

Big flocks of sheep and some cattle were grazing on it and there were some Tibetan tents. He also saw many Brahminy ducks and sixteen geese. Some stray horses walked up to within 20 yards of them. The western part of the plain was very sandy, and on May 17 the party crossed a dreary valley of sand and scrub for 8 miles, when they came to another huge grass plain stretching north to the same range as had been crossed on the previous day. Fine grazing country with many Tibetan flocks and tents was crossed on May 18, and in places the ground was honeycombed by countless rats (possibly a small species of marmot). He also saw a few gazelle, but they were very wild. In the daytime it was warm enough after the first hour for him to shed his coat and gloves.

Ta-ho-pa was reached on May 19. Pereira had taken a day longer than Sorensen, but he had travelled by a longer route where water was more plentiful. Here there was a fort with about 70 infantry under Ma Ch'i's orders; though beyond placing these garrisons he had done nothing to develop the country. Pereira made the distance from Tangar 150 miles. In the valley of the Ta-ho there were some trees—the first he had seen since leaving the Sining Ho valley. He was delayed here by a snowstorm. He had also to await the arrival of an escort, for it was unsafe to go beyond this unescorted on account of the Golok raiders.

Some 30 or 40 mounted soldiers with 50 or 60 mules having arrived, Pereira set out again on May 24 and climbed the small Cha-su-ra