

inane folly and wastefulness of human life and good money. This view proceeds, I am convinced, from the quite intelligible lack of appreciation by those in England of the actual conditions prevailing on the spot. For the men who act on the confines of the Empire in this supposedly evil way are, after all, kith and kin with themselves. They were born and bred in England, and are probably not more naturally wicked than an ordinary Member of Parliament.

Now, I have shown that, however remote Tibet is from England, it is not remote from India, but, on the contrary, adjoins and marches with India for 1,000 miles. And if Russia, whose border nowhere comes within hundreds of miles, can yet take such a practical interest in the country as to protest time after time at each little move we make in relation to the Tibetans, surely there is some probability that we also have a necessity for interesting ourselves in it? If the Russians as well as ourselves take practical interest in Tibet, and feel it necessary to have some fairly sharp diplomatic correspondence about it, the probability is that any action we take is not merely inspired by inquisitiveness, idle curiosity, or love of adventure, but that animating this interest must be some real practical necessity.

What that necessity is must, I think, be evident to those who have read the previous pages. Though it is the fact that Tibet is divided from India by the lofty Himalayas, it is also the fact that there is connection and intercourse between the inhabitants of the two countries. Tibet is not isolated like an oceanic island. The inhabitants of India and the inhabitants of Tibet have always had relation and intercourse with one another. And it is the necessity for regularizing and harmonizing the intercourse, and for putting it on a business-like footing, that has been the cause of our interest in the country.

Let me bring the point a little nearer home. Supposing there were in the far Highlands of Scotland a people who had drawn their religion from England, who always looked with veneration upon and made pilgrimages to the sacred cities of Canterbury and York; who