

we are willing that you should be independent. We find we were mistaken in regard to the Russians, hence we revert to the position always held (on paper) that we have no designs against you. As we were wrong in our suspicions we of course have no right to a war indemnity. Our claim in that respect is remitted. You desire to be isolated, and your desire should be a recognised right. We want peace of mind in the future concerning the possible intrigues of our great rival.

“As a fair compromise, representing less than our force might demand, we, acknowledging our initial error, now propose that a British agent be stationed in Lhasa, without any authority, since there are to be no relations except those you may desire, but merely as an observer, a visitor, whom, knowing, you shall learn to like and to trust. The trade-privileges extorted from you, and considered dangerous by you, will be abandoned. If gradually, by reason of our agent’s representations, you come to a different opinion as to us, we shall be glad to strengthen our relations in all friendly ways. We want your friendship. Our God and your great Incarnation, the ineffable Buddha, are both reported to have urged men to love each other. We may not be able to live, as our Master advised, a life of non-resistance; we may not be able to do good to those that spitefully use us; but we think ourselves capable henceforth of being good to you if you are good to us, *i. e.*, if you have no conspiracy by which Russian influence shall become dominant in Lhasa, whatever that may mean.”

Now, gentle reader, you may imagine how