

impertinent this suggestion would seem to Lord Curzon, or to any of the gentlemen around him who take themselves and the world so seriously and make it so tragic. The outsider venturing to criticise is most likely to be ignored; as a matter of fact he is often not supplied with sufficient data for wise criticism. Did I not believe the affair in Tibet to be one in which only the admitted facts need be considered, I should feel that the able men in Calcutta were probably right, despite my first impressions to the contrary. But it is true that administrative minds are often clouded by knowledge of the very detail which gives them a sense of superiority. And again, the *important moral relations* between communities, as between men, are best guided by a few general principles, and even one who is not viceroy of India may grasp these.

So clear is it to me, however, that outside amateur criticism is liable to error, when the case becomes complicated, that I now proceed with much more hesitation than before to state one of my first and strongest impressions as to the unwisdom of the present Tibetan policy. It has seemed to me that when the facts shall be understood in Afghanistan, as in the end they will be, grave risk will arise of losing the nascent favour of the Ameer, and of compromising British interests, in a quarter where none will question their present importance, however one may criticise the course which led to their creation. How different the situation there from that existing in the north-east! Afghanistan is coterminous with British-administered territory. Tibet is not. Afghanistan is inhabited by a warlike peo-