

Chinese Commissioner in charge of the Chinese Trade and Diplomatic Agency; and this Mr. Gow proved so contumacious that Sir Edward Grey had eventually to press for his withdrawal. He threatened to stop the supply of provisions by Tibetans to our Trade Agent unless they were paid for at rates to be fixed by himself; and he also, apparently under sanction from Peking, claimed that in all transactions between the Tibetans and British officers *he should act as intermediary.*

This was a clear enough indication of Mr. Chang's line. He meant to get in between us and the Tibetans. And the Tibetans at Gyantse had many rumours just now that he was going to eject the Europeans and the Indian troops from Gyantse; that if the Indian Government did not agree, Chinese troops would be sent to expel us by force from Tibet. It was explained that Chinese troops were not sent to oppose us during the time of the Tibet Mission because there was no time to collect them. It was also reported that Mr. Chang intended to object to British officials and other Europeans travelling in Tibet except between the trade-marts and India. And this is what in fact he did in the case of Sven Hedin. He wrote him a very polite note saying what interest he took in geography and so forth, but adding: "The last treaty between China and Great Britain contains a paragraph declaring that no stranger, whether he be Englishman or Russian, an American or European, has any right to visit Tibet, the three market towns excepted." The Treaty has no such clause. It simply confirmed the Lhasa Treaty, in which was a clause stipulating that the agents or representatives of foreign Powers should not be admitted. As a matter of fact Sven Hedin was not the agent of a foreign Power, but a scientific traveller, and in any case the Lhasa Treaty simply laid down that agents should not be admitted "without the previous consent of the British Government." Sven Hedin was then at Shigatse. He was being most cordially received by the Tashi Lama, who was quite willing to let him travel where he liked. It was merely Mr. Chang who twisted and misquoted the Lhasa Treaty to exclude him.