in charge of the peasants of the village which belonged to Pari Chöte and he promised us that he would find us a good place in which to pass the night. We rode together until we were approaching Trung Kang, the place where the Dalai Lama of that time had been born. Before we had even come in sight of it, I said, "We might stop at Trung Kang."

"There is no suitable house," he said.

"We have a tent," I answered. "We camp in gardens."

"There's no garden either," he said. "We must go on to Lhenga."

At that moment I caught sight of the gilt roof of a fine temple and coming closer I saw a charming garden.

When I said that I was going in to see it, the monk became very alarmed. "No one is allowed to go there," he said.

"I'm going," I answered.

"I shall be beheaded," he shouted, seeing my persistence, and he rode away into the village as fast as he could.

I thought I had seen the last of him, but when I had finished looking round the garden, there was the monk with a bunch of the villagers he had aroused, waiting at the gate of the temple.

I rode up to them and without asking their leave I went through the gate into the courtyard. They followed and I asked them where the chapel was.

There was no chapel, they said, and no monks either.

I dismounted and went in, with them still following me. When I reached the first floor, I turned round and said: "Why are you telling me lies and trying to stop me? I have never been stopped seeing any place in Tibet. When I meet the Dalai Lama, I will tell him how you have treated me."

There were many rooms, but they said that they were all sealed and no one could enter. But they admitted that there was a chapel higher up.

I went higher up and found a chapel, small but very fine, with one monk in charge. The idols were so covered in scarves that it was impossible to see them. Next to the temple was a big central room which was the Dalai Lama's. He had stopped there once, the only time that he had ever revisited his birth-place, on his way from Lhasa to Tsari in the Mouse Year (1900). But the place was kept private for him as his quarters were kept in the Potala and Norbu Ling at Lhasa.

I did not know what truth there was in what they said about there being nothing to see and the rooms sealed. But I did not wish to press them; so I went down again into the courtyard, where there was a monkey tied up. He was like the common Indian monkey, but the fur was longer, especially around the face. He came from Kongbo, the villagers told me, eager enough to answer questions now that I was leaving the place.

And the monk, as we were riding on to Lhenga, lost his fear of being beheaded and told me that the Tibetans had "five or

six" Chinese machine-guns and the same indeterminate number of Chinese mountain guns, manned by Chinese deserters. He used the word "Pak-pa" to describe the machine-guns. "Why do you call them that?" I asked. "Because they go Pak-pa," he said, imitating the noise of them firing.

*August 20th. Lhenga. 10,600 ft.*

That night at Lhenga I asked another man in what year the Dalai Lama had come to Trung Kang, wishing to check the information I had received. His answer showed the difference of our beliefs. "Thirty-eight years ago," he said, meaning the year the Dalai Lama was born. To me it only seemed a freak of chance that the Dalai Lama was reigning in Lhasa, instead of carrying one of my loads, as another man was, born in the same place, in the same year.

The next day we recrossed to the right bank of the Tsangpo in a skin boat, and while the rest were crossing I rode up the valley of the Trulung river to visit the monastery of Ganden Rapden. They were having a service in the temple and most of the monks in the centre were wearing capes and hats like those I had seen the monks wearing at Chimdro. The chief idol was Chamba and all of them were well decorated.

Afterwards I talked with the abbot in his room and he gave me a meal of omelette and tsampa. He told me that they had submitted to the Chinese when they arrived and had been well treated. The people of Guru Nangye Dzong three miles up the valley had been less subservient and had been fined twelve dotses, a sum equivalent to £90.

*August 21st. Rapdang. 10,800 ft.*

The Trulung river was unfordable, and returning from the Gompa I crossed it by a bridge two miles below and went down the left bank to its junction with the Tsangpo, up the right bank of which I rode five miles to Rapdang, where we halted for the night.

On the way I met a man who had been on a pilgrimage to a cave in Pachakshiri where Lopön Rimpoche stopped. I

asked him how big "the big river" was. As usual he could give no estimate in yards or feet. "It's as large," he said, "as large as the Kyichu at Lhasa in the wintertime."

"Is it the Sangachuling river, only further down?" I asked.

"No," he said, "it comes from the peaks near Tsari and it flows through a country they call Boso into Assam."

It was all very vague, but I noted it in my diary that night in the hope that Morshead and I would later find out more for ourselves and the certainty that if we didn't, someone else would later.

At Rapdang we found some welcome additions to our diet, peaches, which though not quite ripe were excellent stewed, apples, pears, radishes and beans.

Kintup mentioned a nunnery close to Rapdang and on the other side of the Tsangpo a monastery called Talha Kambo Gompa, in which monks and nuns lived together. They were still in existence, as we could see with our own eyes, but we did not visit them.

*August 22nd. Lenda. 11,000 ft.*

The next day was fine and hot and we made twelve miles along bad roads to Lenda. The most interesting thing was the sight of Gyatsa Dzong across the river, a group of fine houses set among trees with good-looking fields around.

The people of Lenda, like those of Ganden Rapden, had collaborated with the Chinese, who they said had paid them well for everything they took. The Lenda women wore in the back of their hair a turquoise set in silver and coral as I had seen women do in Shugden Gompa.

Six miles out from Lenda next day, I reached the monastery of Takpo Tratsang,\* a large establishment of five hundred monks. I went in and was taken to a monk who was deputising for the Abbot, who was away. The deputy was rude, ill-mannered and unpleasant, perhaps because being a deputy he was uncertain how to deal with anything as unprecedented as

\* It is customary in this part of Tibet to prefix the province name *Takpo Tratsang*, *Kongbo Nga La*, just as in the U.S.A. the state name is added after the place name, St. Louis, Missouri.

the visit of a foreigner. He did however produce a cup of tea.

I visited the temple, or rather temples. There were two, one above the other. At one end there was a colossal image of Buddha and the ceiling of the lower temple came no higher than the Buddha's chest, but in the upper temple one saw him face to face.

Most of the monks were in the lower temple and I thought it possible that the upper temple was open only to certain classes of monk or at certain festivals. The deputy abbot did not choose to enlighten me.

I noticed a badly drawn picture of people building the monastery and on the altar a butter lamp of gold.

From the monastery I went on about a quarter of a mile to Trumba, where there was a large house, the owner of which had been in Lhasa when the Younghusband Mission was there in 1904. He was as affable as the deputy abbot had been uncongenial and he plied us with *chang*. Later in the day we met Chandzo Masen, the steward who had also been in Lhasa, looking after the supplies for the Younghusband Mission. He had a red silk fringe to his queue, which he said was a sign of his rank. We met him first at the village of Dzam, from which he rode on ahead to make preparations for our arrival at Lhapsö, of which he was the Dzongpön.

*August 23rd. Lhapsö. 11,650 ft.*

When we arrived at Lhapsö, he was there waiting for us at the gate of the Dzong. A ruined wall ran round the Dzong with occasional rooms still intact. On the hill above stood the ruins of an earlier Dzong. We did not discover how much responsibility for this decay lay with the Chinese and how much with Time.

In the evening the Dzongpön brought us presents of dried fruit, cheese and a fresh pomegranate which he said had been bought in Tsöna. He stayed some time talking with us and told us among other things that Tsetang meant the "Play Plain", because it was a place where monkeys used to play.

This gave Morshead and myself a great deal of quiet pleasure, because Doctor L. A. Waddell had announced that Tsetang meant "Hill of Peaks"—whatever Hill of Peaks might mean.

A mile and a half beyond Lhapsö there is another bend in the Tsangpo, larger than the horseshoe bend we had cut across between Nge and Nang Dzong, but more depressed. The Dzongpön of Lhapsö told us that two days up this bend from Dzam there were falls. He had never seen them himself, nor had any of his people, so we did not place any great trust in their estimate of their height, "about three storeys of a house".

Morshead and I talked it over. We were reluctant to leave our survey of the Tsangpo incomplete. But travelling up the right bank under the great hills which at this point ran east and west, we should not have been able to survey the land to the south. In view of the Darjeeling conference, which we knew was either taking place at that moment or likely to take place very soon, it was obviously more important to fill in the map for those areas which would be under discussion in the fixing of frontiers. So we decided to keep south of the east-west range and strike the Tsangpo again at the return of the bend. We could do this by going up the side valley in which Lhapsö lay, crossing over the Putrang La and dropping down into the Changra valley.

As we climbed up the valley, we went backwards, as it appeared, in time. Down in the Tsangpo valley nearly all the crops had been harvested; up here on the flat high terraces they were still green.

All the fields were irrigated and in one place I noticed an irrigation aqueduct which took the water in hollowed-out logs across a stream which ran in a narrow gorge some twenty feet below.

After going seven miles we came to a village called Lasor, where the people were making what looked like polo balls, of wood pulp, which they told us they had to deliver to Lhasa, as a tax in kind. In Lhasa they were pulverised, mixed with musk and sweet-smelling things and made into incense sticks.

The valley had more vegetation than the Tsangpo. There

were willows, rose and other thorns and a few rhododendrons. And there were many turfy places, covered with alpine flowers.

*August 24th. Traso. 15,000 ft.*

We spent the night at a single house 1000 feet below the pass and crossed early the next morning. Our two aneroids made the height 16,300 feet and the boiling point made it 16,470 feet. But we had to guess the air temperature ( $45^{\circ}$ ) because we had broken the thermometer.

On the top of the pass I spent some time catching butterflies (mostly *Parnassus epaphus sikkimensis*), and only left when the sun went in and a storm was coming up. From the pass I could see in the distance some large buildings, Lhagyari Dzong, but they were soon hidden by the hail which accompanied the thunderstorm.

Cultivation began at about 15,000 feet, but this side of the pass there was no irrigation and the fields were just small patches on the mountainside. At Lamdrin we came into an open valley about a mile and a half wide, in the centre of which the river had cut a gorge 200 feet in depth and nearly half a mile in width with precipitous sides. The gorge was cultivated and so were the upper terraces in patches. Either side of the valley were rolling hills.

There were two roads, one in the gorge which crossed the river over and over again; the other, which we took, wound along the side of the hill.

*August 25th. Lhagyari. 13,100 ft.*

From the pass I hadn't realised either how large or how precarious Lhagyari Dzong was. It was built on the very edge of the gorge, a precipice composed not of rock but of earth. Part of the foundations were supported on beams which jutted out over the gorge. At first sight it was difficult to decide which might be the more dangerous, to be inside, in which case the whole edifice might plunge into the gorge, or to be in the gorge, in which case one might be buried beneath the debris.

A closer scrutiny was reassuring. The main foundations



were some way from the cliff. What was supported by beams was merely a low wall and their object seemed to be to prevent the cliff-face from crumbling away. It was definitely safer to be inside the Dzong than out. So I went in.

I have called it a Dzong, but the word palace would be nearer the mark, since it was the residence of a king. It was not however a palace as we visualise it in Europe. I came to it from the other side of the river, across a good bridge and up through an incredibly dirty street with mean houses either side into a large cobbled courtyard, with well-built houses round it, in one of which we were lodged.

Lhagyari was a principality or petty kingdom with one of those loose associations with the Tibetan central government that one finds so perplexing. The King of Lhagyari, who was a hereditary monarch, was at the same time by virtue of his office a lama. Since he must have issue, he also possessed a wife. When we arrived there, the former king had died a natural death the previous year and his younger brother had been killed fighting in the Tibetan army against the Chinese. There were three children, two boys aged thirteen and ten, the elder of whom was king, and a little girl of twelve, a princess, who came in the evening to look at our photographs.

There was also in the palace an official from Lhasa, called a Chandzö, who acted as regent while the king was a minor. When the king reached his majority, we were told that he would assume power, and the Chandzö would remain on as an adviser. *Tout ça change.*

I asked how many subjects the king had, and as usual I was given the picturesque rather than the mathematical answer. "If each of the subjects brought a *Karma-nga* (a small silver Tibetan coin worth about twopence) it would fill a *bo*." (A *bo* is a measure of volume, which when filled with tsampa weighs eleven pounds.)

The next morning I saw some Mönba merchants in the courtyard. I asked them where they came from and when I heard that it was from the same village as one of our coolies called Dawa, I sent for him. But he was nowhere to be found.

I asked these Mönbas how they came to be in Lhagyari, and they said that they came up from Bhutan to Tsetang and then returned via Lhagyari, buying woollen cloth which they sold in Assam.

As we left the palace, I caught sight of Dawa and told him about his fellow villagers. But it turned out that he had spotted them long before I saw them, and had hidden himself because he was afraid he would get into trouble for having left his wife in Darjeeling. Or so he said.

We did not follow the river down from Lhagyari, because it flowed into the Tsangpo higher up than we wished. By making more or less due north over the Kampa La (14,300 feet) and the Nyerma La (15,600 feet), we could reach the main river at Trap, sixteen miles lower down. Most of the traffic went down the main road along the river valley and we found our track rough going. At one village I had a row, because they produced yaks for us to ride and I insisted on taking our ponies for a further stage.

*August 27th. Trap. 12,100 ft.*

When we reached Trap we made enquiries about the falls, which we had been told were "as high as three storeys of a house". But the people of Trap had seen them. "Three storeys!" they said. "They're as high as your tent, perhaps."

*August 28th. Rongchakar. 12,050 ft.*

So next day we turned towards Tsetang again and by the evening reached Rongchakar, the village to which we would have gone direct if we had followed the river down from Lhagyari. The whole of this day's journey was heavy going: poor roads, bad transport, small impoverished villages. But the road from Rongchakar to Tsetang was good all the way. In a dozen different ways we could feel that we were coming to a city. There were more ferries, for one thing. One was for donkeys or horses, a sort of wooden box with a horse's head in the prow, like a figurehead.

About two miles from Tsetang I met a Kashmiri merchant

riding to the city, a Ladaki Mohammedan who told me that in Tsetang there was a colony of about fifty of them, counting women and children, with a headman called Ata Ulla. In Kashmir, the idea of meeting fifty Kashmiris would not greatly have excited me. But here in Tsetang, having travelled nearly 800 miles in three months without any but the most tenuous contacts with the outside world, it was good to link up with a whole group of people whose interests were in British territory and who might be in contact with British sources of information.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

*August 29th-30th. Tsetang. 11,850 ft.*

WE lodged in a small house near a row of three Chötens, and the very afternoon that we reached Tsetang, Ata Ulla and most of his fellow Kashmiris came to see us. That evening we went out for a walk and called at Ata Ulla's house to hear what he knew of the outside world since we had left it.

Ata Ulla greeted me as an old friend. He reminded me that in Lhasa in 1904 I had made friends with a relative of his, named Ahad Shah, a Ladaki merchant in that city.

"Of course I remember," I said. And it was true.

"And Ahad Shah asked you to help me on my road to India and you did so," said Ata Ulla.

"That is right," I said, though I had forgotten it till that moment. "What happened to Ahad Shah?"

"He was killed by a Chinese soldier in 1912. The soldier disputed the price and in the end he paid nothing," said Ata Ulla.

He was a mine of fascinating, if rather wild, information. He received copies of two Indian daily newspapers, *Paisa Akbar* and *Vakil Akbar*, and from Gyantse came digests of items of interest culled from the English papers by the British Trade Agent. The great civilised world had not been idle, we gathered. Turkey had won back all the territory she had lost in the war. Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Austria and Russia were all fighting among themselves. The Russians were also secretly helping the Mongolians to fight the Chinese, and taking advantage of their preoccupations, the Afghans had attacked the Russians and defeated them. It was clear that the world situation was normal. So we asked Ata Ulla about local conditions. What about the Chinese machine and field guns manned by Chinese deserters, for example?

This was completely untrue, said Ata Ulla. The only guns and rifles which the Tibetans captured from the Chinese had been made useless first. Anyway, he added, the mauser rifles used by both sides were inferior. They all jammed after a few shots. When the Tibetans used them, they jammed after the first two or three shots; but the Chinese, being better riflemen, could sometimes fire as many as ten or even a dozen shots before they jammed.

I asked about the Darjeeling conference, and he told me that it was true that the Shatra Shape had left Lhasa for Darjeeling in a great hurry. But when he reached Gyantse, he heard that the Chinese had not even started, so he waited at Gyantse for some time. Then he moved on again, hearing that the Chinese were on their way, but he halted again, at Phari, learning that the rumour was false. Another false rumour took him as far as Chumbi, where he was at present; but there was still no news of any Chinese delegation. Ata Ulla said that the Chinese would demand the restoration of the *status quo*, a Chinese Amban at Lhasa with a garrison of 500 soldiers and small garrisons posted in other places. "The Chinese fear that the British will help the Tibetans and prevent the Chinese getting what they want," said Ata Ulla. "And the Tibetans hope the Chinese are right."

"And what about you Kashmiri traders?" I asked.

Ata Ulla smiled. "When the Chinese were in power in Lhasa," he said, "things went well with us. If a Chinese wanted a thing, he didn't haggle about the price. But today, so many Tibetans have been in India that they know the real value of things. And they won't buy rubbish any more."

The Kashmiri colony in Lhasa, which he said numbered 800, seemed to be coping with the new situation fairly well. The head of the colony in Lhasa had sent a full list of the losses sustained by his people during the fighting to the Resident in Kashmir, who was pressing for compensation.

An intriguing titbit of information Ata Ulla gave us was that two Japanese had travelled openly to Kalimpong, where they had suddenly disappeared and reappeared again in Lhasa

dressed as mule-drivers. They paid frequent visits to the Dalai Lama, but the exact nature of their business no one knew. Tibet, being in the nature of a political vacuum, seemed to be drawing in every sort of foreigner to fill it. The rumours aroused by the Abor Survey Expedition were still reverberating. Ata Ulla himself seemed to believe that 2000 to 3000 British troops were moving up to Tsetang and that Morshead and I were advance scouts.

They were very anxious for me to change rupees for them (the rate for the Indian rupee was four trangkas, as against three trangkas for the Chinese rupee). I sold him the three sovereigns which I had left in my belt for fifteen rupees each (60 trangkas apiece).

The Kashmiris were keeping Ramazan. Their women were not purdah but were dressed and went about like Tibetan women. Ata Ulla could read Urdu, Persian and Tibetan. He said that it had been necessary to learn the Arabic characters in order to read the Koran, and Tibetan in order to do his business.

Next day we went to the bazaar, which was open every morning. It was very like the one I had known at Gyantse, a few people sitting down with rubbishy things in front of them. There were toothbrushes and powder made in Japan and soap made in England. From Germany were aniline dyes, mouth organs and looking-glasses with pictures of King George V and Queen Mary on them. There was tobacco, but no cigarettes because of the Dalai Lama's ordinance; also tea, at 30 trangkas (Rs. 7½) a two and three-quarter pound brick of the first quality and at 20 trangkas for the second quality.

We chatted with Ata Ulla again. He expressed the view that whatever the outcome of the Darjeeling conference, the Chinese would come back in force and take the country. Perhaps that was wish-fulfilment, as the Kashmiris had done so much better under the Chinese.\* He expressed great indignation that two men (not Kashmiris) had been given a monopoly for the purchase of wool, musk and yak-tails.

\* But in the long term Ata Ulla has been proved right.

In the afternoon we visited two monasteries, each of them guarded by awful dogs; and the Mohammedan mosque, which was an ordinary house, one room of which was set aside for prayer.

The next morning (August 31st) we left Tsetang, heading due south up the valley of the Yarlung river, with the intention of working back east in a line parallel to the Tsangpo, south of the range which formed the southern watershed of that river.

Ata Ulla and several other Kashmiris came to see us off. They were careful to impress upon us what influence the Nepalese had in Lhasa. "The Tibetans listen to what the Nepalese agent tells them," said Ata Ulla. "The Tibetan government will pay their claims for war-losses." He did not seem as confident of the influence of the British Resident in Kashmir and expressed the hope that the Indian Government would back up the Kashmiri claims for compensation. As usual we were careful to commit ourselves to nothing, but we said that we would report their request to the proper authorities.

The road went round a spur, and just the other side of the spur we came to Netong, a town as large as Tsetang with a big monastery and a Dzong. A mile and a half further on was the fine monastery of Tramdru, with a golden roof and elephants' heads at each corner. It had been newly whitewashed and it was a splendid sight. Except in Lhasa, I had never seen a Gompa so rich in jewels. Before the image of the Buddha were set well-wrought ornaments of gold and in an out-of-the-way corner was a lovely image of Drölma with a fine crown and a breastplate of rough pearls. There were pictures of scenes from the lives of Buddha and Lopön Rimpoche round the walls, and over one door the name of a former Dalai Lama.

The strangest sight of all was the hall devoted to Lopön Rimpoche, in which we were told there were 100,000 clay images of him, each with the face painted gold. Such a statement is always mathematically provocative. On each side of the room were eight sets of shelves, each with sixteen shelves;

and on each shelf there were about thirty images in a row; which meant there would have to be fourteen or fifteen rows in depth to make up the 100,000. Tempting though it was, I did not stay to count them. There was a greater attraction, a *Cham* or religious dance, which they said was to take place at Lharu, four and a half miles further along our road.

As I approached Lharu, I saw a crowd of people with banners and musical instruments round a small shrine up the hill. This, I was told, was the place to which the god was coming; so I turned up towards it. As I did so, a monk in bright coloured silk came running down, with a sword in one hand and a bow in the other. On his head he wore a hat with eyes on it. Two ordinarily dressed monks ran with him, clinging to his clothes and the quiver he was wearing. He came to a place where there was a chair or throne covered with a tiger skin. He sat down on this and was given a beaker of *chang*. One by one the people ran up to him and put scarves round his neck and he filled his mouth with *chang* and blew it over them. Having watched this rather messy fun for a time, I rode to the place where the dancing was to be, but it had not yet started.

While I was waiting, a message arrived from the Dzungpön's deputy. (The Dzungpön himself, a man whom I had known in Phari when I was Assistant Political Officer in Chumbi, was away with the army.) The deputy requested us to take refreshments with him and, as Morshead had just come up, we went together and drank *chang* and ate cakes with the deputy. Though I did not recognise him, he knew me. He had been a clerk or something to the Dzungpön of Gyantse when I was there.

We were anxious not to miss the dancing, but the deputy assured us that the monk into whom the god was to enter was going round the fields, and as soon as he came back we should go and see the show. He found it hard to believe that we had come from Po me. "It is impossible," he said. "The Pobas would have killed you."

In a little time a man came to say the monk-god was return-



ing and we went to another place where there was a throne covered with tiger skin. There was a similar ritual with the scarves and the *chang*; but in addition he scattered grain from a bag which a monk held for him.

Then he danced about, and taking arrows began to shoot them in a dangerous manner into the crowd and some right into the bazaar. Whether through luck, skill or incompetence, nobody was hurt. But Morshead and I were not sorry when we were asked to go to the courtyard where the dancing was to take place. We were taken into a gallery from which we could look down on it.

We waited a time, but the monk-god did not dance, because the god had not yet entered into him. It was rather boring, until suddenly the god came into the monk and he began to dance. The dance began quietly but it became more violent and he rushed at the crowd, laying about him with his sword, and hit some before they could get away. Then suddenly he fell down—I thought he had tripped, but when the monks took him up, he was stiff.

They carried him into the temple, where he recovered and was placed again on a tiger skin throne and the ritual began again of placing scarves round his neck. But this time he gave them small knotted bits of silk which he tied round their necks as charms and he blew on the knot as he tied it.

