

had written to the Tashi Lama, proposing a general treaty of amity and commerce between Bengal and Tibet. The letter of the Lama, he said, had invited us to friendship, and the final arrangement of the disputes on the frontier had rendered the country accessible, without danger either to the persons or effects of travellers. He had, therefore, written for and obtained a passport for a European to proceed to Tibet for the negotiation of the treaty, and he now purposed sending Mr. Bogle, a servant of the Company, well known for his intelligence, assiduity, and exactness in affairs, as well as for the "coolness and moderation of temper which he seems to possess in an eminent degree." Warren Hastings, with great wisdom and knowledge of Asiatic affairs, adds that he "is far from being sanguine in his hopes of success, but the present occasion appears too favourable for the attempt to be neglected."

This latter is precisely the point which we who have dealt with Asiatics can appreciate so well—taking the opportunity, striking while the iron is hot, not letting the chance go by, knowing our mind, knowing what we want, and acting decisively when the exact occasion arises. It is hard to do nowadays, with the Provincial Government so subordinate to the Government of India, with the Government of India so governed by the Secretary of State, with Cabinet Ministers telling us that the House of Commons are their masters, and members of the House of Commons saying they are the mouthpieces of their constituents. Nevertheless, the advantages of such a method of conducting affairs must not be forgotten. Decision and rapidity of action are often important factors in the conduct of Asiatic affairs, and may save more trouble than is saved by caution and long deliberation.

Warren Hastings' policy was, then, not to sit still within his borders, supremely indifferent to what occurred on the other side, and intent upon respecting not merely the independence but also the isolation of his neighbours. It was a forward policy, and combined in a noteworthy manner alertness and deliberation, rapidity and persistency, assertiveness and receptivity. He sought to secure his borders by at once striking when danger threatened,