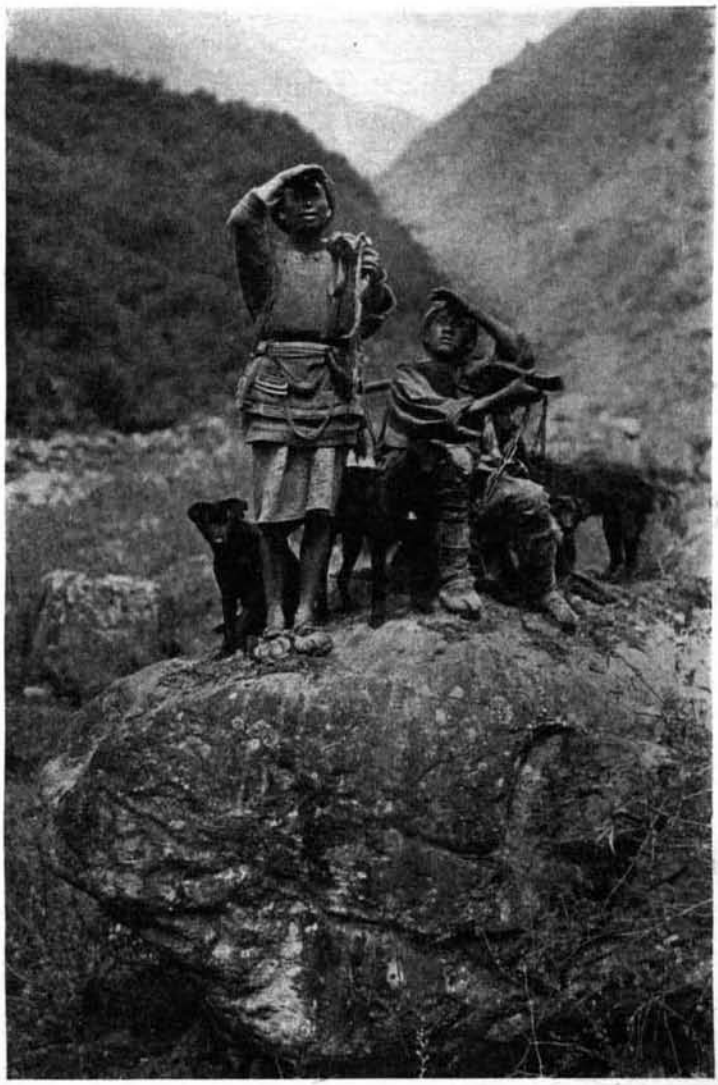
him, up he jumped and escaped without further damage from the volley of shots which followed him. After running about 500 yards he halted, and Mr. Brooke bowled him over again, and now we thought that he really was killed, and sent up a hunter to carry him down. No sooner did the hunter approach the spot where he lay than up he jumped again; we had given our guns to the hunter to carry, and he escaped.

It was now getting very dark, and the paths were terrible, so we thought that we had better get down to the level as soon as possible. The hunter put a dog on the track of the goral, saying he would drive it down, but we saw nothing more of him that night. When we got safely back to the main road we could still hear the faint sound of the dog baying the goral in the pitchy darkness, right on the face of the perpendicular wall of rock 2,000 feet above us. We never expected to see the dog alive again, so sat down to wait events. Suddenly from the face of the cliff shot out a flash of sparks and a bang, then silence; then the dog barked again, then another flash and bang, then a final silence. After waiting some time the other hunters said we had better get home, though there was neither sight nor sound of their companion who had gone after the goral.

The brave little hunter followed the goat along the face of the cliff in the dark, and had shot at it by hearing, and then returned safely along those terrible tracks in the pitch dark. Few foreigners would have cared to undertake so much in broad daylight.

On returning to the town we spoke to the chief about what had happened, as we were quite anxious about the man, but he only laughed and said, "My men are not Chinese."

The goral was brought in next morning badly bruised from its fall over the cliff. It had stuck in the brushwood on a narrow ledge, some 500 feet below where the hunter had given it the *coup-de-grace* the night before; and to get the



THE HUNTERS SCANNING THE MOUNTAIN SIDE FOR GORAL.

beast one of the men was roped and suspended over the side of the cliff and attached the rope to the dead goral, which was drawn up, and the rope again let down for the man, who clung to the narrow ledge by the few bushes that grew out of a crevice in the rock. We found that three shots had been sent through the beast—one through the intestines, which also broke one hind leg, the other not far behind the heart; and the little hunter's buckshot, one of which hit him in the head, had bowled him over the cliff.

The vitality and agility of these animals is incredible. The horns were so badly broken from the fall that the skin was useless as a specimen.

The next day Meares and I went out on the other side of the river; the road was much better, but the game not so plentiful.

Just as we were giving up, for we had patiently waited for some hours, the dogs drove a chitze (chamois) down to Meares. It came out of the undergrowth just behind him, but turned before Meares got a shot, and came towards me, the dogs hard after, one of them not more than ten paces behind. I let drive at the chitze at about seventy yards, while he was on the run, and shot him through, breaking a front and hind leg; so he did not go far, but managed to get down the mountain side some little distance before the dogs got him.

One of the hunters and myself were soon at the spot and recovered our prize from the dogs, who would have torn it to pieces. We had each now bagged something, and felt that we had also some experience in shooting in a mountainous country.

Tussu now insisted that we should come up and spend the next day with him in his castle on Tonglin, so we went, and he had a feast prepared for us, and entertained us royally. Brooke took his phonograph up, and the

whole countryside gathered in to hear it, so we spent a lively evening.

The following morning we went over to the chief's private temple, over 600 years old, and filled with the most obscene idols I have ever seen. At the right of the door as one enters the temple is the idol of Sakti, wife of the god Siva; while inside are the obscene idols of the Bön sect, the most vile form of nature worship.

"The Tantras," or Sakti Bible, which presents Hinduism at its worst and most corrupt stage of development, and identifies all force with the female principle in nature, is no longer used by this tribe, as their religion has been reformed by the Lamaism of the Red Sect; yet there is still much of the Sakti superstition practised among all these tribes, and there are some who still retain the old Tantras writings as their standard of morality and holy living; but I will write of these things in another chapter.

The head Lama is a cousin of the chief, and is a pleasant young fellow, but not inclined to give away much information, or he may not be well acquainted with the early writings to which I have just referred. The old Lama, who is really dying of consumption, was well up in the subject, and gave me a good deal of information, but this is not the place to deal with this subject.

There were shelves piled with books written in Tibetan character, but they did not look as if they were much used, or as if the cobwebs were often swept off them. Old scrolls with paintings of Buddha and the saints, or incarnations decked the walls and hung from the beams. Candles were kept burning in front of some of the idols, but many of them were quite neglected.

The tribesmen seem to be losing confidence in the power of these idols to perform the mighty things claimed for them by the priests, and while they do not really profess Chris-

tianity, they are a happy, jolly people, who deserve something better than they have; and, when the missionaries commence to work among them, they will prove themselves to be a people worth working for.

We enjoyed our visit to the chief, and learned to understand him better, as he was more free, when away from the Chinese. He is a heavy opium-smoker, however, and is always proposing to go to the hospital at Chentu and break it off, but has not the courage to make the attempt. He is rather a weak man, and the Chinese play a good deal on his good nature. He fears that the chieftainship may soon be taken from him, and the whole country put formally under the Chinese official. This will probably take place in the near future; as the Chinese are certainly planning to replace all the hereditary chiefs of all these border states by Chinese officials, appointed by the Emperor periodically, as in other parts of China.

I should be sorry to see a people like this lose their identity and be completely absorbed by the Chinese, but it might be the best thing for them, as they are at present despised and down-trodden by their conquerors, as well as oppressed by their chiefs and princes. The position of the ordinary man and woman is that of vassal or slave, and they can never expect to possess anything of their own. To eke out an existence is about their only ambition under the present system.

CHAPTER VIII.

Hunting the Panyang.

We heard of a strange kind of sheep called "Panyang," by the Chinese. It was reported to have long curved horns and to live on the grass lands above the tree-line, which in this latitude is 11,000 feet.

The Prince showed us some skins, which were incomplete, the native hunters having cut off the legs and head, considering them of no value. The horns and skulls also were left on the mountains where they were shot; so that these skins were of no use as specimens, but we were able to get some idea of the animal and its coat. The hair was of a greyish blue or drab colour, white on the flanks and belly, and black stripes bordering the flanks and down the front of the legs. The hair was rather coarse but soft and thick, more like a deer's coat than a sheep's, and could by no means be called wool.

The description of the habits of these sheep, as given by the natives, was sufficient to arouse our curiosity and we determined to secure a specimen. The chief declared the snow was too deep on the mountains for us to ascend to their haunts, but on offering a reward for a skin in good condition three hardy hunters volunteered to attempt the task. The chief recommended that we should go to Tsaopo, a small place lying back from the main road where his old palace is, and which was once the headquarters of the Wassu Chief. He put this old castle at our disposal and sent in word to his retainers that we were to be well looked after. No foreigner

had ever lived in this locality and only two or three had ever visited it. The chief sent ten of his hunters with us, and we were to wait in the valley near the castle, while the three hunters, who had agreed to go up the snow-clad mountain to secure a panyang, returned.

The next day, March 13, we set out, retracing out tracks down the Min about seven miles to Sohchiao, where there is a very long rope bridge suspended across the river.

Here a good sized stream coming from the west joins the Min. We followed up this stream for about ten miles, crossing it several times. For the coolies this was easy enough, as there were rope bridges over which foot passengers can make their way; but, I having my horse along with me, and the planks being set so far apart that it was impossible for him to cross the bridge, I had to take the pony down to the river bed, and almost swim him through the swift waters. The natives said it could not be done, or rather that it had never been done; but my pony was in good condition, and knowing how to handle him, we soon crossed over and overtook the party again. I had thus to cross the river several times, as there were many places where the path ran along the side of the cliff, where it was so narrow that it was impossible for the horse to pass. At last we reached the junction of two streams, the one still coming from the west, the other from the south-west. Here the valley opened out more. There were several water mills along the stream, and a great part of the valley and part of the hillsides were cultivated; but the mountains towered up from 7,000 to 10,000 feet, and the tops of them were deeply clad in snow.

We made our way up this valley by a zigzag path, and about 4 o'clock arrived at the old castle. It is situated on the spur of the mountain about 100 feet above the stream. I found an old keeper in charge, who showed us the three rooms we were to occupy.

The ground storey was really a stable, or large pen for sheltering stock, but there were very few animals about, as the people are very poor. They depend for a livelihood on the timber trade, which is the chief industry of this section of the country. The men also get something out of the hunting, while the women do most of the farming and attend to the water mills in which they grind their grain. We went up a long stone staircase and entered a courtyard about twenty-five yards square, and surrounded by a parapet which on the inside was about three feet high, but when you looked over the wall you saw it was quite twenty-five feet to the ground on the outside. Passing through a long hall or corridor, we turned to our left and found a suite of rooms, which were very dark and dirty. The whole castle was unoccupied, except for the caretaker and an old Lama. He performed the priestly rites in the presence of the castle idols which have their lofty abode on the fourth storey of the building, and which are of the same obscene character as those found in the temple at Tunglingshan, where the Tussu lives.

The interior of the castle was exceedingly gloomy; the dust and cobwebs of ages hung from every beam, the floors had not been swept for years, let alone washed—a thing indeed entirely unheard of in this country. Three of the best rooms in the castle were filled with maize-cobs and husks, which were stored for fuel: when these were turned out and the rooms cleaned up a bit, they were quite habitable. In this country, where for at least seven or eight months of the year but little rain falls, every place is infested with fleas; and when we began to move about in the dust that had been lying undisturbed for so long, it was like stirring up a bee's nest, the fleas attacked us in earnest, and in the morning we were all as much spotted as if we had had measles.

Soon after our arrival the chief's brother, who lives near here, called and chatted till late. He partook of supper with

us, which consisted every day of bacon and eggs, or boiled rice and bacon with Chinese scones: when we wanted a change we reversed the order and had scones and bacon. During the last two days the weather had been very fine, and the hunters thought the snow might be melted off the grass country above the tree-line, so we decided to go with them to the top of Chienliangshan, where the panyang was to be found. The hunters were not anxious to take us along, as they knew the road was very difficult and in places dangerous, which indeed we afterwards found out for ourselves. After fitting out three light loads of 20 lbs. each, which contained our bedding, a few extra garments and some provisions consisting of about 5 lbs. of bacon, 10 lbs. of rice and 20 lbs. of flour to make scones, with three tin cups, frying pan and tea kettle, at 9 o'clock we left the castle, and followed the stream till we came to the last habitation, where we stopped for the night. It was a miserable, dirty little hut; but by stretching the bamboo mat across the tie beams in the roof, which were about two feet apart, we succeeded in making a place to spread our beds on. Fearing we might not have sufficient food, we here bought some maize, and during the evening amused ourselves and others by grinding it in a hand mill. This we turned by means of poles attached to the stones, and walking round and round till we were quite dizzy, we finally managed to turn our maize into meal.

Next morning we started out at daybreak, and soon got into deep snow drifts, some of them very treacherous, not to say dangerous. The banks of stone along the river bed were covered with a smooth coating of snow, which would break through after one or two persons had passed over; we took turns in disappearing through the snow into the pits below, but fortunately no one got hurt. Farther on, we had to make a road through the thicket of dwarf bamboo bearing a load of snow which bent the trees almost to the ground.

This was cold wet work, for the moment we touched one of these trees a load of ice and snow was deposited on our heads and necks. The path next ran along the face of the cliff, on slippery poles, sometimes horizontal, sometimes at an angle of 10 or 15 degrees. These poles were pinned to the rocks or suspended by the vine ropes. Next, we had to cross and re-cross the stream on bridges, and what bridges! Just a tree eight inches in diameter, lying from bank to bank and on top of it a crust of snow and ice six inches thick. If this crust broke or the passenger lost his balance, the only issue was a leap of thirty feet into the rocky bed of the roaring torrent. The hunters walked boldly across these bridges and we followed, treading in their footmarks. The brave coolies, with 20 lbs. on their backs, followed in our steps, and seemed to think little of it, so that we could not feel proud of our performance. We struggled on thus for miles, crossing and recrossing the stream, and at last turned sharply off and climbed a zigzag path up the side of the mountain, the incline of which could not have been less than 60 degrees. The snow was not so deep here, but quite enough to make it very slippery walking. However, by much struggling on hands and knees, we gradually reached the belt of white firs, which begins at about 8,000 feet above the sea, and continues to 10,000 feet. Then we passed on through the rhododendrons, some of which were showing a few buds.

A few months later the forest of white fir would ring with the sound of the axe of the woodman, who comes all this way to fell these trees, which he roughly squares into coffin boards and sticks of timber, and carries on his back to one of the towns on the banks of the Min, there to sell them for a few shillings apiece to the wood merchants. But now all was still, and in silence we toiled on till we emerged from the rhododendron thickets into the grass land. We hunted about for some time, seeking for a place where we could spend the

night, and were about to camp under a shelving rock when some of the hunters, who were higher up the mountain side, shouted for us to climb on; so, after tramping through deep snow drifts and over cliffs for another hour, we found the remains of another hut, which had been made by the herb diggers the previous year. Here the snow had almost disappeared, and the tufts of grass, yellow from the frosty winds

OUR CAMP AT CHIENLIANGSHAN.

of the past winter, stood out against the barren crags that dotted the mountain side.

Far above us towered a great range, its peaks covered with eternal snow. The coolies arrived shortly after us, but one of them had fallen over a cliff and had knocked out most of his front teeth. Just after dark it grew bitterly cold and began to snow, and as the coolies had no bedding with them, and none too much clothing for this temperature, they had

to take most of the wood off the roof of the hut in order to keep a fire burning for the night. Next day it was still snowing heavily, but the men decided to go out and get some firewood, so putting on their sandals and climbing irons, they descended to the tree level and later returned with huge bundles of wood. It was impossible to see any distance, and we remained in camp all day. By the following morning it had ceased snowing, and although the sun was not visible from where we were, we could see its rays flashing with dazzling brilliancy on a huge ice peak which shone up behind us another 8,000 or 10,000 feet. After some hours the sun drove away the clouds which had hung over the lower ranges in the early morning, and by 10 o'clock was shining brightly on us. Our camp was about 11,600 feet above sea-level, and from here we set out for the haunts of the wild sheep still thousands of feet higher. The newly-fallen snow was knee-deep, and the glare of the sun on it was so powerful that after going about a mile, Meares became perfectly snow-blind, and returned to camp, finding his way with great difficulty by feeling with his hand the track we had made in ascending. Brooke, two hunters and myself climbed on over some very rough ground and came upon a flock of peimuhchi, a bird as large as a turkey, which lives on these mountains. Brooke had a shot at them, but as he, too, was almost snow-blind by this time, he did not succeed in killing one. The light was such that it was impossible to judge the distance. We found afterwards that the birds were not more than 60 yards away, but thought they were more than 100 yards when he fired. The mist was now closing in on us again, and seeing that it was useless to attempt to hunt in such weather we decided to return to camp. The little hunter who was our guide said, "This is the shortest way back," and sitting down on the steep snow slope, he shot off into the mist and disappeared. This was all very well, but in a country which is mostly

precipitous, the longest way round is often the safest way home, so we retraced our steps by the way we had come, and returned safely to find that the little hunter had arrived long before us, and after having finished his evening meal was comfortably warming himself by the fire. The next morning it was still snowing, so we determined to retrace our steps to the foot of the mountain. We packed up our things, and cut for ourselves strong alpine-stocks in preparation for the dangerous descent. It was a difficult task to find our way back as our track was completely obliterated; but it took much less time to get down the mountain than it did to ascend it, and in many places we shot quickly down the slopes in a sitting position, holding on to the branches of trees to keep ourselves from going too fast. On our way back we passed a wonderful hot sulphur spring which was building for itself a marvellously coloured basin; its waters were so hot that we could scarcely bear to dip our hand in them. We reached the castle at Tsaopo the same day without anything to show for our trouble. The next morning we went on to the hills near the castle, where there were a number of goral about, one of which I picked off the top of a rock at 1,000 yards, much to the admiration of the natives, and Mr. Brooke shot another a few minutes later, which the dogs brought to him. The following day was a blank, but we enjoyed life while waiting on our game-runs in the warm sunshine, with snow mountain piled upon snow mountain in view, contrasted with a brilliant blue sky. Many a man has travelled thousands of miles to see a sight not half so magnificent. We discovered that the panyang we had gone after was the "blue sheep" (*Ovis-nahura*), or the Tibetan Nawa, "the Bhural of India." These are common all over this part of the country between the tree-limit and the snow-line, that is, from 12,000 to 17,000 feet. The old males leave the females in June or July and live by themselves.

Both sexes have horns, but the horns of the females are much smaller than those of the males. They have the habit of always grazing near rocky ground, in which they take shelter when startled by any strange object. And they always post a sentry when feeding. He stands amid some jagged rocks where he has a good view, and where it is impossible to distinguish him from the surroundings. He does not move his head, and one is attracted to him, if at all, only by the sudden bound he takes when leaving his watch tower, and which is the signal to his companions that it is time to be off. The natives first told me this story, and later, when crossing a high range in July where these animals were feeding, I had occasion to prove its truth.