While this was happening, there was dancing in the courtyard, first a group of ordinary monks and then some young monks with masks on their faces.

Then the monk-god put on a different robe, perhaps to make himself susceptible to the possession of another god or demon, and the same thing happened over again; the dance, the possession, the attack and the rigor. The method of attack varied. The second time he threw knives into the crowd, and when he threw them in our direction we ducked beneath the parapet of the balcony.

Altogether there were six possessions in various guises. He wore a fine gold and silver plate on his chest the whole time; but other things he changed, wearing at one time a hat with

skulls round it, and later a huge hat, four feet high, covered with down and silk flags. The dances in the interludes were also different. There was one dance by ten people in armour and helmets, bows and swords, five on each side of the courtyard. Then there was a six-legged lion made of goatskin with a mask for a head and three people inside for a body. Then villagers from different places danced one after the other. Sometimes they were in ordinary dress, at others they put on strange clothes or masks on their heads.

We were clearly a long way from the higher forms of Buddhism and these were mixed with Bön rites which had survived from the primitive fertility festivals and devil worship of pre-Buddhist times.

*August 31st. Halakang. 12,400 ft.*

As we rode through Lharu on our way to Halakang, we found the village in high feast. Many people had come in from outside and pitched their tents there. Some women were dancing in the bazaar and the men were shooting with whistling arrows.

These contests with whistling arrows deserve a word of explanation. They are very popular throughout Tibet. A screen of cloth about ten foot high is erected, in front of which a small target made of padded cloth or felt is hung from a piece of rope. The bull's-eye is a bung, made out of the same material as the target and fitting into a hole in the centre. The object is to shoot the bung out of the hole.

The shooting point is about thirty yards from the target. Instead of points on the heads of the arrows, there are egg-shaped wooden bosses about the size of a large hen's egg. Holes in the sides of the boss make the arrow whistle as it flies.

When one goes to a Tibetan party, there is nearly always the background noise of an archery contest, the monotonous repetition, Whistle—flop. Whistle—flop. Whistle—flop.

By the shooting point there is a low table, on which are cups of *chang* and the stake money is placed, little groups of silver coins. The Tibetans seem always to play the game for money.

But though as I have said, the object is to knock the bung out of the target-hole, the gambling seems to follow some more complicated rules. I have often seen an archer pick up a coin when he has missed instead of putting one down. But perhaps in these cases, they were just cheating.

We did not stay a great time in Lharu, but it was long enough for two of our coolies, Anay and one of the Dawas, to get drunk.

We were getting fed up with this. It was the third time in two weeks that Anay had got drunk and the second that Dawa had. We had given them really too easy a time. If it had not been for the long journey from Mipi to Chimdro, we would never have brought so many coolies with us. Once we were in Tibet, we no longer used them as porters. They were our personal servants and carried our equipment, such as the theodolite; but for carrying things like food, the money box or the tent, we used the cheap Tibetan *ula*.

As a punishment for their drunkenness we put the two men back on ordinary portage, the work in fact which they had been hired to do. And if there was a certain amount of badinage at the expense of the two drunkards, perhaps that would teach them their lesson.

*September 3rd. Tratsang. 15,000 ft.*

We climbed from Tratsang three and a half miles up to the Pu La and saw quite a lot of wild life either side of it: a herd of forty-three gazelle, five kyang and two small foxes. I tried to get one of the foxes but I missed. The other side there was a herd of twenty-five bharal, but no heads.

There was a good deal of aconite growing here, as there had been for the last two or three marches. But the people did not muzzle their animals to prevent them from eating it, as was the custom in many places. The dangerous time was earlier in the year, when it was just sprouting and was liable to be eaten with the grass. The mules had been taught to avoid it, by having their muzzles rubbed with fresh, juicy aconite leaves.

Coming down from the pass, we passed an encampment of

gold diggers, who had walled up the mouth of a cave. They were labourers who had been sent up from Lhagyari, whose "king" owned the gold rights in this part. They worked in pairs, and if lucky they could wash between them 80 grains a month, but usually less. If a nugget was ever found, it was replaced because the people believed that the nuggets would breed more dust.

The way they did it was this. They dug a channel beside the stream about a yard and a half wide. With what they removed they made a dam across the exit of the channel. On this dam they placed five pieces of very short turf about  $15 \times 8 \times 1$  inches. These made a weir-top, when the stream was diverted into the channel. Then they dug the mud from the stream-bed up stream and placed it on top of the turf, letting the top get gradually washed away. The mud in this way was removed and the gold dust fell and was caught in the turf.

As they worked, they moved slowly down stream, repeating the process over and over again.

Twice a day, at noon and in the evening, the sods were removed and the dust washed out of them. The dust went through three stages, being washed first in a wooden pan three feet by one with a hollow in the middle. The contents of the hollow were washed finer in a small wooden bowl and finally these were washed more finely still in a tin. By the second stage I could detect grains of gold. But the deposits were obviously not very rich.

A sample I bought, which was the result of half a day's work by two men, contained only three-quarters of a grain of gold, not a profitable amount, unless of course I was swindled.

*September 4th. Kyekye. 14,600 ft.*

We slept at Kyekye, just one house and a temple with a single monk in charge. On the altar there was among other things the cast of a large fossil ammonite, which is perhaps as good an offering or object of adoration as most other things.

It was just like any other night, except that there was a frost, which showed that summer was in retreat. We retired

into our tent, which just held our two beds, and stacked as usual the money box in the verandah which we made out of the outer fly of the tent, piling the usual stuff on top of it.

After getting into bed, for some reason which I did not analyse, I got out again and took the rifle and shotgun which were by the outer fly and laid them on the ground between our two beds.

We both slept soundly, but towards sunrise I was wakened by a noise. It was the voice of a woman, the kitchen servant who was supplied under the *ula* system; and she kept calling, "Anay, la! Anay, la!" She wanted to make tea for the men and there was nothing strange in her calling Anay. But there was something very odd in his not answering.

I sat up in bed, immediately wide awake. The sun had not risen, but it was light enough to see that the things stacked under the outer fly had been tampered with. The money box was missing.

I woke Morshead and shouted out for the coolies to come. The Lepcha cook was the first to arrive and as he reached the tent, he picked up something from the ground. It was a *dao*, one of those cutlasses with which each coolie was provided, for cutting the jungle. The thief or thieves had obviously brought it in case either of us woke up. I thanked God we were both heavy sleepers. Two Poba swords which we had bought had been taken by the thieves.

The muster of our coolies showed that three of them were missing. Anay and the two Dawas; Anay, of whom I had been suspicious when I was alone with him in the gorges below Pemaköchung, the Dawa who had lost his temper when Dorje said all Mönbas were thieves, and the Dawa who had hidden when he saw the Mönba traders from his village at Lhagyari.

Suddenly I remembered that when we had punished Anay and Dawa for getting drunk, Anay had immediately gone over and picked up the money box as his load. This had surprised me, because it was the heaviest load of all and I expected him to pick out the lightest. It had aroused a faint suspicion in me, and later in the day, when I saw Anay lagging behind, I

ordered him to change his load with another coolie. It was not a very strong suspicion. It had occurred to me that Anay might be tired, carrying the heavy box. But the suspicion was clearly strong enough for me instinctively to get up and move the firearms into the tent the night before.

I am not of a speculative temperament and it was not till writing this account so many years later that I troubled to reconstruct the crime. But I have little doubt that the three thieves had long been planning to rob us, perhaps even as early as Pemaköchung. A guilty conscience would explain Dawa's violent outburst against the accusation of all Monbäs as thieves. Our thoughtfulness in relieving them of their heavy burdens had provided the chief obstacle; and when we started to inflict porterage as a punishment for drunkenness, they saw their chance of getting their hands on the money box while we were on the march. It is even conceivable that the reason one of the Dawas was so anxious to avoid recognition at Lhagyari by his fellow villagers had nothing to do with the desertion of a wife as he had said. Probably he had fled from his village to the anonymity of Darjeeling to escape the consequences of an earlier theft. If this argument is correct, it is likely that they had got drunk deliberately, hoping that they would be able to steal the box on the march, and when I insisted on the changing of the loads, they thought that I realised what they were doing. So they changed their plan and decided to commit the theft while we were asleep.

At the time of the theft, however, such thoughts did not concern us. Only two things mattered. To catch the men and to ascertain exactly what we had lost.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

As soon as we discovered the theft, we sent all our coolies out to search for the box. It was large, heavy and conspicuous, and the only chance which the thieves would have of escaping detection would be to break it open and remove what they wanted.

While the coolies were gone, Morshead and I discussed what we should do. The first thing was to raise hue and cry among the villages and report the theft to the responsible authority, the Dzongpön of Guru Namgye. There was no one in Kyekye who could write, so I had to attempt a letter on my own, which we immediately despatched.

We were not completely out of money. In Indian money we possessed seventy rupees and Morshead still had five English sovereigns in his belt. But we could no longer afford to pay for our *ula*. Our position previously had been strong, because though we enjoyed official facilities we paid for them. Now we could not even pay off our own coolies when we reached our journey's end. Ata Ulla was our only chance of securing fresh funds and I wrote to him in Urdu asking if he would send us money to Tsöna against a cheque.

By this time the coolies had returned with the box, which they had found broken open by the bridge below the village. In it were left some odds and ends such as candles, but Morshead's warm clothes were gone, all our soap, tea and the inner box containing the money. The thieves had also taken all our cartridges, presumably to stop our shooting them. This meant an end to collecting bird specimens.

I despatched Tindu, one of the coolies, immediately to Tsetang with my letter for Ata Ulla, instructing him to raise

hue and cry in all the villages through which he passed and report the theft to the Dzungpön of Netung.

We had been intending to continue due east and over the Puram pass to Lilung; but we reckoned that the thieves being Mönbas would make due south towards Tsöna and Tawang, in which latter two of them lived. So we decided to turn south in pursuit and I rode ahead as fast as I could to the first village, Charap. The thieves had very little tsampa and would soon be forced to go to a village to get some. But there was no news of them in Charap.

What had happened to them we could not be certain. They might have lain up between Kyekye and Charap and allowed us to pass; or they might have by-passed Charap during the night, as I now suspect they had. All that we knew was that at Charap we were faced with a choice of roads, which meant also a choice of purposes. To the west there was a road, which if our guess was correct they would have taken, as it was the direct route to Tsöna. If we went along it we should be heading directly away from the country which we wanted to map, and we thought that we stood a better chance of catching our men if we enlisted the help of the Dzungpön of Lhöntse, the quicker road to which ran due south down the Char valley to Pundro.

Furthermore it was consistent with our plan of following all streams which broke through the main range of the Himalayas to ascertain how far down Tibetan administration was effective.

*September 5th. Tengchung. 14,000 ft.*

The road the whole way was very bad and narrow. After Charap we crossed the river to the right bank by a very shaky bridge and the ponies had to ford. When we reached Pundro we were again faced with alternative routes and chose to continue down stream because that was the more direct route to Lhöntse. We had some trouble with transport, as no one apparently ever travelled in this country and the villages were very small. The people of Pundro wanted to take us only for



a short stage of about a mile, but we finally persuaded them to take us through to Tengchung, which was three miles down the river.

Everything depended on outdistancing the thieves who had had a start of some hours. We had covered sixteen miles during the day, which was not bad, and at Pundro I had got a letter written to the Dzongpön of Tsöna warning him about the thieves, so there was a chance of heading them off from Tawang.

During the day we were too worried to notice very much. But we did see some people washing gold in the river and while we were waiting for our *ula* in Pundro we sampled dried pounded nettle leaves, which looked rather like dried mint. One's diet, we decided, would have to be very monotonous for this to be a delicacy.

When we asked about the thieves at Tengchung, the people said, "We didn't even know that *you* were here."

Next morning we pressed on towards Lhöntse, but when we were changing transport opposite Yakshi, preparatory to crossing the river and going south, we heard that the Dzongpön was not at Lhöntse but at Sanga Chöling further down the river.

We altered our plans and made all speed down the river. We could not however go very fast, as the road left the main valley in order to avoid cliffs and climbed 650 feet to a pass called Tsigu and then another 1000 feet to the Gyemo pass (15,000 feet).

*September 6th. Shirap. 14,000 ft.*

We spent the night at Shirap, the junction of two valleys. It was a small place, with barley and peas as the only crops. On the houses were fixed the horns of bharal.

We were told that up to eight years before traders had come annually from Pachakshiri, bringing red dyes and taking back woollen cloth. But the trade had ceased, because it had been a long and unnecessary journey.

The Tibetan government, we were also informed, had imposed a special tax to repair the damage done at Lhasa during

the fighting with the Chinese. It was like a head tax, only it was on ears. Each man had to pay two trangkas a year, one for each ear. Women's ears were apparently less valuable, the tax on a pair of female ears amounting to only one trangka and two-thirds. Ears eight years old or less and seventy years old or more were exempt.

*September 7th. Bung. 12,000 ft.*

Next day we rejoined the Char river and continued down it as far as Bung. It was a day of frustrations; after all these weeks of trying for eared pheasants, I put up a flock of them, but could not afford to shoot because I had so few cartridges left. And when we reached Bung, we learned that the Dzongpön had left Sanga Chöling and returned to Lhöntse.

At Bung, however, there was an obliging agent of the Lhagyari king. He had seen me in 1906 when I had gone with Captain Steen, our medical officer at Gyantse, to inspect vaccination in a neighbouring village. He fed us with biscuits made in Calcutta and sat down and wrote a letter to the Dzongpön at Lhöntse, informing him of the theft.

The area of search for the thieves was extending and as there did not seem much hope of our catching them ourselves, we decided to alter our plans again, striking north to Lilung and then to follow our route to Tsari as originally planned, coming back to Sanga Chöling after a wide detour.

At Sha Shiga, an estate at which we stopped on our journey from Shirap to Bung, there was another man who knew me from Gyantse. He had been one of the servants of the Sechung Shape, when he came to Gyantse to pay indemnity money in 1906. He was very anxious to see our "glass gun".

"You can see for yourself it isn't glass," I said, showing him my shotgun.

"Oh, but it is!" he said, looking down the clean, shining barrels.

*September 8th. Karpo. 12,100 ft.*

The next day we followed down the Char river for nearly five miles, then leaving the Sanga Chöling road, we turned north

across a spur and down into the valley of the Karpo river. We crossed over the river by a bridge and joined the road which runs from Sanga Chöling right through to Lhasa, via Kyekye.

At Karpo we slept in a summer house which had been occupied the night previous by an incarnate lama who was travelling from Sanga Choling to Lhasa. The butter lamp was still burning and the *tormas* made in his honour had not been removed by the monk who looked after the guests. He was a lazy man, in manner abrupt, if not downright rude.

*September 9th. Kambado Drok. 15,700 ft.*

There were a number of different passes from which we could go from the Karpo valley into the Tsangpo drainage. The monk had advised we should go up a ravine from Doshö over the Ra La. We ignored that and passed through Yutö, the highest village in the Karpo valley, thinking that while we were about it we might as well go to the head of the Karpo valley and see what the country looked like between there and Kyekye, and spend the night in a yakherd's encampment about which we had been told just on the west side of the Druk La.

I rode on ahead and from above the pass, which was 16,600 feet up, I could see almost to Kyekye down the open valley; but unfortunately by the time that Morshead came up, there was a heavy hailstorm in which he could not work.

We found the yakherds' encampment, but our *ula* coolies were some way behind and would not have relished spending the night in the open at 16,000 feet—especially as we intended to return on our tracks the next day.

So we went back and met the men climbing up to the Druk La and turned them back to a gorge which led up to Takpo over the Kamba La. By that time the hail had turned to rain. A bad time was had by all, with fifteen coolies under the outer flap of the 40-pound tent for the night.

I had noticed a herd of bharal near the site of our camp, and next morning, going up to the Kamba pass, I kept an eye out for them. We saw two females on the skyline to the right of

the pass and later five males ran across the valley from left to right. I went after them and had a stiff climb over loose stones which made a fearful noise as they rolled down. I could not see the animals myself, but Morshead sat down on the road below and signalled to me where they were. I got within a hundred yards, but then they saw and heard me and went off. They gave me a shot at 150 yards and I got the biggest (24 inches). Immediately after they gave me another shot, but in the hurry I did not take the biggest. The one I got was 19½ inches. I could have taken another shot at the big head, but our cartridges were so few that I did not dare to. We could no longer afford to buy sheep and were badly in need of meat; but two bharal were all we could deal with.

We saw plenty of game this day. On the Kamba pass (17,100 by aneroid) there were snowcock and on the Takpo side a covey of partridges and another herd of about thirty bharal, some with good heads.

On the pass the coolies found caterpillars with the parasitic fungus *Cordiceps sinensis* growing from their heads. I had seen them once before near Batang. The descriptive Tibetan name for the parasite and its host is Yartsa Gumbu, which means "Summergrass Winterinsect".

*September 10th. Pumkar. 13,200 ft.*

We spent the night at Pumkar, which as villages go was nothing to boast about. But compared with the camp of the previous evening, it was "paradise enow".

When we crossed the Kamba La we were back again in the Tsangpo drainage. Pumkar itself was on one of the headwaters of the Trulung river. After following it down for three miles we came to a well-built house called Sem, where the people had erected a tent for us with cushions. They gave us *chang* and offered us a meal of noodles. We felt that we were coming back into a land, if not of plenty, at least of sufficiency and we expected that things would improve as we went down the valley. But when we reached Dem, three miles further on, nothing was prepared. They had been ready

for us three days before, but as we had not arrived they had put the ponies out to grass. We beguiled our wait by eating walnuts from a tree, which appeared quite magnificent after the treeless country through which we had been travelling.

Shortly after Dem we crossed the river and climbed a spur which gave what to me was a not very satisfying view of the country of the Tsangpo valley to the north. We had wanted to see Guru Namgye, the residence of the local Dzongpön, but all we could see were some cultivated fields, which we were assured were those of Guru Namgye. Rather than go down there and return on our tracks, wasting a day in the process, Morshead marked in the place on this evidence and we began to work backwards up another one of the tributaries of the Trulung Chu.

The first place of interest which we came to in this new valley was Bumda Sebum,\* where there was a small temple kept by a layman. There were two large chötens round which the house had been built.

The layman told us that formerly pilgrims on the way to Tsari had been beset by a hundred thousand devils, called apparently by the collective name Simo. But all that had been stopped by a lama called Chibu Yeshe Dorje (otherwise known as Choje Gyaro), who had confined the devils in the two chötens. His was the most important image in the temple.

*September 11th. Trupchuka. 14,950 ft.*

At Bumda Sebum the tributary split into two and we took the southernmost stream and stopped the night at the head village in the valley, a place called Trupchuka, preparatory to a long march next day which should take us into the Tsari drainage.

It was the longest march we had made, seventeen and a half miles. The first six miles were up the valley to the top of the Kongmo La (17,250 feet by two aneroids). Snow fell as we were crossing the pass, and on the right side as we were crossing there was a good deal of permanent snow either side

\* Bum is Tibetan for "100,000".

of the pass. I saw sixteen bharal and some snowcock on the way up, but nothing worth collecting. Two miles from the top, I took shelter from the snow in a yakherds' camp and there I saw a wolf. We were very hungry for meat but I did not want to waste my cartridges for meat alone, and I hoped that on the other side of the pass I should find some game which would be good as a specimen and nice to eat as well.

Five miles from the Kongmo La the valley joined a larger one running east, and to the south was another valley running up to the Cha pass and thence to Sanga Chöling. We took the eastern valley, because we wanted to work down and discover what was the frontier of Tibet at this place.

We soon came to another herd of about twenty bharal, but none of them had good heads. They were very tame and they let me walk within 200 yards. But I did not shoot, as we were now in the holy district of Tsari.

Then the other side of the river I saw a herd of twelve stag. The river-bed was very rough and stony and as I put my pony to ford it, the pony fell into a hole, getting me very wet. The wind was very tricky, as they were on the spur at a junction with a side valley and the wind blew up the main valley and down the side one. It was a good stalk and after about an hour I had come to within 150 yards of the only horned male.

From that distance I could see that the horns were in velvet. I lay watching the stags for some time and being myself watched by some hinds further up the mountain. I could not make up my mind to shoot because the stag was a small head in velvet, but in the end when they got up, I decided that I had better get a specimen and shot him. He measured 46 inches high at the shoulder.

The people were shocked at my shooting the stag, since no one was allowed to take life in this very holy place. I was indeed rather shocked myself, not merely because Tsari was a sacred place, but also because the stag was in velvet. My reason was that I did not know what sort of stag it was and it might be new to science.

It turned out to be *Cervus affinis*, popularly known as the

Sikkim stag, though it has not been found in Sikkim for many years, if indeed it ever was found there. In 1921 I saw four females and a young one in the Chumbi valley, where they had come from Bhutan.

It is satisfying to think that even if they have been exterminated elsewhere, they still survive in the holy sanctuary of Tsari.

*September 12th. Chösam. 14,200 ft.*

We spent the night in Tsari Chösam, a village of six houses with good stone walls and pent roofs of shingles, substantial buildings of a type which we had not seen for some time.

From Chösam a road ran north over the Sur pass to Nang Dzong and another south over the Rip pass to Yü Me and Sanga Chöling (or Sangling, as it is often called). But we continued east down the Tsari river.

The valley broadened out into a wide grassy plain with a marshy bottom, to which ponies and donkeys were sent for grazing from as far away as Sangling monastery to the south, and in the north from Talha Kampo on the left bank of the Tsangpo opposite Ganden Rapden valley. At one place a large part of the hillside had been cleared and fenced in to make a large paddock into which they had driven mares and stallions (horses and donkeys) to breed.

At Yarap,  $13\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Chösam, was a small village which the people used for themselves and their cattle, when the ground was covered with snow. As it was raining, I went into a house to take lunch. Inside there was no one apparently, except a little girl aged six and her younger brother. She was not a bit shy and invited me to come and sit by the fire and talked to me the whole time. She also tried, without great success, to teach her small brother to dance.

*September 13th-14th. Chikchar. 12,700 ft.*

We crossed the river at this point over a bridge built on two stone pillars. We climbed over a spur and came into a flat valley up which was Chikchar, about a mile from the main river.

As we drew near Chikchar, my guide took me round a rock on which was a shrine and showed me a stone. "This is where people dismount," he said.

I signified my interest, but I did not dismount; and I asked him why he went up to a piece of rag tied to a hole in the rock and rubbed it. "To prevent my falling ill," he said.

I did not realise until I reached Chikchar that I had been guilty of a breach of ritual. The people, having made me comfortable in a pleasant house, asked tactfully if Morshead would be angry if they requested him to dismount when he passed the shrine. Perhaps my guide's rubbing the rag was intended to avoid any ill effects from my unintentional sacrilege.

We halted for a day in Chikchar, partly because Morshead wanted to ink up his plane table, but also to give the stag skin a chance of drying.

Chikchar, as far as I could gather from the minor official who called on us, was a pilgrim economy, being the main centre for the circuit of the holy mountain. The great pilgrimage took place every twelve years, in the Monkey Year. 100,000 pilgrims usually made the pilgrimage, many of them coming from Po me. The Pobas sent a hundred soldiers; fifty were sent from Trasum in Kongbo and thirty from the frontier village of Trön on the Chayul river. These were to protect the pilgrims from attack by the Lopa tribe of Daflas, through whose territory the pilgrims had to travel when making the Great Pilgrimage.

