

ments. He had had experience on that frontier for fourteen years, and was naturally well up in all the local aspects of the question, and knew—what I did not—what dealing with Tibetans really meant. His accounts of their obstinacy and obstructiveness appeared to me exaggerated, and, with the optimism of inexperience, I thought that we should, together with Captain O'Connor's assistance, be able to soon break through it. But Mr. White turned out in the end to be right, and I think from the first he knew that we should not be able to do anything elsewhere than in Lhasa.

Mr. White's long local experience on that frontier made his recommendation in regard to arrangements specially valuable. We were to have an escort of 200 men from the 32nd Pioneers, who had been for some months in Sikkim improving the road towards the frontier, and we wished arrangements made for them to precede us to the vicinity of the frontier, so that we, travelling lightly, might reach Khamba Jong as quickly as possible, for we were now getting well on into the summer, and had not much time to spare for negotiation before the winter came on.

Indian troops and officers have, fortunately, plenty of experience in rough work of this and every other description. The 32nd Pioneers I had known in the Relief of Chitral in 1895, and they had come almost straight to Sikkim from another frontier expedition, so they could be relied on to be thoroughly up to the duty now expected of them. All I asked Government for, on Mr. White's recommendation, was that, as they would be moving up from the hot, steamy valleys of Lower Sikkim to a plateau 15,000 feet above sea-level, they should be provided with clothing on the winter scale, with poshtins (sheepskin coats) for sentries, and that special rations should be issued to the men. And for ceremonial effect, which is an item never to be lightly passed over in dealings with Asiatics, I asked that they should take with them their full-dress uniforms, and that twenty-five of them should be mounted on ponies, which could be procured locally.

The Government of India always equips and organizes