

to meet the chief, who came outside the tent to receive me. I was astonished to find myself in the presence of a man with a complexion of almost European fairness, and with reddish hair. His features, too, were of an entirely European cast, and, dressed in European clothes, he might anywhere have been taken for a Greek or Italian. He was now dressed in a magnificent brocade robe and a handsome turban, presented by Colonel Lockhart. He had a sword and revolver fastened round his waist, and one man with a drawn sword and another with a repeating rifle stood behind him.

He asked after my health, and as to how I had fared during my journey through his country, and then led me into the tent, which was a big one presented to him by Captain Durand. At the head of the tent was a chair covered with fine gold-embroidered velvet cloth. This was the only chair the chief possessed, or rather had in Gulmit, and it was evident that he intended to sit in it himself, and let me kneel upon the ground with the headmen of the country. I had, however, foreseen such an eventuality, and had brought a chair with me on the march, ahead of the baggage. So I now sidled in between Safer Ali and his chair, and whispered to my orderly to get mine, which, when produced, I placed alongside his, and we then sat down together. We then carried on a short complimentary conversation, in which I thanked him for the arrangements he had made for my reception, and the cordiality of the welcome he had offered me. In the tent all the principal men of the country were kneeling in silent rows, with solemn upturned faces, hanging upon each word that was uttered as if there was the profoundest wisdom in it, but never moving a single muscle of their features. The conversation was carried on through two interpreters, and the compliments dragged themselves out by slow degrees. At the close of the interview I again thanked the chief, and as I left the tent the Gurkha escort, by previous arrangement, fired three volleys in the air, a form of salute which