Although I joined the hunting party for a few days, I tried not to forget my own special work among these people, and always had books with me to give to the mountain dwellers, whenever I came in contact with them. While in the old castle, I found the Lama had procured a copy of the Gospel from me on a former visit, and had read it frequently, for it was well thumbed and worn. This copy he took from the shelf, and, turning up several passages which he could not understand, I tried to explain them to him. During the past two weeks I had learned to understand these people better than ever before, and they had come to look on me as a friend. We had many long chats about their difficulties and social problems which constantly confront them. Some of them expressed the hope that the Chinese would soon do away with the existing feudal system, and accept them as Chinese subjects. Many of them say the burden imposed on them by their chiefs and princes, together with the tribute that has to be collected by the Chinese Government, is greater than they can bear. Some of them would gladly make friends with the missionaries and even join themselves to the Church in the hope that they might be in some way released from their

bondage of feudal service imposed upon them ; but, of course, the missionary can offer them nothing in this direction. These were burning questions with them, but they would only speak of them in a whisper, and to those who are their friends. What these people need is education, that they may be able to take their place in the nation, and that they may find their place in God's kingdom.

I had now to return to my work at Chentu, and left the party to continue their wandering alone.

CHAPTER IX.

HUNTING THE SEROW.

MESSRS. Brooke and Meares decided that they must try and get a serow before leaving this part of the country, so on March 25th they started off with some hunters and their dogs to Taokwan valley, which is a famous place for these animals. They pitched their tent in a nice little spot near the banks of the stream and hunted for some days, but shot nothing but a few small deer. There were plenty of serow about, but the dogs were afraid to tackle them. Finding it useless to continue with the dogs they had, they struck camp and went down to Taokwan, a village from which the valley derives its name, and there secured two good hunters with four excellent dogs. One of these men had been with us on Chien-liang mountain. Thus equipped they returned to their camping ground, and hardly had they set out when the dogs got on the track of a serow. The hunters were all waiting on the game-run on the top of the ridge, when Meares thought he heard the sound of an animal in the brushwood below; but his hunter declared there was nothing, and suggested that he should go down and watch another game-run on the other side. He did so, and subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

Hardly had he left, than four dogs, closely followed by a hunter, dashed past him through the undergrowth; an animal had passed quite close without their having seen it. Wang at once drew his curved knife and slashed his way down the steep hillside through the briars and thorns. Brooke

followed him, sliding, running, falling, anything to catch up with the dogs, which were now chasing the serow down the river bed toward Taokwan. Around a waterfall which poured over a huge boulder they found four dogs barking, and made a cave underneath. Wang declared that the serow had taken refuge under the boulder, and Brooke nearly drowned himself trying to get under to see. Another hunter now arrived on the scene, and immediately stripping off his clothes made another attempt to get into the cave, but without success.

They then dammed up part of the river with stones and turned aside enough of the stream to allow him to get under the rock, but found nothing. The owner of the pack now arrived on the scene, and declared that the serow had gone down the stream, so they again raced on and came to a group of Chinamen staring in the vacant way they sometimes have when greatly surprised. On going across to inquire if they had seen anything of the animal, there, lying in their midst, they found a fine serow, with its throat cut and its legs badly hacked, and beside it a Chinaman badly gored. Brooke did what he could for the poor victim and had him taken to a neighbouring house. He wanted to send him into the hospital at Chentu, but the man refused to go, and, after lingering for some days, he died. It appears that the two dogs bayed the serow, and the Chinese, thinking that there was money to be made, attacked the animal with clubs. It charged, and drove its horns through one of them. One of the party succeeded in ham-stringing the animal, and in some way they managed to kill him. In the meantime Meares had gone to the top of the mountain opposite and returned to camp in time to meet them coming in with the dead serow.

Next day they hunted up the left hand valley, and early in the morning sent out hunters to act as stops along the tops of the hills. Meares was posted at a point half way up

the mountain on one side of the stream, and Brooke was higher up on the opposite bank.

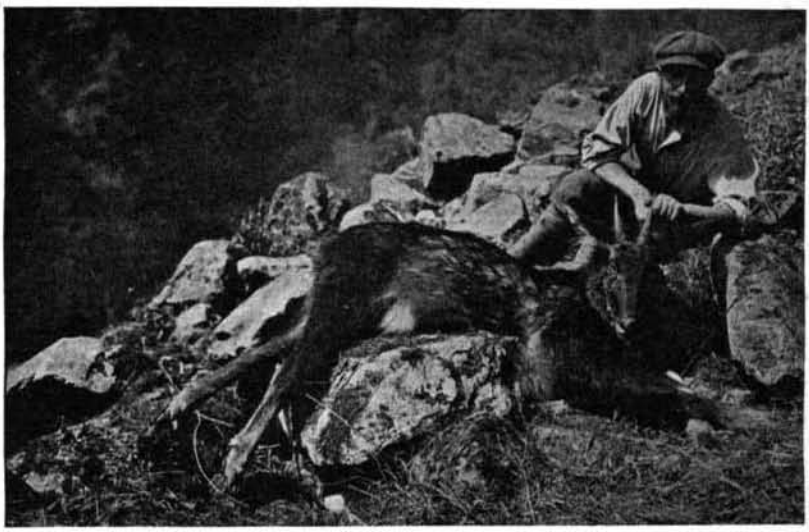
As Meares was going up into his position he again got a glimpse of a serow dashing through the trees, but could not get a shot at it. The dogs soon got on its track, and after a long chase drove him right past Brooke, who dropped him at forty yards. It was a fine female, and a good match for the male they had secured the previous day. One of the dogs was still hunting something, and finally drove another serow past Brooke, which also he shot; but this one was immature.

The following day Meares stayed in camp to prepare the skins, while Brooke went out in the neighbouring hills. After working a short time Meares heard a tremendous row, and picking up his rifle went out to find the dogs driving a serow right towards the camp, and it went to bay on the ledge of a rock not more than 100 yards away. He tried to get a shot at it, but could not for fear of hitting the dogs, which were all over him. Finally one of the hunters shot the beast at close quarters.

This finished the serow hunt, and they struck camp and returned to Wenchuan. The Mandarin prepared a great feast in their honour, and gave them the chief seats, making himself very agreeable. He plied them with many questions—no doubt his chief object being to find out their business and their intentions regarding their future movements. They had the advantage of not being too familiar with the language which he spoke, he being Cantonese, and, as their interpreter was at another table, it was a very simple matter to say "Putong," that is, "I don't understand," to any question they felt was unnecessary to answer. As it was important for Brooke to go to Chentu to have some dental work done—for he had suffered much during the past month with his teeth—it was sufficient in reply to their host's ques-

tion to give this as their purpose, and to add that Meares was going down as far as Yinhsiuwan, the lumber centre, two days to the south. It rather relieved the Mandarin's mind to feel he was getting rid of these strangers, who had been wandering about on the hills and valleys of this neighbourhood for more than a month. He was politeness itself, however, and they parted on the most friendly terms.

On their journey down they met two hunters who had just



MR. BROOKE AND HIS FIRST SEROW.

caught a young takin, which they offered for sale. Brooke jumped at the chance of securing the first specimen of this animal, for when he left England there was not a live one in the Zoo, and this wonderful little creature was very much prized by us all. He was low set, had very heavy legs, and was about as large as a three months' old lamb, only much heavier, rather clumsy in his gait, but not at all wild or timid: there was not much trouble to teach it to take its food first

from a bottle, and later out of a dish. Brooke had him carried to Chentu, where we cared for him for nearly three weeks. He grew to be a most affectionate little creature, and would follow us all about our compound like a little dog, even coming into the house at times. Meares sent down a young goral a few days later, so we had both these animals going about the courtyard, and they became really good friends. The young goral soon made friends with our cow, and was most anxious to help milk her. One morning, unfortunately, the cow stepped on the goral's leg and broke it; we did all we could for the poor beast, but after lingering a few days he died. The takin seemed to do well for quite three weeks, when suddenly one morning, after taking its breakfast, it appeared sickly, and that day refused to take any more food, and died during the night.

For the loss of this most valuable animal Brooke blamed his boy, who had given it some sour milk the morning it took ill, and had not been careful about scalding out the dish from which it fed. We found this out, however, when it was too late.

Meares soon secured a hunter to go with him, who proved himself an excellent cliff climber as well as a good marksman. He knew every inch of the country, and thought nothing of going into the most precipitous places, penetrating every nook and cranny where the game peculiar to this country is likely to hide. He was also quite a naturalist, knowing the habits of the various animals, as well as their haunts and calls. Meares found him a most congenial companion and a good sportsman, his one fault being that he smoked opium, though only at night when they returned from the chase. He writes of his hunting expedition thus:—

"As my new guide believed in still hunting we started off without dogs, taking nothing but a small lunch in our pockets. Our object was to follow the goral to his own hunting ground

on the face of the cliffs. This is very dangerous work, as they make their homes on the most precipitous places, and hide in the caves and crevices of the rocks. The only way to get to them, when still hunting, is to walk along the narrow ledges, sometimes with a sheer drop of 1,000 feet and only a few inches of shelving rock to stand on ; but generally there are small trees and shrubs growing out of the cracks of the rocks, that afford one a hand hold while carefully treading one's way along these dangerous ledges. The little hunter was so used to his work that he could trot over places that made my head swim, and he would lean his body out over the side of the cliffs in search of game to such an extent that I often feared for his safety, and expected to see him go dashing on the rocks below at any minute. There was no need for alarm, however, on my part, so far as his safety was concerned, for I soon found out that he knew his business thoroughly, and that my whole concern need be about myself and the game we expected to see at any minute. He would place me on an important game-run, then circle round. If he started anything and could not get a shot at it he drove it towards me, and we never returned empty-handed during the days we hunted in this locality.

"One day I hit a big wild boar and broke his shoulder. He went to bay in some long grass. The little hunter at once rushed in after him and gave him a charge of buckshot at close range, which so disgusted the boar that he threw himself over the cliff, and we found him dead and very much mangled on the stones at the bottom. He was the largest wild boar I had ever seen ; one of his hind legs had been broken at some time but had mended again.

"The hard hunting on the cliff day after day was too much for me, and the tendon of my heel got strained and swollen to double its size. With a great effort I managed to get to my inn and had to lie up the next day. So Tussu arrived

in the evening and put up in the same inn. A little later a runner came in with the news that So Tussu's castle was being attacked by brigands, and begged him to hurry to the rescue. The Chief pleaded with me to accompany him and bring my rifle along, offering his horse for me to ride on. Seeing he was in trouble I decided to go along; so blistered my heel to reduce the swelling, and next morning we started off early. After two days' forced marching we reached the castle where the old Tussu, So's father, lived. On our arrival we were told that the robbers had heard of our coming, and had retreated into the mountains, and we heard nothing more of them during my stay. The old castle is situated at Sanchiangkou [*i.e.*, Three Rivers Mouth]. The castle is hid away in the mountains in a very picturesque place, where three streams, one coming from the west, one from the north, and one from the east, join. This was once the southern capital of the States, and is quite a typical Mantze castle. Over 100 years ago the Prince was asked by the Viceroy of Szechwan to move from here to Tunglin, where the northern capital now stands, so as to be near the Chinese official at Wenchuan, who is nominally responsible for the affairs of the Wassu State, and through whom all reports to the Chinese Government is made.

"I spent a few days getting some very interesting fossils, which are quite plentiful in these valleys. The country is very mountainous, with out-crops of limestone, and in some places granite, quartz and mica schist are to be found; but as I am not a geologist I will not attempt to give a full description of the geological structure of this country, but I feel sure it will prove a very interesting field for the scientist.

"I started back to the inn in Yinhsiuwan on horseback, but on the second day my horse broke down and I had to finish my journey on foot, and arrived very much of a wreck. I laid up for some days, and watched the rafts being built

which were to shoot the rapids for a distance of thirty miles down to Kwanhsien. The square sticks of timber are fastened together into long narrow rafts, the logs being laid overlapping each other, and then fastened together with ropes of twisted bamboo, which are lashed up tight and then driven firm with wedges. The result is a raft that is firm and yet

THE GORAL SHOT BY THE AUTHOR AT 1,000 YARDS.

pliable. One long oar is mounted on the bow and another on the stern. When all is ready six men are lashed to each oar, the ropes are cut, and off goes the raft dashing through the rapids, water breaking over the heads of the men, who are straining at the oars to avoid the rocks that crop up everywhere. I saw one raft strike a rock, and not only was

the raft broken apart, but the very logs were snapped into pieces like so many dry twigs, and only three out of the twelve men on the raft got ashore; the rest were drowned. The men who do this work have wonderful nerve, but a large number of them annually find a watery grave."

While Meares was waiting at Yinhsiuwan some hunters brought in another young goral alive, and he sent it on to Brooke at Chentu; but, unfortunately, it also died, the heat of the plain seeming to be too much for it. Another hunter brought in two golden-haired monkeys he had just shot. These were carefully skinned and forwarded to Chentu, and one of them is now mounted in the South Kensington Natural History Museum. These monkeys are remarkable animals: they have bright blue faces and dark brown eyes; their nose looks as if a bright blue butterfly was sitting with its wings open in the middle of their face; they have a long golden mane down their back. At Kwanhsien I saw a skin with hair eighteen inches long and valued at £12 15s. These skins are collected and sent to the Imperial Family, and when made up into garments are allowed to be worn by them only.

CHAPTER X.

Haunts of the Budorcas.

When I returned to Chentu at the end of March I found plenty of work awaiting me, but by working hard early and late I soon overtook it, and on May 10 again set out on one of my long tours through the semi-independent States, called by the Chinese Mantze Land (the Land of the Barbarian). This trip had been planned in the previous autumn, when I made out my annual report. Mr. Brooke, on learning of my intention to take this journey, was anxious to accompany me, so made his plans accordingly. When I reached Wenchuen I found him and Mr. Meares awaiting my arrival. I immediately went to see Prince So, to try and get a letter of introduction to some of the princes of the interior States through which I wished to travel. I was much disappointed, however, to hear that he had not yet returned from his southern capital, but his secretary informed me that he expected him any day, and that he had sent word that he had already started for home. It was important to have a letter from him, as the territory through which I hoped to travel had not previously been visited by any foreigners, and the letters he gave me on former occasions had been a great help while travelling in the Central States of Somo, Drukagi, Ranga, Damba, Chosschia, Bawang, Bati, Gaishechia, and also on my journey over the Hungchiao Pass and in the Muping State. This time my plan was to get farther north and cross through Ngaba, Ngolok and Youkoh States, then down through Gaishechia, a journey which would take at least three months. I had a large supply

of Scriptures with me to distribute among the priests and any people who could read. The Tibetan Scriptures are taught throughout this section of the country, but the spoken language would not be understood in Tibet proper. I had a friend at Tsakalao who, I knew, would give me a letter to some of these chiefs; but on former journeys I had started from this point, and kept my connection right through by being handed from one prince to another, thus going from State to State; and I felt it very important to adhere to a plan which formerly had proved so successful.

Having decided that it was best to wait the return of the Prince, we planned to spend a few days visiting the Changmin villages, which are to be found far up the mountain side. Many of these villages are also hid away in deep valleys, where they cannot be seen from the main road. On hearing that another party was on their way up to hunt the takin in these mountains, we thought it might be worth our while to see if these Changmin people knew anything about these strange animals, the budorcas or takins, and their haunts, as it was reported that they captured a great number of them every year.

On the street we had a Mohammedan friend, who has a great deal to do with the Changmin people. At the present time he owns much of the land occupied by them, having taken mortgages on their property, which they have not been able to redeem; their deeds have fallen into his hands, and they now find themselves renting their lands from him. Indeed, he has almost as much power over the Changmin as Prince So has over the Wassu people.

This Mohammedan started life as a poor boy, selling scones on the street at four a penny. Having shrewd business capacity, his fortune has grown until, at the age of 65, he owns over 200 mules, which carry much of the goods passing between Songpan and Kwanshien. He buys up all the gold and musk

THE INTREPID HO, MR. BROOKE'S COOK, WITH TWO HEAD COOLIES HAVING DINNER IN CAMP.


IMPERIAL
LIBRARY.

of the district, supplies the farmers with seed grain, and in the autumn buys up any produce they may have to dispose of. He is also squire of the country side, and tries more cases than the magistrate, since every case which reaches the higher officials must first pass through his hands; and many cases are settled without going further, he receiving a small fee for his trouble per case. He is now very wealthy, and by far the most influential man in this part of the country; and even the mandarins borrow large sums of money from him when they wish to purchase billets. Mr. Ma has been very friendly to me for some years, and to have him on one's side implies practically the whole of the Changmin and Chinese community.

We inquired of him about the haunts of the takin and the people who live in the valleys and mountains to the north-west. He at once supplied us with a guide and sent word to the headman of one of the Changmin villages, hid away in a deep valley surrounded by lofty mountains. Though no foreigner had penetrated this valley before, we found the headman and many of the people awaiting our arrival on the commons outside the village; they gave us a hearty welcome, and escorted us to apartments provided by the headman. We spent a pleasant afternoon chatting with the people, who freely gathered about us; and as they offered to supply hunters to guide us to a place where they claimed that the takin roamed in herds, we decided to go up with the hunters and see if we could secure some of these animals.

The next morning we started early, taking supplies for three days, and followed up a small stream which we crossed and recrossed hundreds of times, having to wade sometimes nearly waist deep through the cold water, which came rushing down from the snow-clad peaks all about us. By noon we came to a deserted lumberman's hut, and as it was raining, our men took possession of it to prepare dinner. But before

they had got the fire well kindled they came rushing out as if they were possessed, some of them rolling on the grass, others beating themselves with their caps, others tearing off their clothes in such a wild way that we thought they must have stirred up a nest of deadly vipers. What they had actually deranged was in fact a nest of fleas, but such fleas I had never seen before. They were as large as the small black fly of Canada and quite as ferocious. The faces, hands, feet and clothing of the coolies were literally covered with these creatures, and every bite left a great red blotch ; nor could they have made more fuss if they had been attacked by a nest of hornets. Needless to say, we chose another camping ground and ate our dinner in the pouring rain.

By 4 o'clock we were in a dense forest, where there were plenty of takin tracks, but these not very fresh. We climbed up to the snow-line and there found an old woodcutter's hut, built out of coffin boards and roofed with bark ; in this the coolies took shelter. We cut some spruce boughs, and by propping up some of the coffin boards, managed to make a flat place on the side of the mountain on which to spread out our beds, and put up our tent as best we could ; but it was impossible to get room to stretch it tight enough to keep it from leaking. We were a forlorn-looking lot ; our clothing was wet through and even our bedding none too dry, and the tent was leaking. Fortunately there was plenty of wood, so we built a huge fire in the coolies' hut and sat round it, everyone trying to dodge the streams of yellow water that streamed through the leaking roof.

After our evening meal we turned in, and our bed of wet boughs seemed really comfortable after our arduous tramp. Towards morning we heard the screeching of a wild animal of some kind, but none of us were sure what it was.

