

negotiations at Khamba Jong, and he said he would even go so far as to undertake to receive in their stead any punishment which the Lhasa Government might order upon the delegates for daring to make this request.

He then asked me what we wanted in the coming negotiations. I told him that I had set our requirements forth fully in a speech I had made on my first arrival, a copy of which I would very gladly give him. But he was well acquainted with it, and asked me what was meant exactly by opening a trade-mart. I explained that we wanted a proper trade-mart, which would not be closed with a wall behind it, as Yatung had been—a mart where Indian traders could come and meet Tibetan traders; a mart such as we had in other parts of the Chinese Empire, and had formerly had in Shigatse itself.

The Abbot himself was a charming old gentleman. Whatever intellectual capacity he may have had was not very apparent to the casual observer, and he corrected me when I inadvertently let slip some observation implying that the earth was round, and assured me that when I had lived longer in Tibet, and had time to study, I should find that it was not round, but flat, and not circular, but triangular, like the bone of a shoulder of mutton. On the other hand, he was very sociable and genial. He would come and have lunch and tea with us, and would spend hours with Captain O'Connor and Mr. Bailey, playing with gramophones, typewriters, pictures, photographs, and all the various novelties of our camp.

But the situation now began to grow worse. On August 31 I was informed by a trustworthy person, who had exceptional sources of information, that he was convinced that the Tibetans would do nothing till they were made to and a situation had arisen. They were said to be quite sure in their own minds that they were fully equal to us, and, far from our getting anything out of them, they thought they would be able to force something out of us. Some 2,600 Tibetan soldiers were occupying the heights and passes on a line between Phari and Shigatse. My informant did not think, however, that they would attack us for the present, though they might in the