

## CHAPTER XV

### THE ADVANCE TO LHASA

JUST a year had now elapsed since we had arrived at Khamba Jong, and now at length all were united in the single purpose of advancing to Lhasa — the Imperial Government, the Indian Government, and the military authorities. A year had been wasted in futile forbearance for the benefit of the British public, but at length what the responsible Government of India had advocated since January of the previous year was to be carried into effect, and on July 14 we left our dreary little post at Gyantse and set out, full of enthusiasm, for Lhasa.

Though we were so high above sea-level, it was quite hot now in the middle of the day, for the sun in these low latitudes and in this clear atmosphere struck down with considerable force. But we also had some very heavy rain in the next few days.

As we approached the Karo-la (pass), the scene of Colonel Brander's gallant little action, I received a letter from the Tongsa Penlop at Gyantse, enclosing a letter he had received from the Dalai Lama. It said:

"We have written to the Yutok Sha-pé, inquiring from him whether it will be easy to effect a settlement or not. Will you also request the English privately not to nibble up our country? Please use your influence well both with the English and the Tibetans. I cannot at present speak with exactness with regard to the frontier, but I have said something on the matter to the Pukong Tulku, so it will be well if the negotiations are begun quickly. Once they have begun, we shall hear gradually who is in the right."

On the next day, July 17, we marched to a camp