After breakfast we all started out in various directions, each with a native guide. I went up through the firs to the

rhododendron forest, and along the top of one of the ridges where the snow still lay deep ; but all I could find were tracks, most of which were several days old, and two old traps set to spear animals as they passed over the game-ways. These were made with a spring pole, on the end of which had been attached a sharp knife ; there was a trip spring which the animal would strike with his feet and release the spring pole, which would drive the knife through his side, presumably just behind the front shoulder.

These traps had been set by the woodcutters or hunters the previous year. The knives had been taken away, so that when we saw them they were harmless ; but one of our guides showed us a mark in his thigh where one of these knives had been driven through one thigh and into the other by one of these spring poles or traps, and the hunter needs to be on the look-out when tramping through a forest.

One day, while we were sitting on the top of one of the ridges eating our lunch, there came suddenly a great crash and roar as if the earth had split in two, and even the hunters looked aghast ; but it was only a landslide, and part of one of the mountains was seen sliding down into the valley. In some places the path would lead us along a narrow ridge where a slip of the foot on either side would land us at the foot of the precipice several hundred feet below. Again, we would climb high staircases made by notching a log and setting it on end against the cliff ; in other places sticks of wood were tied to uprights by creepers, and up these we had to climb until it made our heads giddy to look down. How the takin makes his way about in such a country is a mystery to me, but in the early spring here he is to be found, during his short period of migration from the sheltered valley in which he has passed the winter, to the grassy plains where he feeds during the summer months. We saw plenty of fresh tracks, but unfortunately did not meet one of these wonderful creatures.

The spell that sometimes comes over one, standing on some lofty peak admiring the work of nature, is indescribable. People say it is necessary to go to church to recognise the sublimity and omnipotence of a Supreme Being; but they can have no idea of the meaning of the words till they have gazed on such wonderful scenes as are unveiled before one's eyes in such a country as this, where nature has been untarnished by the hand of man. There is no cathedral in the world which can compare with God's handiwork, and one often feels His presence nearer in the open church of nature than in the buildings and dress of conventional religion.

We had received word that Prince So had returned to his castle, and we immediately struck camp and returned to Wenchuan, that no further time might be lost. The stream which had been so difficult to cross when coming up was now flooded with heavy rains, and was rushing shoulder deep over the boulders, so that it was only with much difficulty and danger that we succeeded in getting our coolies safely over. On the way down I called at So Tussu's castle to see the Chief and try and get the letter of introduction that we had been waiting for. On this occasion, however, he flatly refused to give one for the Ngaba and Ngolok chiefs, as he declared there was war going on between them and Somo. Of this trouble I had previously heard something, but thinking it might not be very serious, I was anxious to try and get through that country if possible. Prince So was quite friendly and gave me a similar letter to the one of the previous year on condition that I should not try to enter the territory where the fighting was going on. Then we said good-bye, and I went down to the city to make our arrangements for a forward movement on the morrow.

Brooke and myself continued our journey westward, following the valley of the Min as far as Weichow, where we crossed the rope bridges that span the Min and the Siho

West River, and followed up the banks of the latter, passing through a barren-looking country where the only sign of anything green was the cultivated fields along the valley and hillsides. Sage brush was the only natural vegetation.

On many peaks were to be seen the villages of the Changmin scattered along the mountain side. These villages were often scarcely distinguishable from their surroundings, being built of the native stone which is the same dull colour as the barren-looking mountains, but in this section of the country between Weichow and Lifan there are at least 50,000 of this remnant of the ancient occupants of the province of Sechuan. They are now under the Chinese Government, and have had no chiefs of their own for nearly 1,000 years. They are still looked down on by the Chinese, though they have adopted Chinese customs and habits to a great extent. They dress in a coarse woollen cloak which is suitable to protect them from the cold winds that continually blow in these mountains. The women speak their own patois, which is not understood on opposite sides of the river; the men all speak Chinese, many of them "broken" enough; and very few of them are able to read the Chinese character. They have no written language of their own. The Chinese Government is establishing schools in some of these villages, and the coming generation is encouraged to attend them. I visited several of these schools, and the people were most friendly.

We next visited Lifan or Paongan, where there are two Chinese officials, one a civil and the other a military, who nominally have authority over a large section of the country to the west and north, but being located in the south-east corner of their jurisdiction they have little or no power over such remote parts as Somo, Drukagi, Ranga, Damba or Ngaba, which are entirely governed by their own princes and chiefs.

However, they claim the same right as the Chinese do in Tibet proper, *i.e.*, that these States must supply the Chinese

with free transports when travelling through the country, and once in seven years visit Peking with tribute which consists of the natural produce of each State.

At Lifan we visited my old friend, Mr. Wang, the Chinese civil official. He was most friendly, but tried to persuade us not to go north into Ngaba, and said he could not give us any permit into that country. Indeed, he showed us an order from the Viceroy to keep foreigners out of all the semi-independent States, on account of a German traveller having got into serious difficulty with the Golok the previous year.

As I was an old friend, he consented, after a lot of talk, to give us a pass. It stated we might go where we wished, in terms so vague, that it appeared we might go where we would; but Wang added a verbal warning to us to be very careful and not get into trouble, and to keep clear of any districts where there might be any local feuds going on.

He sent the same old Lingpan or escort with us who had accompanied me on my former journeys, so I felt pretty safe, and was very glad that the German gentleman's troubles of the previous year had not blocked the way for another journey into a most interesting country.

At Lifan I met my old friend, Colonel Kao, who was down from Tsakalao on business, and who gave us a pressing invitation to stay with him at his yamen.

On the way to Tsakalao we spent the night at the home of another friend, Colonel Gou, who has command of the Kamba military camp. They were delighted to see me again, and the best they had was not too good. These officers live in old feudal style, having many servants who have been born on the estate, and who are practically members of the family, or at least in many respects are so treated as such; yet they preserve a certain distance all the same and have great respect for their master and mistress and family. These servants appear to be perfectly happy, and are given their clothes and

food, besides a little spending money when they go to the city, but they have no stated wage.

One member of every family must hold himself in readiness to bear arms for the Chinese Government, whenever they should be called on, and they receive the small annual allowance of about five shillings during times of peace, and fifteen shillings per month when called to service.

There are five of these camps, each under a colonel, and are called by the Chinese Wutun (five camps), viz., Shangmungtun, Shamungtun, Kintzechai, Kamba and Tsakalao, the latter being the most important.

There are between 600 and 800 men on the road at each camp. I have visited each of these, and found all the colonels and people most friendly. At first they were suspicious, but now we are the best of friends, and I am always taken into their castles or yamen and treated with entire kindness.

As this is mainly a narrative of travel I must not go into any detail about customs and habits of these people, but will just say that at one time the strongest of all the tribal chiefs controlled the affairs of this valley. He rebelled against the Chinese Government, and a large army was sent against him. He was overthrown, and his castle, which was located near the place where the town of Tsakalao now stands, was razed to the ground. The Prince was captured and put to death, and five Chinese colonels were placed in control of the five camps above mentioned. They took to themselves wives of the daughters of the native chiefs, and later were given hereditary colonelships, on condition that they kept the people loyal and peaceable. To-day we find a mixed race. There is a good deal of Chinese blood in them; as each colonel marries the daughter of one of the semi-independent princes of the eighteen tribes, the Chinese strain in the families of these hereditary colonels is considerably lessened; but they are

all loyal to the Chinese Government. After spending two days visiting the district and the large monastery here, we moved on to Tsakalao and stopped with my old friend, Colonel Kao, who would not hear of our putting up in the inn.

No word had arrived of Meares, who was to have met us here. But a short time after we left Tsakalao he arrived, quite broken up after the rough time he had during his search for the takin. He sent a coolie after us, who overtook us about ten miles out, and Brooke returned to Tsakalao to see the skins Meares had secured, and to arrange about their being forwarded to Chentu. I continued my journey alone until they overtook me by making forced marches. Meares separated from us on May 17th, and started off with three hunters and a coolie, a little bedding, and a limited supply of food. After three days' hard tramp up a most terrible path, he reached a spot where the takin was supposed to abound. The mountains were so steep that it was difficult to find a level space on which to pitch their tent, and so they all camped out under an overhanging rock. After unpacking the loads, Meares took his rifle and went out for a stroll. He had not gone more than 200 yards from the camp when he found the fresh tracks of a takin cow and calf. He followed these tracks for a long way until they crossed a stream, on the other side of which they left evidence that they had very recently moved away. He followed them on through the bamboo thickets until darkness closed in and he had to leave them and return to camp.

Next day they again got on their tracks and followed them up to a salt spring where the takin congregate, and where they had made broad, beaten-down paths running in all the points of the compass, but their quarry had not stopped long here, and they followed it on over the mountain tops till evening began to fall, when they had to abandon the chase. For the next week, from daylight till dark, they were

out scouring the mountains without seeing any trace of the takin.

One day was like the next. They rose every morning as soon as it was light, cooked a meal of rice and bacon, and then off to the mountains, always climbing upwards, pulling themselves up by the rhododendron roots, and sometimes falling back again, and so on upwards to the heights where it was hard to get one's breath. The most depressing part was that there seemed to be no living things in the mountains; only once or twice they saw a tiny mouse-rabbit, and on one other occasion, when high up on the mountains, Mr. Meares was surrounded by an army of angry little birds, tiny tits and small brown birds, which suddenly appeared from nowhere, When he was sitting on a stump resting, about fifty of them collected on the branches all round him; and then, when he kept quite still, they got bolder and bolder, till first one sat on his rifle, then another on his shoulder, then others, all jumping about and using terrible language at this strange giant who had invaded their country. At last he had to move, the spell was broken, and the wilderness was birdless again for days. But there was no sign of a takin, except once when the hunters were alone, they said they saw one, but their guns were wet and would not go off. All the time it poured in torrents day and night, except high up, where it snowed.

After ten days of this, provisions got low, and as Meares had to cut across unknown mountains to meet us others, he gave orders to pack up the camp, and went out for a last look at the salt springs. That reached, he found fresh tracks of a cow and half-grown calf, and at once went in chase, and after many hours climbing got a sight of them, and put a bullet into the cow. She was hard hit, but managed to get down the hill some distance, and he only just managed to give her the *coup-de-grace* on the edge of the cliff 100 feet high.

The hunters went off after the young one, and soon brought it down on their shoulders. By the time they had photographed and skinned the takin it was dark, so they felled some huge fir trees, and made an enormous bonfire around which they sat all night, roasting and eating the meat. The young takin meat is like the very best veal, and by morning there was very little of the smaller carcass left but the bones.

TAKIN SHOT BY MR. MEARES.

Meares told us later that he will never forget the morning following. The camp was high up among the pine trees and the sun rose in a clear blue sky, painting the circle of snow peaks around them the most brilliant colours. Everything was perfect, and he felt at peace with the world. He had been rewarded for his trouble by being the first person to shoot an animal which had hardly been seen alive by a European before, and last, but not least, he had had a real

good feed. He returned to the cave, and the hunters carried down the skins and heads and bones of both animals and all the meat that was left. How they managed to do it Mr. Meares had no idea, as there were no paths whatever, and each man's load must have weighed over 100 lbs.

Next morning they started off with their bedding and the skins and bones to cross the mountain range to join us.

It was a pouring wet day, and they trudged up the valley, most of the time wading almost waist deep in the stream itself, for there was no road along the bank.

Meares was at the head of the party when suddenly he caught sight of a hump-backed, grey-coated, black-horned, short-legged object crossing an open space on the hillside about 300 yards away. It was a bull takin. He at once sent a bullet after it, and though it appeared to be hit, it went off at a good pace. On arriving at the spot he found a good deal of blood, showing it had been badly hurt. They followed its trail some distance, but the rain was coming down in such torrents that it soon washed away all trace of the animal, and finally they had to give up the chase.

They toiled up the mountain side till darkness overtook them, and pitched their camp under a pine tree, where they spent the night. At daybreak they started off again, leaving the stream and striking straight over the mountain. After a hard climb for several hours they reached the tree-line and entered the open land beyond, where a bitter cold gale was blowing, which froze their clothing and cut right through them. He saw some of the large yellow mountain poppies, which were already in bloom, but, the day he passed, every hair on every petal was encased in a coating of ice, which shows how hardy these wild poppies are. When they topped the pass, and had reached the northern slopes, they escaped the bitter wind, but found in front of them a field of deep snow, but no path or track was visible.

The snow was more than knee-deep, the coolies were heavily laden and almost frozen, so Meares had to go ahead and break a road. His rope sandals were worn out, and he had to finish the journey almost barefooted. After much difficulty they reached the timber-line, and were able to make a fire and warm themselves; here they found an old timber slide, down which they quickly slid, and soon found themselves in the warm, sunny valley in which Tsakalao is situated. On arrival he found that Brooke and myself had left the day before, but having no money with him to pay the men, he sent a coolie after us to call Brooke back. On the latter's return he found a fine takin skin, which delighted him much, for since he had not been able to shoot it himself, he rejoiced that his companion in travel had been the first Englishman to shoot this strange and coveted animal, the inhabitant of these almost inaccessible mountains.

This little-known animal stands as high as a small bullock, but is much more heavily built. Its legs are especially short and thick, and its feet are shaped like those of a goat, only much larger. I have seen some tracks as much as six inches in diameter. They have Roman noses, black curved horns, and short cut-off ears; the hair of the cow is creamy white, but most of the bulls have a reddish-grey coat, a short tail like a goat, and to some extent resemble the musk ox. In the springtime the cows travel about with their young, who can follow their mothers anywhere at three days old, and are weaned at one month old. In the early spring they seem to feed almost entirely on a plant which looks very much like rhubarb or burdock and grows along the bottoms of valleys. In the month of June they all collect about the salt licks, toward which they make broad, regular, beaten roads, and a little later collect into large herds, and graze in the grass lands above the tree-level.

The natives are very much afraid of these animals when

HUNTING THE TAKIN; A BIT OF THE ROAD.

they have congregated in herds, and say that if one of the group is wounded, the whole company will charge right over the hunter. Each herd has an old bull as leader, and they follow him everywhere ; an old hunter told me that on one occasion he met a small herd on a narrow path and shot the leader, who fell over the cliff, the others immediately threw themselves over after him, though there were some tens of feet of a sheer drop. Judging from the skins I have seen, some of the bulls must grow to a tremendous size.

CHAPTER XI.

FORWARD TO SOMO.

WHEN Messrs. Brooke and Meares had finished drying and packing the budorcas' skins they crossed the river over the big cantilever bridge to visit Colonel Kao. While they were talking and drinking tea with him they heard a crash and a roar, and on going out to see what it was they discovered that the bridge over which they had just passed had collapsed. It had been standing for forty years, and, as the Colonel apologetically remarked, "It never did that before." This entailed their marching five miles down the river to the nearest bridge before they could recross.

On June 4 Brooke and Meares set off to overtake me, and by fast travelling caught me up in two days, as I had been doing much visiting by the way. The road they took is most picturesque, and keeps close to the banks of the Siho (west river), crossing from time to time from one side to the other to avoid the great cliffs that rise sheer up from the river side in many places. We overtook a pack of mules laden with tea for Matang. This tea was the worst rubbish I had ever seen going under that name, it looked more like dried birch leaves and half rotten twigs than tea, and smelt very musty; but the tribespeople seemed to prefer it to a better quality. We passed several Mantze villages during the first twenty miles' march, and there were a number more up the ravines to the north and south which we could not see from the main road. Leaving the cultivated lands behind, the road ran through a deep gorge close to the side of the

river, and the mountains seem to rise almost straight up for 6,000 feet, so that the sun can only cast its rays in the narrow valley for about two hours each day. This is, indeed, a lonely place, and the roar of the river and the song of the birds are all that breaks the stillness. Passing through this gorge we came out to a small clearing, in which stood a solitary house, called Sintientze (new inn), but I have no doubt it had stood there for at least a hundred years, as the smoke from the fireplace in the middle of the main living-room had long since turned the rafters and ceiling the colour of ebony. Passing on through a widening valley, in which stood isolated farmhouses, built of stone, we soon passed the boundary line between Tsakalao territory and the State of Somo. We were at last on ground completely governed by an independent hereditary Tussu or Prince, with many chiefs under him, who direct the local affairs throughout his kingdom. From the boundary line of Somo to Kouerhkou, where we hoped to spend the night, we passed through wheat and barley fields. The people were very friendly and came out as we passed through their little settlements. We were able to have a kindly word with them. It was 7.30 when we reached the little wayside inn, located within half a-mile from the Mantze fort of Kouerhkou, where the chief of this district has his palatial home, built on the spur of the mountain. The town looks quite impregnable, but we decided to take it by a strategy, being determined not to spend the night in the miserable little hovel by the wayside. It may be necessary to explain to the reader that it is most difficult for a stranger to find hospitality in any of these forts, and for the accommodation of the Chinese coolies and travellers little wayside inns have been erected all along the main road so far as the medicine digging enterprise is carried on; but these huts are so filthy that it is next to impossible for a foreigner to live in them, even for a night, though on many

occasions when I have not had a tent with me I have been compelled to lodge therein. On this occasion, however, I made up my mind I would try for something better in the fort, and sent my interpreter up to the head man of the Chaitze,

THE INTERPRETER KAO.

while I remained at the Chinese hut by the roadside. My interpreter was a native of Damba State, and was also a relative of my friend Colonel Kao, so that he would have no difficulty in procuring lodgings for himself. The plan was

that he should first secure lodgings and then inform his host that a friend of Colonel Kao's was stopping at the inn and would also like accommodation, but not to intimate to him that this friend was a foreigner. I could trust my interpreter to play the game, for he had been with me the two previous journeys, and had proved himself adroit. When he had secured the room he was to shout down and I would come up, so that I really entered the house before the old chief knew I was a foreigner. As arranged so things befell. At first the chief was somewhat sulky; but when he found that I was the person who passed through last year he became more friendly, and in less than half-an-hour we were on the best of terms. He gave me a very nice little room on the roof, where I spread out my bed and made myself comfortable, and after supper I came down to the family apartment, a large room in the centre of which a huge fire was burning, while on large iron tripods stood three great pots used for cooking purposes. We all sat round the fire tailor-fashion, for they never use chairs or benches in this part of the country, and there we chatted till midnight. The old lady was very anxious about her daughter, who had run away some weeks before because she had been punished for disobedience. The mother was quite anxious that I should divine, and tell her if her daughter would ever return! She was sure I could, and when I explained that no one could really tell the future, and that it was only a way the Lamas had of making money, she half agreed, but still thought there was something in it. The tribespeople are also strong in palmistry, and as I had read a little on the subject I greatly pleased the old lady by looking at her hand, and telling her she was to live to a good old age—as she was now between sixty-five and seventy, and there was little danger of my not telling the truth. We were good friends now, and I was urged not to go on the morrow, but spend the day with them. As I was

anxious to visit the valley that runs north from here I gladly accepted. Before retiring tsamba and tea were provided. This is the usual Tibetan food, made of parched barley meal and buttered tea. As explained before, the meal is mixed with the tea into a thick paste, then kneaded dry, until you can hold it in your hand much as you would an uncooked

COLONEL GOU AND HIS FAMILY.

cake; but as the meal has been previously parched it tastes quite good when one is hungry, and in effect buttered tea is much like soup. Strange as this food may seem to the stranger it is very nourishing, and the people seem to thrive on it. After thus refreshing ourselves I retired to my apartment on the roof, and, as I went, the family stretching them-

selves out with their feet toward the fire, which still burned in the centre of the room, wrapped themselves in their woollen or sheep-skin gowns and seemed not to mind the hard boards of the flooring, which is the best bed they know of.