The pilgrims went down the Tsari river, past Migyitün—which apparently was recognised as the frontier of Tibet—to where the Tsari river joined the combined waters of the Char, Nye and Chayul. This was five or six days' journey. Then they turned up the combined rivers, towards Sanga Chöling, which they reached about a fortnight later. Some pilgrims went very much slower, the minor official said; and I inferred there was merit in delay. The slower, the better.

I asked how the pilgrims managed on the route, especially when they were going through Lopa country. Apparently all



along the route were places called *Tsukangs* where one man lived and supplied the pilgrims with fuel and hot water, but not with food. Food the pilgrims had to carry with them, but at Migyitün and elsewhere people came to sell food to the pilgrims at extortionate prices.

The Lopas were not allowed to travel up the Tsari valley beyond the frontier village of Migyitün because the Tibetans feared they would damage their shrines. They were induced to give the pilgrims unmolested passage through their own country by the Tibetan government lavishing on them presents of woollen cloth, tsampa and swords.

There was also a Small Pilgrimage\* which was performed annually between the 19th day of the third month and the 15th of the eighth. After that date it was closed, because it was a sin in making the pilgrimage to take any life and the path was infested with small maggots about as long as a short match, which lay so thick upon the ground that it was impossible to step between them.

Women were unable to perform the Small Pilgrimage as the route crossed the Drölma Pass, which was tabu for women. Some of them however would go as far as the pass and then return, acquiring thereby what little merit the tabu allowed them. On the 15th of the eighth month all women were sent away from Chickchar and went to live at Yarap, though I could not discover for what reason.

We visited the temples. The largest was Pagmo Lhakang, down in the valley. It had a golden roof, and the principal image, that of Dorje Pagmo,† was studded with precious stones. A golden butter lamp was set before it. On the hillside was a monastery with twelve monks who wore their hair long and matted behind. Here the central image was that of the Tashi Lama; and in another temple the central image was one of Drukpa Rimpoche, the incarnation of Sangling.

Chikchar was under Guru Namgye Dzong. They paid no

\* I myself did the Small Pilgrimage after our return from Migyitün. See Chapter Thirteen.

† Dorje Pagmo, the Sow Incarnate, was the only female incarnation in Tibet and very holy.

direct taxes, except a little butter, the provision of food and *ula* to officials being their main impost. They made their living by begging, ranging far and wide in the off-season for pilgrims. The headman had travelled as far as Po me soliciting alms.

I asked where the Tsari river flowed after it joined the combined waters of the Char, Nye and Chayul. The official said that it did not flow into Pemakö, but turned south to India; which fitted in with our hypothesis that it formed part of the headwaters of the Subanshiri.

They had heard from the Lopas of some military expedition, which they assumed had been Chinese, since the Lopas described the sepoys working the bolts of their rifles in the same way as the Chinese.

*September 15th. Migyitün. 9630 ft.*

In the twelve miles from Chikchar to Migyitün we passed through thicker jungle, far more like that of the Mishmi hills than of Tibet. Geographically it was clear that we were reaching a natural frontier. There were takin, serow and goral, but no stags, and of the pheasants, tragopan, blood pheasants and what sounded like Sclater's monal.

The religious ban against shooting did not extend as far as this. It was apparently confined to Chikchar and the area of the Small Pilgrimage.

We found ourselves on the edge of the No Man's Land between the Tibetans and the Lopas. The Tibetans (apart from pilgrims) never went down into the Lopa country. The Lopas visited Migyitün only in winter. Coming up, loaded with rice, cane, skins and red dye, they took ten days from the nearest Lopa village. Going down with woollen cloth, salt, iron and swords, they took only six days.

They wore very large earrings and cane hats, and across the front of their foreheads their hair was fastened with long brass pins like chopsticks.

The people of Migyitün paid double taxes: their taxes to the Tibetan government and in addition 144 goats a year to the

Lopas. I asked them why they paid anything to the Lopas, and they said that the Lopas argued that as the Lhasa government paid them a big tax every twelfth year at the time of the pilgrimage, it was only right that the people of Migyitün should pay them a small tax annually.

They were growing wheat and barley, but no maize or millet. To our delight we were able to obtain some potatoes, the first we had seen since we started, except for a few no bigger than marbles that we had found, self-sown, outside a cave near Pemaköchung.

I was lucky enough to meet a couple of traders from Pachakshiri. They were carrying bows and arrows; and though they wore Tibetan clothes, they spoke a language of their own, as well as Tibetan. This language was a dialect of Mönba, the people of Pachakshiri having come originally from Tawang.

They told me that to reach Migyitün they had had to cross two passes, the Lo and the Nyug. The water from between these two passes flowed south into the Lopa country through a valley which was uninhabited as far as they knew.

We found the Tibetans of Migyitün a rough lot. They did not wear boots and they smoked in pipes a tobacco which they got from the Lopas and which smelt very like the Mishmi weed. They had prepared tents for us, saying that their own houses were vermin ridden, a statement we did not question.

Morshead went further down the river to see what prospect there was of exploring the No Man's Land. But four miles down he came on the ruins of a foot-bridge over to the right bank and could get no further. It was one of the Mishmi type, five long strands of cane bound at intervals with hoops. The Tibetans had tried to build another, but they lacked the skill of the Lopas. So there was nothing for it but to return the way we had come. We had done what we came to do. We had found and mapped the limit of Tibetan authority—the frontier in fact, down this valley.

*September 16th. Chikchar. 12,700 ft.*

At Chikchar we found a letter waiting for us from Ata Ulla

saying that he was bringing money to us at Tsöna, where he would arrive on September 13th, which was three days previous to our receiving his letter. This was reassuring as we knew that however poor we might be on the intervening journey, there would be money waiting for us towards its end.

We decided to split up, Morshead going as fast as he could to Sanga Chöling and surveying the Char river down to the Tibetan frontier, while I did the Small Pilgrimage as a penance for killing the stag, trying if possible not to step on a maggot.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE mountain round which the Short Pilgrimage (called Kingkor) ran was an 18,000-foot peak called Takpa Shiri. Its choice as a holy place seemed to me an excellent example of human economy. If it had remained profane, life would have been on a far lower level. Sanctification was the greatest asset it possessed.

Though I made many enquiries, I could find no reason why it should be regarded as holy, except the legend which Kintup reported that the goddess Drölma used to pasture cattle at Kandrotang on the banks of a mountain lake.

Perhaps the real reason for its being regarded as holy was that it was a savage place, unfriendly to man. Human beings in their pursuit of the infinite can seldom resist the lure of the merely uncomfortable. Or so it seemed to me, as I did the circuit at a speed which no doubt was too rapid for the full acquisition of merit.

Women were not allowed to proceed on the Kingkor beyond the first stage. When Kintup visited Tsari he enquired why, and this is what he said in his report: "The reason assigned is that formerly a goddess, named Dolma [*sic*], who wished to judge the behaviour of men and women, laid herself across the path at the summit of the pass. A man came by and found the road blocked by the goddess, who was disguised. So he asked her with kind words to get out of his way. In reply the goddess said, 'My brother, I am so weak that I cannot stir; if you pity me, please find another road. If not, cross over me.' On hearing this the man took a different road. After a short time a woman passed that way, and she also saw the goddess and told her to give way; the same reply was made by the goddess, but the woman crossed over her and went on. Therefore, from

that day, women have been forbidden to pass over, and from that day the pass has been known as the Dolma La."

This struck me as a touching piece of male reassurance and I asked a monk in Tsari whether he had heard the legend. He smiled and shook his head. "Then what is the reason why women are forbidden to cross the pass?" I asked.

"Well," said the monk, "you know as well as I do, wherever there are women, there is trouble."

The reader can choose whichever version he prefers; or both. They are not inconsistent. After all, the behaviour of the goddess Drölma is only an example of the monk's general principle.

The first day I went five miles up to the Tsukang called La Pu, where one of my carriers had to be sent back because she was a woman. We then climbed to the top of the Drölma pass, which was 16,100 feet by aneroid.

Near the top I found a lot of fossil shell casts, which were probably Triassic. None of them was *in situ* but I kept some which were on very large boulders. The whole place was a jumble of sharp rocks, probably the old moraine of a glacier to the east. It was so cloudy that I could not see for certain.

For half a mile either side of the pass, the road was over sharp loose rocks, with a few patches of old snow. There was also snow in places on the steep, rocky slopes.

*September 17th. Mipa. 15,300 ft.*

I spent that first night at Tsukang called Mipa, eleven miles from Chikchar. There were dwarf rhododendrons nearby, but no trees. From the west came down a large stream, which my *ula* told me flowed into Lopa country.

*September 18th. Potrang. 14,700 ft.*

Next day, keeping the same *ula*, I reached Potrang, fourteen miles in 9½ hours. It took 2¾ hours to do the three miles to the top of the Shagam pass (16,100 feet), along a steep rough road, which skirted what in the bad visibility appeared to be a snowfield.

Many of the rocks were scratched as though by a glacier and we were evidently going along a lateral moraine. At one place, where rocks had slipped, ice was visible. From this I inferred that the whole thing was a half-dead glacier. In another place there was a crevasse forty feet deep in the snow or ice.

From the pass we descended two miles in an hour and a half. There was a lot of snow on an old glacier this side too. There was also probably a large snow peak to the east, but I never saw the top for clouds. What I could see was a number of snow-fields on the shoulders of the mountain.

All day it was up one valley side, over a pass, and down the other side, never crossing a watershed, but just moving round the lower slopes of Takpa Shiri.

All day it was very cloudy and most of the time it was raining. But even so I gathered that I was making the pilgrimage in the soft season. The really hardy pilgrims, usually to the number of about 2000, left on the 19th of the third month when the whole route was under snow. The unfortunate people who lived in the Tsukangs had to make provision for this the year before, gathering and stacking firewood in readiness. After the snow pilgrimage, the Tsukang-keepers returned to their villages till the 1st of the fifth month. Then they went back to the Tsukangs until the 18th of the eighth month, when the maggots put an end to the pilgrimage season.

I saw some of these maggots, most of them lying drowned in puddles. They seemed to me the Tsukang-keeper's Best Friend. They provided the most perfect excuse to get away from the Tsukangs before the snow fell, a religious excuse. Without the maggots, Tsukang-keepers would not have any opportunity to beg. As it was, they journeyed to Po me where they were given money, ponies and swords, and then they went to Tawang where they sold the ponies and swords and got more money and tsampa.

On the road the *ula* coolies collected a lot of poppy-seeds for a Tibetan doctor who wanted to use them for medicine. I also collected some seed. They were not the opium poppy,

*Papaver*, but the allied genus *Meconopsis*, so I do not know what use the doctor intended to make of them.

At Potrang there was a small holy lake, round which the *ula* coolies walked. And instead of there being one Tsukang, there were two, because this was where the *ula* stage ended, the Chikchar coolies handing over to those of Chösam or Yü me.

From Chikchar to Potrang I had been going south-south-east. From Potrang to Tomtsang the road turned almost due north. It was still rainy with dense clouds. The route ran fairly level for the first four miles, passing a lake called Dorje Phagmo Lamtso, three-quarters of a mile long by half a mile broad. Then we came to a vertical cliff, which was made easy to climb by the dip of the rocks.

A mile further on we crossed the Tapgyu pass into the Taktsang drainage. The pass was not at the head of the valley, so down we went and up again to another pass at the valley-head, where we came on a marshy flat with a hut reserved for holy lamas in pilgrimage. We carried on down the right side of the valley, gradually coming into a dense forest of firs, in which was the Tsukang Taktsang, where we had lunch. It had taken us from 7.15 a.m. to 11.40 a.m., nearly 4½ hours to do these eight and a half miles.

*September 19th. Tomtsang. 12,600 ft.*

After lunch we climbed very steeply for 2200 feet over three passes, which brought us into the Tomtsang drainage. To reach the rest house we had to descend 3000 feet, and we found a woman in charge of it. We had finished the purely male section of the pilgrimage.

Staying at the rest house was a pilgrim who had begun the pilgrimage on the day that Morshead and I had set out for Migyitün. He had taken five days over what had taken me three; no doubt because he had found spiritual ease where I had found only physical discomfort. Perhaps he had spent his time in contributing to the piles of stones that stood by the wayside, sometimes built up from slates like a house of cards, sometimes consisting merely in a white stone balanced on the



top of an upright slate. Or perhaps he had carved one with sacred writing, a prayer in stone to intercede for him when he had gone.

I had expected that this region in which it was held a sin to take even the life of a maggot would be a natural sanctuary for birds and beasts. But I had not seen a single animal or butterfly; just the drowned maggots and a few birds. I suppose safety has a ceiling price and the creatures which had not yet evolved a religion preferred a little danger to that awful damp and rain.

The next day, though by normal standards dank and overclouded, was less awful than the three previous ones, perhaps because we were now in country sufficiently profane to allow the presence of women. After we had crossed the Karkyu pass into the Yü drainage, we began to see signs of wild life. Two Sikkim hinds were grazing on a marshy plain, but they were wild and made off as soon as they saw us. By a small lake further on there were several Brahminy duck.

Some ten miles from Tomtsang we came to Yü me, the first village I had seen since Chikchar, four days before. And what a welcome sight it was, with its twelve houses and its large temple, tended by four monks! Civilisation is a relative term and Yü me was a synonym for it that day.

I went into the temple. There was a figure of Dorje Phagmo, which seemed to me excellent. But perhaps this was merely because it was something made with human skill in a building fashioned by man towards his own vision of God. It was such a relief after the desolation of the sacred mountain.

The temple itself was very new and in places still unpainted. The old temple had been burnt down by the Lopas in the tenth month of the Fire-horse year (1906).

I learnt about this war later, as its repercussions were to echo through much of the country into which I was coming. Its origin was trivial and absurd, but perhaps no more trivial or absurd than those of the greater wars of history, which are famous for their larger slaughter.

To understand its full absurdity, one must realise that there

were two different tribes of Lopas, the Khalo and the Tinglo. The Khalo were very like Tibetans. They spoke Tibetan and they wore Tibetan clothes. The Tinglo lived lower down the valley than the Khalo. They did not speak Tibetan or wear Tibetan clothes, but they used to bring merchandise up to Trön in the Chayul valley. And this happened year after year and everybody was happy.

But then the Tinglo for some reason which nobody knew started to bring their merchandise to Sanga Chöling, and the market of Trön fell on lean times. This angered the people of Trön and they launched an attack on the Lopas and killed seventy of them. The fact that the Lopas with whom they had some cause for complaint were Tinglos and the Lopas they had killed were Khalos did not greatly matter. They were Lopas and they were dead. It gave the people of Trön a feeling of satisfaction; such satisfaction that they attacked a second time and killed fifty Khalos and a third time and killed twenty.

These attacks gave the Khalos a just cause for complaint against the Tibetans of Trön and in revenge they attacked the Tibetans, but not those living in Trön. They attacked instead the people of Yü me, from whom they had been accustomed to collect an annual tax of tsampa, swords, spears, salt and other desirable commodities.

It was not a very successful attack, because all the men in Yü me were away begging tsampa, swords, spears, salt and other desirable commodities; and those who were left behind, mostly women and children, ran away and were not hurt. But the Khalos had the satisfaction of burning Yü me and taking away all the possessions of the people who previously had paid them a tax without murmuring. They might not be the Tibetans of Trön, but at any rate they were Tibetans.

The Tibetan government immediately collected 500 soldiers from Guru Namgye and its neighbourhood and ten days later they set out in pursuit of the Khalos. They caught up with six of the marauders, who were so sick, so footsore or so laden with booty that they could not go as fast as their comrades, and these sick laggards were killed and their booty restored to

Yü me. But the road became so bad further down the valley that the 500 soldiers could not go down any further.

That was the end of the war. Since that time the Lopas had not come to Yü me. The people of Yü me had been freed of their tax and were devoting their energies instead to rebuilding their temple.

*September 20th. Yü tö. 13,200 ft.*

I went on to Yü tö and spent the night there. The people who had taken such trouble to help me regain the merit which I had lost by shooting the stag on holy ground were very worried that I was not going to complete the usual circuit, but intended to go to Sanga Chöling. They agreed however that if I went from Sanga Chöling up the Char river to where we left it to go to Karpo, the merit would accrue. The important thing seemed to lie not in the route itself but in its being a closed circuit.

I made enquiries about where the streams flowed which I had passed. This helped to fill in my map. But to my distress my watch had stopped during the night I spent in Tomtsang, overcome probably by the damp, so that my estimates of distance were thenceforth largely guesswork.

It was very difficult to do any mapping next day on my way to Sanga Chöling. It rained heavily most of the time and the thick clouds never cleared.

I reached the Takar La (16,700 feet) after following the stream up the valley for eight miles. Just before reaching the top, I saw a flock of snowcock.

It was very satisfying to see wild life again.

*September 21st. Sanga Chöling. 10,900 ft.*

And it was equally satisfying, later in the day, to come to Sanga Chöling, a real place that made Yü tö look like the back of beyond, with good houses and fine temples.

Most of the religious dignitaries were away. The big incarnation, Drukpa Rimpoche, was doing a pilgrimage in Kongbo. The lesser incarnation whom we had met on our way

up to Karpo had also gone away again. But the Steward (Chandzo) brought me presents of meat, eggs, flour, tsampa and peaches, which were very welcome. He brought with him his predecessor, a brother of the Steward of Gobshi near Gyantse, whom I knew well.

Later the brother of the Drukpa Rimpoche came to see me. He told me that Morshead had received a letter from Ata Ulla saying that as he had heard that we were going to India from Tsari through the Lopa country, he would wait in Tsöna only until the 16th of September and then return to Tsetang. There was nothing I could do about that, since it was now September 21st.

The Lama's brother told me that he had seen white *cross-optilon* at Ha and Paro in Bhutan.\* He also wanted to sell me a live male Sikkim stag three years old. I said I would take delivery in Gyantse and wrote to the Trade Agent about it.†

Knowing that I was interested in animals, the ex-Steward presented me with a skin of a water shrew (*nectogale*). Swellings on horses disappeared, he said, when rubbed with the nose of a *nectogale* skin.‡

Before I left the next day, the Steward took me round the temples. Many were new and some still being built. In the central temple there was a large image of Buddha. The Steward told me that when the Mongolians occupied Sanga Chöling at the end of the eighteenth century, seven Mongolian soldiers came into the temple and one of them cut the image over the shoulder with an axe. Straightway all seven fell down, blood spurting from their mouths, and died. The wound on the image healed gradually, like the flesh of a human being.

I went down the Char river to meet Morshead. The country was quite different from the damp jungle found in Tsari at this elevation. The hills were dry, and near to the scanty

\* Since that time, I have come to know both these places well. There was no truth in his report. It shows how dangerous it is to accept hearsay information of this sort from people not actually interested or qualified.

† It never turned up.

‡ Gilbert White in his *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* refers to the belief that an animal over which a shrew has run will lose a limb.

fields I passed peach trees the ripe fruit of which I plucked and ate as I rode.

*September 22nd. Char me. 10,600 ft.*

Ten and a half miles from Sanga Chöling I reached Char me, where I found Morshead, returning from a short four and a half mile march to Drü, the last Tibetan village, which consisted of one house. He had gone altogether as far as the junction of the Char and Chayul rivers at Lung.

Despite the fact that our money was short, we felt in good spirits. The people of Sangling had stocked us up with food and told us that while we were among their villages we were to pay nothing. And the house in which we were staying was pleasantly odd, with a cypress tree growing out of the floor and up through the roof.

We talked over plans and decided that the best thing for us was to make up the valley of the Kyimpu river, across the Le La and down into Chayul drainage. This would enable Morshead to survey and map the country between the Char and Chayul valleys.

This would bring us to Chayul Dzong, from which we could go down the Chayul to link up observations with those which Morshead had taken at Lung. It meant doubling back to Chayul Dzong later, but the alternative would have been to go up the Chayul river from its confluence with the Char at Lung and that was doubly risky. We couldn't be certain of the bridges, and approaching Chayul from what was nearly Lopa country, we might lose our excellent *ula* arrangements with Sanga Chöling and find it hard to establish *ula* with Chayul Dzong. It was a danger in working in these frontier regions, which was to haunt us through the weeks to come.

*September 23rd. Kyimpu. 13,400 ft.*

We made the journey to the Chayul river in three stages. The first night we spent at Kyimpu. Then we crossed the Le La (17,180 feet), went down past Gyandro to the Nye river, where we spent the night at Nyerong, a flat-roofed village.

This day was chiefly memorable because Morshead's watch broke down. Unlike mine, which was completely ruined by the pilgrimage, we hoped to be able to repair his.

Before we started the next morning, Tindu, the coolie whom we had sent to Tsetang from Kyekye at the time of the theft, arrived with a message to say that Ata Ulla was at a village two days upstream from where we were, and would wait for three days there and return to Tsetang if he did not hear from us. We immediately wrote a letter and sent it back with Tindu and another coolie, a man of Nyarong, asking Ata Ulla to give them a hundred rupees which they could take to Tsöna and keep against our arrival.

*September 24th. Nyarong. 12,500 ft.*

Three-quarters of a mile below Nyarong we crossed the Nye river to the right side by a bridge, and six miles further down came to a bridge across the Loro river just above where the Nye river joined it, to form with their combined waters the Chayul. We continued down the Chayul for a mile and came to the scattered village of Komlha, where we had to change *ula*. There was a summer house where I stayed during the change-over. There were walnuts and peach-trees; but the peaches were not so ripe or succulent as those we had left at Char me.

All the cultivation in this part was irrigated, but in places the cliffs were so steep that the people could not dig ditches and were forced to carry the water round on wooden troughs.

*September 25th. Kap. 11,400 ft.*

At Kap where we spent the night there was a party of seventeen Lopas, including some women, who had come over the Lha pass to trade. Their own name for themselves as far as I could gather was Nyile-Be, their principal villages being Shobo, Rubang, Mele-zo, Molong-zo and Dawa-zo.

They had come over the pass, which was covered with snow, eight days' journey from the last of their villages. They had brought with them red dye, skins, tobacco and cane which they were bartering for salt, woollens, cloth, cymbals, bells

and white shell beads. I saw a little of their bartering. For a packet of madder dye, they were given one *tre* of salt and a little over. They were swindled every time by the man giving them short weight. With the salt they got there was a liberal admixture of moss; and we thought at first that this was a further example of sharp practice. But we found that it was necessary for its transportation. The salt, being hygroscopic, would have absorbed so much moisture that it would have dropped through the bamboo packets in their humid country if it had not been packed with moss.

The Lopas spoke no Tibetan, but one of the Tibetans spoke their language well and the others had a smattering.

They wore coats fastened with bamboo splinter pins, very like those worn by the Lepchas, as our Lepcha cook immediately pointed out. The men had their hair tied in front of the forehead in a knot, through which was thrust a brass or bamboo pin about a foot long. Their hats were tied on by a string loop round the knot of hair. Some of them had cane helmets, like those the Abors and Mishmis wore, but without the strengthening bars and with a flap down the back of the neck. In front following the curve of the helmet was half a serow's horn and hanging down from behind the helmet they wore feathers.

