

would be destroyed in a hundred, or perhaps a thousand, years. In the west the "foreign frontier" was very close. In that direction, also, was Nepal. The Tibetans were therefore to make friends quickly with the Nepalese, and "become as one to resist the foreigners." In Tibet were "some wicked, aggressive foreigners," with whom intercourse had to be maintained, and for this purpose English schools would be opened. Then, again, in the south was Bhutan, and "Tibet and Bhutan were as inseparable as the cheek from the teeth." It would be even more advantageous to make friends with Bhutan than with Nepal. If at any future time the Bhutanese wanted help, the Chinese Resident would give it. "Bhutan is like a wall of Tibet. The Emperor thinks that the Gurkhas, Bhutanese, and Tibetans should live like three men in one house."

The next Chinese move was the Imperial Decree issued in November, 1908, to which more detailed allusion will be made later,\* ostensibly conferring an additional honour on the Dalai Lama, in reality containing, as Sir John Jordan put it, "the first unequivocal declaration on the part of China that she regarded Tibet as within her sovereignty"—sovereignty, be it noted, not suzerainty.

Then, a year later, came the announcement by the Chinese Government to our Minister, that "Chao Er-feng was faced with a serious state of unrest on the Tibetan marches—so much so that the Chinese Government, having reason to fear complications with Tibet, and desiring to strengthen their influence at Lhasa, were contemplating the despatch of a body of troops to the Tibetan capital."

By a remarkable coincidence, on the very day, November 12, 1909, on which the Chinese Councillor made this announcement to our Minister, the Dalai Lama, from a monastery three marches outside Lhasa, despatched a messenger to him, expressing the Dalai Lama's concern to find, on his return to Tibet, that active measures were being taken in the country by Chinese troops, and adding his hope that the Minister would do what he could in the matter.

\* See p. 384.