Next morning, after an early breakfast, I started up the valley to visit another chief. For some hours we walked up the path which lay along the bed of the stream, on which were built several flour mills, also a number of large prayer cylinders turned by water-power. These cylinders are filled with rolls of parchment, on which are carefully written the prescribed formulas, such as "Om! ma-ni pad-me Hung!" —*i.e.*, "Hail! The Jewel (Grand Lama) in the lotus-flower!" which is the standard prayer of Lamaism. Of course there are many other formulas of a similar character used to fill in the miles of parchment neatly rolled on these cylinders, which are kept constantly turning by the sparkling streams Nature has so bountifully provided in this wild and fascinating country. The banks of the stream were covered with thick brushwood and flowering plants of many kinds; the perfume of the lilac and other sweet-smelling flowers filled the air; the humming of the bees, the song of the birds, could not but arrest and charm; but there was less of the song of the busy tribesmen, and I was disappointed to find so few people in what I had assumed to be a thickly populated valley.

On arriving at the village I found that most of the houses had been burned down the previous year, and nothing but the charred walls of most of the buildings now remained. The only sign of life was a few women busily weaving their coarse hempen cloth, and some girls beating out the flax. Most of the inhabitants, both male and female, were away on the mountains with the cattle, or on the heights near the snow-line, gathering herbs, an occupation general among the inhabitants of this region during the months of June and July, while their crops are maturing in the fields. Return

in August and the hills and valleys will resound with the merry song of the young men and maidens, as they ply their sickles to the beat of their weird chanting.

The people were very timid, as they had never before seen a foreigner. After a little inquiry I found the chief, with whom I chatted for a few hours. He did not invite me into his home, but was quite friendly, and when he learned I was stopping with his neighbour chief at Kouerhkou he told me of a road which led from here over the mountains to the Black River valley, occupied by the famous Hei Shui (black water) tribe, who hold the valleys of the Black River. That is a country never yet visited by any European, but I hope some day to tramp these hitherto forbidden reaches, as I have an invitation from the chief Daerhwangchen to do so.

After partaking of some refreshments with the chief I retraced my steps down the valley, and the only people we met during the march were some woodcutters returning with huge bundles of faggots on their backs, and two Chinese wine merchants making their way toward the villages we had just left. These people are passionately fond of wine, and while they make a mild drink locally from barley, they are very fond of the Chinese fire-water, which is about sixty-five per cent. proof, and will burn readily if you simply set a match to it. Water is sometimes added both by the Chinese merchant and by the people themselves after they purchase it; but the liquor is also frequently imbibed in its pure state through the little terra-cotta syphon quite like a small jug, with a teat on the handle for the lips. The syphon is usually sucked from after heating it, for while they do not mind eating cold food they like their wine hot. When a tribesman is intoxicated, the best plan is either to give him a wide berth or let him have his own way, and say "yes, yes," to all his suggestions. To oppose would only provoke him to a free use of the small sword or dirk which he always carries in his

belt; and though perfectly friendly when sober, the man may suddenly turn one's bitterest enemy when intoxicated. Few of them eat opium, though this curse has found its way into a few homes, and with consequences even more marked on the tribesman than upon the Chinese. Immediately he adopts its use the former surrenders himself completely to the habit, and in a very short time becomes a complete wreck. Two causes suggest themselves: firstly, the opium sold to the tribesmen is largely made from opium ash and refuse from the Chinese opium dens, and is adulterated for the tribal trade; in the second place, these people have little to occupy their minds, and when once they become addicted to the habit, have little to oppose to its influence.

When I started on our forward march next morning the chief provided me with an escort, composed of one old woman and two girls. It is customary in this part of the country for the females to escort visitors from one chief to the other. The only reason I can give is that the men are usually away on a hunting tour, and the women are left to look after the homes and crop. The women and girls of this part of the country are very different from the Chinese, and are more like the American, French or Scandinavian girl in their freedom of conversation. Our escort marched along with the caravan, freely chatting to the interpreter and myself, as though they were the happiest people in the world. On one occasion I made a remark about their aversion to the free use of water, saying they would be really good-looking if they would only keep themselves clean, and by way of contrast pointed to my neck, saying, "Yours might be as white as mine if you would only use soap and water." Her neck as I spoke was black as an African's. But for all that she was a sharp witted, rather good-featured lass, of about eighteen, and the quick reply I got was, "Yes, your skin may be white, but your heart is blacker than my neck." I was not

aware that I had said or done anything to merit the remark, but I had to take it in good grace; and by the time our journey was ended I hope she realised that my heart was whiter than she suspected, for they all returned to their homes with a small string of cash and a thank you for their help in carrying our belongings over the five miles of rough but beautiful country. To receive pay and a kind word was

TIBETAN PLAYERS IN COMEDY.

rather a surprise to them, for if they had been escorting a Chinese Official they would probably have returned with curses for thanks and abusive language for pay, these being the attentions of his followers, even where the Official himself was polite. Kindness is something which surprises these people, so little of it do they receive from strangers; yet they are very kind and affectionate among themselves, and

I have never yet seen or heard any quarrelling in their ranks.

We followed the west bank of the river for twenty li (about five miles), when we again crossed another cantilever bridge, and entered a fertile valley which supported four villages, with a population of 300 families. Lodgings were found on the roof of one of the houses in the village of Cheoti, and we spent the night in fairly comfortable apartments. Here

TIBETAN PLAYERS IN TRAGEDY.

Brooke and Meares overtook me, and we travelled together as far as Chowser, the capital of Chosschia State.

About an hour and a-half after our arrival a Chinese Wei-yuen arrived from the west, sent out by the Viceroy of Sechwan in the interest of education, his business being to establish schools for the study of Chinese throughout these semi-independent States. His style and bearing, however, was not such as would give him much prestige, or command

the respect and sympathy of this independent people. He rode on to the street with an air of superiority that was quite resented by the people, and seeing us on the roof of one of the houses he dismounted and walked in, feeling his way through the smoke, which was making use of the staircase for an outlet. When he emerged from its columns and stood on the roof beside us tears were in his eyes, but not the tear of sorrow or sympathy. He cursed the smoke, the houses and the people that lived in them. After he had finished and recovered his breath he demanded of me my business, how it was I had secured rooms in this house, and where I was going, and so forth.

He next informed me of the hostility of this barbarous race, saying it was not safe for a foreigner to be in their country, and tried to impress me with the importance of returning with him to Chinese territory. In reply, I asked him, "Whose jurisdiction this country was under; if, on their maps, it was not included in the province of Sechwan? for which I held a passport." When he found he could do nothing with me by arguments of this kind, he changed his tactics, and informed me that the road ahead was impassable, the rivers being swollen to such an extent that it was impossible to cross them, and that the mountain passes were deep in snow, and we would surely be frozen to death if we attempted to cross them. I listened to his story until he had poured it all out, then asked the question, "Where have you come from?" He told me how he had left Chentu and had travelled up the Siaochin Valley and over the pass to Drukagi, then up through Somo, over the Chiku Pass, and down to this point, all in the interest of education; but said he had not been able to establish a single school. I sympathised with him in the difficulties he had encountered during his arduous journey, and then asked, "How did you succeed in overcoming them?" When he told me a long

story of how it was done I thanked him for his information, saying we would do likewise. He suddenly realised that he had given his case away, but I informed him there was no need of feeling badly, as I had been over the entire route that he had just travelled more than once, and knew it quite well. When he found he could make nothing out of me, and seeing the rooms were all occupied on the roof of this house—the best in the village—he bowed in farewell and went through the column of smoke down the crude staircase, and after seeking accommodation in the other houses of the village, where he was refused admittance, mounted his horse and with his companions rode off in search of accommodation in the next village, where he was told he would find it. I hope he was successful, but as the village was five miles away, and a rough road separated him from that place, I should not be surprised if he found himself compelled to spend the night under the open canopy of heaven or under some green tree. By 6 a.m. we were on the march, our road led us on through the valley, in which were cultivated fields to the right and to the left. The path kept near the river's brink, which here flows in a south-eastern direction, the early morning air was wonderfully refreshing, and almost in every direction the mountain tops glittered in the sunlight, many of them clad in a mantle of snow, while their lower slopes were covered with forests. Near the river's brink soft, maple, birch and ash trees abounded, while here and there a prickly oak warned us that we are approaching an altitude of 9,000 feet. Cultivated fields were seen dotting the mountain side, surrounded by rank foliage, and stone houses adorned some of the hillsides facing south. We reached Jiapi at noon. This is a village of about fifteen families; on a spur not far away stands a massive stone building, belonging to the prince, which he occupies during his periodical visits through the country. Away to the north the wide valley leads up to

extensive pasture lands, on which we could make out through our glasses large herds of cattle grazing, and far above them the peaks capped with snow.

A little further on it was necessary to cross the stream, but here the bed of the river was broad and there was no bridge. The rain which fell during the previous night, together with the melting snow, had much increased the volume of the stream, and we had a great deal of difficulty in finding a suitable ford. On several occasions while endeavouring to cross my pony was almost carried off his feet by the swift current. Finally, we found a place where the water was not over three feet deep, and by stretching a guide-rope across for the pack coolies to hold to and steady themselves as they forded, we succeeded in getting the whole party safely over on the other side. About 4 o'clock we arrived at Miala, a group of stone houses built on the side of a hill, which boasts itself of supporting two chiefs and a population of 1,500 families in the surrounding district. It was difficult for us to discover where all these homes were located, as the village itself had not more than thirty houses, but scattered about on the mountain side are many isolated dwellings, which cannot be seen from the main road. There is also a large monastery on the wooded mountain to the south, which boasts itself of having about 1,500 lamas, or a proportion of one lama to each household—a rule which they try to live up to wherever Lamaism prevails.

On arriving at the town we were very much surprised to find all the doors shut in our faces. The interpreter and the Fusong were not able to obtain access, even to the home of the chief, the doors being locked and barred, with no sign of any life within. I had told the Fusong to go ahead and secure a place before our arrival; but as he had stopped for two days in this same town the previous year, and had left them so far as I knew friendly, I had not insisted on his

doing so, while the interpreter, thinking there would be no difficulty whatever, had dallied behind with the coolies, and only arrived when we did. It began to look rather serious, and there seemed to be no way of getting in touch with the people, so I accompanied the interpreter and escort to the home of the second chief, who lived some little distance away. There the outer door was also locked ; and though we rapped loud enough to be heard for some distance, the interpreter repeating the well-known call, "A friend has arrived, open unto him the door," there was no response. The wall was not very high, so Kao, who was an expert climber, scrambled up the side like a rabbit, and standing on the top called aloud to the inmates. At last a servant came out, and announced that there was no one at home, which we knew very well was a lie. The servant disappearing and leaving us to make the best of the situation ; my interpreter quickly descended the wall on the inside and unbarred the gate, which was made secure by a great wooden cross pole, but not locked. And both he and I passed through the courtyard and through the stable that occupied the first storey of the castle, and ascending a broad staircase found ourselves on the flat roof, which formed the courtyard of the second storey.

When the inmates found the castle had been taken by storm, and that we were actually in possession, heads appeared over the balcony above us, and through windows on the second storey, declaring that they had no accommodation for travellers. My interpreter informed the old lama, who seemed to be the chief spokesman, that we were quiet and peaceable people, and that he had been sent by Colonel Kao, his master and lord, to escort and protect us from all harm, and that all we wanted was accommodation for the night, for which we were prepared to pay. Showing his military coat, as evidence of his authority, he took it off and hung it on the door ; and according to the tribal custom, to

refuse to open the door to that coat, or to insult it in any way, meant open revolt against the Colonel, whom they all respect throughout these States. There was nothing for it now, so they opened the door, and we were shown to a small room at the north side of the flat roof upon which we stood. The Fusong was sent down for the rest of the party and our things, and in a very short time we were comfortably settled in our little room. In less than half-an-hour the whole town had congregated on our roof. There were lamas in their scarlet robes, the layman in his brown yak-hair homespun gown, women clad in their hempen accordion-pleated skirts and short tight jackets. They were all curious to see the strange people who had come in their midst so unexpectedly. We were not long in making friends and gaining their confidence. Each of the lamas, and such laymen as could read, were supplied with books. It was interesting to see them collect in groups examining the clear type and passing complimentary remarks on the quality of the paper and the writing. We trust they understood the message these books brought to them. They soon began to gather around me, reporting their aches and pains—some toothache and rheumatism, others with ulcers and skin diseases of every kind. I was kept busy till dark extracting teeth, washing and dressing sores. Their fear of the foreigner had vanished, and old men and women and young maidens alike pressed for their turn of attention. One old lady sat down on the floor and let me extract two roots and one badly decayed tooth, all of which were giving her a great deal of trouble. She did not even groan; and when I had finished, though the blood was flowing freely, directed my attention to two other roots on the other side, which she was anxious that I should remove. But fearing that she might lose too much blood I advised her to wait until the morning to finish the operation. When the party broke up it was well on

to 10 o'clock, but each with a polite bow said "good-night" before descending the staircase. We found the report of the Chief's absence was quite true, and some weeks later we met him at Drukagi, where he was trying to solicit help from that State against the people of Ngaba, with whom he and his expected to engage in war at any minute. The Chief's wife and family were extremely friendly, and sent letters by us to her husband. These I personally handed over to him, and he seemed greatly pleased with their contents, and was a good friend to us during our stay at Drukagi.

Here we were supposed to get ula; but, on account of our Fusong wanting to make too big a squeeze, the people would not bring their animals in until we promised to pay for them.

We now found out the reason why the doors were closed in our faces on arrival. I was told in confidence that my Fusong, on my previous journey had demanded fourteen horses and ten carriers to convey me and my belongings to the next chief, and that when the animals were brought in he had refused to take them, saying he must have the money instead. The price of a horse for a stage in the country where ula is used is three chien of silver per animal, and one chien for each carrier. This meant that the Fusong had extracted about fifteen shillings from the people, besides getting a free ride over the pass. Of course I knew nothing of it until after we had passed the place several days, and then only discovered it through a quarrel between the interpreter and the Fusong. On this occasion, however, I made it very clear, both to my escort and the people, that when I asked for animals I expected to pay for them, and that on no condition would I allow the Fusong to extract money from them on my account. When this was understood the people felt quite differently towards us, though I cannot say the Fusong was altogether pleased, nor did he exert himself on our behalf as on former

journeys. I believe that much of the trouble experienced by so many travellers in China and Tibet is due to these blood-suckers, who, while they are serving the foreigner and extracting all they can from him, do not fail to do likewise to their own people, placing the blame on their innocent employer.

On the morning of June 7 we left the village of Miala behind and climbed up 2,000 feet, only to descend again to the river bed on the other side of the spur. We followed the stream, which for five miles flowed through a dense forest, and on emerging from this we entered a cultivated plain, on which were five small villages or groups of houses, all surrounded by green fields. The chinku (a kind of huskless barley), about the only crop grown at this altitude (for we were now quite 10,000 feet above the sea), had not yet grown to more than two inches above the ground and would not be harvested till September. For the last five miles of this stage it rained hard and we all got wet to the skin. On reaching Chintouchai, the last village before ascending the pass, we were able to secure rooms in the same house that I had stopped in the year before, and the whole party were soon sitting round a great fire in the large kitchen, steaming ourselves dry, for even our bedding had got wet, so heavy was the rain. All through the night it continued to pour, but towards morning it turned to snow, and when we awoke it was falling so thickly that we could not see any distance. The hills were covered a foot deep by 8 o'clock, and there was quite six inches in the valley. What were green fields the evening before were white fields now. The men said it was impossible to cross the pass, so we turned in again as there was nothing to be done, and one's pukai (a Chinese quilt), which serves the purpose of both mattress and bedding, was by far the most comfortable place in such weather.

I was not to enjoy this very long, however, for at 9.30 the

interpreter came into my room in great excitement, and reported that my horse had broken loose and got out of the stable, and they could find no trace of him. I sent the interpreter and head coolie in search of him, and neither of them having returned by the time I had had breakfast I too joined in

THE LI FAIR—CHINESE MANDARIN.

the hunt. I could track the horse by his shoes, and soon found that he had taken the road toward home. After I had followed him thirty li (ten miles) through the mud and slush (for the snow had now pretty well melted) I met some coolies who reported they had seen a horse near Miala, some ten li further on, and that he was still making toward Tsakalao

as hard as he could go. I had run most of the way, but I now increased my pace down the mountain side, hoping he might turn into the place where he had been stabled at Miala ; but on arrival there I learned that he had galloped straight through the village, and that my coolie had gone after him. Some five li further on we could see the horse, like a little speck, coming towards us, nibbling a bit of grass and then trotting forward a little. Later we could distinguish the coolie hobbling along behind him, driving him towards us. The road ran through the plain below Miala, and I knew there was no use trying to catch him there, so went back and waited for him in a stone lane near the village, and, just as he came round the corner, caught him. At the village I got some food and borrowed a saddle. In trying to catch the pony the coolie had been knocked down, and was so badly hurt that I had to put him on the horse's back and lead them both toward Chintouchai. At the top of the hill we met one of our muleteers coming in search of us, and on his mule I put the coolie, and mounting my horse galloped him all the way back, and got in nearly three hours ahead of the others. I was determined to pay the pony back for the tramp he had led me, but I am not so sure that I did not get the worst of it. The saddle I borrowed was an old hard one, which did not seem to fit me very well, and my horse seemed as fresh at the end of the run as when we set out. It was 4 p.m. when I returned, and we had perforce to spend the night in camp.

Next morning by 5.30 we were on the march and soon entered a thick forest, through which the road ran for fifteen li. Then we came out on the grass land at the foot of the pass, and soon overtook a caravan of some sixty mules, laden with tea, which had camped for the night, and was just loading up to start on the steep and arduous climb over the pass called Chiku Shan (" Eat-bitterness Mountain " the pass is

called); and when the snow lies deep on its slopes, and especially in the "saddle," through which one goes on reaching the top, it is quite worthy of its reputation, and has claimed many victims during the winter seasons. There are many wild tales told of how the Black River people raid the caravans while crossing this pass, and muleteers always club together in large bands, and will scarcely ever venture over when there are less than twenty in a party. Some small caravans wait for days just above Chintouchai until a large caravan arrives and there joins them. While crossing this pass 12,000 feet above sea-level the grade is quite gradual, and the climb is only a little over 2,000 feet from the base of the mountain to the top; but by the time the traveller has reached it he will imagine it to be several times that altitude. At the top there were still deep snow drifts, but these were melting away, and we found the purple and yellow poppies and many other flowers in bloom almost at the edge of the snow drifts. A drop of 2,500 feet in about four miles took us to Matang, a little tumbled-down trading station where the tea is deposited, and where the Tibetans and tribesmen from the upper Kermer and part of the Ngaba bring in their wool, hides and animals, in exchange for Chinese commodities. The inhabitants of Matang are nearly all Mohammedans. This place is too high to produce even vegetables, and the only occupation of the people is to trade with the natives in the surrounding country.

