

to annex Tibetan territory or to interfere in the administration of Tibet." Even travellers such as Sven Hedin we refused to allow across our border into Tibet. Everything we could do to avoid interference and irritation we did. And every sign of intriguing official had disappeared from India. Lord Curzon had left, Mr. White and I had retired, Captain O'Connor was in Persia, and there was a new Foreign Secretary. Yet just as many troops as accompanied the Mission at the start were moved to the frontier ready to advance into Tibet at any time. If men like Lord Morley and Sir Edward Grey so act, may it not be inferred that bureaucrats also are carried along against their will by some strange force?

To attribute these forward movements merely to the designs of bureaucrats is, then, to take but a shallow view. Single men of great force and ability and little knots of men can do a great deal, but to accomplish anything big they must have a solid backing of some kind behind them. They may, as it were, accentuate an impulse and carry it forward a stage or two farther than without them it would have gone. But unless they have this propulsion from behind they can accomplish nothing. That great men are not only the creators, but the creatures, of their time is now a truism. Born at any other period than the French Revolution, Napoleon might have been no greater than Lord Roberts or Lord Kitchener. Born in the Revolution, Cecil Rhodes might have been a Napoleon.

The overwhelming probability is that there *is* some strange force working in the affairs of men, and when British Governments and the British people are driven along against their will it is more reasonable to attribute this phenomenon, not to the designs and intrigues of a few officials, but to some inward compulsion from the very core of things. The paragraph in the *Spectator* must have been either written or inspired by Mr. Meredith Townsend, then its co-editor and author of "Asia and Europe," a man who had lived in India, who had made a life-long study of Asiatic politics, and who honestly did not like the idea of advancing to Lhasa.