

had recommended me originally on account of my discretion. As long as he was in India he had given me unfailing and ungrudging support, besides the personal encouragement of a real friend; and if he thought that in the end I had failed him I should have been miserable for the rest of my days. I had acted absolutely and entirely on my own responsibility in what, in most difficult circumstances, had seemed to me the best for my country; and I had to take the risk of my action being approved or disapproved. But it would have been indeed a blow if I found Lord Curzon thought I had acted wrongly.

So I hastened home, and at Port Said stopped to meet him on his way out to India again. In one moment he set me right. I dined with him on the P. & O. steamer, and for hours afterwards on deck we talked over all the stirring events which had happened since we had parted in his camp at Patiala. Of all he was warmly appreciative. There is no man more staunch in friendship, and no keener patriot in England, than Lord Curzon; and what he did for the Indian Empire, and still more what he would have done if he had been more amply supported from England, will perhaps some day be more fully recognized than it is at present. If this Mission had been a failure, on him would have fallen the blame. How much its success was due to him no one knew better than I did.

On my arrival in England I had the honour of an audience of His late Majesty, and the reward I most appreciated for my services in Tibet was this opportunity of personally knowing my Sovereign. I saw him quite alone. He placed me in a chair by his desk, and then in some indefinable way made it possible for me to speak to him as I would have to my own father. He was himself most outspoken. He did not merely ask questions in a perfunctory way, but took a genuinely keen interest in our proceedings. He warmly praised the conduct of the troops. He was well aware of the deeds, and even character, of individual officers, and he spoke most feelingly of the loss of Major Bretherton, of whose splendid work he was fully cognizant. It appeared to me that