

forwards between Lhasa and St. Petersburg, and served therefore all the purposes required of those religious relations which it was very natural should subsist between the Dalai Lama and Russian Buddhists, it does seem hard that the Government of India, now at the climax of all their efforts, should have been tied down through deference to the distant Power.

It is a remarkable coincidence, in this connection, that while the Russians were making protests and representations upon a move of ours which was not within a thousand miles of their frontier, the Chinese Vice-Minister, when Sir Ernest Satow informed him* that we intended to advance to Lhasa, received the news with perfect equanimity, raised no objection, and remarked that the Dalai Lama was ignorant and pigheaded.

I reached Chumbi on June 10, and spent the next few days in discussing details of the advance with General Macdonald. The change from the monotony of the investment at Gyantse and from the barrenness and high altitude of Tibet was refreshing in the extreme. I met old friends again: Colonel J. M. Stewart, who had years before relieved me when I had been arrested by the Russians on the Pamirs; Major Beynon, who had been Colonel Kelly's Staff Officer in the Relief of Chitral; and my brother-in-law, Vernon Magniac, who was to accompany me now as private secretary, and whose companionship was the greatest relief in the midst of a host of the usual official worries. The drop from 13,000 feet at Gyantse to 9,000 feet in Chumbi, and the change from constant risk to absolute security, all eased the tension on me; and the joy of being once more amidst luxuriant vegetation, with gorgeous rhododendrons, dense pine forests, roses, primulas, and all the wealth of Alpine flowery beauty, was a softening and welcome relaxation.

At Phari, on my way to Chumbi, I had met the Tongsa Penlop, now the Maharaja of Bhutan, who had recently come to interview General Macdonald and myself.

* Blue-book, III., p. 19.