

They saw, however, no reason why the presence of a resident agent in Lhasa should be a lasting source of irritation. For more than eighty years we had now had an agent at Khatmandu, a capital the isolation of which from foreign intrusion had been guarded hardly less jealously than that of Lhasa itself, and that by a people whose prowess had been proved in our own armies. The hostilities which preceded the first appointment of a British Minister at Peking, under the treaty of 1860, were also far more serious than any opposition which had so far been encountered, or was likely to be met with, on the way to Lhasa. The Government of India saw, then, no reason to anticipate greater risk in placing a Resident at Lhasa than was incurred in sending a British representative to Khatmandu or Peking.

Despite the hostility which, under the influence and leadership of the monkish faction, they had displayed against us, the Tibetan people had no dislike for us as a race, and there was nothing in the tolerant Buddhist creed which counselled hostility to strangers of a different faith or encouraged fanaticism. The exclusion of British subjects and Europeans was merely based on a concordat of the present dominant class in Tibet, and was not in any way a religious obligation. The monks were at present opposed to us, fearing the loss of their influence, but their antipathy was based on suspicion and ignorance, and with tact and patience it might be eradicated—a view which was supported by the friendly relations which the Mission was able to establish at Khamba Jong with ecclesiastical Envoys from the Tashi Lama of Shigatse.

It had always to be borne in mind that subjects of all her other neighbours—China, Nepal, and Kashmir—were allowed freely to resort to, and trade in, Tibet, while China and Nepal had official representatives at Lhasa. As at Khatmandu, our agent would, like the Nepal representative at Lhasa, abstain from all interference with the internal administration of the country, and would confine himself to watching over our trade interests and in guarding against the introduction of foreign influences. His presence, therefore, at Lhasa would be in no sense a