I tried to exchange some of the things I had for one of their hats. But they did not want the few things I had, needles, small boxes, etc. I showed them some opium, but they did not know what it was.

In the knot of hair on the foreheads, they sometimes had palm leaves sticking up. Round their necks they wore necklaces of beads, mostly blue and white; and their sword belts were ornamented with cowrie shells. About their persons were hung brass ornaments in quantity and in their ears small rings, sometimes Tibetan, more often made from what looked like telegraph wire. They did not have the earring holes enlarged in the manner of the Abors and Mishmis. They all had a black cord wound round the left wrist, as a precaution when shooting arrows, I supposed. Some of them wore rough boots,

resembling those of the Tibetans, thick soles of leather with uppers of cloth, reaching to below the knee.

Both their women wore their hair loose and one of them had a tattoo mark on her nose and forehead. Some Tibetan women sewed woollen cloth into clothes for them and they immediately put these new clothes on.

They thought that I was a holy lama and they asked me to make magic so that their return journey might be safe and their wives and homes all right on their arrival.

During the evening two Pobas came to see us. One of them was Tindu Gyendzen, whom we had met at Dre on July 2nd and again at Dzeng on August 6th. They had been at Tsöna while we were at Sanga Chöling, and having missed us there they had made the journey to Kap. The other man, Atra, offered me a present of three rupees and a scarf, but though they chatted amiably enough, they made no allusion to the business on which they wanted to see us during that evening.

In the middle of the night there was great uproar and confusion. Apparently the son of the Tibetan headman touched one of the Lopas when he was asleep, and he jumped up and hit the son with the back of his sword. It looked as if there was going to be a free-for-all; but they agreed to talk it over the next morning. It was one of those stupid accidents that didn't start a war. When they went into it the next morning, it turned out that the headman's son had been groping down in the dark in order to make certain that he did not tread on any of the Lopas, and by mistake he had touched the Lopa's foot. If he had touched any other part of his body, it would have been all right. But a Lopa considers that the feet are the most precious part of the body and if you touch a man's foot even by accident, he flies into a rage.

The Lopa, however, was taking no chances the next morning, because when we came to a deserted village further down the river, there he was, in hiding until he heard the result of the discussion. Even so, in avoiding one risk he was taking another, since the Lopas were forbidden to go outside Kap.

Before we left Kap, the two Pobas came up to me rather



furtively and said that they would like to talk to me in privacy on the roof. I went up and they said that they wanted to go to India to trade next year and they would like a note of authorisation. I gave them one readily. Atra had been to Rima to trade and also to a place called Sole, near where the Chulikattas traded. He said that they could not make up their minds whether to go to India through Tawang or through Gyantse. I answered that it didn't matter very much which they did, wondering meanwhile why there should be all this secrecy about giving them a letter.

Then they started talking about the war with the Chinese and how the Lhasa government had asked the people of Po me to stop the Chinese on the lower road and the people of Po tö to stop them on the upper road. "The people of Po me stopped the Chinese," Atra said, "but the people of Po tö, especially those of Pulung Gompa, let the Chinese through."

"I have already heard this," I answered.

"The people of Po me are going to kill those in Po tö who collaborated with the Chinese," Atra said. "There will be war."

I said nothing.

"Perhaps the Indian Government would help the people of Po me in that war?" suggested Atra.

I said the Indian Government would certainly not help them and we went down from the roof. The two Pobas did not seem offended. That was the way life was, their expressions seemed to imply. No one would support righteous assassination.

*September 26th. Drötang. 11,200 ft.*

The sixteen and a half miles from Kap to Drötang was a hard day's march. At times the road lay on galleries made from sticks along the cliffside. At one point, we came to a gorge where we had to climb a vertical ladder more than thirty feet high, propped on top of a masonry pillar in which steps were cut.

Ten and a half miles from Kap we came to Trön, the

village which started the war with the Lopas, which ended with the destruction of Yü me.

Here and at Drötang, I made the fullest possible enquiries about the different tribes of Lopas who came up to trade. The Lopas we had met at Kap were called Lagongwa by the Tibetans and dwelt in the valley of the Kurung-Hoko river over the Lha La. Those who came over the Kashung La which was closed by snow towards the end of September, were the Lawas from the valley of the Keme Eshi. Those crossing the Chapung La (open until November) were also Lawas, but from the valley of the Tapa Sham river. They were able to trade after November by making a detour and coming up the river.

All these three tribes spoke the same language, dressed their hair in the same way and wore the same sort of clothes.

Further down the river, below the junction of the Char-Chayul rivers, were Lopas, called Tingbas by the Tibetans, Bungnyi among themselves. They spoke a different language and wore their hair long and loose. They traded with Migyitün and after November also went up to Lung to trade with the Khalos, the Tibetanised Lopas who had been the victims of the Trön aggressors. Most of the Khalos had been wiped out in the war. The survivors had become nomad hunters with few fields. Since the war they had been paying a tax of one trangka a man to the Tibetan government.

The people of Trön made part of their living by helping pilgrims going to Tsari for the long pilgrimage.

We passed forty Lopas on the road. They had been trading at Trön and were taking back among other things goats; and one man had a cat.

*September 27th. Trön. 10,700 ft.*

After spending the night at Drötang, we sent the coolies back up the river six miles to Trön, while I went further down. It was the same story that we found all down the frontier, a last village and then No Man's Land; except that in this case I came to a single house, with rough stone walls and a bamboo

roof, inhabited by a family of the Tibetan-speaking Lopas. There were fields round, but they were desolate and they did not understand the art of irrigation. They lived by making baskets, collecting bamboo down the valley and taking the baskets up the valley to sell. In November they did a little trading, buying rice from the non-Tibetan-speaking Lopas and reselling it at Trön and Char me. They also did some hunting.

“Do you hunt in Tsari?” I asked, remembering that I had been told that after the pilgrimage was over, Lopas came up for game.

“No,” they said, “Tsari is a holy place.” Which even if it was not true was a discreet answer.

We continued down the right bank of the Chayul to a point more or less opposite that which Morshead had reached when he went down the left bank from Char me. Here high up on the hill was the last Tibetan house, a little temple called Karutra in which a caretaker lived all the year round and where, once a year on the 14th day of the fourth month, there was a big religious ceremony.

My guide, who had been across the Kashung pass, said that on the other side there was a lake called Lagya Yumtso, large and holy. People could go from Karutra and get back in a day, having made the circuit of the lake. But most of them took two days.

At the one-house village of Kisi on the way back, I met a Lopa who came from a place called Mura or Morang, a month's journey down the river. He knew nothing of his own country and I suspect that he had been sold as a child to the Tibetans of Migyitün. They bought slaves at that time for 45 sangs (110 Indian rupees).

When I showed the people photographs of the Chulikattas and Abors, they said that people with their hair cut in that fashion came to Migyitün, from a country they called Miri.

I went back by the lower road, 300 feet above the water, about six miles to Trön.

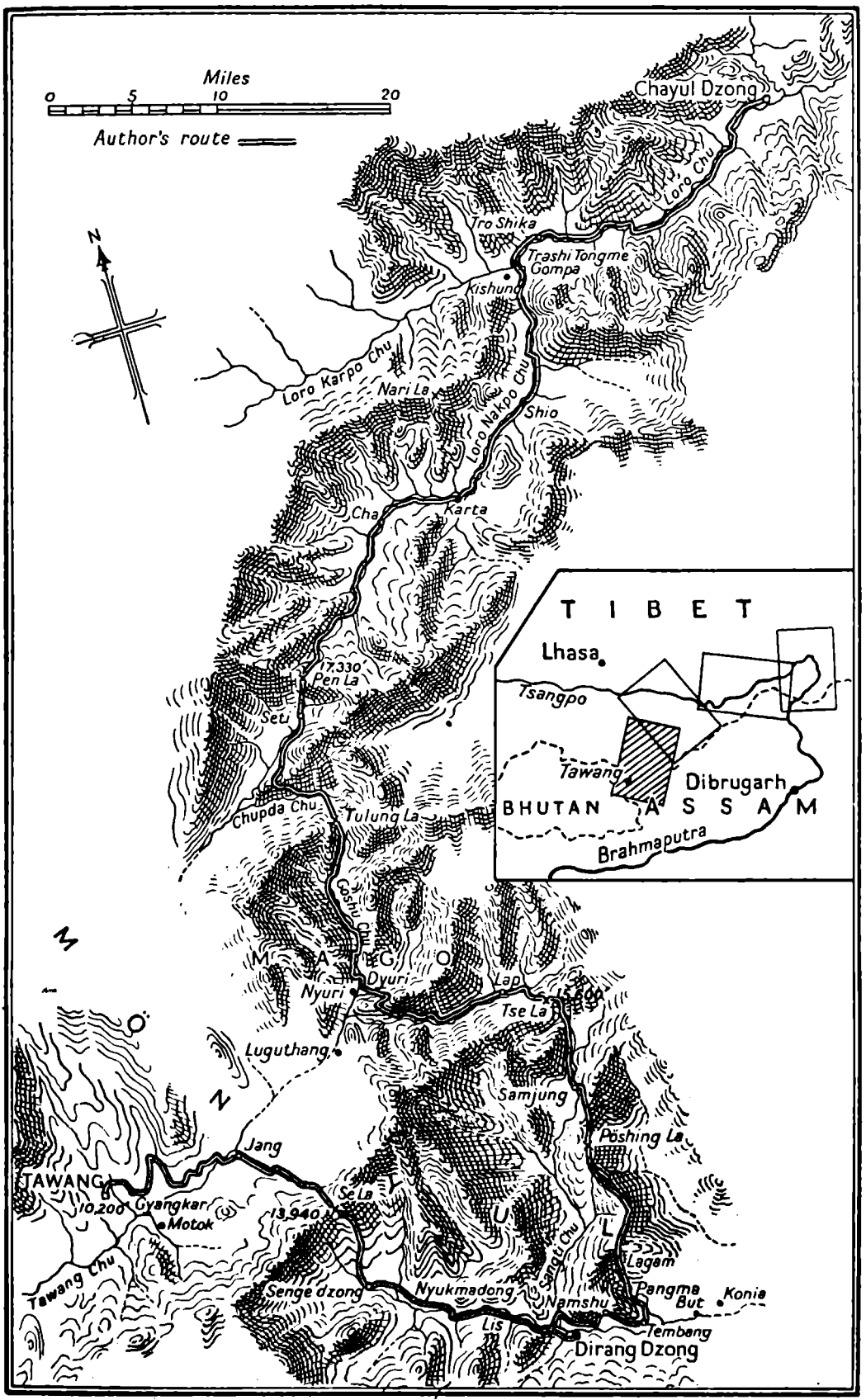
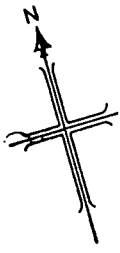
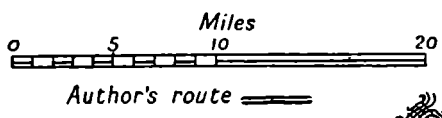
*September 28th. Chayul Dzong. 11,450 ft.*

The next day we went to Chayul Dzong along the route which we had used on the way down. Nothing of any interest happened except our meeting with a group of Lopas. They wanted to sell me some honey, but they wouldn't take money.

I offered them a bangle, some needles.

No, what they wanted was white beads, enough to make eighteen inches of bead necklace.

We parted without striking a bargain, and as we went on my guide said to me with all the contempt of a man who has risen to the dignity of currency: "Offer them a hat full of money, and they wouldn't take it."



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

*September 29th. Tro Shika. 12,350 ft.*

We continued up the Loro river for twenty miles to Trashi Tong Me Gompa, where it split into two, the Loro Karpo and the Loro Nakpo, or White Loro and Black Loro, so called from the colour of the water, the black river being very dirty, evidently from melting snow.

From above the Gompa, Morshead took fixings of the peaks of a high snow range running from the south-east to the south. The site he had chosen was a funeral ground where the bodies of the dead were cut up and fed to the vultures in the usual Tibetan way. Seeing Morshead and his attendant coolies, all the vultures in the neighbourhood converged on the spot, expecting a funeral banquet. They filled the air with their indignation when they found that the survey party descended, leaving nothing succulent behind.

We wanted to go up the Black river, which was larger and closer to the frontier. But at the monastery they said that the road along the river was very bad and impassable for animals. There was a good road over the Nari La, a pass reached from a side valley two miles up the White river. Everyone went that way, they said.

So we went up the White river along the right bank for about a mile, until we came to the house of the Kishung Depa, a minor official who collected the taxes from the little district of Mago on behalf of Samdru Potrang, the great Lhasa family that owned it. The Depa hummed and ha'd and asked us why we should want to go to Mago at a time when no one was there, but everybody was up in the hills looking after the cattle. Nobody could conceivably want to go to Mago at such a time.

We did not labour this point, since he was the sort of person

who would have been annoyed if we had explained that we had not come all this way to visit Mago in the high season. We were mapping the frontier, we explained, having come all the way from Pemakö. If we did not complete the map, the Dalai Lama would be angry. We got the impression that the Depa was far more concerned as to whether the Samdru Potrang family would be angry if we did complete the map. He asked if we had a passport. I said that we did not travel on passports. The Dzongpön of Tsela had written to Lhasa about us ten weeks before and since then we had received every assistance. So would he please send a man with us to see to our supplies?

He refused to do this, but he finally promised that he would send a messenger on ahead of us, whom we would find on our arrival. "I cannot understand why you should be travelling over the Nari La," he added; "the road to Mago lies along the Loro Nakpo." When we told him that we had been advised to go this way by the people of Trashi Tong Me, he said, "You should never trust anything the people of Trashi Tong Me tell you."

So we had to send our kit back to Trashi Tong Me and up the Loro Nakpo. Morshead and I felt thoroughly disgruntled because we had not travelled all this way in order to meet the obstructionism of petty officials. We could have found that much nearer home.

*September 30th. Shio Shika. 13,200 ft.*

At Shio Shika, the details were filled in. The Depa had not sent a man with us because he had had a quarrel over *ula* with the owner of Shio Shika. The owner of Shio Shika was the absentee Dzongpön of Chudzong, hundreds of miles away in Po me. He had never been there, because he employed a deputy for his official duties, but on the strength of his official position he claimed immunity from supplying *ula* in Shio Shika. The Kishung Depa on the other hand refused to supply *ula* beyond Shio Shika—the next stage being another twenty-three miles there and back for the coolies.

Our arrival at Shio Shika was, in consequence, rather inauspicious. And the sight of one of the servants shuffling about with fetters on his legs did not inspire our confidence.

"It's only a temporary punishment," said his master.

Temporary or not, the fetters did not make it easy for the unfortunate man to climb up and down the ladder to the upper storey where his master had his living quarters.

We were interrogated again. Where were our passports, what was our reason for going to Mago? Altogether our new host appeared as disobliging as the previous one and we thought that we should not get *ula*.

I produced my photographs of the Dalai Lama and the Tashi Lama and not to be outdone he produced his, a very tattered snapshot which he said was of the Tsarong Shape taken in Lhasa. It was in fact a photograph which I myself had taken of Kyibuk Rupen and his wife at Gyantse, and I made the mistake of telling him so. It was perhaps not the most tactful thing to have said and when he refused to believe it, I did not press the point. Instead I showed him my guns and later we all went up on the roof, from which I spotted a herd of bharal on the mountain above. They were about two miles away and I put my telescope on them and they all looked through the telescope and were delighted; especially his children, who seeing them suddenly so large, asked me to shoot the bharal from the roof. "They are too far away," I said. "No," said the children, "not if you shoot them through the telescope."

The whole incident delighted our host so much that he grew quite friendly and asked us what transport we wanted and offered to buy two of the sovereigns which Morshead had in his belt, a very welcome act, as we were down to 15 rupees.

The next morning suspicions revived. He wanted to melt the sovereigns down to make into earrings. He brought along a black touchstone on which he rubbed the two sovereigns. A dull coppery mark resulted. Then he rubbed his gold ring on the touchstone and this produced a bright golden colour. "You see," he said, "these coins are not gold."



There was no doubt about the difference between the colours of the two marks and I found myself involuntarily blushing as if I was trying to swindle him. "Gold is a very soft metal," I said. "Something has been added to make the coins stronger." I pointed to the king's head. "You can see they are genuine. There is the picture of the King."

"I am not interested in the pictures," he answered, "nor am I interested in what has been added to make the gold harder. I am interested in earrings."

It looked as if we had reached an impasse. Then I discovered that he was going to be in Tsöna at the same time that we should arrive there. "These coins can be exchanged for Indian rupees," I said, "and Indian rupees can be exchanged for Tibetan trangkas. They have a value much higher than what you are offering us, but when I come to Tsöna, I will buy them back from you at the rate you give us." And so we exchanged the money and promises that the sovereigns would be redeemed later.

We continued up the Nakpo until Karta where it split into two. The main stream came from a high range to the south-east, the peaks of which Morshead had fixed at Trashi Tong Me. Changing transport from coolies to yaks, we went up the stream to the south-west, towards the Pen La. On the way we passed some Mago people, who were taking a shivering monkey as a present to the ungracious Depa of Kishung. At first sight they looked just like other Tibetans, a little dirtier perhaps and slightly more untidy. But then we noticed that the men all wore their long Tibetan coats red and they carried their swords slung behind, while the other Tibetans carry them in front. The felt skull caps which they wore had fringes or tassels round the rims and were rather like those worn by Mönbas. The women wore skirts of woollen cloth with broad red and blue longitudinal stripes; and beneath the skirts woollen knickerbockers. They were very fond of jewellery. On the top of their heads they wore a silver plate from which strings of large amber beads came down in front of the ears and were fastened to an ornamental brass belt. As if this was

not finery enough, they had long cornelians dangling from the silver plate on to their foreheads.

They spoke Tibetan to us and among themselves; but though they talked of themselves as Tibetans, they used the phrase "going up to Tibet", implying that they did not consider Mago as Tibet proper.

We also met a Mohammedan trader from whom we bought a dozen boxes of matches. He had never been to India and his Hindustani was almost unintelligible; but he insisted on speaking it instead of Tibetan, the language in which we could both have conversed fluently, because he wanted to impress the Tibetans, an irritating form of language snobbery which I have noticed among indifferent linguists in many parts of the world.

*October 1st. Chao. 14,300 ft.*

Having spent the night at the small village of Chao, we crossed the Pen La (17,330 feet) next day and camped at a deserted grazier's hut on the other side of the pass, a chilly resting place with no fuel but yak dung.

On the way up to the pass I saw four herds of bharal. In the last herd there were three good heads and one albino female. They were up a very narrow side gorge, which I had explored in the hope of finding bharal. I sighted them at 300 yards and they went off. I followed them some way, but had to give up as they showed no sign of settling down.

There was no game on the south side of the pass, which was swept by a high chill wind, dead in our faces. There were several marmots near the camp, who must have been thinking of hibernating. Certainly if we could have made ourselves warmer by hibernating, we would have done so.

*October 2nd. Seti. 16,000 ft.*

In crossing the Pen La, we had left the drainage of the headwaters of the Subansiri in which we had been travelling since we crossed the Pu La four weeks before (September 4th). We were now in the drainage of the Tawang Chu, the headwaters of which formed the natural district called Mönnyul.

Mago, for which we were making, was a remote little district which belonged geographically to the Mönnyul area, even though it was the property of a Lhasa family. From where we had camped it was approached by first crossing a spur, called Zandang, formed by the junction of two valleys, then crossing the second valley down which the Chupda Chu flowed and climbing over the Tulung pass (17,250 feet) down into the Goshu valley.

We were very interested in the Chupda valley, because we were told that we might find there the *Ovis Ammon*, the largest of the wild sheep, which stands higher than a donkey. Just before we came into the valley, I saw a herd of bharal in the valley below, but before going after them I wanted to be sure that I wasn't missing the *Ovis Ammon*. I crossed the spur and saw a herdsman driving a large herd of yaks. He said that he had been living there some time and had driven the *Ovis Ammon* away. From the direction his yaks were heading, I could see that he was also driving my bharal away. So I told my coolies to head the yaks off and went down after the bharal.

As I did so, I saw the herdsman running for all he was worth down the hill, convinced that we were robbers come to take his yaks from him.

There were two groups of bharal, one of seventeen and the nearer of nine with six good heads. I got about 120 yards of them and then saw that I could get even closer by going back and working round. But by the time I had reached that position, I could see that they were suspicious and were walking away in a line, still about 120 yards off. I took a shot end-on at the biggest and got him. The rest ran into a ravine and I went up after them and came on them looking at me about eighty yards off. I could not make up my mind which was the best head, and just as I fired they all moved off and I missed. The head of the one I got with my first shot was 25½ inches, but one of the horns was rather broken.

We saw no *Ovis Ammon* as we crossed the Chupda valley, though our guide said that they were not very wild and did not

mind people going along the road. The yaks had obviously driven them away.

It was a very steep climb, especially the last 250 feet to the top of the Tulung La. From it we could see, west of north, some snows we had not seen before, on the Nye-Chayul water-head.

*October 3rd. Camping ground. 14,500 ft.*

As we came down, very steep in places, it began to snow; but it turned to rain as we reached the lower slopes. We camped at the junction of the two valleys, where the first fuel was, small bushes.

During the night our yaks strayed and it was some hours before we caught them. Indeed we had to write one off as missing. So we were late in making a start. Half a mile before we reached Dyuri, we came on a hot spring. We had no thermometer, but the water was just too hot to be bearable on the hand.

*October 4th. Mago. 11,800 ft.*

Dyuri and the adjacent hamlet of Nyuri on the other side of the stream together formed Mago village. There were two other villages in the Mago district, Lugutang and Lagam. That, at least, is how we thought they should be spelt. We could not be certain, because the population of Mago was completely illiterate. It was the only region on the whole of our journey where we failed to have the local names written for us in the Tibetan character.

The people of Mago grew no crops. They had their yaks and *dzos* whose products they exchanged with Mönbas to the west and Lopas to the east for cereals and madder dye. The dye, yak butter, cheese and the planks which they cut from their forests they exchanged with the Tibetans in the north for salt and food grains. Some of the salt they passed on in exchange to the west and east.

They paid double taxes: to the Kishung Depa, two loads of butter a year and two to three loads of madder dye per

house. To the Mönbas they paid about seven pounds of salt and twenty of cheese. These taxes were not so much for services rendered, as far as we could see, as for disservices not rendered. Some of the Mönbas' tax was paid over to the Lopas. But even with the payment of this protection money, theirs was a dwindling society. They told us there were not more than a hundred of them left and we saw the ruins of empty houses.

In all the previous places through which we had passed the people had had some experience of officialdom and Morshead and I had been forced to put on a certain act to impress the local officials, and so retain our right to *ula*. In Mago there were no officials and if we had tried to put on our act, the people would not have understood what we were doing. To them, we were the only sort of travellers they knew, commercial travellers. They asked if we knew Tawang.

"Not yet," we said, "but we are going there."

"What a place!" they answered. "So many houses! So many people! And the *chang*! There is no *chang* like the *chang* you get there. And the girls, who sing and dance for you. You haven't seen girls, till you go to Tawang!"

