

what I always regarded as much more important than any paper settlement, and as our real object in going to Tibet—the establishment of a good feeling between ourselves and the Tibetans, we must not only go to Lhasa, but be able to stay there for an ample period. Yet when I stated this opinion to Government, I should, I acknowledge, have given it in a less brusque way than I did in the telegram I have quoted.

I had this much in excuse. I had, as I have related, at dawn on the day I sent that telegram, and before having had my breakfast, been attacked by the Tibetans, and had myself to fight with a rifle in my hand. I had had, after breakfast, to ride nearly thirty miles with the constant risk of further attack on the way. I had had to do all this after being cooped up for a month in a house without being able to stir outside it. I had therefore to compose and cipher my telegram when I was physically exhausted and depressed in spirit. I knew that military considerations, and Imperial considerations, and international considerations, and every other consideration which hampers action, were dead against my proposal, and I was not in the mood to be respectful towards them. Still, I was ill-advised to let my telegram have the slightest tinge of brusqueness in it. If I wanted to get the thing done, I should have preserved that marvellous imperturbability and cheery good sense which, from the Strangers' Gallery, I have so frequently admired in British Ministers in the House of Commons. All this I note for the benefit of future leaders of unpopular Missions. For the effect of my telegram was not to further the object I had in view—the making of all preparations for keeping the Mission at Lhasa for the winter, if need be. It merely earned for me a reprimand from Government, who telegraphed back on June 14 that they found it necessary to remind me that any definite proposals I made for their consideration should be, as far as possible, in conformity with the orders and present policy of His Majesty's Government; and I was to remember that the policy of His Majesty's Government was based on considerations of international relations wider than the mere relations between India and Tibet,