

out, as tending to minimise the danger, the fact that the Lhasa authority ends long before the frontier of China proper is met, going eastward; that, intermediate between the great Central Tibetan state and the Empire, are several large districts, some substantially independent, some under a Chinese rule far more direct than that at Lhasa, and in any case free from political connection with that city. Some of these smaller states, indeed, as Mr. Rockhill and other travellers in Eastern Tibet have testified, are more or less jealous of the Lhasa Government. These conditions, it seemed to Mr. Rockhill, would put a stop to English movement eastward; these states, he thought, would be a buffer between the Lion at Lhasa and the Dragon of China. But, though yielding to none in my respect for Mr. Rockhill's authority, I yet feel sure, that if Nepal and Tibet have not served as buffers in the past, we may not count *anything* as a sure buffer in the future. The very dissensions which now indicate a certain independence of the small states, will become inducements for endless extension of British Power if once it be established at Lhasa.

Assuming Russia in Kashgar and England in Lhasa, we must observe, moreover, the new phase of parallelism of march as distinguished from frontal approach. The faces of both will be turned eastward and prestige will drive them forward over perils, as neck-and-neck horses are driven over hurdles to the finish. True, if China meanwhile is solidified by external or internal force, so that her frontier is one that can resist pressure *by force*,