

from the Government of India to proceed to Chumbi, to confer with General Macdonald as to future plans. We had to a certain degree kept open our communications. Still, there were Tibetans all about, and it was a somewhat unusual, and certainly risky, proceeding for the chief of the Mission to have to ride 150 miles down the lines to consult the military commander. However, I was glad enough of the change from the monotony of our investment at Gyantse, and at four the next morning, while it was still dark, I rode out with an escort of forty mounted infantry, under Major Murray, and accompanied by that gallant doctor of the 8th Gurkhas, Dr. Franklin. We gave a wide berth to the Niani monastery, and arrived safely at Kangma, our first fortified post, forty miles distant, where Captain Pearson, of the 23rd Pioneers, was in command with about 100 men.

All was quiet here, and the post had never so far been attacked, owing probably to the effect of Colonel Brander's action on the Karo-la, from which a route led direct to this place. I had risen at 4.30 the next morning to make an early start, and was just dressed when I heard that peculiar jackal-like yell which the Tibetans had used when they made their attacks at Gyantse. I instantly dashed on to the roof, and there, sure enough, was a mob of about 300 of them weighing down upon the post, and before our men were out they were right up to the walls, hurling stones and firing at me up on the roof, which was flat, and from which I could not for the moment find a way down. We all, dressed or undressed, dashed up to the walls, seizing the first rifles we could find, and firing away as hard as we could. And here again the Tibetans just lost their opportunity. As before, in a moment it was gone, and they suffered terribly for their want of military acumen. Sixty or seventy were killed, and the rest drew off up the mountains.

But this was not the only body of Tibetans about. While these were making the direct attack, two other bodies of 400 men each had appeared, all of them Kham men, the best fighters in Tibet. One party went up the valley and the other down, to cut off our retreat on either