There was a party of Mönba traders in Mago with whom we made some barter. They paid a handful of maize for a needle. The man to whom I had given the skin of the bharal I had shot sold it to them for a *trangka*.

One of these traders had been to Assam and had with him several rolls of Assam silk, derived from the large moth named *Attacus Cynthia*. It is like the coarse shantung silk from which we make tropical clothing and is called *Buri* in Tibetan.

The trader was very proud to have bought such good *Buri* so cheaply. He made me feel it and he told me the price. Then he began to boast of a medicine which he had bought in Assam, a wonderful medicine which could prevent malaria or cure it. "Of course it was expensive," he said, "a very rare and precious drug."

He produced a small medicine bottle filled with a pink liquid and it was passed round for all to admire. When it came

to my turn, I took out the cork and dabbed a little on the back of my hand and tasted it. It was quinine. I put back the cork and passed it on.

“Well,” asked the trader, “you know it? It is good?”

“You are a trader in *Buri*,” I said, “and when you sell, you say, ‘This is the most wonderful *Buri* in the whole world,’ and perhaps if you are lucky, you will get twice as much as it is worth.”

“But this is the best *Buri*,” he said, pointing to his cloth.

“And quinine is the best medicine against malaria,” I said, “but you have paid a hundred times more than it is worth.”

At that the other traders laughed, because he was a man who made their lives miserable with stories of his shrewdness.

We could not leave Dyuri the next day because the yaks which the Depa of Kishung had promised us were not forthcoming. It was the same story on the morning of the third day, but when at last I sent a coolie up to the headman's house to demand what had happened, there were the yaks waiting outside and the people sitting around doing nothing. The yaks had arrived the previous night, but for some reason, probably we thought on the Depa's instructions, the people of Mago were trying to delay us. We did not start until 10 a.m.

*October 6th. Lap. 14,700 ft.*

During the day we kept along the side of the range, more or less due east in the direction of the Lopa country. We spent the night at Lap, a grazing encampment just at the limit of the fuel line.

Next day, after the usual delay in catching the yaks, we set off about 11 a.m. and crossed the Tse La (15,600 feet) soon after. We had now left the Tawang Chu drainage. The Sangti Chu which flowed from the pass went down into the plains of Assam.

Near to the pass there was a lake about half a mile long. It had no visible exit, but the water was fresh. The outflow was presumably subterranean.

*October 7th. Samjung. 12,850 ft.*

We continued down a very bad road, strewn with huge boulders over which we had to scramble. We spent the night at a single hut in the forest called Samjung. Then on again, leaving the river and crossing the Pöshing La in cloud.

*October 8th. Kyala. 12,500 ft.*

We had hoped to see some Lopa villages to the east from the head of the pass, but the visibility was so bad all day that we decided to halt for the night at another hut, called Kyala, after a march of only eight miles. It was always clear in the early morning and next morning we were rewarded.

To the south and south-east rolled the great plains of India as far as the eye could see and further. We looked at them with a sudden uprush of nostalgia for the life there, which we could so soon and easily enjoy if we declared our self-chosen mission at an end. "Look!" shouted Morshead, and I looked in the direction in which he was pointing, and there through my binoculars I saw faintly in the distance the smoke of a railway engine toiling across the great landscape. It was only a faint plume of smoke, but it immediately brought up the vision of the people travelling in that train, a first-class dining car, the spotless linen, food and drink in infinite variety, the fleshpots of India.

But it was not to be, yet. It remained what we could look forward to, when the job was over. Meanwhile our concern was with the low range of hills jutting into the plains from our left, with the spur well cultivated by the Lopas, little fields on a steep hillside with a small hut for storing the crop. Our concern was with the fields of Dirang to the right and the road we intended to take from there, leading west from the frontier to Tawang.

Morshead took some angles to the snows and some good triangulated peaks to the south, and while he waited to get a latitude I pushed on. It was 1100 feet down to the next rest hut. From the road two Lopa villages were visible on the left, with a good deal of cultivation. The houses were long and

seemed like Mishmi houses, but they were too far away for me to see clearly. To the right was the valley leading to Dirang, flat at the bottom and cultivated. All the hills were covered in forest.

*October 9th. Lagam. 9200 ft.*

The ground was gradually falling, Lagam where we spent the night being over 3000 feet lower than our rest hut of the previous night. The heat and humidity had increased enormously. We were back among the leeches and the *damdim* flies, and the yaks were so distressed by the heat that they had to be taken back immediately after we had reached Lagam. We had sent one of our coolies, Kesang, ahead to try and get *ula* from one of the Mönba villages.

Lagam had once been an inhabited Mago village, but the dwindling Mago population had abandoned it and it was now used only as a transit camp for Mönbas and Lopas trading with Mago villages. We passed a caravan of these traders, seventy-two people and fourteen animals, mostly ponies, all laden with madder and chillies, to me an astonishing amount for the few people of Mago to buy.

The next morning no Mönba *ula* turned up nor was there any sign of Kesang. So at 10 a.m. I set out with a couple of coolies to see what I could do.

I hadn't gone very far when I met Kesang, who had finally succeeded in persuading nine men from Pangma to carry our loads as far as Tembang. So I went on and sent a note back telling Morshead to follow.

*October 10th. Tembang. 7600 ft.*

Tembang was a large village, twenty houses huddled together on a spur, with fortified gateways on the approach roads. The houses were well built of stone with bamboo matting roofs.

They told me that there were two more Mönba villages down stream, first But, about six miles down, and after that Konia. Below Konia was the country of the Lopas, who were



called Torku by the people of Mago and Gido by the Mönbas. On the other side of the river the Lopa villages came further up, the nearest being just below But.

The people of Tembang were obliging enough about answering my questions, but as soon as it came to *ula* their manner changed. They were reluctant to give us a house for the night, saying that officials never came to Tembang and asking where our home was. They did not understand our explanations until they asked whether we were "sahibs". When we said yes, they said they understood all about us. But they were no more anxious to give us *ula* up river, in the opposite direction to India. After a great deal of argument, they said we could have nine men instead of the twelve we asked for. And when the next day came, we had great difficulty in assembling these nine.

*October 11th. Namshu. 6400 ft.*

We had the same difficulty again when we arrived at Namshu, a village of eighteen houses seven miles up stream from Tembang, the people asking us why we had come to their country, apparently under the impression that we had come direct up the river from India. But when we explained where we had been and what we were doing, they grew more friendly.

Their tax system was very complicated. They collected a tax of one yak per house from the people of Mago, with whom they traded. In their turn they had to pay taxes to Lhasa and to a number of different Lopa villages, each village exacting an amount proportionate to its importance.

There were about fifty of these Lopas in Namshu, Akhas from Hazarikhoa, some of whom spoke Assamese. They were dressed rather like the Lopas we had met in Trön, the same palm leaves and feathers in front of their hats, the same rope on the left wrist as handguard when they were shooting arrows. They had heard of the Abors and the Mishmis, and the earrings which they wore in their distended lobes were in the Mishmi fashion. Unlike the Lopas of Trön, they knew the uses of opium and smoked it. They also understood money

and were prepared to take it, when there was no barter they fancied.

*October 12th. Dirang Dzong. 5700 ft.*

We had no trouble in getting our *ula* to Dirang Dzong next day. We were off early and were very pleased at meeting an old lady on the road who presented us with delicious peaches. We crossed the Sangti Chu by a bridge, and looking up we could see parts of the road down which we had come from the Tse La. We went down the Sangti Chu to the Dirang river, which we crossed to the right bank, and reached Dirang Dzong after a march of six miles.

It was a large place, some eighty houses and a Dzong. The houses had roofs of bamboo matting and they looked strange and rather gay with the chillies laid out on them to dry. The Dzongpön was away, up at Tawang. We asked for the Dzongpön's agent and were told that he was at Nyukmadong, further up the valley. When we said that we wanted *ula* to continue our journey, the people made the excuse that they had received no notice of our arrival, but of course we should have *ula*. When we started to get impatient, they protested that the *ula* would not be ready until the evening so that we could not go on that day.

In the evening they came back and said that they were wild, stupid people like the Lopas and could they see our passport? I told them we had no passport and gave them a speech very like that which I had given to the Depa of Kishung.

It must have had its effect, because next morning our *ula* was ready promptly and we made an early start. But at Lis, a large village five miles up, we ran into the same trouble and had to wait for *ula*. We continued another seven miles up, crossing over to the left bank, and came to the village of Nyukmadong, smaller than those we had been passing through.

The people here dressed differently from those further down the valley. The women wore woollen clothes instead of cottons and Assam silk; and the men carried a curious pad hanging from the waist behind, a sort of portable cushion to sit on.

Most of them could speak Tibetan and they appeared more Tibetan than Mönba. But their behaviour was just as full of suspicion. We had run out of most things and were reduced to drinking a local form of tea which grew wild and tasted very nasty. But they refused to give us any food and added that they would not give us any *ula* until they had received permission from Sengedzong. We asked for the Dirang Dzongpön's agent and were told that he was of course in Dirang.

We realised what had happened was that since Tembang, we had been on the direct route from India into Tibet, and the people had probably been told that they would be punished if they allowed any unauthorised strangers through. But this realisation only whetted my anger. I waxed furiously eloquent, telling them we had been travelling through Tibet for five months and had never been treated with such discourtesy. I waved the Tsela Dzongpön's passport at them and showed them the seals on letters from the Lhasa government and the Tashi Lama and threatened them with the displeasure of those on high if they did not treat us with due civility. They were impressed. They raised the letters and touched their foreheads with the seals. Then they went away and produced a chicken for our supper.

But the next morning there was no sign of *ula* and I sent a servant to know why it had not come. They sent him back with a message that they must talk about it and then they would let us know if they would provide transport.

I went straight up to where they were all sitting. I was very angry and I told them that I would go on alone with three of our own coolies to Tawang and get an order sent back to provide us with *ula*. "And what's more," I added, "I'll have you all brought up to Tawang and beaten."

I left them and went back and gave orders for my bedding and some food to be packed. But before I could start, they came and said they would take us that day to Sengedzong and the day after we could make the long march to Jang. I showed the headman the seals on the letters I had and also the Kalon Lama's letter which had been sent on to us from

Showa. But I would not let him read a thing. "If any of my correspondence is to be read," I said, "it will be by the Dzungpön and not by people like you."

He said, rather disconcertingly, that he was not to be blamed for doubting us. The Dzungpön of Dirang had left his agent at Dirang and if we had received a letter of authorisation from him, there would have been no trouble. This merely made me angrier and more determined to get to authorities powerful enough not to be afraid of making decisions. So at last we agreed to accept their proposal of going with them as far as Jang.

*October 14th. Sengedzong. 9900 ft.*

They brought us some food and at three in the afternoon we set out on the four miles to Sengedzong, where once again they refused to supply either ourselves or our coolies with rations. We had enough left over, however, and we did not make a fuss.

*October 15th. Jang. 8000 ft.*

Next day we set out early in the soaking rain on the sixteen-mile march to Jang. The road was up four miles steeply across a spur for 3000 feet, then more gently for another mile to the Se La (13,940 feet by aneroid). The other side was similar, a gentle decline at first, later becoming very steep and stony.

What was worst was the pouring rain. We reached Jang late in the afternoon, drenched to the skin. We had no idea what reception we would get and were relieved when people met us and showed us into a house. We had at least shelter.

I sent for the headman and told him what *ula* we wanted for the next day. He answered that two years before the village had been punished for letting a man through and they could not help us without orders from Tawang Gompa. A little argument showed plainly that he was inflexible. We said no more about it, as we had agreed between ourselves that if there was trouble, I should leave Morshead and the coolies behind and go ahead myself. The headman agreed to provide a guide, but refused to carry any of my things.

We were all very hungry and short-tempered after the long march in the rain. Food was the important thing. But the headman refused to provide any.

I took hold of my rifle. "If you will not give us food," I said, "we will take it. If it is a choice of deaths, we prefer to die fighting rather than die of starvation."

At that the headman ordered us to be given food. He had probably wanted to give us food all the time, but he could not do so until we provided him with plea of *force majeure*. I forget what it was; I can only remember how wonderful it felt to be sitting out of the rain, eating and gradually getting dry.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SLEEP brought second thoughts to the headman. He refused to provide me with the guide he had promised, which I did not mind very much, since I had Nain Singh's itinerary and even if I hadn't I could scarcely have failed to find Tawang in this widely populated valley. I reserved my indignation for his refusal to provide Morshead and our coolies with food, while I was away. Before I left, with three of our coolies carrying my loads, the headman had given way on this and I could make the journey without anxiety for them.

I went down 800 feet through fields to the river. I crossed it by a long narrow bridge, built of two spans supported in the middle by a pillar of masonry, and climbed steeply for 700 feet and then more gently to the top of a spur, from which I could see in the distance the white pile of Tawang Gompa set on a grassy spur. It consisted of a number of buildings protected by a surrounding wall.

Four miles further on I came to a bridge over a stream, from which there was a short cut to Tawang. But being without a guide, I took the longer route via Gyangkar, where I was told an official lived. Arrived there, I sent in to say that I wanted to see the official and was invited to enter.

A monk and a layman were inside, both agents of the Dzongpön of Tsöna, from whom they had heard all about us. They were very cordial and invited me to drink some arrack with them. They had been drinking before I arrived and they were both well away. The monk told me that he had been to Calcutta and had been a servant of Dorjiev\* with whom he had visited Russia.

\* Dorjiev was a Siberian Buriat, a remarkable figure of that time, who owed religious allegiance to the Dalai Lama as a Buddhist and political allegiance to the Tsar as a Russian subject. He went to Lhasa about 1880 and entered

I left Gyangkar, feeling all the better for the arrack and for a conversation with people who were not trembling in their shoes for fear of punishment from the authorities of Tawang; and with me came three *ula* coolies, who had relieved my own men.

Three miles from the bridge I was met by an official, a sort of clerk of the Tawang Council. He took me to Tawang village, where he found me accommodation. It was rather late when we arrived and I was very wet, so I told him that I would prefer not to see the authorities at the Gompa until the morning. Meanwhile I wanted an order sent back to Jang to assist Morshead and enable him to come on with the kit to Tawang. He promised he would do this, and later in the evening the man who was to take the order next day arrived to show it to me. I approved it and arranged that the messenger should warn the villages on the way to have *ula* changes ready.

We had run out of tsampa and butter. But on my request the Gompa authorities supplied it without demur. They were all Tibetans, not Mönbas; and it was a pleasure to deal with them after their surly subordinates down the valley.

In the evening I talked to a boy who had been to India, eleven days' march via the Mokto bridge. He had come to a place called Baksha,\* where there was tea and sahibs rode in what he thought were railway trains, but from his description were clearly motor-cars. And *baniahs*† rode bicycles, which they propelled by ringing bells.

Mönyul was governed by the Trukdri, a Council of Six, situated in Tawang. There was the *Kenpo*, or Abbot, of Tawang, another high lama, two monks known as Nyetsangs, who corresponded to the Chandzos, or Stewards of Tibetan Gompas, and the two Dzongpöns of Tsöna or their agents. In

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Drepung Gompa, which was the largest monastery in the world, with ten thousand resident monks. He rose rapidly and became cup-bearer to the Dalai Lama with the title of Tsa Nyi Kenpo. He used his influence with the Dalai Lama to further Russian interests and it was largely that ascendancy which made the Younghusband Mission necessary.

\* He clearly meant Buxa, on the Bhutan frontier.

† *Baniahs* = shopkeepers.

the summer, when the heat was oppressive in Tawang, the Dzongpöns went up to Tsöna, leaving their agents to represent them in Tawang; and in the winter, when the cold was oppressive in Tsöna, the Dzongpöns came down to Tawang and sent the agents to take their places in Tsöna. Since Tawang was over 10,000 feet above sea level, this showed very clearly the Tibetan idea of oppressive heat and their dread of it. To deal with our case the Trukdri co-opted a number of minor officials and after they had debated among themselves for some hours I was summoned into their presence.

There were nineteen of them all told, sitting round the walls of a small square room drinking tea. In the middle of the room was a pillar at the base of which a cushion had been placed. I was told to sit there, facing the most important of the officials. I underwent a long, rather stiff interrogation, who we were, where we had come from, what passport we had and so on. It was cold and formal to start with, but it warmed up when I started talking about our maps and showed them one of the maps and some of our photographs. They were particularly interested to know whether we had made a good map of the Lopa frontier.

I knew from that moment that the battle was won. I had reached a responsible administrative level; and they could appreciate as well as we could ourselves the value of the work which we were doing. Though no decision was reached while I was there, I had no doubt that it would be favourable. And sure enough that evening a headman of the village came to see me with an offer of flour and eggs, saying that the committee had decided that I was up to no mischief.

Morshead arrived about noon next day. We spent the afternoon looking round the temples and then went before the committee. As on the previous day, there were cushions by the pillar in the middle, but there were not so many officials.

The opening of this meeting was once again rather formal—but there was none of that overnight recession into suspicion which we had found in other places. I asked for *ula* for the next day, saying that we wished to go to Tsöna as soon as pos-



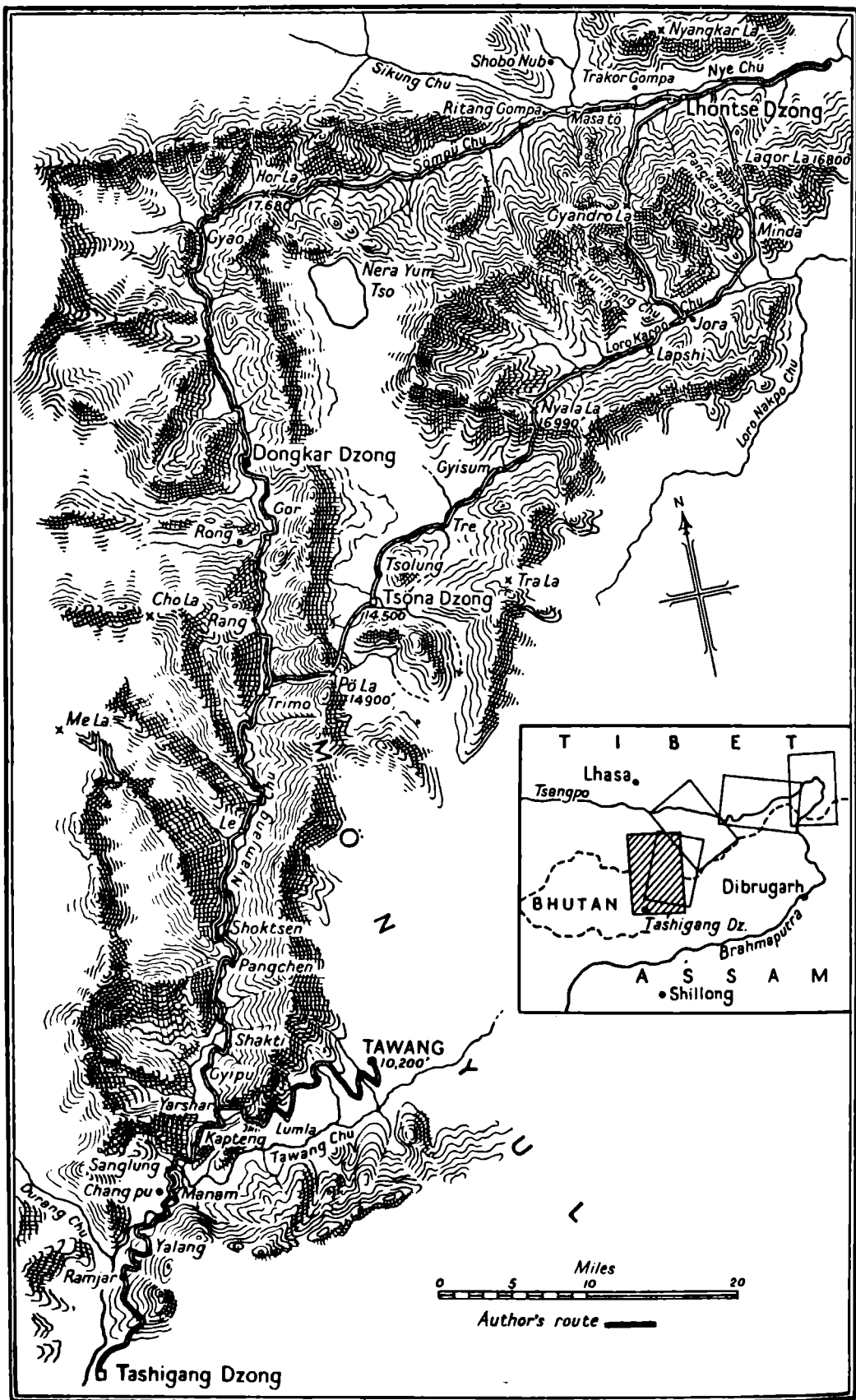
sible. They said that the direct route over the mountains (which Nain Singh had used) was blocked by snow. To reach Tsöna at this season we would have to take the long route along the valleys. They gave us a passport with four seals: the Kenpo's, the Labrang's, one of the Nyetsangs' and one of the Tsöna Dzongpöns'. It was a very impressive-looking document which we thought, misguidedly, would solve all our future *ula* problems. (We were to find that though our right of *ula* was never challenged and though the Mönbas carried far better on the march than Tibetans, it was almost as difficult to assemble them with a passport as without.)

After we had finished our formal business, we relaxed on both sides. I showed them the photographs of the Dalai and Tashi Lamas and ended by presenting them to the Council. They admitted that the reason why everybody had been so suspicious of us was because they were afraid that if we were not Chinese ourselves, we were at any rate Chinese agents. Two years before a Chinese soldier, who had fled from Po me, had followed a very similar course to ours, through Tsari, Sanga Chöling and Mago, and the people of Jang had been punished for letting him escape into India. That was why they had been so apprehensive of us.

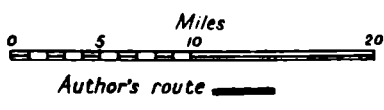
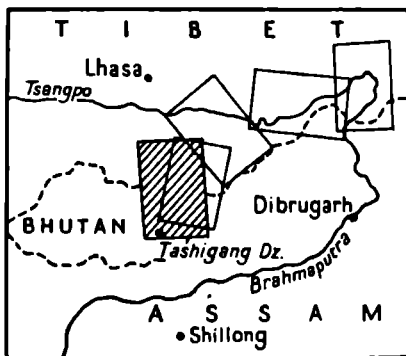
We talked of the friendship developing between our two countries and they said that now we could travel through their country without let or hindrance. But, they added, we should have brought a doctor with us, as Tibetan doctors were very bad and we could have done a lot of good to sick people.

When we were there, some of them were discussing the case of a woman who had lost, or said she had lost, some money which she had to send to Lhasa. We passed her on the way down to the village. From the beating she had received, we were glad that we had made friends with the authorities instead of enemies. They had left us in no doubt what they would have done with us, if we had not convinced them that we were not Chinese. "We would have put you in sacks," they said, "and sent you back to India."

We had no doubt that they would have done it, if they had



Tashigang Dzong



considered us dangerous. As good Buddhists, they would not have shot or beheaded us. That would have been taking life. But if we were alive, when the sacks in which we were tied had entered the river, it would be the river which had taken our lives, not the men who threw us in. As for the officer who gave the order to throw us in, he would be even further removed from any guilt.

