

Chinese Government entertained no thoughts of such a course, which would be a contravention of the treaty stipulations between England and China. Mr. Max Müller was reminded by Natung that blame was formerly imputed to the Chinese Government because they did not enforce observation of Treaty engagements on the part of the Tibetans, and that the signature of the Trade Regulations of 1908 by a Tibetan delegate had been insisted on by His Majesty's Government, because they thought that Regulations would otherwise not be conformed to by Tibetans. He stated, as regards troops in Tibet, that none of Chao Erh-feng's force had entered Lhasa territory, that force being still in Derge and Chiamdo. The 2,000 men sent to Lhasa were a separate body of troops from Szechuan, and, beyond the Amban's normal escort and the guard at the post-stations, these were the only additional troops in the country. The right to station troops in Tibet had always rested with China, and the object of sending the recent reinforcements was merely to secure observance of Treaty obligations, to protect the trade-marts, and to maintain peace and order. The person of the Dalai Lama himself, he assured the Minister repeatedly, was alone affected by the steps which the Chinese Government had taken. Precedents for removing Lamas were numerous; in 1710, owing to misconduct, the sixth Dalai Lama had been removed. No action would be taken which would disturb the Lama Church or the existing administrative system in Tibet. It was absurd to suppose that the Chinese Government would interfere with Lamaism, as there were Lamaist functionaries at the Peking Court, and millions of Lamaists among the Mongol subjects of China. With regard to the charges that monasteries had been burnt, one only had been destroyed by Chao Erh-feng, more than a year previously, because a Chinese Amban had been ambushed and killed, together with thirty of his escort, by the Lamas.

On the receipt of the Chinese reply, Lord Morley telegraphed to the Viceroy for the views of the Government of India; but at the same time he impressed on them that they should bear in mind that it was essential