

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE RESULTS OF THE MISSION

EVEN in the present year I was asked by a Cabinet Minister what good we did in going to Lhasa. Since that question was asked one striking result of our Mission has come to light, in the fact of the Dalai Lama, who before we went to Lhasa would not even receive a communication from the Viceroy, now in person, at Calcutta itself, appealing to the Viceroy to preserve his *right* of direct communication with us. The suspicious and hostile attitude of the Tibetans has so far changed that they have now asked us to form an alliance, and to send a British officer to their sacred city. To attribute this change entirely to the effects of the Mission may not be justifiable. Much is due to the tactlessness of the Chinese treatment of the Tibetans. But the change in direction of Tibetan feeling was visible before we left Lhasa, and there is good cause for assuming that if Lord Curzon had never despatched the Mission to break through the Tibetan reserve, they would have still been as inimical to us and as inclined towards Russia as they were six years ago. The conversion of our north-eastern neighbours from potential enemies into applicant allies may be taken as one result of the Mission.

When the Mission was despatched into Tibet, we had for thirty years been trying to regulate our intercourse with our Tibetan neighbours, but had obtained no success whatever. The Treaty which their suzerain had made with us was repudiated. Boundary pillars were thrown down, trade was boycotted, our communications were returned. And the Dalai Lama showed a decided leaning towards the Russians. As a result of Lord Curzon's policy