

of docile folk whom you would benevolently exploit by firm government and an exclusive commercial system, it appears plain as a pikestaff that vagrant French and Americans should not be encouraged to spy out the land and perhaps to create incidents out of which new ideas might be born. Would Cortez have welcomed independent English or French travellers in Mexico while he was preaching to wondering Aztecs the doctrine of his master's universal dominion? Would the British have left a free latch-string to indiscriminate Europeans when they had undone the work of Dupleix in India, and were considered as special envoys of the gods, irresistible? Already the Russians have done much political and commercial pioneering in Chinese Turkestan. Our international code gives them what we call a "right" to garner the fruits of seed sown in wild places.

We watched the play between Petrovsky and Miles with some amusement and much serious concern as to our plans. The cards ran to Miles. A parade of other nationalities through Turkestan could do no harm to British designs, which cannot reasonably look to conquest north of Tibet. And, small as was our individual importance, we *might* a little disturb the Muscovite program.

The powerful Consul General could probably determine the Taotai's mind for or against us. As to the result we were left in dangling doubt until the very morning which we had set for our departure. Then came the Taotai's smug young secretary bearing letters which we might present to the Ambans in Yarkand and Khotan, and telling us that other letters would be written to the chiefs of nomad