

examinations of which such a fetish is made, and never till now had been near the Tibet frontier. I made, indeed, an abortive effort in 1889 to go to Lhasa, disguised as a Turki from Central Asia; but this, too, was nipped in the bud by the refusal of my Colonel to give me leave from the regiment. What spirit of adventure I possessed never received much encouragement from Government, and, as I have said, I had left the frontier for some years, and was superintending the affairs of a native State in the very heart of India, when, on a sweltering day in May, I suddenly received a summons to proceed at once to Simla to receive instructions regarding a mission I was to lead to Tibet.

Here, indeed, I felt was the chance of my life. I was once more alive. The thrill of adventure again ran through my veins. And I wasted little time in rounding up my business, packing my things, and starting off for Simla.

There I was handed over all the papers in the Foreign Office to digest while the final instructions of the Secretary of State were still awaited. And one afternoon I was asked to lunch with Lord Curzon and Lord Kitchener, at a gymkhana down at Annandale, where, after lunch, sitting under the shade of the glorious pine-trees, Lord Curzon explained to me all his intentions, ideas, and difficulties. Men and ladies performed every feat of equestrian skill and equestrian nonsense, and the place was crowded with all the beauty and gaiety of Simla in the height of the season. But the Viceroy and I sat apart, and talked over the various difficulties I should meet with in Tibet, and the best means by which they could be overcome.

One thing he made perfectly clear to me from the start—that he meant to see the thing through; that he intended the mission to be a success, and would provide me with every means within his power to make it so. Fortunately, we knew each other well—ever since his first appointment as Under-Secretary of State for India. We had travelled together nine years previously round Chitral and Gilgit; we had corresponded for years; and when he came to India he, with a kindness of heart for which he is