I had given them a photograph of one of the Dawas responsible for the theft of our money and goods, because he came from a village not far from Tawang. But after we had heard what they had intended for us and seen what they had done to the woman, we hoped that Dawa had been wise enough not to go home.

Next day we made a late start, as the *ula* did not arrive on time. But this gave us the chance of getting the secretary of the committee to write in names for the map.

We travelled on the road above the river, winding back and forward along the mountainside, climbing on to spurs and descending into gorges; an eighteen-mile march which, with seven changes of transport, took us until half-past seven at night.

At Tawang there was a great concentration of holiness, 550 monks in a monastery whose population at times swelled to 700. But in Mönyul as a whole, there were fewer small monasteries scattered through the countryside. Piety was delegated to the water prayer wheels, which were to be seen in most of the houses along the road. There were also a great many Chötens, with religious paintings inside.

*October 18th. Lumla. 8250 ft.*

Lumla, where we stopped the night, had several bamboo huts specially built for the Dzungpöns of Tsöna on their journeys between Tsöna and Tawang.

The next day we had further *ula* trouble. We were late in starting because they failed to arrive. At Gyipu, where we changed *ula*, there was a long delay through trouble in collecting coolies, and we did not reach Shakti until four in the

afternoon, though it was only eleven and a half miles from our starting place. By then it was too late to reach the next stage, Pangchen, that day.

*October 20th. Shakti. 7250 ft.*

The crops in this part were terraced rice, tall beans on sticks, tobacco, maize, marwa and quantities of chillies. In Shakti there was one walnut tree, a few plantains, some peaches and an unpleasant berry, which usually had no stone, but at others compensated by having three or even four, an immature fruit in the evolutionary scale, which though determined to be nasty had not yet decided on the most effective means.

In the villages where we changed our *ula*, they usually had ready for us a bamboo mat hut with cushions and small tables on each of which a plantain leaf was placed as a tablecloth. In the middle there would be a fire on which we could cook corn-cobs to beguile the tedium of waiting for the transport to be changed.

The most exhausting part of our journey on this day was a climb of 500 feet up steps.

At Shakti there was the usual trouble of getting started in the morning. After eight miles we changed *ula* at Pangchen, from which according to our passport we should be carried to Le without change. But when we reached Shoktsen, the people of Pangchen tried to change *ula*. I protested, saying that they must carry us right through. It was a very long stage and I didn't want the delay which the change would cause.

A compromise was reached, in which only some of the coolies were changed and I sent them all ahead. But the coolies from Pangchen suddenly threw down their loads and ran away. So we had all the delay of changing after all and it was getting dark before we arrived at Le.

*October 21st. Le. 8350 ft.*

At Le were some Bhutanese traders who had come from Tsöna and we heard with relief that they had seen our servants

there two days before. After our experience with Anay and the two Dawas, we had both been secretly afraid that these two would abscond with the money.

The people in this part dressed differently from those below Pangchen. Round their felt hats they all wore a twisted peacock's feather. Their coats were white, not red, and hanging down their backs they had an animal skin. The women wore earrings, sometimes of red beads and at others of turquoise stuck with sealing wax to a piece of bamboo. Usually they had necklaces with a large piece of amber in front.

At Pangchen I saw them printing religious writings off a wooden block for prayer flags.

We were not able to get ponies to ride and, in their place, the people brought us one trangka which of course we refused to accept, as we normally paid something towards our transport. They went away rather crestfallen, and then returned with two trangkas. They seemed very confused when we refused these also. It had never happened to them before.

Next day, five and a half miles from Le, we came on a Tsukang or customs house. It was manned by a Tibetan, an agent of the Tsöna Dzongpön, who invited us in and gave us milk. While we were drinking it, he told us something of his position and the customs business. There were two customs houses, this the Western and another, Eastern one, on the direct route from Tawang to Tsöna. No duty was charged on goods going down from Tsöna, but on everything coming up a duty of 10 per cent was levied, mostly in kind, the merchants being mostly Mönbas and Bhutanese. Rice was a government monopoly and could be sold only to the Dre Drukpa.\* There was also a tax of  $\frac{1}{2}$  trangka per man and 1 trangka per animal.

The customs officer was an employee of the Tana family. When I had been on the Younghusband Expedition, a Tana had been Dzongpön at Nangatse. He had at different times been Dzongpön in Kongbu, Tsela, Shoga and Cholo. It was his son who was the Dzongpön of Tsöna at the age of twenty-two.

\* Dre Drukpa = Rice Agent.

*October 23rd-24th. Tsöna. 14,500 ft.*

We reached Tsöna next day, leaving the valley of the Nyamjang river and crossing the Pö La, where the country changed abruptly to rolling hills, barren of vegetation. From the pass we could see the main road leading from Tawang along the valley below to Tsöna Dzong in the distance.

Tsöna was a largish town, but most of the houses were empty as the merchants had left for the winter. But our servants were there and the Dzongpön's agent came to see us and brought the money, which had been deposited with him. Instead of 100 rupees for which we had asked, Ata Ulla had provided 250: and to make good measure he had added a welcome gift of cigarettes.

We had thought in view of the approaching winter that we would have to return from Tsöna the way we had come. With this extra money we were able to buy warm Tibetan coats for our coolies, which would enable us to cross the Hor La and so work down to Bhutan by a different route.

We also bought a brick of second-quality tea, the price of which was 15 per cent higher in Tsöna than it had been in Tsetang.

There were three trading seasons in Tsöna: the Yartsong or Summer Market in the fifth month, the Töntsong or Autumn Market in the seventh month and the Winter Market or Gunt-song in the tenth and eleventh months. Very few of the traders lived there all the year round. Most came up for the seasonal markets. The main winter trade was in salt. Mönbas brought it in from the people of the Changtang, north of Lhasa, and with the money they got for it went on to buy grain in the Nye valley. From Trimu, there was also a trade in planks, which were sold in Tsöna, three for a trangka, and then taken on to Tsetang.

Both the Dzongpöns came to see us, the young Tana boy of whom we had heard at the customs house and an old monk of Ganden. The old monk soon left, saying he had work to do; but the young man stayed on, looking at our photographs and equipment and telling us about his own experiences.

He had fought against the Chinese in Lhasa the year previously, and he was full of optimism. The Tibetans, he said, had fought much better than the Chinese. The Chinese fought, each man for himself, and no heed to the officers. In the Tibetan army the morale was much higher, because there was no officer class. A man could rise from the ranks to the highest command.

The Tibetan army was organised in sections of ten, each commanded by a *Chupön*. Over each ten sections was the equivalent of our company commander, a *Gyapön*. Over every five companies was a *Rupön*; and over every ten companies, or thousand men, was a *Depön*.

They had plenty of rifles, both Chinese and Russian; and they could get as many more from Russia as they wanted. We wondered whether this was perhaps due to the good offices of Dorjiev. And when we heard that the Tibetan army was being reorganised under the instructions of two Japanese, we thought that we had discovered the activities of the two mysterious Japanese who had travelled to Lhasa disguised as muleteers.

Now that we had adequate clothing for our servants, we could fill in the large blank in our map to the north and north-east of Tsöna. The next day we headed north-east in the direction of Lhöntse Dzong.

On our way we called at the Tsöna Dzong, which was a mile and a half away from the town. Nearby was a hot spring which in the cold morning was sending up clouds of steam. Instead of in the usual large building, the Dzongpöns lived in houses in the village. Tsöna was really a centre for the collection of taxes and in no way a strongpoint.

I gathered that until recently there had been only lay Dzongpöns; but that since the fighting with the Chinese, Ganden monastery had been allowed to appoint representatives to help recoup their war losses by a share of the taxes.

The old monk whom I had met the day before revealed that he had met me before in Lhasa, when I was lunching with the Ti Rimpoche, whom he said was still going strong at the age of seventy-nine.

With the young man, the Tana Tungkor, there was the Tungkor of Shio Shika to whom we had sold the two sovereigns. He had in the meantime enquired about their value and found that they were worth very much more than he had given me for them. He was reluctant to sell them back, but I held him to his promise, because we had nothing with us except Tibetan money, which would be useless when we got back to India.

We were now fairly well set up, with five gold sovereigns and 550 trangkas remaining from the 800 with which Ata Ulla had provided us. But with an eye to the future, I asked that Trashigang Dzong should be advised that we were coming through some time next month and that the people of Rang should be instructed that we would need *ula* for the three days' march that would take us to the first Bhutanese village.

The Tana Tungkor entertained me in his house with tea and Huntley & Palmer's biscuits. In his room he had several Chinese rifles, one of which had been cut down at both ends to make a pistol. There was also a cheap sword, such as the Chinese officers carried. They were now being worn by Tibetan officers as a sign of rank, he said. "Of course they're useless for fighting. For that you need a real Tibetan sword."

He told me that he was going to Calcutta in January to learn English and Japanese, but he would return before the hot season. He was, as I have said, an optimistic young man. But I do not think that even he expected to master the two languages in that time. We suspected that he was being sent on a secret mission for the Tibetan government and I pressed him to write to me when he came to India.\*

The road we took from the Tsöna Dzong ran roughly parallel with that which we had taken up the Loro Nakpo river, but ten to fifteen miles to the west. Two miles out from the Dzong we reached a village of five houses, called Tsolung, from which a road went up a valley and across the Tra La to Pendo, through which we had passed on October 2nd.

We, however, continued on our parallel course, crossing a

\* He didn't.



small pass, the Doka La, a thousand feet above Tsöna. About three inches of snow were lying on the pass and more was falling as we crossed. The visibility was good enough for us to see a high snowy range to the west, high over which we could see the pass leading from Tsöna to Dongkar.

We continued down a valley leading to a three-house village called Tre. The road was swarming with bharal and I also saw some gazelle, which I missed with the shotgun, and a fox which I missed with the pistol.

At Tre we came to a stream which we were told joined the Mago Chu not far from Jang. We went up this for a couple of miles, seeing more bharal on the way.

Here the valley split into two. We took the right fork up a valley, where there were said to be stags, though we saw none; and after four miles we reached the small village of Gyisum, where we spent the night. At 15,500 feet it was too high for corn to ripen, and it was fed green to animals.

This was the richest day we had for seeing animals; three herds of gazelle, numbering twenty in all, and nine herds of bharal with a total of 200. But among the bharal there were only three good heads and they were a long way off and out of our way. Even these did not appear as good as those I had already got.

In the valley joining at Gyisum, I saw seventeen *Ovis Ammon* ewes with two young ones. Shortly after sunrise next morning I went up the valley in the hope of finding a ram, but there was nothing except a few *kyang*, or wild donkeys (*Equus hemionus*).

So I retraced my steps and went up the main valley, where there were plenty of *kyang* and a few gazelle. After two miles we turned north up a side valley. If we had continued up the main valley we would have reached Goshu, through which we had passed on October 1st. The side valley took us in two miles to the top of the Nyala pass (16,990 feet). Near the top I saw a lot of *Ovis Ammon* and in one place a mixed herd of *Ovis Ammon*, *kyang* and gazelle.

There were four rams on a hill and four down the valley.

I could not shoot, because I had only the shotgun. Morshead had taken the rifle to go after a gazelle.

I waited for a long time for Morshead, but before he appeared the four rams on the hill were scared by three *kyang* who were galloping about. The four rams joined those below and they all went off down the valley.

I followed round the hilltop, keeping out of sight. Then I saw Morshead, who had obviously spotted them from below and was stalking them. But he was in very open ground and the animals seemed restless. They did not sit down or eat. They kept running about and butting each other.

Below me a ridge of rock ran down into the bottom of the valley. I went down to this and watched from there.

Suddenly they all began to run more in earnest and I noticed nine altogether. This must have been when Morshead fired.

I saw four of the best running straight up the valley towards my ridge of rock, so I slipped down behind it with the shotgun, hoping they might come close to me as the wind was right. Up the bottom of the valley they came to within about 200 yards. Then they stopped and for a moment I thought they would come up towards me; but they climbed the other side of the valley and sat down about 400 yards off. After some time they were joined by four smaller ones, which also sat down.

I could not leave my ridge without their seeing me and as I thought Morshead might still be stalking them, I lay there watching for about two hours. Four were shootable and two of them had good heads, probably over forty inches.

When it grew late and there was still no sign of Morshead, I got up and quite openly began to climb back up the hill. At first they took no notice of me, but first one of them got up and then the others and made their way leisurely up the opposite hill.

I met Morshead near the top of the hill. He had shot two of the rams. They were good heads, and the supplies of meat were welcome.

We made our way together to the pass, but then, since it was late and we had not told the *ula* to stop at Loro tö, the

first village in the new valley, the Laro Karpo, I rode ahead to catch them up.

I found them about seven miles down the valley and ordered Morshead's bedding and some food to be sent back, while I myself went on to Lapshi, the next *ula* stage.

The large numbers of game, *Ammon*, bharal, *kyang* and gazelle, roaming in herds in this open rolling country reminded me of pictures of the game in East Africa, especially those in J. G. Millais' *A breath from the Veldt*.

*October 26th-27th. Lapshi. 13,500 ft.*

I spent the whole of the next day at Lapshi, waiting for Morshead. It was rather dull and I saw none of the bharal that I was told abounded there. Morshead sent me a note to say that he was trying for some more *Ovis Ammon*, so the next day I went ahead alone.

I went down the valley four miles to Jora Shika, where there were some large houses and a Gompa of eighty monks above the right bank of the river.

This Gompa had previously been an estate of the Tengyeling Gompa in Lhasa. But as the monks of Tengyeling had collaborated with the Chinese, their Lhasa monastery had been razed to the ground and a barracks erected in its place. All their estates had been confiscated and the monks were scattered all over the country. In charge of Jora were a Tungkor and Tsetrung,\* but though their agents were there, I did not see them. The monk who received me at the monastery was an agent of Tengyeling, who had been told he must leave the place but could not make up his mind where he should go. He was a furtive creature, with the demoralisation common among unsuccessful collaborators. He would not believe a word of what I said, being quite convinced that I might be anything except what I was. He huddled close to me and talked in a confidential whisper.

Was I looking for gold? he asked. No? Then perhaps I was an agent of the Chinese. I was British? But surely the

\* A fourth rank lay official and a fourth rank monk.

British were going to help the Chinese to take over Tibet. No? Well what about Darjeeling? If he went to Darjeeling, would anybody feed him, if he sat around and did nothing as he did in Jora? I told him that he would have to work for his living. He shook his head and sighed. Any moment I expected to hear him start talking about "the good old days".

From Jora there were two different routes to Lhöntse, one up the valley of the Turinang Chu and over the Gyandro La and the other, further east, up the valley of the Pangkarnang Chu and over the Lagor La. I left a note for Morshead telling him to take the former route, while I took the latter.

*October 28th. Minda. 13,700 ft.*

I spent the night at Minda, an estate of Samdru Potrang. My host was a minor official, who was very obliging, if a trifle ineffectual. "I have been ill here for two years," he said. He said it as anyone else might say, "I have lived here for two years." If he was transferred, he would go somewhere else and be ill there.

There was no *ula* ready, because he had not been warned, he said. Anyway the route over the Gyandro La was quicker and the Jora people must have lied to me, because over the Gyandro La they have to carry right through to Lhöntse. He was so kind and helpless that I did not dare to tell him that it would have made no difference, because I wanted to travel this route anyway. Such a complication might have sent his temperature up.

Up the valley next morning I saw bharal and gazelle with heads, but I could do nothing about it, as I still had only the shotgun.

From the top of the Lagor La (16,800 feet) I could see to the south the snow peak which Morshead had fixed from the funeral mound above Trashi Tong Me, and also the valley up which we had gone to Mago. To the north I could see the valley of the Nye and the Trakor Gompa on the opposite bank. The whole country was brown, no green at all, though the Nye valley was broad and well cultivated.

It was intensely cold on the pass. On the north side it fell very steeply, dropping 3700 feet in four miles, to Lhöntse.

*October 29th. Lhöntse Dzong. 13,100 ft.*

The Dzong was a fine stone building on a hill with a wood of a thorny tree they called *la* just below it. Immediately on reaching it, I asked for a couple of ponies and rode down the Nye river a distance of about ten miles to a bend from which I could see some peaks just beyond the Le La, the pass we had crossed on September 24th. I took some bearings and got enough information for us to join up the map.

Morshead arrived that evening. He had no more luck with the *Ovis*, though he had seen about fifty of them and missed one. Wolves, which he had also seen, had driven the *Ovis Ammon* away. "They were much more afraid of the wolves than they were of me," he said. He had found an *Ovis Ammon* lying on a spot which he had passed when he was stalking. It had a fair head and had been killed by wolves the night before.

The next morning before we set out we called on the Dzongpön. He was as elusive as he had been when we were trying to give him information about the theft of our money. His only representative was an uneducated coolie whom we found in a kitchen underneath the Dzongpön's house.

Opposite Lhöntse to the north was a large gorge running up to the Nyangkar pass, which we had seen to the south of us when we were at Yakshi on September 6th.

We had thus filled in the gaps of our map to the east and to the north. It remained therefore for us to head west until we reached the drainage of the Nyamjang Chu and then make south for Bhutan and India, filling in the map as we went.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

FOUR miles west of Lhöntse, we reached Masa Tö, where we changed transport. The river was fordable at this point and I crossed over to the left bank and went up a side valley a couple of miles further up. I continued up this side valley for two and a half miles. Then it forked north-west and north-east. The north-west fork led up past Shobo Nub Gompa eventually to Lhagyari, and the north-east fork led to the Char Tö, down which we had come during the first week in September.

This was the last link which we could make with our northern exploration. I returned to the Nye river, crossing it again where it split into two at Ritang Gompa. One fork, called the Sikung, went north-west, eventually to Lhasa. The other, the Sömpü, slightly south of west, was the one we followed.

*October 30th. Sömpü Do. 14,100 ft.*

At Sömpü Shika, where we had to change transport, no *ula* was available. I had a bit of a row before I succeeded in getting any, the people maintaining that it was too late to go a further stage. But I insisted and we arrived at a small village called Sömpü Do late in the afternoon, where it was already dark and freezing hard. We were over 14,000 feet up and even the difference of 1000 feet between there and Lhöntse showed very perceptibly in the temperature.

*October 31st. Gyao. 15,000 ft.*

Next day was the worst of any we experienced, not excepting the passage through the deserted valley on our way to Chimdro, right at the very outset. We made a march of nineteen miles, crossing over our last high pass, the Hor La (17,680 feet). On the way up I saw a lot of game, bharal, snowcock, partridges and hares. Halfway up, we had lunch

in a Drokpa's hut, a slight shelter from the bitter wind. Here and elsewhere in the shepherds' camps were the remains of sheepdung fires, burnt every night to keep away the wolves.

A strange sight in this cold country were the hot springs steaming from both sides of the valley. It was almost as strange to come on a caravan of sixty yaks, bringing salt from Yamdok Tso to the rice official at Tsöna.

While we were having lunch, I watched the Drukpas making cheese. They heated the milk and poured into it the whey left over from the last cheese they had made. This curdled it and they strained it through a brushwood filter, using the whey strained off to curdle the next bucketful.

The last three miles of the climb to the top of the pass were very steep. Looking back from the pass I could see a bit of the lake they call the Nera Yu Tso. It was intensely cold and a little snow was falling. So I went on. But Morshead decided to wait on the pass for his plane table, hoping for the weather to clear.

They had told us we should see gazelle and *Ovis Ammon* but we saw none at all. But in the steep slope down from the pass, I saw two herds of bharal and a pack of wolves, evidently hunting.

Looking back to the pass, I found it was hidden in a snowstorm. But as it was already late, I did not wait but went on down to Gyao, a fair-sized village below the snowline. It was dark by the time we arrived and I waited for some hours, getting more and more anxious about Morshead and his party.

Finally about nine Morshead arrived with his coolies. He had been caught in the snowstorm and unable to do any work. But my feeling of relief was short-lived. They soon found that one of the coolies and Morshead's guide, a woman, were missing.

A search party was sent back with torches made from strips of the bark of the white poplar. We sat on waiting in the cold room, trying to pass the time with conversation. Morshead had seen forty bharal which I hadn't and I had seen 149 during the day. Where did the roads go from here? Under what

Dzong were the people of Gyao? It was all the sort of information which I had been taking down in my diary day after day and was useful. But the whole time we were listening for the sound of the returning party.

They got back around midnight. The search party had found them both lying on the freezing ground a couple of miles up the valley, numbed and resigned to death.

Gyao was 15,000 feet up. But we were now on the south side of the Himalayas. From now on every day we were going down closer and closer to the baking heat of India.

Before leaving Gyao, I went over the monastery. There were only four monks there. But they possessed a library of about 1100 books, thirty being enormous volumes, eighteen inches broad.

We were now back in the Nyamjang drainage and our route lay down the river. As we went, we mapped, we waited for *ula*, we got angry when it looked as if being angry would be effective and sometimes when it wasn't.

It was five and a half months since we had left Mipi and over a year since we had been in any city of the western type. That moment at Tembang when we had seen in the distance the smoke of a railway engine puffing across the plains of Assam, we had felt a tremendous nostalgia. It had been hard to turn back to complete our task. But now that we were going back, that each step took us closer to the Tibetan frontier, the reluctance to leave the country grew stronger. There was so much more to explore, to map, to note down. We were conscious less of what we had achieved than of what we had failed to achieve, the missing sections of the Tsangpo river, the uncharted valley of the Gyamda river up from Tsela Dzong. We had had the chance of a lifetime to get as far as we had and we had the foreboding that the chance would never recur. What we failed to do now, we would never do.

It was still bitterly cold, with an icy wind in our faces all day and the snowline descending as we descended. But this did not worry us so much as the thought of returning to the humdrum of the British Raj.



What especially depressed us was that there lay ahead a stretch of the Nyamjang river, from Trimo to Yarshan, which we had already traversed on our way up from Tawang to Tsöna. The only way in which we could avoid retracing our path was to cut south-west across the two passes, the Cho La and Me La to Durang, or, as the Butanese call it, Trashiyangsi.

*November 2nd. Gor. 13,750 ft.*

We proposed this to the Dzongpön of Gor; but he said that it was too late in the year. No Bhutanese had been over for some time, which must mean that the snow had blocked the road.

We said that we would try all the same. But when we had made our arrangements we found that even if the passes were open, we would lose our Tibetan *ula* when we came to the frontier and would have to wait until we could get transport from Bhutan. This was too great a risk and we decided to go down the river, even if it meant covering some of the same ground.

The Dzongpön presented us with lots of flour, rice and other commodities of which we were in need, and we set out down river with the winter in close pursuit. Gor was 13,750 feet up. Rang, thirteen miles down river, was 2500 feet lower, yet many degrees colder.

*November 3rd. Rang. 11,300 ft.*

To overcome the difficulties we usually had in collecting *ula*, we promised the people of Rang eight trangkas if the yaks arrived early. In consequence, we got away soon after sunrise. We reached Trimo after four and a half miles and while we changed transport, with unusual speed, we called on a friend, the customs official, and asked him to write a Dayig, which means literally an Arrow-letter.

A Dayig is a picturesque document written on red cloth and tied to an arrow, round which it is furled like a flag for carriage and unfurled for perusal. Anyone can send a Dayig, and it is used to warn people on the road that an official is approaching and to state what his requirements will be.

