

## LETTER FROM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY 235

since the time of Warren Hastings. It was addressed to "The all-wise Sahib sent by the English Government to settle affairs, from the Tibetan National Assembly." It ran as follows :

"Recently the Tongsa Penlop sent a letter to the Dalai Lama, and also communicated with the two delegates, but hitherto a treaty has not been effected. The Sahibs say that they intend to come to Lhasa and to see the Dalai Lama and to negotiate there, and that they will there establish friendship. The letter which contains the nine terms of the Convention has arrived here. This is a matter of great importance, and therefore the Chigyab Kenpo (Lord Chamberlain) has been sent to Chisul. Now, our Tibetan religion is very precious, so our Regent, officials, monks, and laymen have consulted together. Formerly we made a National Convention that none was to enter the country. So now, even if the Sahibs should come to Lhasa and meet the Dalai Lama, this will not advantage the cause of friendship. Should a fresh cause of dispute arise, we greatly fear that a disturbance, contrary to the interests of friendship, may follow. So we beg of the Sahibs both now and in the future to give the matter their earnest consideration, and if they will negotiate with the delegates who are now here all will be well. Please consider well all that has been said, and do not press forward hastily to Lhasa.

"Dated the Wood Dragon year."

This letter was brought by a messenger, who said that the new delegates were then at Chisul, on the opposite bank of the river. And now again arose the question whether we should make use of this new chance of negotiating or should still press on to Lhasa. We had in front of us the serious obstacle formed by the Brahmaputra River, which, if we crossed it, would be a nasty impediment to have in our rear. On the other hand, we had negotiators here with more ample credentials than any had had before, and we had the National Assembly