

been swept away in an instant and have never seen his reward. It is in reflecting on cases such as these that one begins to wonder whether our touching trustfulness in the mercy of Providence is altogether justified.

We had to halt some days now, while the troops and baggage were being transported across the river, and on the 27th I had a three hours' interview with this new deputation from Lhasa, which consisted of the Dalai Lama's Chamberlain, a man of some capacity, with an air of great consequence, who was evidently regarded with much respect; the Ta Lama, the somewhat effete, but genial, old gentleman who had met me at Gyantse; and a Secretary of the Council, a brisk, cheery gentleman, with an ever-ready smile, and very different from the other Secretary who had met us at Khamba Jong, Gyantse, and Nagartse.

They brought with them a letter from the Dalai Lama, and repeated the old request that we should not go to Lhasa. The only new argument they used was that our going to Lhasa would so spoil their religion that the Dalai Lama might die. I told them that I should much regret that our arrival in Lhasa should have any such melancholy result, but I had studied their religion, and could hardly believe it was so weak that it would not stand our presence in Lhasa for a few weeks. The delegates repeatedly urged me to realize the personal inconvenience our presence in Lhasa would be to the Dalai Lama. The Ta Lama explained that the Chamberlain was in constant personal attendance on the Dalai Lama, and enjoyed his fullest confidence, and for that reason had been specially deputed by the Dalai Lama. I was given to understand that this was a very unusual favour, and I was earnestly begged to accede to the Dalai Lama's personal wishes; the delegates further told me that if I did not accede to them they would themselves be severely punished by the Dalai Lama.

In reply I expressed my inability to accede to the Dalai Lama's wishes, but trusted they would ask His Holiness to excuse my insistence. They had spoken of the inconvenience our presence in Lhasa would cause the