*November 4th. Le. 7950 ft.*

Thanks to all these things we made seventeen miles that day and reached Le, where the night was cool but pleasant. After we had finished dinner a disquieting thought occurred to us. All the way along the route, people had come to us, asking for medicine. We had never refused a request for medical attention; but we had neither the skill nor the drugs to cure anyone. All we could boast was that we had never killed anyone with what we had prescribed—which is more than many qualified practitioners could say. And perhaps we had given some temporary relief with the psychological benefit of a pill. It did not matter greatly to us, because the next day we were on the road again and were miles away before it was discovered that our medicine was useless.

But now we were coming back to places where we had given medical attention. In most cases we had little to fear. But in Shakti between Pangchen and Gyipu, there had been a particularly distressing case. I had been taken to see a little girl, who was quite obviously at death's door. What was wrong with her I don't know. She was running a high fever, the body was dehydrated and there was that peculiar hue to the complexion which precedes death. I knew that I could do nothing, so I merely gave the parents aspirin, calomel and some quinine for luck, saying they were unlikely to take effect. The thought of having to face their sorrow, their mute accusation of incompetence, made me feel very uneasy.

We got off early again the next morning and sent ahead two coolies with the Dayig, the first coolie to warn the people of Pangchen and the second to go on ahead of us to advise the Dzongpön of Trashigang of our coming. We congratulated ourselves on the efficiency of our organisation.

But when we reached Pangchen, we found the coolie who was supposed to be on his way to Trashigang kicking his heels, waiting for the headman to arrive and give him a guide.

We hung around in Pangchen trying to get a complement of coolies. The moon was full and we decided to have a high tea and then go on by moonlight. But even when we had

finished tea, there was still one load without a coolie and time was being wasted looking for a man.

I solved the problem by picking on a man who had been passed over because he was so very drunk. I made him carry the load and I kept him in view to see that he and the load came to no harm.

The drunk man only took up the load under protest, but later when the other coolies caught us up, bringing with them the bearer for whom they had been looking, the drunk man refused to give up his load and went on with us.

*November 5th. Camp. 5500 ft.*

At about eight o'clock, when it was dark, we camped in a field. We were down to 5500 feet now and it was so warm that we did not trouble to pitch the tent. In two days we had descended from winter into summer.

It was as well we had not sent back the extra coolie. The drunk, sobering up during the night, had disappeared by the morning.

Undiscouraged by the failure of our efficiency organisation, we tried the scheme again and it was a brilliant success. We did not have to wait long in any village and we made seventeen and a half miles.

Our first change of *ula* was Shakti. As we approached, we were met by the villagers, who processed us into the village, carrying burning incense in front of us. Among the children, there was one, a little girl, whom I remarked especially because she presented physically such a contrast with the dying child to whom I had given the medicines.

While we were waiting for the change, several people came up to me, one of whom I noticed as the father of the dying child. He pointed to the others and said that they were ill and would I treat them?

“But your daughter . . .” I said.

“She is there,” he answered, and pointed to the little girl whose glowing health I had noticed.

I treated the sick in Shakti and in other villages we came to,

where the fame of this miraculous cure had penetrated. Calomel, aspirin and quinine might be limited in action, but taken with a dose of faith, perhaps they enabled the body to work its own miracles.

Only in very special cases and then in small quantities did we administer the Boiling Medicine, since our supplies of Eno's Fruit Salts were very small. The Tibetans had never seen anything boil when cold, and a dose of it was capable of giving enough faith to remove, if not mountains, most other things.

At Yarshar we left our old route and went steep down and up again to Pomong and Karteng. Down again once more and we crossed the Nyamjang river by a bamboo suspension bridge with a span of about 135 feet. The coolies carrying our loads could not cross more than three at a time.

We overtook a good many traders and pilgrims going to India. They were going very slowly and were intending to stop some time in Bhutan, as India was too hot for them in November and December.

*November 6th. Sanglung.*

Sanglung, where we spent the night, was on the hillside forming the right bank of the Nyamjang, just above its confluence with the Tawang river. Growing in the fields were rice, orange trees and plantains.

Six miles down from Sanglung next day we crossed the Bhutanese-Tibetan frontier, a small dry watercourse without a name. One mile further on we came to the first Bhutanese village, Chang Pu.

There was no clear distinction between the frontier villages on either side, though there was a distinction between these villages and those of central Mönnyul. Their houses, like those of the Mönbas, were built of stone with sloping roofs of wood or bamboo matting. But they were more open than those of the Mönbas, to combat the heat, and usually had a part of the wall made of whitewashed wattle and daub, or planks between wooden beams.

The men dressed like those of western Bhutan, with the

lower part of the *chuba* short, like a kilt. They wore their hair short, never in a queue. Most of the women also wore their hair short. Those who wore it long were the more elderly. These tied over it a silver band studded with turquoise.

Goitre was no respecter of frontiers and we found a heavy incidence of it for a few miles either side of the frontier.

Crossing from Tibet to Bhutan, we were concerned to establish there relations as good as we had enjoyed in Tibet. Before we reached Chang Pu, we were met by Tindu, whom we had sent ahead to Trashigang to warn them of our coming. He had got no further than the Durang river. A trader finding the bridge in poor repair had crossed over and then burnt it in order to force the local people to build a decent one. But they had not completed it in time for Tindu.

We were, however, given a warm welcome by the people of Chang Pu. They gave us food and their own brew of *chang*. This they made mostly from millet, but with the addition of a little maize or barley. The grain was fermented in a bowl and then hot water was poured on it. They served it by pressing down a small basket which filled with the liquor without allowing any of the grains to come through; and this they allowed to flow into wooden cups. It was a variation on the Sikkimese custom of sucking the *chang* through a bamboo tube which kept out most of the grains. As the bowl grew empty, they filled it up with hot water, as we do with tea in a pot.

Waiting for us in the village were two servants of the Dzongpön of Naksang. They were at our service, they said; and they added that the Trongsa Penlo had sent orders that we were to be helped.

We did not know whether the Trongsa Penlo's assistance had been requested by our own government, or whether he had heard we were coming and had given orders on his own.

*November 7th. Manam. 4700 ft.*

After some delay, relieved by *chang*, we got coolies to take us down to Manam, 2000 feet in a mile and a half. But when

we reached there, everybody was out working in the fields. The efficiency system had suffered at least a temporary breakdown.

Despite the good will of the Trongsa Penlo, the *ula* was late in arriving the next morning. To get round the burnt bridge over the Durang river we went down very steeply to the river-bank and crossed to the left bank of the Tawang river over a cane suspension bridge with a span of 180 feet. Then we continued down the left bank through rice fields.

All along this valley the lac insect was cultivated. This was done by hanging on trees forked twigs covered with the insects, which then spread in myriads on the young shoots, digging their proboscides into the bark and drawing nutriment from the sap. They exude a resinous secretion from their bodies which forms a hard layer all along the twigs. This contains myriads of cocoons, in which the females spend the whole of their useful, if unadventurous, lives. Impregnated by the males, the female grows into a large crimson ovary, attached still to the twig by her beak.

When the lac is harvested, the branches are cut off. The resin is crushed and washed to free it from colouring matter, and when further treated, is marketed as "shellac" to make sealing wax, and to form the basis of a number of varnishes. The dye is used in various ways.

From each crop, the forked twigs are laid aside to provide the "seed" for the next.

Two miles from the bridge we climbed up a hill, which rose 1500 feet in the first mile and then went up more gently for the second mile through long-needled pine trees to Yalang village. The people had two incense fires burning outside the village. But the three headmen left this distraction and came to greet us, carrying incense sticks in their hands. They made us welcome with *chang*, and when we went on our way they sped us with more burning incense. What was far more to the point, they had our *ula* waiting ready for us.

*November 8th. Ramjar. 5300 ft.*

That was not the case when we reached Ramjar, four miles

further on. In charge of the village was a minor official, called a *Trumba*, an old gentleman of seventy-two who had served the father of the Trongsa Penlo. His memories of the old days were vivid, but his grasp on the present was tenuous. He dithered and asked to see our passport. We told him that a letter had come from the Trongsa Penlo, but it had gone up the opposite bank of the river before the bridge was burnt.

"Why don't you go down the opposite bank?" he asked.

"Because the bridge has now been burnt," we answered patiently.

"Oh well," he said, desperately groping with this present crisis. "We couldn't possibly give you *ula* before tomorrow morning."

When we agreed to that, he brightened. Tomorrow was another day and there was something worrying him far more than our transport. He broached it now.

"A man disappeared nine days ago," he said. "There's not a sign of him. I wondered if you could tell me where he is."

We said that we hadn't seen him.

"Of course not," he answered, "but perhaps you could find out by divination."

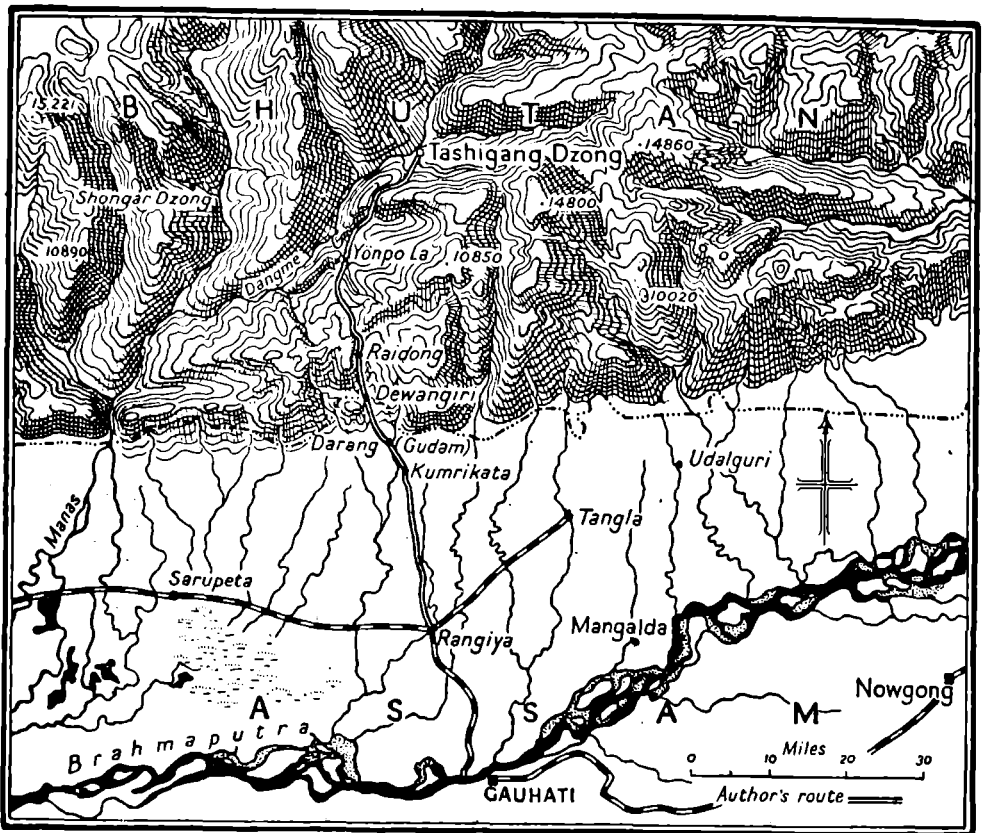
Somewhat to our surprise, the transport was ready early the next morning. We climbed to a spur 1000 feet above the village and came out on to a good road, which we followed through thin oak forest, descending 1000 feet in three and a half miles, where we reached some Chötens.

*November 9th. Tashigang. 3250 ft.*

From there the road fell steeply, 3200 feet in three miles, to a sixty-foot bridge across the Gamri river. It was intensely hot at the bridge and I went on ahead climbing up to Tashigang Dzong, 1300 feet above.

It was a huge building, very well built, with a number of temples, which we later discovered to be of small interest architecturally or iconographically.

Outside the Gompa I was met by several people who presented me with white silk scarves; and within the courtyard



the Dzongpön himself, a pleasant man of fifty-three, was waiting, also with a scarf. He took me by the hand and led me up to a room which had been got ready for us.

A religious dance was in progress and he had cushions brought and we sat and watched it until Morshead arrived.

Sitting on a long bench was a row of about twenty masked figures and in the centre of them were those of Lopön Rimpoche and Buddha himself. Seven women sang, dancing with their hands as they did so. Then they brought all the babies in the place and presented them one by one before Lopön Rimpoche, who blessed them and gave them names. This rather surprised me, since Lopön Rimpoche was the follower of Buddha, not his master; but I imagined that the same principle was at work, according to which in certain places minor Catholic saints are preferred to busier figures in the higher ranks.

After the naming ceremony, some monks danced without masks. They wore silk clothes, ritual hats and aprons of carved human bones. They carried bells (*Tribu*) and skull



hand-drums (*Dramaru*). Twice in the middle of the dance they stopped, lined up in a row and chanted something which I could not understand.

After that one of the masked figures got up from the bench and began to dance. The others joined him one by one until all were dancing except the Lopön Rimpoche and the Buddha. Among them were three Mahomedan masks, comic figures who danced regardless of the movements of the others, much to the delight of the spectators.

Four children came in, also wearing masks. They bowed to Lopön Rimpoche and Buddha, who then rose and proceeded behind the children in a progress through the temple, while the masked figures continued their dancing.

The departure of Lopön Rimpoche and Buddha from the temple marked the end of the ceremony; and as they left, I saw once again to my surprise that the Buddha bowed to the Lopön Rimpoche, as if the Lopön Rimpoche was his superior.

After it we went to the Dzongpön's room, where he kept a lot of different rifles. I noticed two martini carbines with Indian Government marks on them. They were part of a consignment of sixty, he said, which had been presented to the Trongsa Penlo when he was in India.

The Dzongpön said that there would be no one at Gudam, the first Indian village across the frontier; and we were not quite sure how we were going to get on from the Bhutanese-Indian frontier to Gudam and thence to the nearest railway station.

*November 10th. Jiri Bridge. 4400 ft.*

The Dzongpön came to see us the next morning before we set out. We chatted for a time and he told me about their taxes, two annas per man and one trangka per pony crossing the bridge in the direction of India, but nothing for those going up.

He came some way beyond the gate with us, gave us each a good silk scarf and sent on two riderless ponies for us to use on the second half of the march.

At Tashigang Morshead closed his survey. The country from here on to the railway had already been mapped. He was now free from the care of seeing that no feature we passed was omitted from the map, a task which had made his share of the work more exacting than mine.

We went eight miles to Dongkar, the end of the *ula* stage. But when we got there, we found that the day before everybody had gone to Tashigang to see the dance and they had not come back.

We left some of the loads to be brought on when they returned and pushed on, partly through rhododendron and oak forest and higher up on the Yenpu La (8250 feet) through open bracken.

The pass was 5000 feet higher than Tashigang and there were rest huts at intervals along the road. There was another hut just beyond the top of the pass where the forest began again, a pleasant place beside a little stream.

From the highest part we had a magnificent view back across the country through which we had come. To the north-east more than forty miles away we could see snow on the mountains beyond Mago. On either side of the Nyamjang river there was snow, on the long range running north and south which we had crossed over the Hor La, and the great range running east to west, which formed the barrier between Tibet and Bhutan, the mountains we had been warned we could not cross by the Me La, because it was too late.

We stood in the sunshine, gently sweating, looking back at the high cold land from which we had come. It was hard to imagine, though it was only eleven days ago, the snow-storm that struck the Hor La and that bitter cold which froze even hope in the coolie and the woman guide caught on the mountain. And then we turned to the south, the direction in which we were going. There was forest sloping downwards and beyond that nothing, just a great haze of heat that was India.

Three miles below the pass, we left the main road to De-wangiri. There were no villages along the main road—prob-

ably because there is small attraction in living where the claims of *ula* can be heavy.

We camped that night beside a fine cantilever bridge across the Jiri river. Once again it was so warm that we did not trouble with the tent.

So we went on for the next two days, up and down the foothills, through country which we had been told in Tashigang was dry but which combined a shortage of water for camping with more rain and more snakes than we liked. Finally on the afternoon of November 12th we crossed the watershed over the Rimpa La. No longer did the streams flow westward into the Tawang river. They flowed southward directly to India. I celebrated the event with a bout of fever.

*November 11th. Pang Ka. 6000 ft.*

It was not until the next day that we saw the plains of India. They were very different from the forest-clad plains near Sadiya, as they had greeted me at the end of my long journey through China and Tibet two years before. This was a great expanse of rolling browns, which were probably parched long grass, spotted with dark green stains of jungle.

We might have reached India that day, if transport arrangements had not broken down. We had sent Tindu on in advance as usual, but when we reached the village of Yando, five miles from our starting place, there was no transport waiting for us. We had to wait there for five hours, our tempers rising with the thermometer, until finally the coolies appeared accompanied by a minor official, who tried to propitiate us with gifts of fowls, oranges and rice. He swore that Tindu had told him that we intended to stay in the village overnight, otherwise of course he would have brought up the transport earlier. When he saw that we did not believe a word, he whistled up more food.

*November 12th. Tungshing. 4250 ft.*

We went a further seven miles that day and, making an early start the next morning, we came on the new road which

had been made to Dewangiri. For two miles we made a fine speed and then the road petered out in a stream, which we had to ford thirty-two times.

After this ordeal, we came on working parties remaking the road, the first Indians we met; and following their remade road, we soon reached Gudam, a temporary collection of grass huts, which served them as a base camp. It was on the plain, at the very foot of the hills.

We spoke to two Bengali Babus, the contractors for the road. They told us that Tindu and another coolie had gone down the road to the next village to try to get one or more bullock carts.

After some delay we borrowed some of the roadmaking coolies to carry our loads down the road until we met the bullock cart, which would be coming to meet us.

Kumrikata, the next village, was two miles from Gudam, and twenty-four from Rangiya, the nearest railway station. But there was no sign of a bullock cart either on the way or in Kumrikata. Tindu had obviously gone on to Hazragaun, a rather larger village than Kumrikata, and as it was only four miles further we decided to push on and meet the bullock carts.

There were no bullock carts at Hazragaun; but by this time we were very hungry. We had been living since October 26th on the *Ovis Ammon* which Morshead had shot on the Nyala pass. It had rather passed its prime, but we despatched the remainder of it, assuring one another that we were probably the first people ever to eat *Ovis Ammon* in the plains of India. Judging from its taste by then, I think it likely that we shall be the last.

After tiffin, we decided that we would certainly meet the bullock carts before we reached Tamulpur, which was six miles away. But in Tamulpur there were no bullock carts.

There were however buffalo carts, which could only travel at night, because the heat of the day was too much for the buffaloes. We hired three of them, loading our kits in one, our bedding in the second and our coolies in the third. We

started after dinner and reached Rangiya railway station at 2.30 a.m. The first sign we had that we were coming close to the station was the moon gleaming on the railway lines and at first we did not know what it was. It was a year since we had seen a railway and had ceased to reckon with metal lines crossing a landscape.

At Tamulpur we had met a police inspector. As our funds were now reduced to the five sovereigns in Morshead's belt, we went up to him as a matter of course to ask him if he could change a cheque or tell us how we could get hold of some money.

He looked at us very strangely and said that he had no money himself. He also asked a number of questions, which showed that he did not believe our statement that we were officers in the Indian Government service. But he finally agreed to give us a letter to the sub-inspector in charge of Rangiya Station.

#### *November 14th. Rangiya Station*

At Tamulpur, I began to look at Morshead more closely. I had not paid any attention to how he was dressed while we were in Tibet. The values there were spiritual, not sartorial. But face to face with the police inspector, I was forced to admit that sartorially Morshead did not look impressive. He looked a tramp, and a rather unsuccessful tramp at that.

Morshead told me later that he began to look critically at me about the same time. He said that if he had just met me at Tamulpur, he wouldn't have spoken to me. Even after having marched over 1600 miles with me, he felt pretty ashamed.

I think he was exaggerating. I am sure that I did not look half as scruffy as he did; but I admit I was not smart.

When we reached the station, we woke up one of the staff and asked about trains. There was a train the next day which went as far as Lalmanir Hat. From there we could get a train to Calcutta, if we could buy the tickets.

We produced the police inspector's letter and told the man

to take it to the sub-inspector. The man did so and we waited on the platform. He did not come back and we were so tired that we lay down on our beds and went off to sleep.

We woke up the next morning very hungry and went to the Refreshment Room. Years later I patronised the Refreshment Room at Rangiya and found it exactly as one would expect such a place to be in a small wayside station, an unpretentious and rather grubby eating room. But as we went in that morning, both of us stopped and stared. It was so resplendent with bright linen and gleaming silver that we were shy to sit down. We were back in a country where appearances mattered, and though we had done something of which we might quite reasonably be proud, we were ashamed of each other and of ourselves.

We ordered breakfast humbly from an Indian who did not trouble to hide his contempt. Humbly we enquired whether the sub-inspector had received the letter. When we were told that he had, we made no protest. We did not storm up and down as we had done in Tibet, demanding our proper due because we were friends of the Dalai and Tashi Lamas. We ate our breakfast, paid for it rather to the surprise of the waiter and went to the ticket office.

We enquired how much tickets would cost to Calcutta. "How many do you want and what class?" asked the man in the office.

We told him that we did not know how many we wanted yet. But as soon as he told us the cost, it was plain that we could not all go to Calcutta. So we enquired the price of tickets to Lalmanir Hat and went away and did some sums. It was possible for us all to get to Lalmanir Hat and Morshead to go to Calcutta second class and wire back the money for me to pay off the coolies and follow.

When we reached Lalmanir Hat we got into conversation with an Anglo-Indian guard. We told him of our plight and as we were doing so, I had an inspiration to make a Masonic sign, just in case he might be a Mason. He recognised it immediately and said: "But I am only too glad to help a brother

in distress. Tell me, please, just how much you want and I will lend it to you.”

We were deeply touched. The sub-inspector who might have been said to have some obligation to help us had not answered the letter and had kept himself out of our way. But this Anglo-Indian guard volunteered assistance without even being asked. I think that he would have given us money for first-class fares, but we asked only for second. After those carefree months in Tibet, we had fallen victims once again to the vice of dress-snobbery. “We can’t travel first class, damn it,” Morshead said. “Not with you looking the way you do, Bailey.”

I had never travelled second class in India, nor even speculated what it was like. First-class travel was not merely the officer’s prerogative. It was his duty to the British Raj.

I am glad we did it. I shall never forget the meal which we had on the steamer crossing the Ganges; the look of horror on the faces of the European ladies in the first class, who shrank to avoid contamination from us tramps. I say tramps, but perhaps “lepers” would have been nearer the mark. We felt that we ought to ring bells to warn them of our coming.

I have not forgotten either that second-class breakfast, the dishes of which had already made their *début* in the first class and were placed before us cold and were served as sloppily as possible so that we shouldn’t mistake it for first-class food.

Once in Calcutta we reverted to conformity. I myself had shaved every day in Tibet, but Morshead had grown a fine beard. We visited the barber and donned respectable clothes—I had left a box at the Army and Navy Stores. We established self-respect by staying at the Grand Hotel.

I don’t know what Morshead felt. But I was conscious of an annoyance with myself for rushing to conform again after those splendid months in which none of that mattered; months when the falls, the map, the flora and the fauna, the lie of the frontier and the next day’s *ula* were the only concerns.