Ta-erh Wang Chen, the Chief of the Black River district, had arrived some hours before us, and was in his Kunghuan, or private residence, in which he puts up when passing this way. His lordship called on us soon after our arrival. The main object of his call, however, was to see if we had a gun for sale! He was on his way to see the Somo Tussu and discuss the war that was imminent.

At 8.30 he sent his men up and invited us to come and

see him. We had called before but they were in council, and had asked us to wait till later. We were ushered into a room, at the head of which sat Ta-erh Wang Chen and his brother on rich Turkish cushions. In front of them was a large handsome brazier, on which were pots of steaming tea made from the coarse Kuanhsien leaves, with plenty of milk, and a goodly supply of salt added thereto.

The walls were covered with fuse guns, swords, daggers, spears and armour; while along both sides of the large room sat, or rather squatted, some fifty of his retainers and followers. All rose to their knees and bowed their heads as we entered. I was given a seat one place below the Chief at his left hand, which is the seat of honour. Hot wine was offered first, and when I refused it hot tea from the steaming pot before us was poured out, and we sipped and chatted till after 10 o'clock.

Ta-erh Wang Chen has a peculiar voice, more like the quack of a drake than anything I can think of. He understands and can speak some Chinese, but most of the conversation was carried on through an interpreter. He took a fancy to my little pony and I let him have it, though it was an old friend, on condition that when I wanted to go through his territory he would give me a pass and escort, which he promised to do.

CHAPTER XII.

The Journey to Chosschia.

On leaving Matang we descended an easy grade and soon reached the Kermer River, a stream flowing from the north. At Changku, the point where we crossed, it is spanned by a cantilever bridge, and there turns west and continues this general course, until it joins the Kwanyin River at Damba, and from this point, Changku, the united stream is known as the Tachin Ho (Great Gold River).

We followed the right bank of this stream. All the way to the capital of Somo the river was a foaming torrent, and for the most part of the way we passed through a dense forest, which extended from the river's bank to the lofty peaks, several thousand feet above our heads. Here and there where the valley opened out a little, some lonely farm houses were seen nestling at the foot of the cliffs, or perched on their sides. About 4 p.m. we emerged from this forest and got the first view of the fertile valley of Somo, dotted with its many villages, the houses of which are all built of stone; most of them three-storey high, and some even running to five storeys.

While we were resting and admiring the view that had opened out before us, we heard the war cry of the Black River warriors, which rose above the deafening roar of the Kermer. Their cry came nearer and nearer, so we decided to wait and let them pass, as the road was wide where we were. It was not long until the leaders appeared, some of them riding very fine mules and ponies, others at a half run

holding to the tails of the animals, which were laden with their camping outfit and instruments of war. The cavalcade was a very extended one, and they came in bunches of threes and fours, and were spread out over about two miles.

We could not wait any longer for them and started off and marched in their ranks for some distance. They were a jolly lot. Once, when the advanced guard stopped to wait for their caravan, which was at the rear, and had not been able to keep up, we attempted to pass on. Some of them, out of fun, turned their animals across the road and tried to block it, and at first we were not quite sure of their intention, but soon discovered it was only play. No doubt they wanted to see if we were easily frightened. Finally we passed the whole cavalcade, which stopped to wait until their chief overtook them.

After a five-mile walk through cultivated fields, in which was a good crop of barley and wheat just coming into head, we found ourselves at the little bridge at the foot of the spur on which stood the castle and a group of houses, mostly occupied by the Tussu's retainers.

Several of the houses are also owned by representative men of districts throughout the realm.

On my former visit I lodged in one of the houses inside of the palace enclosure, which belonged to the Hei Shui Chief, but on this occasion he would need it himself, for he and his followers would fill every bit of available space, and we wondered where we would get accommodation.

I went on ahead to secure lodgings, and on the green near the bridge I found most of the inhabitants, both old women and young maidens, old men and boys, together with local headmen or chiefs, all kneeling on the grass, while Tibetan rugs were spread out, on which they were to entertain and welcome the Chief of the famous Black River people. I was riding along with two of Daerh Wang's heralds, and, according

DAMBA CASTLE.

to custom, we all dismounted when we drew near and were saluted by the waiting party.

I inquired where we were to lodge, and a man was told off to guide the way. We were led to a fine large stone house at the back of the palace, and about half-a-mile to the west of it, where we found comfortable quarters.

After passing up a long stone lane we entered a large court-yard, surrounded by a stone wall, where the animals were put up.

On going through the heavy doors, over which the skull of a bear was hung to keep away evil spirits, we passed through an opening in the thick wall of the house and, turning to our right, entered a large room forty feet long by thirty feet wide, in the centre of which was the usual fireplace, and a great fire burning under huge pots that stood on iron tripods, each pot holding about fifty gallons of water. This was the general kitchen and living room. We did not stay here, but were led up two dark stairways to the third floor, and shown to a very nice room in the centre of which also was a fireplace and a pot almost as large as those below. Wood was provided, but as there was no chimney, and the only way for the smoke to escape was through the two small windows, which did not afford much light to the room ; we preferred to be without a fire, and to have our food cooked in the kitchen below.

Although we did not have a fire in our room, we were not without our share of the smoke, for when all the coolies arrived, each group wanted a fire to themselves, and the smoke came in clouds up the stairway ; and, not being able to escape with sufficient rapidity through the windows in the outer wall, much of it found its way into our apartment. This made life so miserable that we had to go down and put out some of the fires, and inform the coolies they must be content to use the one general fire, as they would have to do in a

Chinese inn, or else buy their own wood and go outside to burn it.

We spent all the next day here. A number of people came about, but we were not able to see the Tussu ; he was some distance away, worshipping in a temple, and imploring the idols to endow him with wisdom before attending the council of war.

Next morning our ula arrived and by 9 o'clock we were on the march. For the first four miles the valley was cultivated, then we again entered thick undergrowth with a few large trees scattered about. Fire had run through some parts of it. There was nothing of particular interest until we reached Mami Chiao. There were a few houses here, in one of which I had put up for the night during my travels in 1907.

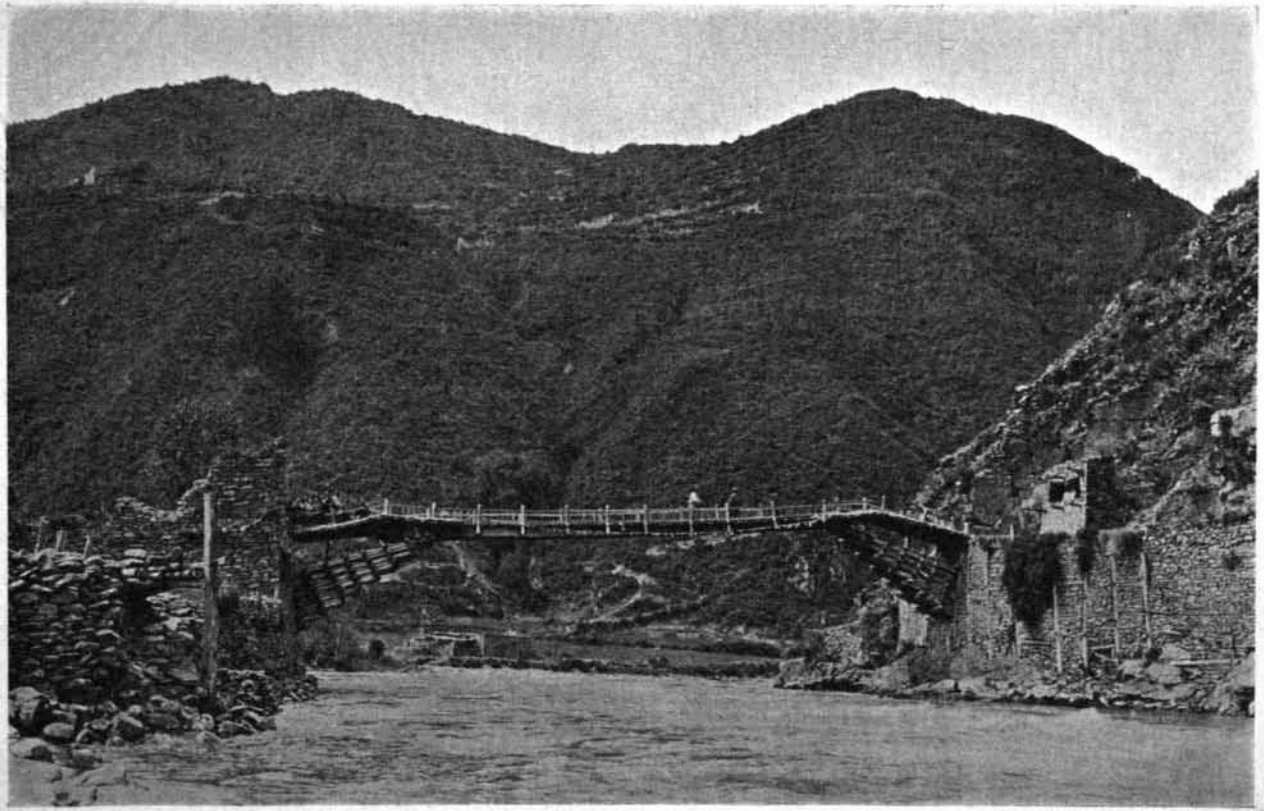
The cantilever bridge that spanned the river was leaning at quite an angle, and we had to be careful lest it should collapse like the one at Tsakalao ; however, we got safely across and the bridge was still standing when we left it.

A stiff climb brought us to the top of the spur, and here we had a fine view of the town of Drukagi, as well as of a good part of the State.

After a long detour down a zigzag path we reached the town. The interpreter and escort had gone on ahead, but when we arrived they had not succeeded in securing accommodation, so we had to stand in the street for some time.

Finally a house was put at our disposal, but the people refused to sell us wood. They had not been very friendly when I passed through here before, but they seemed more sullen than ever this time.

After a little some of the people became more talkative, and we found out that our Chinese friend, in the interest of schools, had left word with the Tussu that if any foreigner ever passed through this way again they were to take him



THE BRIDGE OF MAMI, WHICH THEY TORE DOWN TO KEEP MRS. BISHOP (MISS ISABELLA BIRD) FROM CROSSING.

prisoner and escort him out. My letter from So Tussu and Colonel Kao had rather put a different aspect on things, and they felt they must at least give us a place to sleep in. The Tussu, who is a Lama, left early next morning for a temple situated some distance up the stream, flowing from the south-west. He told our interpreter that he had no time to get us ula or an escort, and had left no one with power to act. The interpreter went up several times to try to get an escort and had for his pains a blank shot fired out of one of the windows of the palace at him.

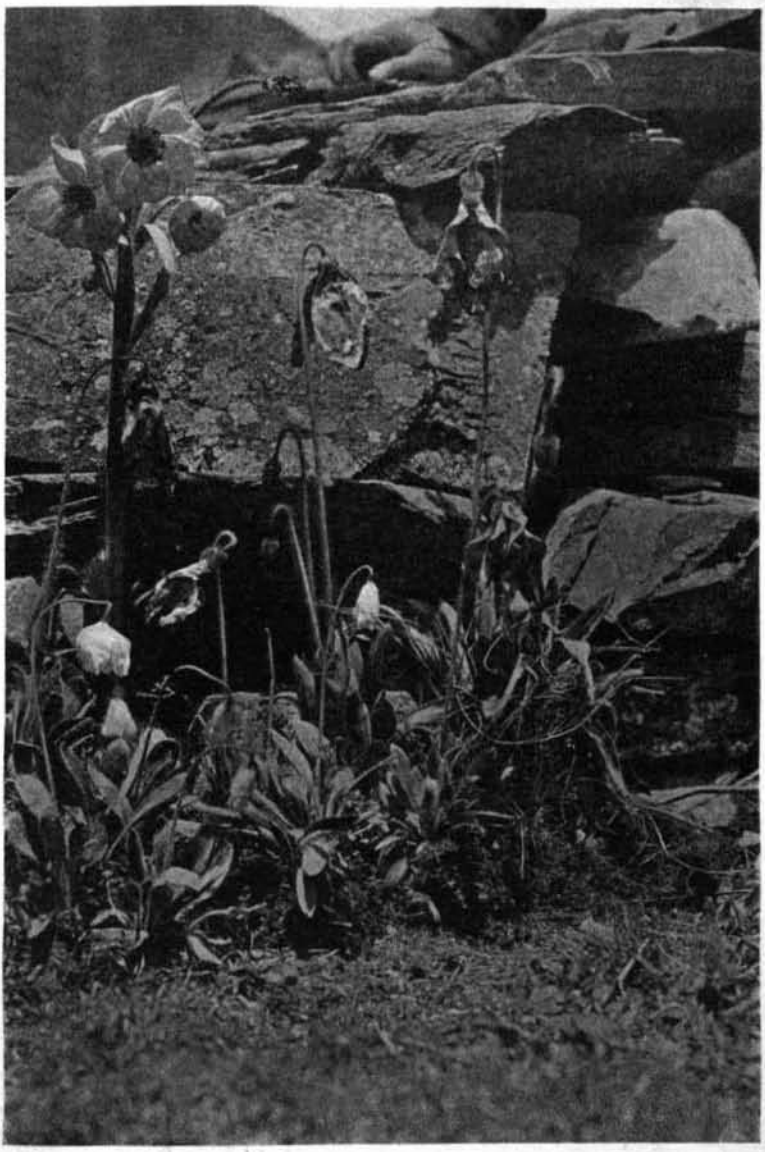
We spent the day here, but were not able to do much more than make friends with a few of the people on the street, and next morning we left. Following the river which here runs a little north of west, we arrived at a large monastery called Maerhkang Cumba, five miles below Drukagi. The people and Lamas were quite friendly and we spent an hour chatting with them, but they would not let us enter the monastery.

From Maerhkang a road leads up one of the ravines to the grass land of Drukagi and on to Ngaba. From here we continued down the right bank of the stream, passing through a cultivated valley with groups of the usual stone houses on the hillsides, on both sides of the river. At last we sighted Runga on the spur of a hill, and the great castle in which the Princess lives, by far the most prominent edifice in the town. The Princess refuses to marry, lest the reins of government should be taken from her. She is greatly influenced by the Lamas, and spends a great deal of her time in a large monastery on a mountain some five miles from her castle. A report has it that she is not as virtuous as she would lead people to believe, and spends a good deal of her time with a favourite Lama in the temple. The rest of his time is taken up reciting prayers before the castle idols and acting as prime minister in temporal affairs. A Lama will probably succeed the Princess in the near future. The Lamas already have control

of several States and are aiming at greater things. It is strange that these shepherds of the flock are not satisfied with the control of the spiritual welfare of the people, but are anxious to grasp the State and all its property and completely control it.

A very nice place was put at our disposal, and the people soon gathered round. Many of them came for medicine, and brought vegetables, eggs, meat and barley meal as a thankoffering; those who could read were given books and we were kept busy. Several of the headmen or local chiefs came and spent most of the time with us, partly to see how we treated the people, and hear what we had to say to them.

Mr. Brooke and Mr. Meares went over to the monastery at the other side of the river, and gave some small mirrors to the people, trying to make friends; but their effort was not very successful, for some of the priests objected to the maidens being able to see their own faces in the small glasses presented, lest they should really know how pretty they looked. So the priests had the mirrors all collected and broken up, saying that by means of these reflectors the foreigners would get possession of their souls. There is a belief current that to look into a looking glass will cause an abortion, which is why so many of them object to being photographed. To avert this influence the priests called all the holy men together, and, in chorus, from the roof of the temple, they clanged their cymbals, blew their trumpets, read their holy books, and poured out all the curses in their ritual on the foreigner's head, for his attempt to harm the people under their care. They were surprised that their curses seemed to have but little influence on the bearing towards us of the common people who had become used to us and had received our medicine, and certainly we did not seem to mind their cursing in the least. The next day many who had been helped by the medicines they had received the previous day came to thank me, and



SOME POPPIES NEAR THE SNOW-LINE.

brought friends along to have their troubles attended to; even some of the Lamas came for medicine. As we passed the temple on our way to the State of Damba they all gathered on the roof of their temple again and in loud chorus continued their most impressive ceremony of yesterday; but with no better result, for we quietly stood by and photographed them, much to their amazement.

Passing up a broad valley, covered with grass on which were many horses and cattle feeding, we came to a small monastery, called Tawei. Here we turned due west, and started up a steep incline. After climbing for about a mile, the grade became more gradual and we came to farms where they were just sowing their buckwheat. It came on to rain, and the pass that was still far above us was white with new-fallen snow, so we stopped for the afternoon and night in an old farmhouse, used only in the autumn, when the farmers come up to reap the harvest.

Next morning it was fine and we made an early start. Before going far we entered a thick undergrowth, which soon gave way to a dense forest of scrub, oak, birch and a few white firs intermingled. All were draped in fairy scarf, some of which must have reached a length of thirty feet. This fairy scarf is a kind of lichen, a cellular cryptogamous plant, which clings to the bark of the trees and hangs in long streamers from the limbs and branches. This lichen is almost like fine hemp or flax fibre, and rope made of it is quite strong.

For hours we travelled along a narrow pathway on the side of the cliff, arched over by branches of shrub oak, which grows from ten to fourteen inches at the trunk, and these were all draped in the same silvery green ribbons. On we marched till we came out on a grass valley where we had dinner. To the west was the snow-capped range and pass, the other three sides covered with forest. The cry of large flocks of

grouse, as they flew up on all sides of us, was the only sound that broke the stillness.

After lunch we set out for the final climb, and toiled for another three miles, up through deep snow drifts, in which the animals almost floundered, and we had much difficulty in reaching the top. It was a beautiful day and well worth while to stand on this pinnacle of Pewa Pass, the dividing line between Runga and Damba State, and gaze upon the panorama that opened out before us. From here we could see over a great part of Damba State, which is not a very large one, being only about forty miles square, the most part of which is mountainous and uninhabited. The valleys are quite fertile and thickly populated, and in many secluded spots lonely houses were hid away from general view. The people of Damba are very proud of their reputation, and tradition says they were famous warriors and most fearless men.

Three hours' hard march brought us down the steep mountain side, first, through beds of wild flowers, then through another dense forest, and finally out to cultivated fields on to the village of Drozer, where we put up for the night and changed our guide and ula. It was a beautiful clear night and we got a latitude, after the inhabitants had all retired, for we had to be careful not to arouse their suspicions by doing much star-gazing.

Word was sent out to the people on the mountains, whose turn it was to escort us, and early next morning they were waiting before we had finished breakfast. It was a new thing not to have to wait for ula, which is the only drawback to the system, so far as the traveller is concerned, for not only does it ensure a safe transit from one tribe to another, but the charge is quite moderate. The Chinese seldom give them anything, but I believe in always paying a proper price for their help.

