

territory. In all they accurately surveyed 40,000 square miles of territory. And after crossing the Himalayas by the Ayi-la (pass), 18,700 feet, in deep snow and with the thermometer 24° below zero, they reached British territory on Christmas Eve, and Simla on January 11. It was a good piece of work, magnificently executed, for which the greatest credit is due to both Captain Rawling and Captain Ryder, and it was an immense relief to hear of their safe arrival in spite of the risks of hostility and of cold.

In the meanwhile Messrs. White, Walsh, Wilton, and myself had proceeded on to India. It was fairly cold even as we crossed the Tang-la, the thermometer not being much above zero, but we were fortunate to escape the blizzard, the 3 feet of snow, and 27° of frost which General Macdonald and the troops experienced a week or two later, and which caused the death of two men and about 200 cases of snow-blindness.

We had a long, steep, cold ride over our final pass—the Nathu-la—and then we rode down and down through all the glorious Sikkim vegetation into soft and balmy ease. A scientific gentleman once asked what was the chief effect of being a long time at high altitudes, and I told him the principal effect was a desire to get to a lower altitude as soon as possible. Now that we were back at ordinary human altitudes, bathed in delicious air and basking in the glorious sunshine, we realized what the strain of those high levels, combined with the biting cold, had been. Life seemed so easy now. There was no more unconscious effort in breathing; no more conscious fighting against the cold. Existence was once again a pleasure, and in the best season of the year, amid the most splendid scenery in the world, with snowy peaks rising sheer out of tropical forests into a cloudless sky, there was little more a man could wish.

But in the midst of this dream of ease, and just the very day before I reached Darjiling, came the rude shock that the best points I had obtained at Lhasa were to be