

was to bring upon me the censure of Government. That, of course, is what I had to risk. I knew that I was not acting within my instructions. I was using my discretion in very difficult circumstances with what the Government of India afterwards described* to the Secretary of State as "a fearlessness of responsibility which it would be a grave mistake to discourage in any of their agents." And if I really was in error, I think that those who tied their agent down for time and bound him within such narrow lines before they were aware in what conditions he would find himself at Lhasa, cannot themselves be considered as altogether faultless.

In another matter also I at this time acted on my own responsibility. In the original proposals of the Government of India regarding the terms about which I was, without committing Government, to ascertain how the Tibetan Government would be likely to regard them,† was one by which the agent at Gyantse was to have the right of proceeding to Lhasa to discuss matters with the Tibetan officials or the Resident. This reached me before I left Gyantse, and when the Tongsa Penlop asked me for our terms to let the Dalai Lama know what we wanted, I gave him this among all the rest. Subsequently, I received instructions not to ask for permission for the Gyantse agent to proceed to Lhasa. I did not, however, at once withdraw the clause from the list of terms, because in the course of negotiations it might prove useful as a point on which I could, if necessary, make concessions to the Tibetans. But when I found the Tibetans raised no special objections to the clause, provided the trade agent went to Lhasa only on commercial, and not political, business, and only after he had found it impossible to get this commercial business disposed of by correspondence or by personal conference with the Tibetan agent at Gyantse, I thought there would be no objection to taking an agreement from the Tibetans to that effect; for, under such limitations and provisions, there could be no grounds for assuming that in going there the trade agent at Gyantse would be taking upon himself any

* Blue-book, III., p. 75.

† *Ibid.*, p. 22.