

really could be seen in the distance, I received the final deputation, which had come to make the last great effort to induce us to stop. It consisted of the old Ta Lama, the General who had met Mr. White and me at Khamba Jong, and had since been promoted to the post of Councillor, and known as the Tsarong Sha-pé, the Chinese official deputed by the Resident, the Abbot in private attendance on the Dalai Lama, a Secretary of Council, and the Abbots of the three great Lhasa monasteries. They repeated the usual requests that we should not go to Lhasa. I reiterated my usual statements that we must go there. They said that if we would remain where we were they would supply us with everything—of course, on payment. The Dalai Lama's private Abbot made a special appeal on behalf of the religion of Tibet. I told him I was particularly interested in hearing his views on religion, but I trusted he would not object to my reminding him that, while he was an eminent authority on religion, he had little experience of politics. In political life, when a country repudiated a treaty, declined to negotiate a new one, and attacked the Envoy who was sent for that purpose, it was considered that that country had committed three very serious offences, any one of which would be justification for the capture of the capital of the offending country. In the present case, out of consideration for the special sanctity of the city, we were prepared, if we encountered no opposition, to abstain from capturing Lhasa, and I trusted the Abbot would appreciate the consideration. Perhaps if he had himself been fired on continually for two months he would not have been equally moderate. The Abbot laughed, but remarked that they also had had to suffer.

I promised the Abbot to respect the monasteries. If they were occupied by soldiers, and we were fired at from them, as we were from the monasteries round Gyantse, we should, of course, have to attack them. But we did not wish to be obliged to resort to force, and as long as we were not attacked we would prevent our soldiers from entering the monasteries. I would also see that soldiers and followers did not enter the