We only travelled some five miles further down into the

valley, where we came to another village, where there is another chief or headman. It was his duty to escort us to Damba twenty miles further on, but he was away ; so we had several hours' delay before we could get animals and men from the mountains to take us on. We tried to hire the men who had come from Drozer to take us into Damba, but they would not do this, saying they had no authority to escort us through the other chief's district.

ULA AND A GRASS-LAND TRIBESMAN.

Brooke and Meares went on with some of the coolies and the Chinese escort, while I remained behind to wait for the ula, keeping the interpreter with me.

It was a long wait, and by 2 o'clock only two animals had arrived. We waited on till 4 o'clock and at last I saw the other yaks coming down the mountain side, and put my bedding on an old broken-down horse that had been waiting mounted. But the old nag refused to carry me, and I felt it

was much safer as well as quicker to walk. So with my bedding on the ancient steed and a good stick in my hand on we tramped down to the depths of the valley quite 2,000 feet below our starting point. After crossing an old cantilever bridge we followed the left bank of the stream for some two miles, and then turned up a ravine and up a steep spur, where we toiled for an hour and a-half, my female guide tugging on the halter in front of the nag, while I plied the stick from behind.

At last, dripping with perspiration, we reached the top of the pass. The sun had already set, and there were ten miles of rough road yet to travel, so, without waiting to take breath, we pushed on, and in the twilight overtook the rest of the party.

They had waited for the coolies, and counting on the ula to overtake them, had pitched their tents ; but while I talked with them my escort pushed on with my bedding, and was already out of sight. So, as I knew the road, and also people on the street at Damba, I gave chase, and though I did not overtake my guide I found my way to the capital in the dark, and near the entrance to the castle met two men, who took a message to the Princess that I had arrived and would like accommodation. This was Colonel Kao's aunt, who had already heard of our coming through him, so I was given quarters with my old friend of the year before. I soon found my bedding, which was in another house near by, where my escort had put up. They had a good laugh at me for getting left in the dark.

A pound of parched barley meal, some milk and hot tea were now brought in, and I don't remember tsamba ever tasting better. If my readers think they would not appreciate tsamba for supper I would recommend a twenty-mile tramp between 4 and 9.30 p.m. with a climb of 4,000 feet and several descents of 2,000 feet each. If they have not had anything to eat since morning, except a small cake made of coarse

cornflour, cooked in wood ash, I will guarantee their agreeing with me that tsamba is good food when one is hungry.

After supper I was taken on the roof and allowed to choose my apartment. I took the best there was, and taking a large round basket about six feet in diameter used for sunning the grain, made my bed in it, under the projecting roof, and rolled myself in my quilt, while my worthy landlord rolled himself in a sheep-skin gown and lay on the roof near by. Needless to say I was soon in the land of know-nothing, and was only aroused by the shouts of the interpreter next morning about 9 o'clock, trying to find out where I was. The sun had been shining full in my face for some time, but I had been quite unconscious of it.

The rest of the party had not fared so well. They had pitched their tents in a swampy place where there was some wood, but it was so wet that it would not burn, and the ula with their bedding did not overtake them; so they were left to pass the cold night with what they had on them, and the next morning came in half frozen and very hungry.

An empty house, or kung kwan, was put at our disposal, and we soon made ourselves comfortable. A little later the ula all turned up, so we had bacon and eggs and fried scones for breakfast, and a bucket of milk was brought in by my old host, and that morning we feasted.

Here, again, the people gathered around us for medicine; and as Colonel Kao was to arrive with his younger brother, who is to be put under the charge of a Lama here to be prepared for the Tussuship of this State, when his aunt dies, we waited another day. In honour of their arrival there was to have been a great dance; the country swains and the maidens came in from the mountains dressed in gay colours, and had already gathered on the green in front of the castle, when three men rode in on horseback, and said some brigands had driven off a large herd of cattle. At once the interesting

party broke up, and in groups of fives and tens were seen hastening away to guard the passes, and to try to capture the thieves and redeem the animals.

After spending a pleasant two days here we passed on to Cheoser, the capital of Chosschia, where another aunt of Mr. Kao's resides, and is the wife of the Tussu.

We had got the Colonel to send word over the evening he arrived that we were coming and to arrange for our entertainment.

On leaving Damba, we descended a steep hill, and after travelling four miles came to the banks of Tachin.

The only means of getting to the other side was by means of a coracle, a craft the appearance of which is not inspiring. It is made of a very slim frame of willow branches, woven together and covered with a raw hide, is about four feet in diameter and three feet deep, and will hold three people. I have seen four natives, who were used to these skiffs, cross in one. All hands huddle down in the bottom with their legs curled up in a most uncomfortable position, and it is fatal to move after the craft is shoved off. As for ourselves, we shot up stream in the back water until we struck the current, when the coracle was sent swirling round and round in the vortex and bobbing like a cork on the waves. One moment we were down in the trough with the feeling that we would surely be engulfed, for the waves seemed much higher than one's head; the next we were riding the crest of the waves, but all the time being carried down stream at the rate of fifteen to twenty miles an hour. Just below the landing stage the river foamed through some boulders and cut the shape of the letter S. To a stranger it looked as if we must surely be carried on to the boulders. But the ferryman, by means of his paddle, steered and dragged the coracle forward in a wonderful way and safely landed us, and it really needs much more skill to manage one of these crafts than it does a birch bark canoe.

We now found our way to the town of Cheoser, where the Chief had set apart a house for our use. The courtyard was soon filled with Lamas and laymen, old women and young maidens, all anxious to have another look at the stranger. But all were friendly, and one after another I saw them point to me and say "That is the man who passed through last year." Some of my former escort came forward and saluted me by falling on their knees, bowing their heads and saying "Chou-ba-le-su, kuzu demo duk-kam" ("You are welcome; are you well?").

CHAPTER XIII.

Through the Unexplored Grassland.

We had to spend three days at Chosschia waiting for ula, but it was not time wasted.

The people soon began to gather about, afflicted with all kinds of ailments. Priests and laymen, women and girls, gathered about me and had their sores dressed. Skin diseases and sore eyes were the commonest complaints, but there were many with ulcered legs, and some of both sexes with syphilis and kindred diseases. From morning till night I was kept busy, for, when I had treated all who came to our lodgings, three of the chiefs sent for me to come to their homes and attend to some sick folk who were not able to come out for treatment.

One poor woman was almost eaten up with leprosy, and her son of thirteen years lay a few yards away, reduced to skin and bone; he could not last much longer. It was most pathetic to hear their pleading for help, but I could offer them no hope. I gave them some ointment to relieve their pain and appease their minds for the time being; they seemed surprised when I told them frankly they could not recover. The mother I judged to be about thirty-five years of age. She had heard somehow that I was able to heal the sick, and had sent her eldest son, who was a young Lama of about eighteen years of age, to bring me up. All the chanting of the Lamas and their so-called holy men had not been able to work the miracle of healing, and now she believed that the foreigner could do it. I shall never forget that face of sorrow as she pleaded

with me for help, and pointing to her youngest child, a little girl of about five years, said: "If I could only live until my baby was old enough to look after herself, for who will care for my baby?" The tears ran down her cheeks, and the eyelashes of others in the room, for some reason, were not dry. The husband, old Tibetan as he was, kneeled down beside his wife as tenderly as any foreigner could have done, and whispered to her, "Do not worry about the baby, I will care for her." The mother did not quite despair, and she insisted that I should accept presents, which she commanded her husband to bring to me, and made her son, the Lama, carry to my room. I think this was the saddest case I have ever attended on all my journeys in China and Tibet.

From this home I was escorted from house to house, and had to attend to not a few female cases, about which I had not the least idea that they would ever consult a foreigner.

Taken to the palace itself I found a poor child that had fallen into the hot ashes. The flesh was almost falling off the bones of one arm and part of the shoulder, and the stench was something tremendous; but, after a great deal of work, I removed most of the filth and scab, thoroughly cleansing the sore, and it was wonderful the improvement, even in three days. The father and mother, who at first would hardly submit to my using water to cleanse the sore, were so surprised at the result that they sang our praises far and wide, and more than one person asked me to stay in their country, as they had never had any one to care for them like this before.

Even the Prince was so pleased that he consented to let us travel across the Grassland where no foreigner had ever been allowed to pass, and sent one of the chief's sons, whose home I had visited, to escort us to Damtung, the capital of Gaishechia.

From this point Mr. Meares went south, down the valley

of the Tachin, with the coolies and most of the stuff, while Mr. Brooke came with me. We packed what we thought we would need upon the horses and yaks that were brought in to convey us westward. A tent, a few camping articles, bedding, clothing and books, a good supply of flour and some bacon—for there was nothing to be procured *en route*—comprised our outfit.

When all was ready we set out—one party for Mongung, the other for the Unknown beyond. The whole street turned out to see us off, and we received many kind farewells and much advice about being careful on the road, for in this country even their own people never know when they may be surprised by a band of villains. Our interpreter from Tsakalao went back from here, not understanding the language beyond this point. So we started out with quite a stranger, the son of one of the chiefs to whom I had given medicine.

This young man proved himself a very good guide and interpreter, but he had neither the cunning nor the experience of my friend who had just turned back. We passed up a wide valley that was mostly used as pasture land for the milch cows of the town. Great boughs of wild white roses clung in clusters of bloom over the stone walls that surrounded the fields. The birds were singing, all Nature seemed at peace, and we were happy at the thought that kindness and a little knowledge had won our victory over ignorance and superstition.

The year before it was with the greatest difficulty I had got into this place, and the people were not friendly. On one occasion Mr. Edgar had arrived there, and had to fly almost for his life; now we were the friends of the people and their rulers, and were travelling under an escort and with documents written by the Prince himself, stating that we were his friends and must be protected and escorted safely

through his country. I also had a letter on my person to the Prince of the next State asking that he would receive us. Our success was even greater than we had dreamed of.

A BOWER OF WHITE ROSES NEAR CHOSSCHIA CASTLE—MR. BROOKE FEEDING DOG ; INTERPRETER ON LEFT.

We rode north-west up the valley for about three miles, then turned south-west up the side of the mountain, where we toiled for some hours, first through a rank forest, then at

8,000 feet, coming out on a great grass slope facing south. A little later we came to a long stretch of cultivated land. We put up for the night in a small village called Rengack, where we were comfortably housed. There seemed to be an epidemic of sore eyes all through this country and I had a number of patients. The people here, fifteen miles from the capital, had heard of our doings at Chosschia, and flocked about us freely. Goitre seems to be a very general complaint all through this country, and it is common to see people —women especially—going about with a great pouch hanging under their chin. I could not discover the cause, but rather think it is the mica which is so plentiful about here, and which, washed down by the melting snows, may be found in the sparkling water that ripples down every mountain side.

There was no salt or brackish water about. The natives themselves attribute the trouble to drinking snow-water. I noticed that where the surrounding mountains were largely composed of mica shist there goitre was most prevalent.

Another day's march brought us to the first tents in the grasslands. Up till 10 a.m. we marched on through fields of waving barley. We were now 9,000 feet above sea-level, but by reason of the southern aspect and the sandy nature of the soil, the crops were well advanced, and would soon be ready for the sickle.

On crossing a small stream down which a road leads from Yukoh we here turned south-west, and started up the north-eastern slope of Mount Zibzier. When we crossed the stream we were over 10,000 feet above the sea-level. Here we entered a forest, and for four miles the path ran through as wild a track of country as one could wish to travel in.

By noon we had come out on the Grassland. We laboured up the slope, passing a number of small lakes or basins kept full of water from the melting snow, and at length reached

the top of the pass—12,460 feet high. We found here the usual obo or pile of stones in which are inserted poles with prayer-flags attached.

From the top of this pass the whole country lay open before us. We could see for miles to the south, west and north away over the forest, and far to the east over the country we had just travelled through. On the mountain lower down we could see little black specks through the glasses feeding on the slopes, and knew that we were nearing the herds.

Five miles down a gradual slope brought us to the camp where the Chief lived. Not far away a number of other tents were pitched, and the mountain sides were literally covered with thousands of yak grazing. A few small calves were tethered near the tent, and a huge mastiff, the inevitable sentinel of every Tibetan's tent, whose deep bass bay make the very slopes vibrate, warned the stranger to approach with caution.

On arrival our interpreter went in with his letter from the Prince, for here we were to change our ula. We waited some time and, when he did not invite us in, walked up to the tent, raised the flap, stepped in, and sat down about the fire in Tibetan fashion.

The tent was about twenty-five feet long by fifteen feet wide, shaped almost like the bottom of a Chinese boat when turned upside down. The sides of the tent were so arranged that it could be rolled up in warm weather, and in the centre of the roof of the tent was a long slit that could be thrown open to let the smoke out, or closed over at night to keep the snow and rain out and the heat in. In the centre burned the usual argol (dried manure) fire, for wood had to be carried on yak from the forest ten miles away, and they only used it for starting the fire.

A large pot of tea was boiling and a bucket of milk stood

near by; and as they never wash these wooden buckets in which they milk the yak, and keep the milk while the cream rises, there was a thick coating of dirt and sour milk both inside and out. However, one must not look too closely at things in a country like this, though, to be sure, there is no need for a magnifying glass to enable one to see dirt, or a microscope to discover bacteria. The milk is boiled and then put in wooden vats, when it sours almost immediately, but the people claim that they get more cream that way, and make more butter. After I saw how they skimmed their milk I was convinced they were right, for they put in a great deal of the curd with the cream, and this curd mixes with the butter in some way, and, as they do not wash the butter after it is churned, it is about half curd. Sometimes, when I have washed the butter before using it, most of it has run off in the water in the form of butter-milk. On other occasions I have used Tibetan butter which was almost pure milk-fat and of a very good quality; but a good plan is always to use a knife and cut carefully through it, first one way and then another, and so remove the long yak hairs which are so abundant in the butter, especially in that made in the springtime, when the animals are casting their coats.

The Chief promised to send ula the next morning, and passed us on to Acree, where we found the large monastery of Muska Cumba.

The monastery was built of stone, and was the only place where there was any attempt at fixed dwellings. The inhabitants all lived in tents, which they pitched wherever they could find the best pasture for their herds, and in winter they all fed in the lower valleys in the neighbourhood of the monastery, 12,137 feet above sea-level.

We had some little difficulty in getting lodgings in the temple, but after a short time the Lamas allowed us to put our things in the porch of the gold-roofed temple, and lodge there for

the night. We were able to distribute a few books among the Lamas, but could not get much information from them, though they were much more friendly when we left. There were several private residences in connection with the monastery, and we saw a number of women and children.

At 10 o'clock next morning the ula turned up, and we packed our things, paid the drivers from Chosschia for bringing us thus far, and proceeded on our journey. The country continued of the same undulating character, all grass. Many herds were pasturing, especially on the higher slopes above 12,000 feet, where they graze in the summer months, the lower valleys being reserved for the winter pasture lands.

That night, after crossing another pass 14,000 feet high, we reached a monastery called Kimlung, which was about the same size as Muska, having about 200 Lamas and 100 lay families.

At first the Lamas were not friendly, but on our showing our letters and saying that if we informed their Tussu of their unwillingness to give us shelter for a night he would not be pleased, they consented to allow us to stay in a large room connected with a private residence, and later brought us wood and were amicable. A number of people came from the tents for medicine. I extracted some teeth, which was a great surprise to the Lamas; but the owners of these annoying decayed pieces of bone were very grateful at being relieved of the source of their pain, and brought presents of milk and butter, which they insisted we should accept.

One more hard day's march brought us to Damtung, where the Tussu of Gaishechia lives. It had been raining nearly every day since we left Chosschia and was still at it when we arrived at Damtung. Of course there were dry spells each

day, but in this country one minute the sky is black with thunder-clouds, and an hour after is bright blue.

When we reached Damtung it was pouring, and we were wet through, and were glad when, after some little delay, we were shown to a house near the castle. We gathered round a fire in a smoky little room, cooked our supper, dried our clothes, slept, and awaited events of the next three days.

CHAPTER XIV.

In the Land of the Cattle Thieves.

We were the first foreigners who ever have visited Damtung, and we found it a compact little town, well fortified by physical conditions, being built on the projection of a mountain where two swift streams join, both of which it would be most difficult to ford. For, while the streams were not over three feet deep, except in flood time, yet they came rolling down at such a rate that it would carry men or animals clean off their feet. Now it was a roaring cataract on both sides of the capital. The photograph will give a better idea than I can make with my pen. Indeed, my pen utterly refuses to portray the beauties of this rare and wonderful scenery, so I must trust to the illustrations for that, and confine myself to the simple story of what took place on the march, day by day. When we first arrived the people looked on us with suspicion and were very shy, but they were not long in changing their attitude. Our interpreter told them of what we had done in Chosschia, and before 9 o'clock next morning I was invited to see my first patient, who was lying dangerously ill in a house close by.

He was a man of about thirty years of age, nearly six feet tall, and although he had a big strong frame, he was reduced to skin and bone. I found he had been suffering from fever for twenty days, and, having recovered from that, was now suffering from another complaint which was the result of fever. He could not have lived many days longer unless he got relief in some way, for all the remedies that they knew of had failed.

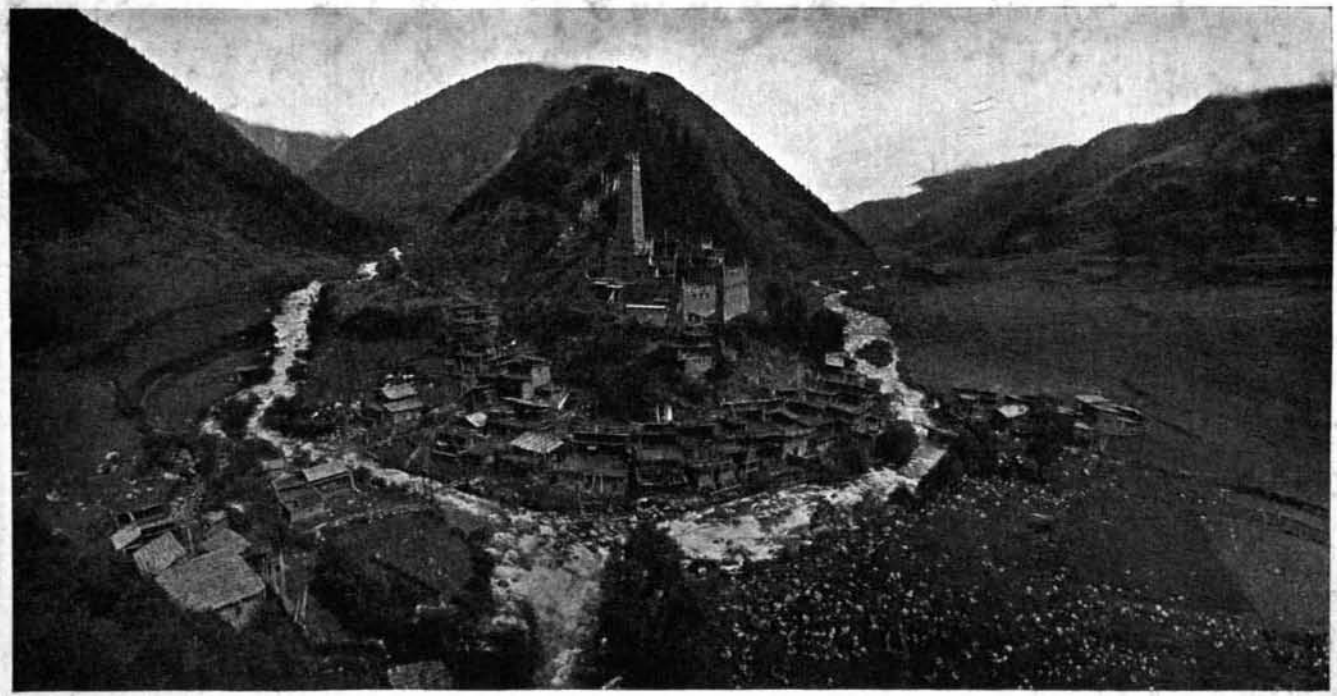
A simple operation by means of a syringe and some warm water was all that was required, and to the amazement of the natives the man immediately began to recover. I prescribed egg and milk, and though we only remained here three days, my patient had so far recovered that he was able to sit up and walk about a little.

