

This it is that affrights them, this ever-advancing boom of cannon, rattle of musketry. They have cherished a tradition that the snow-gods inhabiting the colossal seats of their southern border would protect them against all enemies coming up from that region: but the Goorkha and Kashmir invasions brought a doubt, and now they know that there is a people mightier than their ancestral gods, mighty to conquer, and mighty, we shall hope, to rule wisely and justly. It has been increasingly clear to the Tibetans and to their suzerains, that only complete exclusion of Europeans would effectively preserve the *status quo*. It was also clear that their watchfulness and rigour might be specially directed toward the southern frontier (British Darjeeling being only twelve marches from Lhasa) rather than toward the north where interminable deserts stretched their rampart of desolation.

They had seen Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Ladak, constituting the whole of their southern and western frontier, pass under British "protection," and recently, in 1888, they had seen Sikkim, a little territory (2600 square miles) wedged in between Bhutan and Nepal, fall into a much more direct control of the invaders. Vainly had they protested against this last approach—for Sikkim was, in a sense Tibetan territory, interposing only a two-days sharp march between Darjeeling and their now recognised boundaries. Protest took the form indeed of an army, a monkish rabble armed with spears, matchlocks or bows, and which wisely fled before the organised destruction of British cannon.

Then must the Tibetans have felt that they were