

justified three years before (1885) in resisting the approach of the "Commercial Mission," the organisation and disruption of which, at Darjeeling, caused so much newspaper disturbance and balked so many ambitions that have been bequeathed to the more fortunate personnel of the Younghusband expedition. As early as 1876, in the Chefoo convention with China, a treaty basis was laid for a "commercial mission" to Tibet, the date of the intended expedition being indicated as "next year." But this convention was not fully ratified until 1885, the clause referring to the establishment of Tibetan relations sleeping more soundly, perhaps, than any other.

When diplomatic delays had ended, and the signature of Chinese officials had been subscribed to an engagement in respect to passports and a general smoothing of the way for British intercourse with Tibet, there was a gathering of men and things at Darjeeling. The men were three hundred in number, but among all the three hundred, *not a commercial agent*. Was it British humour which Parliament, the Chinese Minister, and the Tsung-li-Yamen at Peking heard, when the Under-Secretary of State for India, referring to the leashed warriors at Darjeeling, said: "The object was to confer with the Chinese Commissioner (the Amban at Lhasa) and the Lhasa government as to the resumption of *commercial relations* between India and Tibet," and he adds, does this saturnine Under-Secretary, "looking to the delicate nature of the mission *it had not been thought wise to appoint a special commercial representative.*"