

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB — COMMERCIAL CONVENTIONS AND CHRIST'S CODE— WHAT IS THE RIGHT ?

THE argument of the play is, then, something like this: By a century of conquest stretching gradually up to the high door-sills of Tibet, by a century of aggression against the Tibetan suzerain, the British have closed the once open door of Lhasa, and have implanted a general fear of their presence in every Tibetan mind which is capable of understanding something of the outer world; then comes a co-religionist who succeeds in having the Tibetan religious chief send presents to the ruler who is in temporal power over the visiting pilgrim. They are sent, obviously, because asked for by an interested intermediary. A similar mission might easily have been arranged by British influence acting upon some clever lamaist of Ladak, who could have tested the Dalai Lama's attitude by requesting through the Chinese exchange of presents with his distant liege, King Edward, even as had been granted to the Buriat. But this was not done. And if these were not thought dependable, there are the Kashmiri merchants long established in Lhasa, giving Great Britain a far more permanent contact, through her intelligent subjects, than