

in a disorganized condition, and looting the country *en route*.

Another of the Tibetan stone walls, running from the waters of the lake far up the mountain-side, was found deserted on the next day, and that same day we crossed the last pass on the way to Lhasa, the Kamba-la, 15,400 feet. The ascent was steep, but we all eagerly clambered up in the faint hope of getting some distant glimpse of Lhasa, or at any rate of the mighty Brahmaputra River, which still lay in between us and the sacred city. The enthusiastic Perceval Landon was quite certain that through some chink he saw the glitter of a gilded cupola, and refused to be convinced by the prosaic survey officers that whatever it might be it at any rate was not the roof of the Potala.

But if we were not yet to catch a sight of our goal we had many other exciting incidents on that day. We descended rapidly from the pass by a very steep path to a camp on the banks of the great Brahmaputra itself, called here the Sanpo, and presumed to be identical—though this is a great geographical problem yet to be solved—with the Brahmaputra of India. It was here 11,550 above sea-level, and spread out in many channels, but farther down, where it was narrowed into a single channel, it was 140 yards wide and flowing with a strong, swift current. The valley was wide and well cultivated with wheat and barley, and several cultivated valleys ran into it. In these valleys were plenty of trees, poplars and willows, but the hillsides were not wooded, as we had hoped.

General Macdonald sent on his mounted infantry to seize the Chaksam Ferry, and they succeeded in capturing the two large ferry-boats, and occupied Chaksam for the night. This was a great stroke, as if the Tibetans had kept the boats on the other side of the river our difficulties in surmounting this most serious obstacle would have been immensely increased.

Another great event on this day was the receipt of what was, I think, the first written communication which any British official had received from a Tibetan official