

panied the delegates back towards the jong, which, however, they did not again enter, but took up their quarters in the village, while their followers and baggage were sent down to them there. I expressed my regret to the Yutok Sha-pé that at our first meeting I should have had to put him to such inconvenience. But the occupation of the jong was a military necessity. It was a matter of congratulation that it should have been effected without the loss of life on either side.

The following day the Tibetan delegates held another prolonged interview with me, lasting three and a half hours. They made no further mention of the occupation of the jong, but were very insistent that we should not advance to Lhasa. The Yutok Sha-pé was the chief spokesman at first, but during the course of the interview each one repeated separately much the same arguments. They said that in Lhasa there were a great number of monks and many unruly characters, and disturbances might easily arise; to which I replied that I should much regret any such disturbances, and hoped the delegates would do their best to prevent them, for the result could only be the same as the result of the disturbances at Gyantse.

Another argument the delegates used was that, if we went to Lhasa, we should probably find no one there. To this I replied that this would necessitate our waiting until people returned. I reminded them that they lived apart from the rest of the world, and did not understand the customs of international intercourse. To us the fact of their having kept the representative of a great Power waiting for a year to negotiate was a deep insult, which most Powers would resent by making war without giving any further chance for negotiation. But the British Government disliked making war if they could possibly help it. They had therefore commanded me to give the Tibetans one more chance of negotiating, though that chance could only be given at Lhasa itself. Let them make the most of this opportunity.

The delegates replied that they had intended no insult by keeping me waiting a year; it was merely the custom of their country to keep out strangers. "But, anyhow,"