

Government, but existent nevertheless—was the disturbing factor; now it is Chinese influence, exerted beyond its legitimate limits and with imprudent harshness. Either of these causes results in a feeling of uneasiness, restlessness, and nervousness along our north-eastern frontier, and necessitates our assembling troops and making diplomatic protests, and might require us to permanently increase our garrison on this frontier. That is the practical point we have to meet.

Inimical Russian influence we have no longer any cause to fear. Not only has Russia assured us that she has no intention or desire to interfere politically in Tibet, but the whole set of her policy is now towards Eastern Europe rather than towards India. So altered, indeed, is the situation that in future years I should say that there would be an increasing likelihood of her acting with us rather than thwarting us in Tibet, and I believe the day will come when British and Russian Consuls will be sitting together in Lhasa, as in Kashgar, Mukden, and dozens of other places in the Chinese Empire.

There remains the need of preventing Chinese influence being exercised in such a fashion as to cause disorder. Chinese influence in Tibet, as long as it is neighbourly to us and not irritating to the Tibetans, we have no cause to mind; it is, indeed, what for years we tried to believe existed. So we never questioned China's suzerainty over Tibet, and in any dealings with the Tibetans their suzerainty always has been and would be recognized. It is of many hundred years' standing, and as long as it is not used inimically to us, or in such a tactless way as to cause disorder on our frontiers, we may be very well satisfied that it exists. The Chinese are good neighbours, and in the sense of any invasion of India by way of Tibet, we have no need to fear a Yellow Peril. We have nothing to complain of, therefore, if the Chinese were established as effective suzerains in Tibet, able to preserve order there, and co-operating with us in a friendly manner. A reference to the account of our negotiations at Lhasa will show that throughout I worked with the Chinese Resident, and never directly with the Tibetans,