

he was as comfortable at Gumbum and Yutai Shan as in Northern Mongolia, but his heart was in Tibet. Many Tibetans had arrived and all urged him to return to Lhasa, which he might possibly do. He had not yet decided to go to Peiping. I told him that the sympathies of the Russian people were on his side, when he felt obliged to leave his own country. The time had coincided with the serious trouble that Russia had experienced, but now energetic work had been done and the Russian Army was stronger than ever. These sympathies had not been weakened by the lapse of time, and wherever he might be, he could feel sure that Russians, both high and low, watched his footsteps with interest. He listened to my polite speeches with unconcealed satisfaction. Then I had to explain the working of a Browning revolver that I had brought as a present. He laughed, showing all his teeth, when I showed him, how quickly it could be reloaded by putting in 7 fresh cartridges. I apologised for not having brought a better gift, but after two years' travel it was difficult to have any other objects of value than weapons. The times were such that a revolver might at times be of greater use, even to a holy man like himself, than a praying mill. He appeared to relish all this, but he would not allow me to photograph him. He said that he had often been proffered the same request before and had always refused permission. The next time we met, however, I could do so, for now that he had received me, he would always look upon me as a good acquaintance.

At the exit I was pounced upon immediately by Weng, who tried to pump me as to what we had talked about during such a long audience. Of course, I told him all the details! To make doubly sure I saw him get hold of Tchao, but I had given the latter suitable orders in advance.

The Dalai Lama impressed me as a lively man in full possession of his mental and physical faculties. The setting of our talk and the difficulty of carrying on a conversation through the medium of two uneducated interpreters, gave me no opportunity of a more interesting exchange of views. From the whole staging of my reception it was sufficiently evident that his love of China and her suzerainty was only moderate. Twice during our conversation he gave orders to see if anyone was eavesdropping behind the curtain over the door. It looked as though a good deal was left unsaid in his remarks. At all events he does not look like a man resigned to play the part the Chinese Government wishes him to, but rather like one who is only waiting for an opportunity of confusing his adversary. He is of medium height, thin and with some nervousness in his features, which he seems anxious to hide. His gaze wanders, especially when talking. His step is lively. There are slight hollows in the skin of his face, which are supposed to be pock-marks.

It is, of course, difficult to form a clear opinion of the influence that the Dalai Lama exercises over Buddhists, Tibetans, Mongols and Buriats. Large crowds of worshippers wend their way daily with gifts to Yutai Shan. Owing to the situation of the place the influx of one nationality is increased at the expense of another. In Northern Mongolia masses of Buriats made pilgrimages to him, here their place and the place of Northern Mongolian tribes is taken by Mongols from Ordos, Sunnites and other western Mongolian tribes. At Gumbum many Tibetans visited him, but only a few of them come here. I was told that the number of worshippers was approximately as follows: