

in their wintry bareness. For the sight of the first iris I hoped in vain. As the clattering tonga carried me down through the narrow forest-clad gorges of the Jhelam there were plenty of broken bridges and other obstacles to distract attention. So I can scarcely tell exactly at what point spring coming up the Hydaspes and I hurrying down had a passing encounter by the roadside.

After the gloomy cold of a Kashmir winter I was quite ready to appreciate the signs of the approaching hot weather which greeted me on arrival in the Punjab plains. My first days there were claimed by Lahore, once my official 'station' for eleven years, whither the wish to say good-bye to old friends and the more prosaic necessity of having my teeth looked to before protracted travels 'in the wilds' were now calling me. A few peaceful days under the hospitable roof of my friend Mr. E. D. Maclagan, then Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government, gave the brief relaxation which I was not likely to meet with again for a long time. These happy days sped past only too fast. Yet, what with long-missed familiar faces and sights all round me and the pleasant memories revived by visits to some delightfully neglected old gardens in the Lahore Campagna which used to be my favourite places of refuge during long years of strain and unceasing exertion, I could say farewell to my kind hosts with a feeling as if I had lived through again much that had cheered me in my Indian past.

At Peshawar, to which I proceeded on April 10th, there was plenty to keep my thoughts fully occupied with the present and immediate future. An auspicious chance had so willed it that Lord Minto, the new Viceroy, was to pay his first visit to the capital of the Frontier Province just before the time I was planning for my start from the Peshawar border. It was important for me to interest His Excellency in the explorations before me, and the intercession of his Private Secretary, Colonel (now Sir James R.) Dunlop-Smith, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., whom old friendship has ever prompted to smooth things for me, had already assured to me the desired interview. I could not have revisited my old headquarters on the Frontier