

Jong being the meeting-place seems evident from the copy of the telegram from the Chinese Resident at Lhasa, which the Chinese Government forwarded to Mr. Townley with the above-mentioned communication. The Resident's words were: "The Dalai Lama's answer is to the effect that, since the British Government has appointed Major Younghusband as Boundary Commissioner and Mr. White as his fellow-Commissioner, and fixed the 7th instant for the meeting of the delegates at the frontier station of Khamba, and as the Prefect Ho Kuang Hsieh is to proceed there in a few days from Chingshi, it is his duty, the matter being a very important one, also to appoint interpreter officials above the usual rank to proceed to Khamba, and, in company with the Prefect Shou [? Ho], to meet the British delegates and discuss the frontier question with them."

Nothing would seem clearer than this. Both the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama accepted Khamba—that is, Khamba Jong—as the place of meeting, and directed their delegates to proceed to meet Mr. White and myself there. Yet, when we met at the appointed place, they refused to have anything to do with us!

I think a solution of this extraordinary proceeding may be found in the last paragraph of the telegram of the Resident to his Government. In this very same telegram in which he announces that the Dalai Lama is sending delegates with Mr. Ho to meet me at Khamba Jong, the Resident asks that we should "be careful not to cross the frontier, and thus again excite the suspicion and alarm of the Tibetans."

My impression is that neither the Chinese Government, the Resident, nor the Dalai Lama knew that Khamba Jong was on the Tibetan side of the frontier. And this appalling ignorance of the frontier by men who, nevertheless, kept the control of frontier affairs absolutely in their hands was one of the main difficulties with which we had to deal, and was what made it an absolute necessity to negotiate with them face to face at Lhasa itself.

In any case, whether they really were ignorant or not