

and without convincing the Secretary of State in England. India is not governed by the Viceroy alone, but by the Viceroy in Council. On such a question as the despatch of a mission to Tibet, the Viceroy would not be able to act without the concurrence of three out of his six councillors, and without the approval of the Secretary of State, who, in his turn, as expenditure is incurred, would have to gain the support of his Council of tried and experienced Indian administrators and soldiers, besides the approval of the whole Cabinet.

It is, then, a very fair presumption at the outset that if all these various authorities had satisfied themselves that action in Tibet was necessary, there probably was some reasonable ground for interference. What was it that influenced these sedate authorities, alike in India and in England, to depart from the natural course of leaving the Tibetans alone, to behave or misbehave themselves as they liked? What was it that persuaded these gentlemen that action, and not inaction, intervention, and not *laissez-faire*, were required, and that we could no longer leave this remote State on the far side of the mighty Himalayas severely alone? There must have been some strong reason, for it was not merely a matter of permitting an adventurous explorer to try and reach the "forbidden city." After thirty years of correspondence what was eventually sanctioned was the despatch of a mission with an escort strong enough to break down all opposition. What was the reason?

The answer to this I will eventually give. But to make that answer clear we must view the matter from a long perspective, and trace its gradual evolution from the original beginnings. And, at the start, I shall have to emphasize the point that there has always been intercourse of some kind between Tibet and India, for Tibet is not an island in mid-ocean. It is in the heart of a continent surrounded by other countries. That it is a mysterious, secluded country in the remote hinterland of the Himalayas most people are vaguely aware. But that it is contiguous for nearly a thousand miles with the British Empire, from Kashmir to Burma, few have