

DISCUSSION REGARDING RELIGION 241

The British Government had spent a considerable amount of money in clearing away forests, and the town in which Buddha was born was actually discovered. We did not believe that every religion except our own was wrong. On the contrary, we believed that the same God whom we all worshipped could be approached by many different roads, and we were ready to respect those who were travelling to the same destination, though by a different road to that which we ourselves were following.

The delegates expressed their satisfaction that we should have studied their religion, but the conversation soon returned to the more pressing question of our advance to Lhasa. The Chamberlain was the most sensible, practical man we had so far met, and I was specially polite to him, as in the event of the flight or murder of the Dalai Lama he might be a possible Regent. But even he had evidently very little power, and while he was nervous throughout the interview, was clearly more nervous of his own people than of us.

After the interview had lasted three and a half hours, I asked them to report my words to the Dalai Lama, and I told them that I should be very glad to see them again whenever they liked, either to discuss further official business, or, putting official matters aside, to pay me a friendly private visit. They took one of my Tibetan Munshis with them, and gave him a special present of silk for Captain O'Connor, and also told the Munshi that the man who had brought all this trouble on Tibet was the Tung-yig-Chembo (the Chief Secretary), who was at Khamba Jong, Gyantse, and Nagartse, but who was not present at this interview. It was satisfactory to find that two such influential men as the Chamberlain and the Ta Lama had discovered this, and I thought that if the man was now cast aside, our chance of getting on terms of friendship with high Tibetan officials would be vastly increased.

I now accepted the silk which the Dalai Lama had sent me through the Tongsa Penlop, but which I had at the time refused to accept unless accompanied by a letter or handed to me by one of the Dalai Lama's own officials. The