

1774. It was the invasion of Sikkim by the Tibetans which made the necessity for the treaty of 1890. And it was because the Tibetans repudiated that treaty, and occupied territory inside the boundary therein laid down, that we had to take measures to see it observed.

But even supposing they were aggressive, it may be said that we ought to have treated the Tibetans with leniency, gentleness, and consideration, because of their ignorance. So we ought, and so we did. Warren Hastings conceded the request of the Tashi Lama. And though the Tibetans for a century have been free to come down to India, with no restrictions on their trade or on their travel, we for years never pressed for any ordinary rights of trade and travel for our own subjects, whether British or Indian. We allowed the Tibetans to come down where, and when, and how they liked. For a century we let the principle of heads they win, tails we lose, continue. Even when we at last stirred, and thought of sending Macaulay to Lhasa to make some less one-sided arrangement, we gave up the idea when we saw that the Tibetans raised objection. And even, again, when the Chinese asked us to make a definite treaty with them on behalf of the Tibetans, and guaranteed its observance by them, and when the Tibetans broke it, and repudiated it, and refused to meet our officers, we continued for ten years showing them forbearance and patience. It was only at last when the Tibetans, having broken the treaty, having declined to have any communication with us, yet sent Envoys to the Russians, that we took high action, and despatched a mission with an escort into Tibet. If we had shown no inclination to hold the Tibetans and Chinese to their engagements, others might well think that they also would not be held to theirs, and our authority and influence would slacken in proportion as this impression got abroad. No Government can conduct the affairs of contiguous States if it allows a treaty to be broken with impunity.

My personal view is that the local question would have been better settled, and much subsequent international complications would have been saved if, at an earlier stage