Perhaps that was why we were so angry when the press came swarming to the hotel, demanding our story. What we had

done, if it was to have any value politically, had to be kept quiet. "There are no falls," we said, "just miles of rapids and in one place a big jump."

From a newspaperman's point of view this was infuriating. It was one of the big stories of Tibet. For years there had been this speculation about the Tsangpo river. And we refused to talk.

"If you want a story," I said, "go to Sealdah Station. There you'll find our coolies waiting to catch the train back to Darjeeling."

In a moment Morshead and I were left alone. "What will they make of that?" Morshead asked. For he was as conscious as I was that it was a fifty-fifty chance whether we would be congratulated or hauled over the coals by the authorities.

"They'll write a pack of lies anyway," I answered, "but it won't matter very much if they are based on lies they get from the coolies."

"Perhaps you're right," said Morshead. But when I saw the newspaper stories, I thought that I was probably wrong.



PART FIVE

After the End



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

It was not surprising that the newspapers did not carry very detailed or accurate accounts of what we had done. It needed fairly long and careful assessment to put what we had done into perspective; the sort of assessment we could have made ourselves in a turnover article for the London *Times*, supposing that in the first place we had been private explorers and not Government officials playing hookey, and in the second place we had known beforehand that we were going on this expedition and had made arrangements with the moguls of Printing House Square.

As things were, the *Morning Post* went along to an Ex-President of the Royal Geographical Society, Sir Thomas Holdich, to ask his views on what we had done.

Sir Thomas Holdich was considered to be an authority on the subject and he lost no time in pronouncing judgment as follows.

### THE BRAHMAPUTRA FALLS

Interviewed by a representative of the *Morning Post* on the 18th November with regard to the reported results of the expedition of Captains Bailey and Moorsom [*sic*], Sir Thomas Holdich said he regarded the identification of the Brahmaputra with the Tsangpo as of minor importance in view of the fact that there is already a large body of evidence which virtually establishes the identity of the two rivers. The old dispute has, indeed, long since ceased to whet the appetites of geographers, who have come to regard the matter almost as *chose jugée*.

As regards the statement that Captain Bailey has found the Brahmaputra Falls to be non-existent, Sir Thomas Holdich was of opinion that the evidence for this statement would be eagerly awaited by those interested in unravelling the secrets of the Tibetan frontier. While paying a tribute to Captain Bailey's intrepidity and entire credibility as a witness, he expressed the gravest doubt whether he could possibly have acquired such evidence as would justify him in saying that the Brahmaputra Falls

did not exist. The following statement was made by Sir Thomas Holdich:

“Unless Captains Bailey and Moorsom have been able to visit the supposed site of the falls and the monastery near those falls from the Tibetan side, and have seen for themselves that there are no falls near that monastery, the evidence as to their non-existence is imperfect. All visitors to the falls have reached them from the Tibetan side, and agree in stating that there is no possible route closely following the banks of the river through the gorges and clefts of the Himalayas from Tibet to the plains of Assam. The evidence of the Tibetan lama who made a sketch of the falls for Dr. Waddell (who is one of the few frontier officers well acquainted with the Tibetan language) is at least as good evidence as any that could possibly be collected from native sources on the southern side of the Tibetan border. This rough sketch is published in Vol. 5 of the *Royal Geographical Journal*, and it bears out what the survey of the Indian explorer Kintup proved about those falls. Kintup’s evidence is, of course, entirely distinct from that of Waddell’s Tibetans who visited the place. Until Captain Moorsom (who, I believe, is the surveyor of the party, and technically the head of what appears in the telegrams to be described as Captain Bailey’s expedition) can give us a full account of the extreme point to which his exploring party penetrated, and the exact route followed, the question of the falls must remain still in the air.”

We both read this effusion through and then I said, “Well, Captain Moorsom, it looks as if we’ve just been wasting the last six months.”

On June 22nd, 1914, I had the pleasure of giving to the Royal Geographical Society, “a full account of the extreme point to which our exploring party penetrated and the exact route followed”. Morshead was in the audience and we were both fully prepared to deal with Sir Thomas Holdich, if he still maintained his views. He was however completely convinced, and in the first speech after Morshead’s and mine, he made the *amende honorable*. He began:

“Let me first say what a great pleasure it is to me to welcome the son of my old friend Col. Bailey, so long Secretary of the Scottish Geographical Society, back again to England after his wanderings in the East. He has succeeded in unravelling a geographical knot which we geographers in India had looked at with longing eyes for many a long year; and he has disentangled it with an energy and determination and

ability such as—well, such as we might have been led to expect from the previous records of this gallant young explorer. . . .”

And to my great pleasure he ended with a tribute to Morshead, to whose untiring work I feel that in this book I have not given due attention, for the good reason that I have been working from my own diaries for the most part. “Before concluding my remarks,” Sir Thomas Holdich said, “I should like to refer to Captain Bailey’s gallant colleague, the engineer and surveyor, Captain Morshead. I have had some experience myself in this matter of surveying with expeditions in that part of the world. I know what it is to be constantly on the watch for visions of peaks which are never free from clouds, to be looking for stars which never seem to appear, and to spend the rest of one’s night in computing from such sketchy observations as one may be able to secure.”

But I have run ahead in my narrative. Several days before we read Holdich’s sceptical views on our achievement, I had received a telegram addressed to me care of Thomas Cook & Son, Calcutta:

Delighted to hear of your safe return hope you are well I would like you to come up to Simla as quickly as possible.

McMahon foreign.

The Simla Conference had started in October, after months of delay in which the Tibetan and Chinese representatives had bashfully waited in the wings, each for the other to come on to the stage. The Indian Government had finally notified the Chinese that if their representative did not turn up, the Indian Government would negotiate with the Tibetans alone. Mr. Ivan Chen, thereupon, arrived from China post-haste.

But negotiations were very slow. The Chinese and the Tibetans had to refer back to their governments at every stage, a very long process with the Tibetans who had no telegraphic communication with Lhasa.

There was in consequence plenty of time for Morshead to prepare his map and for me to go pig-sticking when I was not wanted for consultation.

On April 27th, 1914, after six months' discussion, a Convention was initialled by the three Plenipotentiaries.

This convention divided Tibet into two zones, Outer Tibet and Inner Tibet. Outer Tibet was the part nearer India, including Lhasa, Shigatse and Chamdo. Inner Tibet was the part nearer China, including Batang, Li-tang, Tachienlu and a large part of eastern Tibet.

Chinese suzerainty was recognised over the whole of Tibet but the Chinese undertook not to convert Tibet into a Chinese province.

Great Britain undertook not to annex any part of Tibet.

Outer Tibet was recognised as autonomous. The Chinese undertook not to interfere with the administration, which rested absolutely with the Tibetans. They also undertook not to send troops there, apart from the military escort of 300 men attached to the Chinese Amban in Lhasa. No Chinese colonies were to be established there. The British gave similar undertakings, while reserving the rights to continue their Trade Agents with their escorts, which should not exceed three-quarters of the Chinese escort in Lhasa.

In Inner Tibet, the Tibetan Government at Lhasa were to retain their existing rights, including control of most of the monasteries and the appointment of local officials. But China was not forbidden to send troops, officials or plant colonies.

The British Trade Agent at Gyantse was authorised to visit Lhasa to settle any matters which could not be settled at Gyantse. At the same time, to quote Sir Charles Bell, *Tibet Past and Present*, p. 155:

The opportunity was also taken to negotiate the frontier to be established between Tibet and north-eastern India. From the east of Bhutan, along the northern and eastern border of Assam, round to the meeting place of China, Tibet and the Burmese hinterland, this frontier had never been defined. . . . It proved fortunately possible to establish the frontier between India and Tibet over eight hundred and fifty miles of difficult and dangerous country. We have thus gained a frontier standing back everywhere about a hundred miles from the plains of India. The intervening country consists of difficult hills and valleys, and so constitutes an excellent barrier.

In drawing this frontier the Tibetans made certain concessions to the Government of India in return for the Indian Government guaranteeing the Simla Convention. Tawang for example and Dirang Dzong were ceded to the Indian Government.

Unfortunately two days after Ivan Chen had initialled the Simla Convention, his action was repudiated by the Chinese Government, and he was forbidden to proceed to full signature. The British Minister at Peking informed the Chinese Government that Great Britain and Tibet regarded the Convention as concluded by initialling and intended to sign it independently. Perhaps if the First World War had not supervened, the Simla Convention might have done something to give Tibet the peace she needed. As it was, China pursued her old aggressive policies unhindered, precisely as Ata Ulla had prophesied she would, when we talked about it in Tsetang.

While I was in Simla, I had enquiries made about Kintup, whose itinerary we had found at the same time so useful and accurate during our travels. We had come to regard him as a legendary figure. His journey had been made in 1880, before either Morshead or I had been born. And yet Kintup had been a young man at the time. In 1913, he could only have been in his fifties, that is, if he were still alive.

As far as the Survey of India was concerned, Kintup was lost. They had no idea where he might be and no great curiosity. I wrote to my friend Gyaltsen Kazi, a Sikkimese landlord with excellent sources of information, and asked him if he would institute a search. Very soon he sent me news that Kintup had been found, working as a tailor in Darjeeling, the trade he had pursued at Tongkyuk Dzong when he was deserted by the lama.

Col. Sir Sydney Burrard, the Surveyor General, authorised funds for Kintup to come to Simla to see me. And the day he was due to arrive, a young journalist who prided himself on being "first with the news" burst into my office and said excitedly: "This'll interest you, Bailey. Kintup's been found. You ought to have a talk with him."

“It’s an idea,” I agreed.

That evening Kintup and I had a long talk about his travels and ours, in the course of which it emerged that Kintup had never said that there were any great falls in the Tsangpo. He had talked about the 150-foot fall of the stream behind which the deity Shingche Chögye was hidden and he had talked about the thirty-foot fall by Pemaköchung, and either the scribe to whom he had dictated his report or the man who had translated it had collated the two, a mistake which Kintup had not corrected because he had not been able to read the report or its translation.

I pestered the Indian Government to give Kintup a pension in recognition of his service to Tibetan exploration. But they were adamant. “We can’t give the man a pension,” they said. “That is an indefinite financial commitment. He might live to be ninety.”

I suggested that if he did live to be ninety, he would need the pension more than ever. I was anyway asking for a very small pension, sufficient to keep him from want.

But the great guardian of public finance would not give way. “No pension,” he said. “The best we can do is give the fellow a bonus of a thousand rupees; and leave it at that.”

So Kintup went back to Darjeeling with a thousand rupees, which was far more than he would ever have received as a pension, as within a few months he was dead.

The First World War interrupted all Tibetan exploration. That missing fragment of the Tsangpo survey, the ten miles between the point which I had reached and the village of Payü, was not supplied until 1924, when Captain Kingdon Ward and Lord Cawdor, travelling in the winter and with official blessing, filled in the gap. On the same journey they explored the Gyamda Chu, as Morshead and I had hoped to do. The reader who is interested will find an account of this journey in *The Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges*, Arnold, 1936.

In 1935 Captain Kingdon Ward went up the Yigrong Chu and in 1936 F. Ludlow, the ornithologist, accompanied by



Major Sherriff and Dr. Lumsden, covered some of the same ground which Morshead and I had done in Chayul, Char me and Tsari. They also broke new ground by exploring Pachakshiri, with a brief visit in 1936 and a more protracted one in 1938.

On this second expedition the place of Dr. Lumsden was taken by Dr. G. Taylor, now Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. On the same expedition, 1938, they also realised the ambition which Morshead and I had formed when we crossed in the ferry to Tsela Dzong, the exploration of the Gyamda Chu.

In 1946-7, Lumsden, accompanied by Col. H. Elliot, I.M.S., went to the head of the Yigrong Chu.

Ludlow and Sheriff were primarily interested in avifauna and botany. The results of their investigations can be found described in the standard periodicals on these subjects. They, with Mrs. Sheriff, became inseparable travellers, naturalists and collectors. Their initials "L & S" appear after the names of many of the beautiful plants which they have introduced into our gardens.

I cannot end this book without a final word about Henry Morshead. We became companions almost by chance, but if I had been given the widest choice, I could not have found better. Few men can be in one another's company uninterruptedly for six months without a certain fraying of tempers and nervous irritation. But I can say with truth that there was never a word of difference between us. He was fond of singing, but he had only two songs, one of which Gerty Miller had sung better. I remember wishing sometimes that his repertory was a little wider—but if there had been friction between us two, those songs would have been infuriating. What my habits were which might have infuriated him I cannot tell—if I could, no doubt they would also have infuriated me—and unfortunately Morshead is not alive to tell his own side of the story.

He had all the work. He had to travel slowly in all weathers with very delicate surveying instruments, which had to be

manhandled. My stuff could be carried on yaks and I could ride ahead and camp early and make notes and enquiries about the country and the routes ahead. He came on behind, having climbed every significant eminence on the way, waited for the weather and then made his observations. It was a terrific feat.

When we separated, as we did on a few occasions, he did my work as well, gathering the sort of information I required and helping to supplement my report.

He was an imperturbably adventurous man. He distinguished himself in the First World War, in exploration in Spitzbergen and on Mount Everest, where he lost several fingers and toes from frostbite. I suppose he took no more notice of the cold than of the jungle leeches. I was always afraid that that sort of carelessness would kill him one day. But I was wrong. He was taking a peaceful ride one morning in Burma when he was murdered.

At the time when we made our journey, Morshead and I looked forward to a future in which travel in Tibet would become increasingly frequent for westerners. Morshead went as far as to say openly at the Royal Geographical Society meeting, "Not our least discovery is the fact that it is now possible to traverse the country from end to end, openly, with plane table and theodolite and without even the formality of a passport from Lhasa."

That was October 1914. Today, forty-two years later, it would be foolhardy for a westerner to make such a boast. The Chinese Communists succeeded where the soldiers of the Chinese Emperor and Dr. Sun Yat Sen both failed. They have established themselves in Lhasa and any venture such as Morshead and I attempted would end in disaster at the first village across the frontier.

But for all their dominance, I imagine that life except perhaps in the largest places which we visited is very much the same today as it was when we were there. Those optimists of

social engineering, the Communists, have announced that for them to make Tibet Communist will take a hundred years. As an optimist of human nature, I believe the next hundred years may make the Chinese Communist way of life as humane as that of Tibet.



## APPENDIX

### *Butterflies*

I MADE a collection of about two thousand specimens of butterflies, belonging to nearly two hundred species. A detailed account of this collection was published by Colonel W. H. Evans in the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 532-546.

As was to be expected in this remote part of the world, which no collector had ever visited, several new species and forms were obtained.

In the dense forests of Pemakö in the lower Tsangpo valley the butterflies were of species already known from the Eastern Himalayas, and no new species or geographical races were found here.

In Po me I caught several *Erebias* (to which genus the Mountain Argus of our own country belong). Of these *Erebia pomena* with its sub-species *shuana*, obtained later from the Tsangpo valley, were new, while *Erebia phyllis gyala* was a new sub-species of a butterfly from Western China. Another new species from Po me was *Erebia tsirava*. There was also a single specimen that has been referred to this species from Tsa on the Tsangpo, which is peculiar and is probably new. It is not considered wise to name a specimen as new from a single example which might be only an aberration; though it is unlikely that if only one specimen is obtained it would turn out to be an aberration; aberrations are very rare. From Po me also came a new sub-species of a skipper, *Cartercephalus houangty shoka*. Two other skippers from Western China, *Ochlodes bouddha* and *O. thibetana* from Po me, should be noted. Another skipper taken at Chimdro was a new

sub-species and has been named *Caltoris siriuss chimdroa*. A small but brilliant "Blue" was found in Po me; larger than usual and with other slight differences. The other forms of this butterfly usually occur at considerable heights up to 16,000 ft. These in Po me were found as low as 10,500 ft. and have been named *Polyommatus pheretes major*.

In the dense forests near the Falls I found a rare and beautiful species of Hairstreak, *Zephyrus suroia*, which had previously only been found in Manipur, and also a pair of a form of our Purple Emperor, *Apatura iris bieti*. Here also I got a single specimen of an ally of our Duke of Burgundy Fritillary (*Hyporion lama*) previously known only from Western China. This also was slightly different from Chinese examples, and may turn out to be new when further specimens are obtained.

Coming to dryer localities in the Tsangpo valley above the Gorge country, it was natural that the vegetation, and with it the butterflies which feed on it in their early stages, should change. Here I got a new variety of the Ringlet which has been named *Aphantopus hyperanthus luti*, and also a new and quite distinct species of a small "Blue", *Polyommatus luana*. I also found an interesting Clouded Yellow which seemed to be unknown but is now considered to be a pale form of *Colias berylla* and has been named *Colias berylla* form *irma*. In this part of our journey I caught several specimens of a "Holly Blue" which has been named *Lycaenopsis morsheadi*, after my companion, who in spite of his very hard survey work managed to find time to collect for me.

In the high country south of the Tsangpo I caught several small Fritillaries; among these was a sub-species of *Argynnis gemmata* in which the patches of silver on the underside were replaced by a yellowish brown (*Argynnis gemmata genia* var. *fulva*).

In Tawang I got a large Argus (*Erebia annada polyphemus*) also only known from Western China.

Later on the approach of winter caused all butterflies to disappear at the high altitudes, while in the warmer country

in and near Bhutan, the butterflies were of well-known Indian species.

Several of the generic names have been changed since the collection was described by Evans; this will give no trouble to an expert.





## ITINERARY

	Miles	Height in feet		Miles	Height in feet
1913			7	Chema Chembo	8 7,250
Mipi	—	4,800	8	Tongkyuk bridge	13½ 8,340
May			10	Lunang	16½ 11,050
16	Basam	10 5,600	11	Tumbatse	6 11,650
17	Camp	6½ 6,500	12	Timpa	15½ 9,750
19	Abgya Pukpa	6½ 7,400	13	Shoka	4 9,800
20	Shakang	5½ 8,150	15	Tri pe	10½ 10,000
21	Sumdo	7 9,150	17	Gyala	11½ 9,300
24	Yonggyap Latsa, south	12 10,600	18	Kumang	5½ 10,350
26	Yonggyap Latsa, north	10 11,300	19	Nyuksang	8 8,830
28	Yonggyap Da	8½ 10,590	20	Sengedzong	7½ 8,550
29	Damle	9 12,000	21	Pemaköchung	8 8,800
30	Gyayö Pukpa	8 11,100	23	Sanglung Glacier Camp	4 8,950
31	Chimdro	13½ 6,450	25	Camp	6 8,400
June			26	Camp	3 11,050
3	Nyapa	4½ 5,700	28	Churong Chu	8 ?
4	Domgyur Pukpa	8 5,650	30	Camp	3 ?
5	Kapu	12½ 4,800	31	Camp	12 ?
6	Giling	4½ 3,150	August		
7	Makti	6½ 3,550	1	Sengedzong	11 8,550
8	Meto	12 4,000	2	Kumang	15½ 10,350
9	Rinchenpung	4 6,700	3	Gyala Gompa	6½ 9,300
12	Meto	4 4,000	4	Tamling	13 10,000
13	Bungmo	7 3,950	5	Mönlam	14 9,700
14	Meri	7 2,950	6	Dzeng	18 9,500
15	Kapu	9 4,800	7	Tsela Dzong	12 9,700
16	Druk	8 4,950	9	Dowoka	8½ 9,600
17	Pangshing	14½ 3,950	10	Lutö	15 9,550
18	Tsangrang	8½ 4,550	11	Kangsar	15 9,850
19	Lagung	11½ 6,050	12	Tü	7½ 9,950
21	Domkar	6 6,850	13	Gacha	10½ 10,200
22	Sü Latsa, south	7 9,700	14	Tro me	12 10,050
23	Sü Latsa, north	5½ 11,150	15	Kamchang	13 10,150
24	Drosam	3½ 10,450	16	Shu	10 10,400
25	Showa	8½ 8,520	17	Nge	11 10,600
28	Petang	7½ 8,000	18	Lu	14½ 10,700
29	Dem	10½ 7,850	20	Lhenga	10 10,600
30	Tang tö	11½ 7,150	21	Rapdang	7½ 10,800
July			22	Lenda	12 11,000
1	Gyadzong	11½ 7,250	23	Lhapsö	13½ 11,650
2	Dre	5 7,300	24	Traso	10½ 15,900
4	Sangyü	8 7,250	25	Lhagyari	18 13,100
5	Chuluk	9½ 6,850	26	Kongbo	6 14,100
6	Trulung	10½ 6,450	27	Trap	9½ 12,100
			28	Rongchakar	16 12,050
			29	Tsetang	14 11,850
			31	Halakang	9½ 12,400

## ITINERARY

	Miles	Height in feet		Miles	Height in feet
September			7	Samjung	9½ 12,850
1 Ramonang	12½	13,850	8	Kyala	8 12,500
2 Chumda Kyang	13	14,650	9	Lagam	12 9,200
3 Tratsang	10	15,000	10	Tembang	9 7,600
4 Kyeke	12	14,600	11	Namshu	7 6,400
5 Tengechung	16	14,000	12	Dirang Dzong	6 5,700
6 Shirap	10½	14,000	13	Nyukmadong	12 8,100
7 Bung	15	12,000	14	Sengedzong	4 9,900
8 Karpo	13	12,100	15	Jang	16 8,000
9 Kambado Drok	7½	15,700	16	Tawang	10½ 10,200
10 Pumkar	9	13,200	19	Lumla	18 8,250
11 Trupchuka	14	14,950	20	Shakti	11½ 7,250
12 Chösam	17½	14,200	21	Le	19 8,350
13 Chikchar	15	12,700	22	Trimo	10 10,700
15 Migyitün	12	9,630	23	Tsöna	11½ 14,500
16 Chikchar	12	12,700	25	Gyisum	16 15,500
17 Mipa	11	15,300	26	Lapshi	12½ 13,500
18 Potrang	14	14,700	28	Minda	10½ 13,700
19 Tomtsang	15½	12,600	29	Lhöntse Dzong	7 13,100
20 Yü tö	15	13,200	30	Sömpu Shika	15½ 14,100
21 Sanga Chöling	18	10,900	31	Gyao	19 15,000
22 Char me	10½	10,600	November		
23 Kyimpu	7	13,400	1	Nyelung	12½ 13,900
24 Nyerong	16	12,500	2	Gor	9 13,750
25 Kap	12½	11,400	3	Rang	12 11,300
26 Drötang	18	11,200	4	Le	17 8,350
27 Trön Trip	6	10,700	5	Nyamangpo	15 5,500
28 Chayul Dzong	17	11,450	6	Sanglung	17½ 4,550
29 Tro Shika	18½	12,350	7	Manam	8½ 4,700
30 Shio Shika	8½	13,200	8	Ramjar	10 5,300
October			9	Tashingang Dzong	9½ 3,250
1 Cha	11½	14,300	10	Jiri bridge	16 4,400
2 Seti	12	16,000	11	Pang Ka	20 6,000
3 Goshu Shö	11	14,500	12	Tungshing	13 4,250
4 Mago	11	11,800	13	Yando	12 1,250
6 Lap	12	14,700	14	Rangiya railway station	32 —

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