The report of what I was able to do for a poor cottager was not long in finding its way to the ears of the Tussu. At 2 o'clock he sent one of his servants to invite me to his palace, which is the high building near the tower seen in the photograph.

On passing a large courtyard where the cattle are housed at night I ascended two flights of stairs, passed two tigers which were kept in a cage on one of the landings, and then on through a long corridor. A yellow silk curtain was lifted and I was ushered into a room about twenty feet square, in which was a table and two chairs. In the centre of the room was a brazier, and therein a charcoal fire burned and the inevitable teapot boiled.

On a wooden bed, curtained with yellow satin, reclined a miserable looking creature, whom they introduced to me as the Prince or ruler of the State. His feet were at right angles to his body, and could not be straightened out. The pain was so excruciating that he had taken to the pernicious habit of opium-smoking in order to get relief. His hair was in a knotted mat, his face distorted to such an extent that he looked more like a beggar than a prince, though his surroundings were otherwise.

On examination I found that he was suffering from inflammatory rheumatism, and that he had been ill for about two months. I had with me none of the medicines that are usually prescribed for this trouble; but as became a quack who had at last achieved a royal patient, I felt I must do something; so going back for my medicine case, and hunting



THE CASTLE AND TOWN OF DAMTUNG, WHERE THE AUTHOR HEALED THE CHIEF.


IMPERIAL
LIBRARY.

it through, I uttered this prescription :—To start with, a good dose of salts ; 10 grains of quinine morning and evening ; massage for the legs for six hours a day (if the patient could stand it), and this last I illustrated by taking my turn at the work for the first half-hour. We had brought methylated spirits for preserving such insects and reptiles as we might secure on our way, and this was freely used in the process of massaging, with vaseline later, to keep the skin from being too much irritated. At 9 p.m. I went up to the castle again, painted the knees with iodine, and, wrapping the legs in flannel, told the royal patient that he must go to sleep.

Next morning, shortly after 9 o'clock, I was called to the palace, as the Prince wanted me. I followed my guide into his presence. On entering I noticed a heavy cane near the Chief's bed and rather wondered whether it would be used on me ; but I had not to wait long to see what it was for. Almost immediately the Chief seized the cane, threw off the covering and swung out of bed, and, in a manner hard to describe, hobbled across the room and back to his bed again. This was the first time he had been able to put his feet to the floor for nearly three months, and I have never seen a child more delighted with a new toy than this Tussu was over being able to use his legs.

I forbade his attempting to do this for a few days, and unbandaging his limbs gave them another good massage, and repeated yesterday's prescription, then left his people to continue the rubbing. On pulling the legs lightly to try to straighten them I found that they already relaxed to an angle of about 20 degrees.

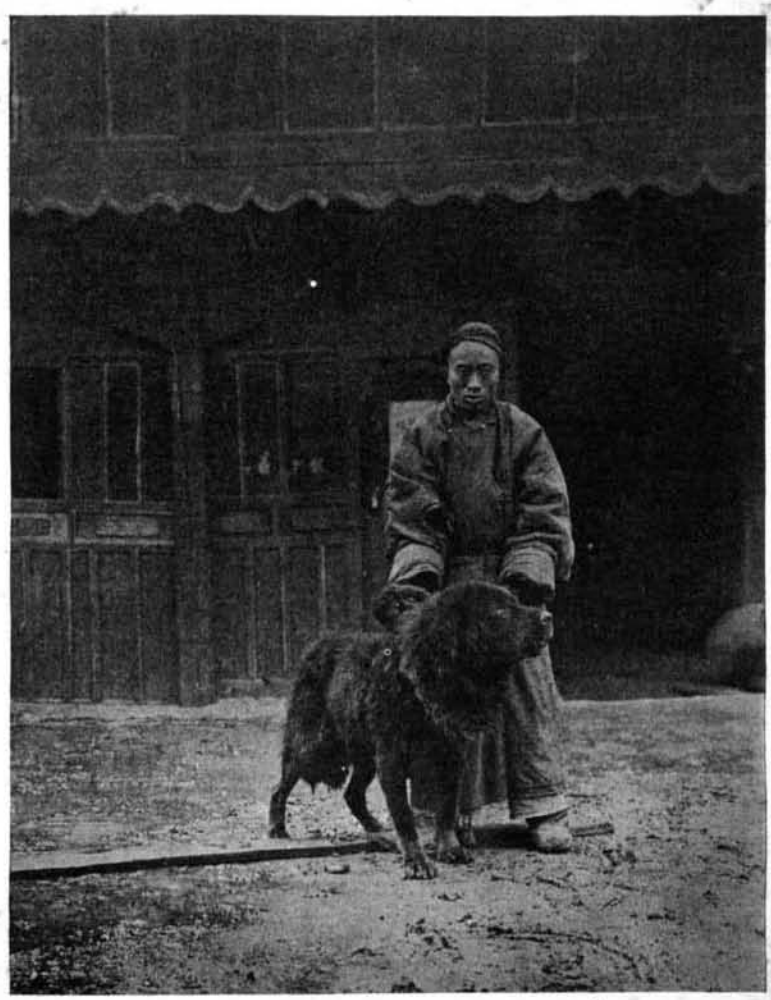
The Prince's wife and daughter now came into the room and prostrated themselves on the floor to thank me for what I had done. Indeed, the cure was more rapid than even I had dreamed it could be, and to them it seemed a miracle.

I returned to our abode, and awaiting the ula which had to be brought from the mountain (a day's journey away), we were not idle, for the people kept flocking about all day. Already word had reached some of the country people ten miles away, and in they came to see the magician thus suddenly alighted in their midst. Patrons of all descriptions and all ages flocked about, and I was kept busy from morning to night. All fear of the foreigner seemed suddenly to have vanished, and they were as free in making known their complaints as if I had lived in their midst all my life. That night the Tussu sent down one of his retainers to know if I cared to choose a wife from the fair daughters of Gaishechia, saying I was invited to come up to the palace to choose one from the scores of eager faces which, from our humble position on the roof of our lodgings, I could see peering over the parapet of the castle. Needless to say I thanked the Chief for his kindness and thoughtfulness, but informed him I had a wife at Chentu. "Oh!" said the emissary, "but a Chinese woman is not like our women, they stay in the house and have small feet, so that they cannot walk. One of our women would go with you, carry your load, cook your food and do all kinds of work." Again assuring him that this was not necessary, I gratefully dismissed him.

When we arose next morning we found the ula had at last arrived, and, while the yakmen were packing the things on the yak, Brooke and I went up to say good-bye and see how the patient was progressing. As soon as we entered the room he sprang out of bed, and, with the aid of his stick, walked around the room almost in an upright position.

We were almost as delighted as he was at this sudden recovery. The Prince called for paper and ink, and wrote down the foreign names of the remedies used, using the Tibetan character, and then wrote down my name and address at Chentu.

We got a photograph of the huge mastiff kept to guard the palace, and then said good-bye.



THE GUARD ON THE ROOF—TIBETAN MASTIFF.

Three months later the Prince sent some of his people all the way to Chentu, twenty days' journey, with presents to me,

and a message that he had quite recovered, and that I was welcome to his State whenever I chose again to visit him.

When all was packed we set out to visit the famous robber district of Yukoh. The only name that is written on our maps to convey any idea of what that stretch of country is like is the word " Goluk " or " Robbers," while on many maps it is left entirely blank. The inhabitants are known to the Chinese as " the great cattle thieves," and many of the neighbouring tribes fear these pillagers. The Prince of Yukoh is married to a sister of the Prince of Chosschia, and the Yukoh prince's brother is married to the sister of the Prince of Gaishechia, and by means of these marriage ties they try to live at peace with each other; but despite this bond of marriage the herdsmen of the different States often have feuds with each other about the boundary line of their pasture lands, and sometimes take possession of each other's herds, if they happen to stray over the boundary. A feud of this kind took place between the herdsmen of Yukoh and Chosschia on the northern border, a few days after we passed through.

On our way to Yukoh we followed the left hand stream shown in the photograph, and after four hours' travelling through wooded land, which we entered about a mile from the capital of Gaishechia, we came out on grass land again, and four hours more brought us to a small temple and a few tents.

The priest was quite differently dressed from any I had ever seen, having long hair, like a Taoist, done up on the top of his head. He had a wife who lived in a tent close by. Their images were very similar to those usually found in Buddhist temples, but it was reported that their books differ.

This was the only priest of this order I had met with in all the journey, and I am not prepared to say just what branch of the faith he represented. He was not a Bon, at least not as we find Bons in the Tachin valley, in Bati and Bawang States, where they have adhered to the primitive form of

Bon Nature worship. I was told that this was a sect found only among the herdsmen, and now almost extinct, being superseded by the Red and Yellow sect.

In the porch of this little temple we spent the night, camping early, as it had rained hard all the afternoon. About 5 o'clock a Lama, the brother of the Gaishechia chief, overtook us, riding a big white horse. He had five companions all armed to the teeth. They had been sent by the Prince to escort us, and hand us safely over to the brother of the Yukoh Tussu, who was camped some ten miles further up the valley. We were now camped at the boundary line of the two States, Gaishechia and Yukoh.

This escort had good horses and rode on to the camps that night, while we decided to pass the night where we were and go up next morning.

It was 10 o'clock when we sighted the camp and the herds grazing on the slopes. By 11 o'clock we drew up in front of fifty-six black tents all pitched on a level flat between two streams, which here could be easily forded. Our Gaishechia Lama was accompanied by two of the Yukoh Prince's brothers, one a Lama, the other married to the sister of the Gaishechia Chief.

Their servants brought Tibetan rugs along, which were spread on the ground, and we were asked to be seated.

We found that our escort had arrived late the evening before, and had been attacked by the great ferocious dogs kept to guard these tents. One of the escort had been badly torn by one of these dogs, and I made shift to dress twenty-eight nasty wounds, some of them on his face, others on his arms, hands and legs. This occupied nearly two hours. Next the Chief's son, a lad of fifteen, was brought with a bad foot, and when he was attended to we were urged to pitch our tents and spend the rest of the day with our friends.

The whole encampment gathered about and lent a hand,

and in a very short time all our ula was unpacked, our tent erected, and we were led off to visit the Chief in his tent. There was nothing to distinguish this from any of the others, only it was pitched almost in the centre of the encampment. Inside it had more comfort in the way of rugs and cooking utensils; but they all ate the same kind of food and lived practically in the same way.

CAMP OF THE PRINCE'S BROTHER—YAK IN FOREGROUND.

In the evening quite 5,000 head of yak, sheep and horses were driven in. There was no enclosure, but the yak were tethered to long lines made of yak hair and pinned to the ground. The sheep gathered toward the centre of the encampment, and at dark the dogs were let loose. They scampered round the outside of the camps, kept the herds together, and kept off wild animals from the flock. All night

long the deep baying of these ferocious brutes resounded in the still night air, and warned the stranger that the safest place was inside his tent. On several occasions a pack of dogs came so close to our tent that we thought they were going to attack it, but they scampered off again without harming us.

Next morning we set out for the capital, which we found to be quite thirty miles further on. We tramped up to the watershed, between the head-waters of the Kwanyin, and the stream that flows past Gaishechia, and empties into the Tachin near Romi Chanku. The pass of Gerhubdumdoh we found to be somewhat higher than the other we had come over, and we got into a heavy snowstorm near the top.

After crossing the pass we found large herds on the other side belonging to the inhabitants. These herdsmen seem to group together in parties of from ten to fifty families, each with their own tent made of black yak hair. When the yak are brought in at night the animals are thrown and their feet tied by a rope. Then a number of people gather round and pluck the hair out in great handfuls, continuing until all the long hair is plucked out. The poor creature groans at every tug that is given, and it is no light pull that extracts a handful of hair from these yak. At 5 o'clock, in a pouring rain, we reached the capital of Yukoh State, and were almost carried away while crossing the stream that flows past the monastery.

At first we tried to secure lodgings in the monastery itself but did not succeed, so pitched our tents in the pouring rain, and made our beds on the wet grass. With great difficulty we secured some wood and cooked some food. We had not eaten anything since morning and had had a long march. A Lama, the Tussu's brother, had gone up another ravine to bring word of our arrival to the Tussu, who was also out in a tent with his herds, so that we had no one to herald our

arrival, and had to wait till late in the afternoon of the next day before he arrived with ula to take us on.

This Lama was a very sullen-looking priest, and if it had

TIBETAN NURSE-MAID AND BABY.

not been for the Gaishechia Tussu sending his brother along we should not have fared so well as we did. We could do but little here, though we met people from other States who were friendly.

The next morning we set out on a 30-mile march to Dawo, and pressed on over the same rolling grass land. Some two miles from the capital of Yukoh we passed a hot spring where there was mixed bathing. On the opposite side of the stream we saw a band of the famous cattle raiders, returning with their plunder of about 200 head of yak, which they were forcing on at the point of their long lances. These would be taken to the Tussu's tent, and, after he had taken his share of the booty, the raiders would be pardoned and the remainder of the plunder would be theirs.

It is hard to imagine a more fiendish-looking lot of men than these nomads of the grassy slopes. According to the maps this country is all within the Szechuan province, but the Chinese official has to ask leave if he wishes to travel in these highlands, and the inhabitants would think as little of plundering him as they would the ordinary merchant. One might undertake a journey in the hope of trade.

We were benighted and had to camp on the plain, and the next morning about 8 o'clock reached Dawo, a large monastery on the great north road to Tibet.

CHAPTER XV.

The Traffic of the Great North Road.

On arriving at Dawo we found a large monastery which contained about 3,000 Lamas, and close by was a small village of about fifty families. We got rooms in a large new gochuang, belonging to the people of Mantze State. A gochuang is a house built by a tribe for the accommodation of their people, while passing through on business.

In large centres like Tacheinlu, each tribe has its own guest-house. This one we found to be very roomy and, as it had just been reconstructed, it was quite clean. Upon examination we discovered that most of the houses were new and several others in the course of construction. When we inquired why these houses were being rebuilt, we were told that some three years previously a great earthquake had destroyed nearly all the buildings, and killed most of the inhabitants. The monastery, which is about half-a-mile away, had also been shaken, and some of the cloisters in connection with it fell, yet the temples and many of the cells were unharmed.

These monasteries along the main road are also great warehouses or tea stations; much of the tea shipped into Tibet travels over this road, and is conveyed from stage to stage by local animals. A great part of this work is done gratis, while on some occasions a small fee is paid by the monastery for carrying the tea from one post to another. I saw hundreds of yak loads deposited at Dawo while I was there.

BLACK RIVER BLACKSMITH AND HIS WIFE.

We thought of passing down through Chantwei, a track of country that is bounded by the Horba States on the north, by Dergi on the west, by Chala on the east and by Litang on the south ; so far as I know, Chantwei has never been visited by any European.

We found a Mohammedan military official here whom I had met some years before. He called and was most friendly. We made very cautious inquiries about the condition of the country to the west, and found it was governed from Lhasa, the official being changed every three years. About fifteen years ago these people rebelled against the Chinese, who asked the Tibetan troops from Batang to help them to put down the rebellion. It ended in the Chinese handing the government of the country over to Lhasa, as the inhabitants were all Tibetans, on condition that there should be no raiding along the big roads. An official was appointed from the Holy City with the title known to the Chinese as Tsangwang, or Tibetan king, but his term of office is only for three years, so that he is not a king actually, though the Chinese call him by that name.

The new representative from Lhasa had just taken over office ; from the reports we got he seemed to be quite an obstinate man, who intended to compel the Chinese to hand back the country taken by the Chinese troops when the Litang monastery was sacked about seven years ago.

It would be interesting to know just how many troops inhabit the country of Chantwei. Report has it that there are 80,000 men capable of bearing arms, but this must be greatly exaggerated, though it was given to me as the result of the census recently taken.

By 6 o'clock a.m. our ula to convey us to Tachienlu had arrived ; but late the previous evening Mr. Ma had agreed to send his interpreter with me over to the Tussu to see if it were possible to get through Chantwei. We postponed

our journey. Mr. Ma promised to send up the interpreter for me, so I waited till 9 o'clock, but he did not appear, and I went over to see what had happened. I was told that early in the morning the interpreter had gone across the river to arrange an audience and had not returned. I was none too pleased with Mr. Ma, and told him I knew what the answer would be, but he assured me it would be all right, and that the interpreter would soon be back; accordingly we waited. It was 12 o'clock when they sent word that the Tussu would not receive me, so I went over to Mr. Ma, and told him what I thought of his plan and its result. He expressed his regret, but assured me he had done his best. Knowing that it is the business of these officials to stop travellers from entering a country of this kind, I said, "If you will allow me, I will go across the river and seek an interview with the Tussu and return before dark." Whether he thought that I was "bluffing" and that I would not dare to cross the river in the coracle, I don't know, but he replied, "All right, you may go, but it will be impossible for you to get an audience." He wanted to send his interpreter along, but I refused his aid, seeing that we had a man of our own. So, immediately setting out, we succeeded in crossing the Ngachu, which was divided into several streams.

The valley is quite wide here and the water is high, necessitating three portages before we crossed the other bank, and it took us a full hour to cross, for we were carried far down the stream. Consequently it was almost 2 o'clock when we found ourselves outside the palace gate.

I sent in the interpreter with my letter from the Chosschia and Gaishechia Tussus.

In a very few minutes I was invited to enter and was shown to the seat of honour.

The Tussu, in this case a female, entered. She was a woman of about forty. One of the retainers poured out a cup

of tea and handed it to her, which she passed on to me with a very polite courtesy. She then sat down and talked for a little on local affairs. I found she understood Chinese very well, though Tibetan was the language spoken by the people. Presenting her with a Waterbury watch, which she accepted, I then very soon made known the object of my visit, first stating that the Princes of Chosschia, Gaishechia and Yukoh had given me ula and a letter or passport, which I submitted to her and stated that I would like ula now to pass through Chantwei. At first she tried to put me off, saying that if the Tussu of Kongser, who lived on the other side of the river, would give me a letter and ula, she would do the same. My reply to this suggestion was that it was very difficult and dangerous work crossing the river, but that if she would just write her letter and give it to the interpreter, who was a relative, he would carry it and, should the Tussu of the Kongser refuse, I would send him back with her letter. So she wrote the order for ula and also a letter to the Chief or Lhasa representative of Chantwei. We left, thanking her, and feeling that part of the task was accomplished.

