

British dominions, and that the Sovereign of such a vast Empire should entertain designs of unjustly and improperly taking the Tibetan mountainous country should never cross their minds. So wrote the Nepalese Minister to the Lhasa Council.

Another month passed, and there was still no improvement in the situation. On the contrary, continued rumours arrived that the Tibetans were massing troops, and that at Lhasa they were quite prepared to go to war. The old Shigatse Abbot was very friendly, but quite ineffectual in bringing about negotiations. One day he lunched with us, and assured us that he had made a divination that Yatung was the place where negotiations would be carried on quickest. I said that what we wanted to find was a place where the negotiations could be carried on, not quickest, but best; and I asked him to consult his beads again, and see if Shigatse would not be suitable in that respect. He laughed, and replied that the divination had to be made in front of an altar, to the accompaniment of music. Captain O'Connor had succeeded in making the Abbot and his people so friendly that Mr. Wilton heard from Chinese sources that the Chinese believed that we had either bought over the Abbot or promised him some considerable concession—neither of which was, of course, the case. Still, all this friendliness of the Shigatse men amounted to very little practical use as long as the Lhasa people were still obstinate. So on October 7 I telegraphed to Government that I was strengthening my escort by 100 men from the support, and on the following day telegraphed them a résumé of the whole situation.

I said that the Viceroy's despatch had reached the Resident one month previously, and no reply had yet been received, though letters from Lhasa could reach Khamba Jong in four days. The Mission had been there for three months without being able to even commence negotiations. The Chinese showed indifference and incompetence, and the Tibetans pure obstruction. The present Resident was