

should go ; but to go a journey anywhere was enough for me, and of course I said "Yes." I remember sitting that afternoon in church at Simla and looking up the rows of people, thinking how every man amongst them would wish to be in my place, if he only knew what I was going to do ; for at that time I thought that everybody must necessarily want to make a journey if he could only get the chance, and that to do so must be the very highest ambition of a man.

Mr. James, it appeared, had originally intended to travel with Mr. Carey, the well-known explorer of Tibet, who was just then starting on his travels. But there had been difficulty about Mr. James's leave, and so he had had to postpone his journey till the following spring, and, being without a companion, had asked me to join him wherever he might go. This act of kindness is one for which I shall ever be grateful, and I shall always feel that it was to Mr. James that I owe the first start on my career of travel.

Both of us had an inclination towards China, and we at once decided in a general way that to China we should go. It so happened that in my leisure hours I had read up a number of books about Manchuria, Mongolia, and North China, and compiled itineraries from them. I was therefore able to give my chief, Sir Charles Macgregor, then Quarter-Master-General in India, some little proof that I was serious in the matter, and he promised to help me and do what he could to smooth over difficulties about my leave. Then followed a month or two with my regiment, during which we marched some three hundred miles to a camp of exercise, and took part in manœuvres such as we have in India only, and in which two armies of twenty thousand men each were started off from bases over one hundred miles apart, and told to find and fight each other how and when and where they could ; and at the close of these manœuvres in the spring of 1886 I obtained my leave, and was able to join Mr. James at Calcutta.