On recrossing the river, we went direct to the Kongser Tussu, and found him a most sullen, insignificant man. Presenting my credentials, I at once stated my business. His reply was, "If you can get a letter and ula from the Tussu of Mantze I will give you one." My reply was, "I have that," and presented her order. He studied it for a few minutes, then called for pen and paper, and wrote the order for ula and a permit to pass through his territory.

Now that the difficulty of gaining admission was overcome, I returned to the gochuang with something of the feeling of victory in my breast.

Mr. Ma was quite surprised at my success, and so was Mr. Brooke, as he felt that the Chinese official had done us at last.

Now that we had got permission to go, and the ula was in, we began to query if it were really right to go on. We had no Scripture left either in Tibetan or Chinese, neither had we any mapping paper, and it seemed a useless tramp to go through a country like this, able to do nothing.

I was due at Chentu by a fixed date, and if we took this journey it would probably lead us through Derge, which would mean a two months' journey and perhaps more; we decided that it was best to go south to Tachienlu, and attempt this journey at some future date. Thus halting between two opinions we had our ula again changed for Tachienlu, and started south the next morning. We were then on the northern road between Tachienlu and Lhasa, over which others had travelled, and which has been described by more than one. I need not detain my readers in this section of the country with more than a few glimpses by the way, that the blank may not be too great between Dawo and Tachienlu.

From Dawo to Tachienlu is about 510 li (or 135 miles). It is called seven stages for a horseman, but we did it with ula in that time, including waiting for relays, though that was not considerable on this road.

About two miles south of Dawo the Nga River turns west and disappears in the mountains. All along its banks a foot-path is reported to exist, but in some places it is almost impassable and really dangerous. We followed up a small stream that flows into the Ngachu, near the point where it disappears into the gorges of Chantwei. The road was 50 to 100 feet wide most of the way, and we met large caravans of yak laden with tea, one day 500, another day 200, besides passing large herds grazing on the grassy plain.

The tea was piled in great heaps in front of the light tents. These tents are made of ordinary grey shirting which people take on the road because of the convenience in transit.

We soon passed over into Chiala State, for Dawo is located

just at the corners of Matze, Kongser and Chiala States. Three days through almost uninhabited grass land brought us to Tailing, where a fierce battle was fought between the Tibetans and the Chinese troops in 1903, when the Tibetan monastery was destroyed by the Chinese troops. Tailing has long been a military post and there is quite a long street composed of one-storey, flat-roofed, wooden houses, most of which are new, as the former buildings were destroyed by the

ENCAMPED FOR DINNER—AUTHOR ON LEFT, MR. BROOKE ON RIGHT.

Tibetans. The Chinese have made the Tibetans build the present new ones as punishment for the outbreak. When the Chinese troops re-took the place from the Tibetans, they sacked and destroyed the large monastery, carrying away many valuable copper and bronze utensils; in fact everything that the Lamas left behind, when they fled before the troops. This loot was taken to Tachienlu and sold, and was readily bought up by the Mohammedans and Chinese traders,

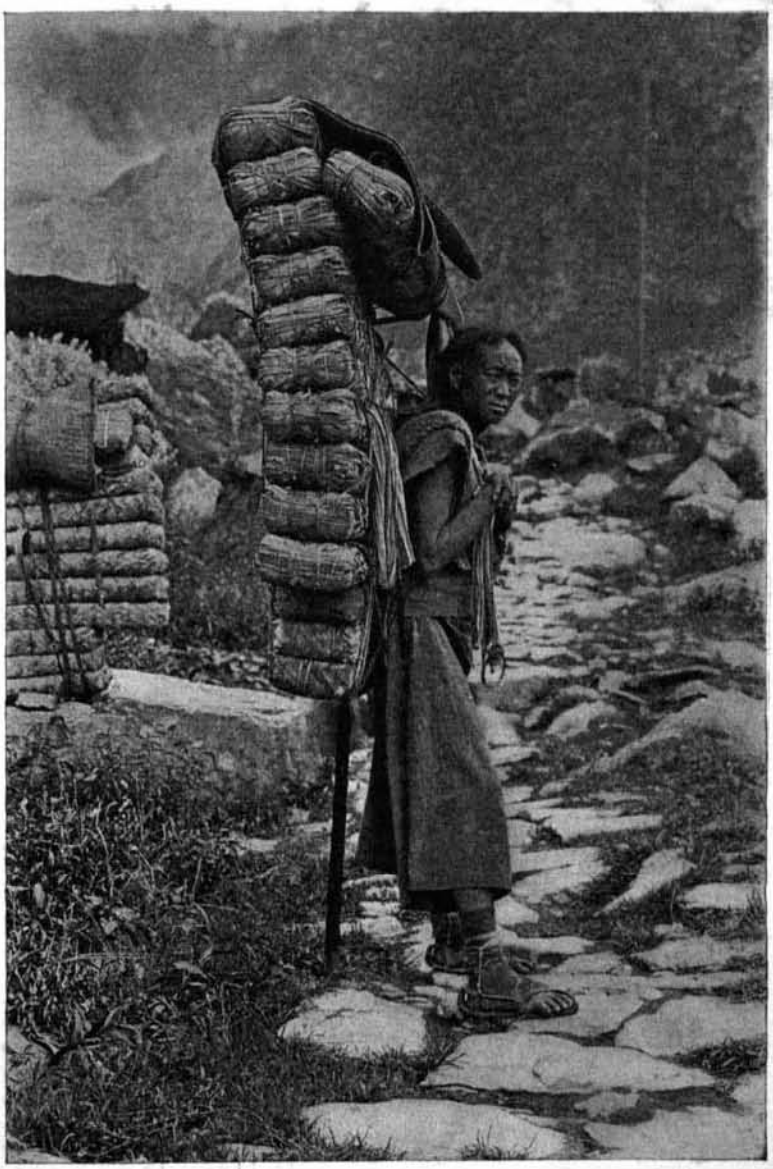
who carried on quite a business. Most of the soldiers had no idea of the value of most of the articles they had secured, and if they had, it was imperative for them to dispose of the stuff for what they could get, as they could not carry it with them on the march.

When we passed through, the temple was almost restored, the workmen were busy painting it in most brilliant colours; when completed it would look very grand indeed. The Lamas were very friendly and showed us all over the place. Before the late war they would have refused to admit foreigners within this Holy enclosure.

The cause of the trouble was that the Chinese were coming in large parties to dig and wash for gold.

Near Tailing we met 500 yak in one caravan, laden with tea, going westward.

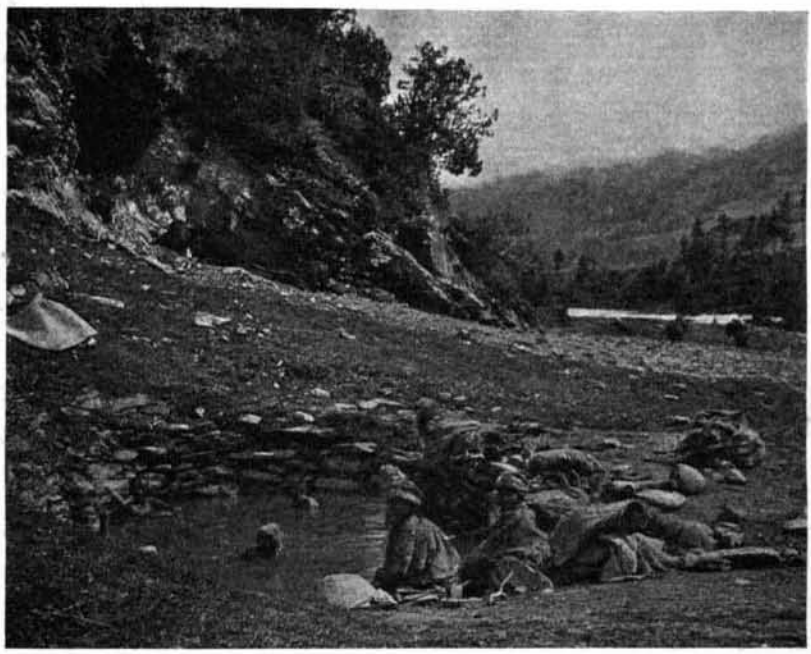
I kept count of the animals that passed up during the two days we spent at Dawo, and also on the way down, and allowing three days for our journey from Dawo to Tailing, the average number of loads that passed up was 200 per day. Each load averaged 120 catties, which would amount to 24,000 catties per day, allowing sixty days in July and August, when there are very few loads shipped from Tachienlu on account of the heat, which neither the yak nor the inhabitants of the higher plateaus can endure. If we accept the statement that 24,000 catties of tea are carried up this road by yak and mules for consumption in Tibet, for 300 days in the year, we find that 7,200,000 catties of tea are carried over this great north road. If we look at Sir Alexander Hosie's carefully worked-out report, founded on the statistics he was able to obtain at Tachienlu, we find that he estimated the tea passing through Tachienlu every year at 8,533,000 catties, and the value to amount to 948,591 taels. My rough estimate of what passed over the Great North road, viz., 7,200,000 catties, would leave 1,333,000 catties to be conveyed over the western route to



CHINESE TEA-COOLIE CARRYING 370 POUNDS OF TEA.

Litang and Batang and other local routes. This would allow for about six times as much of the tea for Tibet to be carried over the Great North road, and find its way to the heart of that great country.

On a very fair basis, Sir Alexander Hosie has been able to compute the quantity of tea passing through Tachienlu,



HOT-SPRING NEAR YUKOH—AND MIXED BATHING.

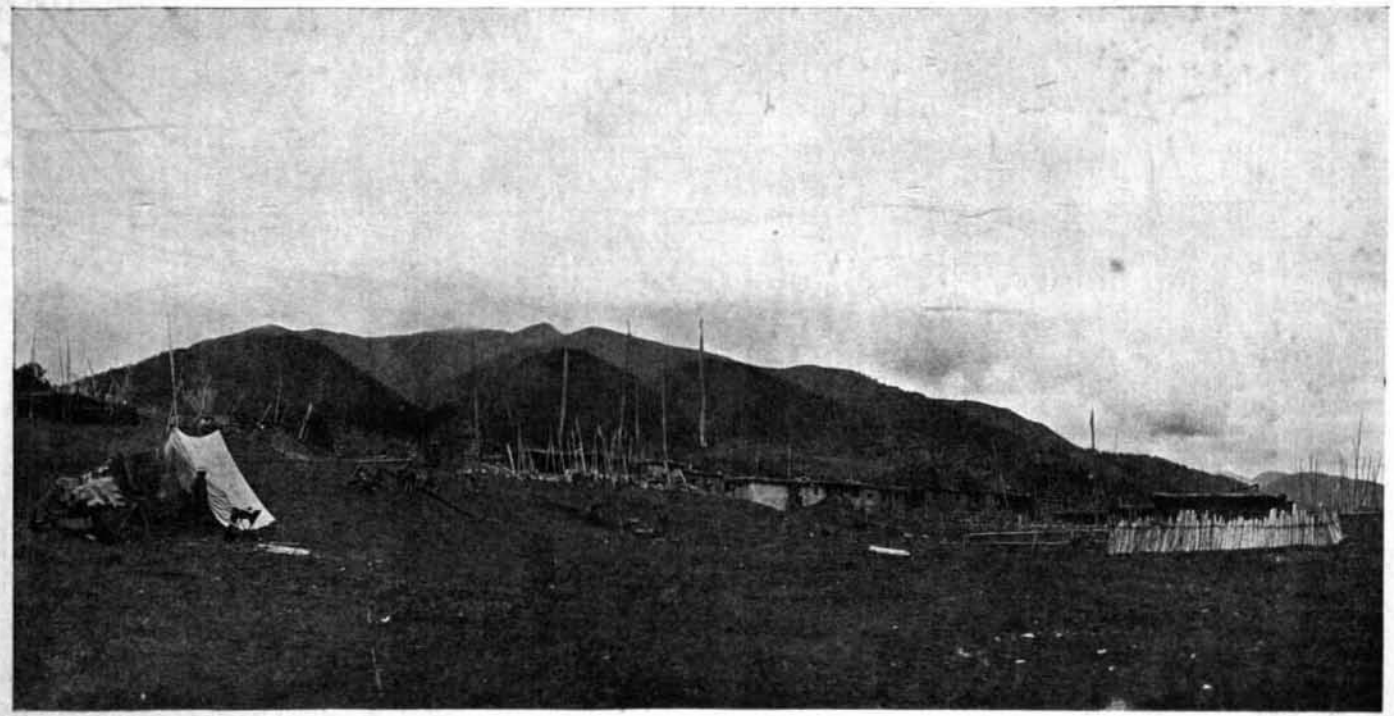
and I believe he is well on the safe side, as no doubt some tea finds its way through which is not registered on the official books; and we may add to this amount the tea that finds its way into Tibet through Songpan, Mongun and Tsakalao, which is not less than one-quarter of that passing through Tachienlu, or say 2,133,250 catties. Almost as much more

finds its way through India and Russia. I know that along the Kansu border and Kokonor district the Hankow brick tea is almost universally used, so that the total amount of tea finding its way into Tibet by other routes may be safely estimated as being equal to the quantity entering from Szechwan, that is, from Tachienlu, 8,533,000 catties; and from Kwanhsien, 2,133,250 catties; would give a total amount from Szechwan of 10,666,250 catties. Allowing that much more finds its way into the country from India, Russia, Yunnan and Kansu, 10,666,250 catties; we may estimate the total quantity of tea annually consumed in Tibet from all sources to be not less than 21,332,500 catties.

If we next allow three catties of tea per person, we arrive at a population of 7,111,166 souls. Now this is a very poor way of getting an estimate of the population; but I believe that research will prove that that quantity of tea finds its way annually into the country. And while the Tibetans are great tea drinkers, yet they boil their tea until every particle of tannin is extracted, and they also use a family pot, so that a pound of tea will go a long way with them; and when we take men, women and children into account, and also that it is a cold country, I believe that three catties each is not too small an estimate of the consumption per head.

When we passed through Tailing, it was reported to us that there were 350 Chinese engaged in the goldfields, along the valleys and streams, which are very numerous here. The whole country is hopelessly broken up, and streams run in every direction of the compass. Groups of gold diggers, varying from 10 to as many as 100 men, were to be seen, all busily digging up the sand and gravel near the water's edge and washing it.

The great snow mountains towered up in the south-east. The most northerly peak is Tapaoshan (Great Peak Mountain),



CAPITAL OF YUKOH.

also called Dabashan, which is the name given to cattle thieves. The Yukoh raiders sometimes come as far south as this and surprise parties crossing to the Tachin Valley. There is also a road from here to Romi Changku, a Chinese military post, at the junction of the Tachin and Siaochin Rivers. Tapaoshan towers up 25,000 feet, and is quite conical in shape at the peak. A little south of it, in the same range, is Haitzeshan, so called because of numerous small lakes found about its base.

At 4.30 next morning we struck camp, and followed the stream down twenty li and came to Pame, on the big road, where we had breakfast and changed our ula. One of the men had come on here the night before, so the ula was all ready for us.

The people were most friendly, and set tea, butter, curds and tsamba on small tables about fourteen inches high, while we sat on benches of about the same height. Chinese customs were to some extent making themselves felt. As soon as the thunder-storm, which came on with terrific force, had subsided, we set out for Barchonku, which we found to be 11,567 feet high, and here we again changed ula. There was a little cultivation about, especially in the valley just below the house of the Fupei Fu, but most of the country was grassland, and it was very cold at night.

On the way up I heard of a strange kind of cat, of which they gave the most wild description, calling it the lion-cat. I got one of the escort to go back with me to see this strange animal, and after riding five miles we found that the reported lion-cat was nothing more than an ordinary house cat. Its hair was long and fuzzy-looking on account of the cold climate.

On the way back we had one of the most severe thunderstorms I have ever been out in, but it is wonderful how quickly the weather changes in this part of the world. One minute you bask in brilliant sunshine, the next are pelted with

rain and hail, and so severely that it is almost impossible to live in it. Six miles farther on there were about fifty gold diggers at work in the bed of the stream. Each gang was composed of fourteen men, which was subdivided into two parties of seven. Each party dug a hole along the river's bank. Before digging far, they get below the water in the stream, the pit keeps filling up, and the miners bale it out with a hand ladle. In one place they were working a bamboo pump, and three men were working a small rod, with a sucker on the other end, but they only succeeded in pumping out a stream of water about half-an-inch in diameter. It was more like milking a cow than draining a mine, only the quantity of water did not in any way seem to be reduced. Three men worked the rod, while four stood by and smoked or looked on. They changed places frequently though there were no signs of perspiration on any of them. This was reported to be a good pit, if they could only get it drained. When enough fine sand is collected in the bottom of one of these holes it is carried in buckets to the stream, ten paces away, and washed over a board some three feet long by eighteen inches wide, which has grooves cut in it to catch the gold.

The stream has a fall of about two feet in every ten feet run, and it would have been the simplest thing in the world to have had a proper trench and sluice-way for washing the sand; but John Chinaman likes his own way of doing things and only laughed at me when I suggested something better.

It was almost dark when I reached Porchangku, to find the party all comfortably housed.

The country was similar to that we had traversed for the past two weeks, only more rolling, with high peaks immediately about.

At last we came in sight of Tachienlu, and received a hearty welcome from the missionaries located there.

The China Inland Mission have had a station here for

nearly fifteen years, and the Foreign Christian Mission of America have been at work for about six years, and were then just moving on to Batang, another eighteen days' journey further west, where they were opening a new work.

We were well looked after during our short stay, and it was indeed pleasant to reach a Mission Station and kind friends after our wanderings.

CHAPTER XVI.

Up the Tung River.

After our long journey over a very rough country, where we had to live almost entirely on the local produce of the land, which was barley meal and butter, it was good to find ourselves once more sitting around a table on which a white cloth was spread. Better still, the table was amply supplied with such luxuries as strawberries and cream, home-made bread and butter, and many of the other delicacies that may be found in an English home, and this although we were on the very borders of Tibet. But wherever the Western lady goes she soon adapts herself to local conditions. What is still more important, she puts her wise hands on the local produce, and with a little manipulation transfers it into delicacies which are far more appreciated by the traveller who has been roughing it than a preparation of the same kind would be under much more favourable conditions.

And here is a reason why so many travellers write of the missionary as living in luxury. On most occasions, when he visits one, it is after a long trying journey on which his supplies have run short, and he has been reduced to what he can pick up on the way—sometimes very meagre fare indeed. He then arrives at a station, and the missionary's wife, wishing to be kind, brings out her preserved fruit which she has laid by for special occasions, and in fact puts herself out to entertain the stranger and make him feel at home: often to find herself and her family written up in some book as a missionary household which lives in luxury, with nothing to do but entertain passing strangers.