

may say, climatically, is tolerably suitable for European life; and it is a point to remember that Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, is situated—if not on the banks of the Brahmaputra River itself—on the banks of a small tributary of the Brahmaputra; and that it is not only the capital of Tibet, but the religious centre of such a vast number of people that I believe, taking them all together, they number almost one-third of the population of the world. Now, I have been told that during the war in China, about one-third of China did not know that any war was going on at all; they did not take any interest in it. But I will venture to say that if two European officers were to reach Lhasa, within a few months it would be known over the whole of China whether these officers were British or Russians.

The PRESIDENT<sup>1</sup>: We have listened to a most interesting paper, and to an equally interesting discussion. The great plateau of Tibet to which Mr. Crosby has alluded, and portions of which he has visited, is, geographically speaking, I consider, one of the most interesting portions of the globe. He has suggested various causes for the existence of that vast plateau, and he has described to us the changes that have been taking place in it. I do not believe that any army, for the invasion either of Tibet or India, has ever crossed it. The invasions Sir Thomas Holdich has alluded to have all gone along the valley of the Tsanpu or from the eastward; none have ever passed over the lofty desert. Therefore I think in that respect it does form a great barrier.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Clements Markham, a distinguished traveller and student of Central Asian questions.