

CHAPTER XVI

CHAMDO TO LHASA

THE basin of the Tsang Po, the Brahmaputra, had now been reached. Pereira sighed with relief at the thought that the worst pass was now behind. He was in country whose waters drained to India. He was in the basin of a river into which the water from Lhasa flowed. He was obviously nearing his goal and was half-way from Chamdo to Lhasa. But he had still a succession of high ridges to cross and winter was drawing near.

Alando was reached on September 26 after a long march of 24 miles. The way led at first down the Chara Chu valley. The river flows into the Tsang Po, but it is only possible to go down the valley in winter when the river is frozen. On the south on this day's march were ranges with snow-covered peaks which must be 16,000 feet high with higher still behind, and one solitary high peak. The lower slopes were covered with fir. The going was good for 10 miles and the path lay about 600 feet above the river. A good many villages surrounded with fields were passed. Then there was an ascent of 600 feet by a not very wide rocky path with an almost precipitous drop to the river. After this the path leads down again