

it was at night, when our long-range rifles lost their special advantage, that the Tibetans would have their best chance. We only had 170 men, and the vastly superior numbers which the Tibetans were now collecting ought to have had a fair chance of overwhelming us if they had pressed home a well-planned night attack. They fired a good deal during this and the following nights, but we kept a good watch, and we heard afterwards that the Lamas tried to organize a second attack on us, but the men refused to turn out.

It was an intense relief to me to hear on the 7th that Colonel Brander had been successful in clearing the gathering at the Karo-la, which consisted of 2,500 men, armed with numerous Lhasa-made and foreign rifles, and headed by many influential Lamas and officials from Lhasa. In a short note to me he told me of the anxious moments he had passed when, on the early morning before he made his attack, he received a letter from me saying that the Mission had been attacked at Gyantse. The Tibetans were in a very strong position behind a loopholed wall of great solidity, and 800 yards long, which they had built right across the pass; and to attack such a position at a height of over 16,000 feet above sea-level, surrounded with glaciers, with only a sixth of the numbers opposed to him, and with his communications not over safe behind, Colonel Brander had in truth to set his teeth and steel his nerves. His frontal attack failed. Poor Bethune, a typically steady, reliable and lion-hearted officer was killed. The guns proved absolutely ineffective. Ammunition was none too plentiful. And Colonel Brander said in his letter to me that he was on the point of despairing when, just at the critical moment, the turning movement of the Gurkhas, under Major Row, who had slowly scrambled up to a height of 18,000 feet, proved successful. Panic took the Tibetans. They first began dribbling away from the wall, then poured away in torrents. Colonel Brander hurled his mounted infantry at them, and Captain Ottley pursued them halfway to Lhasa.

It was a plucky and daring little action, and unique of its kind in the annals of any nation; for never before had