

by that statesman of the true *grand-seigneur* type had given me in the start.

With the Viceroy in residence at Government House and many important affairs of the Frontier to settle, Sir Harold Deane yet found time for a quiet talk with me on the morning of my departure. How grateful I feel now for having had this chance of saying in person my farewell words of thanks to him who had always been my truest friend and patron! I felt deeply the parting from the protective aegis of the noble soldier-administrator, so alive to all the historical interest of the Frontier, who had never missed an opportunity of giving me scope for archaeological exploits within or without the border. I was aware that it might be a parting for longer than the time of my journey. And yet there was nothing to warn me that within little more than two years this born ruler of men, whose strength of body and mind impressed the most turbulent tribesmen, would succumb to the ceaseless strain of guarding the peace on the Frontier.

For the mobilization base, as it were, of my expedition I had selected Abbottabad, the pretty sub-alpine headquarters of the Hazara District, which offered coolness and seclusion for the busy time of final preparations. When I reached it on the morning of April 17th I had the satisfaction to find the array of mule trunks containing equipment safely arrived from Kashmir. The cases with stores and outfit which had been ordered from England and down-country places of India also awaited me at the comfortable new Circuit House. But when could I really hope to make all these impediments move off northwards? I had long before decided that my start from the Frontier ought to be effected by the last week of April. But even while at Peshawar I had been confronted by tantalizing doubts as to whether the local help, without which the crossing of the snow-covered Lowarai Pass could not be attempted, would be forthcoming at the right time.

The local reports sent on by the Political Agent in charge of the Swat-Chitral route continued to represent the avalanche risks as so great, owing to abnormally heavy snowfalls, that any attempt to pass with heavy baggage