

in which the Dalai Lama would have received me if he had himself been here to sign the Treaty. The utmost respect it was within their capacity to show I expected should on this occasion be accorded. They began murmuring other objections, but the Resident told them the matter was settled, and did not admit of further discussion.

The question of the exact room in the Palace was then discussed, and a certain room was suggested. I told the Resident that I would send officers that afternoon to inspect the Palace, and satisfy themselves that the room suggested was the most appropriate one, and I asked him to have Chinese and Tibetan officials deputed to accompany my officers. To this he agreed. The date for the ceremony of signing was then fixed for the next day. The Resident said he would himself be present, though he would be unable to agree to the Convention till he had heard from Peking.

Messrs. White and Wilton, and Captain O'Connor, with Majors Iggulden and Beynon from General Macdonald's staff, went over the Potala in the afternoon, and reported that the hall suggested by the Tibetans was the most suitable one in the Palace. That, therefore, was the one we fixed on for the ceremony on the following day.

Though it was easy enough to speak decisively like this about signing the Treaty in the Potala, I had many qualms that night as to whether I had not perhaps at the last moment made one false step. Since the days of the eccentric Manning—whose name should never be forgotten when Lhasa is mentioned—no European had been inside this Palace, and these 20,000 turbulent monks in and around Lhasa might flare up at the last moment, or else commit some atrocity when we were once and completely in their power inside the buildings. Such things have happened before now to Political Agents in India. On the other hand, the hall we were to go to was not a temple, and the Dalai Lama himself, though considered a sacred being, was also a political personage. It was not in the temple of a god that I insisted upon signing the Treaty; it was in the audience-chamber of a political chief.