

CHAPTER XII

THE START FOR TIBET

PREPARATIONS for the journey to Lhasa had now to be made, and a most anxious time followed. The physical difficulties Pereira did not doubt he could overcome, though his general health was not good, his frost-bitten foot was still giving him trouble, and ahead were more than a thousand miles of mountainous country where he would generally be at an elevation of about fifteen thousand feet and seldom less than twelve thousand. But these physical obstacles would not stop him. What really caused him anxiety was the possible attitude of the Tibetans or Chinese. The Chinese might prevent him entering Tibet at all; and the Tibetans at the frontier might prevent his going to Lhasa. And his hopes of success were sadly shaken by the arrival in Tangar on April 26 of the Danish traveller, Sorensen, who had just made an attempt to penetrate Tibet but had been stopped at Nagchuka, while the final blow came when he heard from the Legation in Peking that the Government of India refused to ask the Tibetan Government for a pass for him. Prospects were about as black as they well could be. However, he set about his preparations with his