

Council; and not with the Council, but the Regent himself, to whom the Dalai Lama had entrusted his own seal and whom he had appointed in his place; and not with the Council and the Regent only, but with the National Assembly and three great monasteries in addition; and with all in the presence of the Chinese Resident himself. No one man would ever have been entrusted by them with power, and no one man would take responsibility. It was only with the whole together that it was possible to negotiate; and we could negotiate with the whole together nowhere but in Lhasa itself.

Granted all this, some may say, but even then was it worth incurring Russian resentment in order to settle a trumpery affair of boundary pillars and petty trade interests in a remote corner of our Empire? Now, I most fully sympathize with the Russian view. Our advancing into Tibet would—and, in fact, did—“involve a grave disturbance of the Central Asian situation.” The news of our signing a treaty in the Potala at Lhasa, and of the Dalai Lama having to flee, did produce a profound impression. But if the subject-matter of our dispute was small, there was small reason why the Russians should trouble us about it. The matter grew in dimension because the Tibetans, whom the Chinese suzerains themselves had characterized as obstinate and difficult to influence, had grown still more obstinate and still more difficult to influence, through their having led themselves to believe that they could count on Russian support. In view of Russian disclaimers, we can assume that the Russian Government gave them no intentional grounds for that belief. Nevertheless, they had it, and for practical purposes that was all that concerned us then. The reception of the Dalai Lama's religious missions by the Czar, the Czarina, the Chancellor and Minister, and the subscriptions they had collected, together with the extraordinary belief they had that Russia was nearer to Lhasa than India was, had led the ignorant Dalai Lama to believe that he could count on Russian support against the British. One can quite realize that the Russians, with their thousands of Buddhist Asiatic sub-