

CHAPTER XIV

CHAMDO TO LHASA (1)

THE crucial point of the whole journey had now been reached. All depended upon whether he could get leave from the Dalai Lama to go to Lhasa. If that were granted all would be well. If it were refused Pereira would have liked to go *via* Batang to Yünnan. But he might be stopped there also and have to retrace his steps over a weary 800 miles to Tangar, and that not in the summer but in the autumn and winter. He had started from Peking in February 1921 and it was now July 1922: it would be a dreary business after the year and a half of effort to have to go back on his tracks just as his goal was in sight.

He called upon the Drepon to discuss the situation. This Tibetan official explained that in the previous year strict orders had come from Lhasa that no one was to be permitted to go there without a passport. Pereira asked him to send a messenger to Lhasa to obtain the necessary permission. The Drepon agreed and suggested that Pereira should also write to Major Bailey, the British Political Agent in Sikkim. The messenger started on July 31, but as he would take at least eleven days to get to Lhasa and eleven days back,