

Republic had not yet established itself. There was no order in the country. The various armies were not paid. And the soldiery, to support themselves, were driven to looting; or they would break up into bands of brigands and scour the country.

And if and when Pereira had made his way through the famine-stricken peoples and through the warring factions and bands of brigands, and had reached the borders of Tibet, still greater obstacles might meet him. On the establishment of the Republic in China the Tibetans had evicted the Chinese from Tibet. And, as a consequence, all along the border between Tibet and China, where it is difficult to state exactly at what line Chinese authority ends and Tibetan begins, there was disorder. Many of the border people owe only a loose allegiance to Lhasa. Many others owe only a loose allegiance to China. And when Tibet and China are at variance, these try to be independent of both. Pereira, on arrival at the fringe of China Proper, might find it impossible to get through disorderly frontier peoples.

And supposing he did get through these wild border tribesmen there was still the Central Government of Tibet to reckon with. Since the British Mission to Lhasa of 1904 they had been well-disposed towards travellers coming from India. But so far they had allowed no European to enter Lhasa from the side of China. Would they show any favour towards Pereira? If not, his aims would be thwarted at their very climax.

These were the obstacles he had to expect. And in addition there were of course the ordinary