INDIA AND SIKKIM
1858 - 1906

P. RAGHUNADHA RAO

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY OF THE INDIAN SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

NEW DELHI

1968

PREFACE

This study deals with the political relations of India with Sikkim from 1858 to 1906. In 1858 the East India Company was abolished and India came under the direct control of the British Crown. In 1906 China confirmed the Lhasa Convention of 1904 under which Tibet had agreed to recognize Sikkim as an Indian protectorate. This study seeks to explain how Sikkim became a protectorate of India. No comprehensive work on this problem, based on original sources, has been undertaken so far.

This study is based almost entirely on unpublished records available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi. These sources cannot possibly give a picture of the history of Sikkim as the Sikkimese saw it. But, unfortunately, no Sikkimese records pertaining to the period under study are available. I have, however, tried to be as objective and impartial as possible while considering significant developments in Indo-Sikkimese relations.

As regards spelling of Sikkimese and Tibetan proper names, I have used those forms which are commonly used in modern books.

In the preparation of this thesis I am indebted to many for their kind help and interest. I am thankful to the Government of Andhra Pradesh for granting me study leave to do research at the Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi. I have received unfailing co-operation from the authorities of the National Archives of India, New Delhi, and the staff of the Library of the Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi, for which I shall always remain grateful to them.

It is with pleasure that I acknowledge my sincere respect and appreciation to Dr. Bimla Prasad, Professor and Head of the Department of South Asian Studies at the Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi, who guided me with his advice and supervision at every stage in the preparation of this dissertation. To Dr. V.M. Reddi, Head of the Department of History, S.V. University, Tirupati, I owe a great deal for patiently going through my thesis and offering valuable suggestions.

I owe my gratitude to Dr. M.S. Rajan, Director, Indian School of International Studies, for securing me the Andhra Pradesh Government Scholarship and providing all possible help in undertaking this work. I wish to extend my hearty thanks to Dr. Satish Kumar, now with the Government of India, for evincing keen interest in my work. Finally my thanks are due to Mr. Girja Kumar, the Librarian, Mr. T.V. Raghavan, the Registrar, and Mr. R.S. Batra, the Assistant Registrar of the Indian School of International Studies, for their help and co-operation.

New Delhi
27 July 1968

P. Raghunadha Rao.
(P. Raghunadha Rao)

ABBREVIATIONS

F.E.A.	Foreign Department Proceedings, External Branch, A category.
F.E.B.	Foreign Department Proceedings, External Branch, B category.
F.P.A.	Foreign Department Proceedings, Political Branch, A category.
F.P.B.	Foreign Department Proceedings, Political Branch, B category.
F.P.C.	Foreign Political Consultations.
F.P.P.	Foreign Political Proceedings.
F.S.C.	Foreign Secret Consultations.
F.S.E.	Foreign Department Proceedings, Secret E Branch.
F.S.P.	Foreign Secret Proceedings.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Kingdom of Sikkim, situated in the Eastern Himalaya, is the protectorate of India. It has an area of 2,818 sq. miles. (1) The name Sikkim is derived from two limbu words meaning "New palace". It refers to the new Kingdom established by Penchu Namgyal, the founder of the present ruling dynasty. The Tibetans called it Drend Zong, or the land of rice, while it was known to the Lepchas, the original inhabitants of the country as "Nye-ma-el" or heaven. (2)

It is located within 28° 07' 48" and 27° 04' 46" North latitude and 88° 00' 58" and 88° 55' 25" East longitude, and is bounded on the north by Tibet, on the east by Tibet and Bhutan and on the South by the Darjeeling district of West Bengal and on the West by Nepal. (3) It lies south of the main Himalayan range. Except on the south it is separated from its neighbours by a wall of great mountains ranging from 10,000 ft. to 28,000 ft. in height. However, these mountains contain certain important passes. The Chola range, which forms the eastern boundary of Sikkim with Tibet, contain the two important passes of Natu (15,512 ft.) and Jelep (13,254 ft.). Similarly, the Singalila range, which forms the boundary between Sikkim and Nepal, contains the important passes

---

(1) J. Datta Gupta, comp., Census of India 1961, vol. 16, West Bengal and Sikkim, pt 2a (Delhi, 1964), p. 86.

(2) Amal Kumar Das and Swapan Kumar Banerjee, The Lepchas of the Darjeeling District (Calcutta, 1962), p. 10.

(3) J. Datta Gupta, comp., Census of India 1961, vol. 16, West Bengal and Sikkim, pt 1a, Book 2 (Delhi, 1967), p. 81.

of Chiabhanjan (10,320 ft.). The highest peaks are Kanchen Junga (28,140 ft.), Kinchinjhan (22,700 ft.), Siniolchu (22,620 ft.) and Chomiomo (22,385 ft.). (4)

The country can be conveniently divided into two geographical parts: Northern and Southern, Tangu can be taken as marking the dividing line between the two parts. The southern part consists of dense forests and percipitous hills. It is sparsely populated and the villages are few and far between. The northern part is comparatively a more open and undulating country. In this region good pastures and pine forests are found. (5)

The climate has corresponding variations and every variety, ranging from sub-tropical, temperate and arctic is encountered. The rainfall is heavy and averages 137" a year at Gangtok, the capital. The important river of Sikkim is the Tista, which is formed by the confluence of the Lachen and Lachung in the north of Sikkim. (6)

Sikkim is noted for its floral wealth and an estimated 4,000 varieties of flowering plants and shrubs are found. (7) In the sub-tropical lower valleys, several varieties of bamboo, ferns and tree ferns, pandanus and orchids are found. In addition to these, valuable trees like sal are also found. In the temperate zone and

---

(4) Encyclopaedia Britannica (London, 1957), vol. 20, pp. 650-1.

(5) "North and North-Eastern Frontier Tribes" in Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India, vol. 4, compiled in Intelligence Branch, Division of the Chief of the Staff, Army Headquarters, India (Simla, 1907), p. 39.

(6) Encyclopaedia, n. 4.

(7) Sikkim - The land and its people (published by the Publicity Department, Government of Sikkim (date and place of publication not given), p. 3.

in the northern valleys, forests of oak, chestnut, maple, pine are found. (8)

Abundant varieties of wild animals are found in different parts of the country. The Himalayan Black bear is generally found in the altitudes ranging from 4,000 ft. to 11,000 ft. Above this altitude the Brown Bear has its habitat. Snow leopard is also found though it is fast vanishing. In addition to the wild animals, there are about 500 species of birds and nearly 600 species of butterflies. (9)

The geological survey of the country is not yet completed, but it is generally believed that copper, coal, graphite, gypsum are to be found in large quantities. (10)

Mining and fruit preservation are the principal industries of Sikkim. Copper is mined at Rangpo by the Sikkim Mining Corporation, a joint venture of the Government of India and the Government of Sikkim. The fruit preservation factory at Singtam is run by the Sikkim Industrial Corporation. (11)

The main exports of Sikkim are cardamom, oranges, potatoes and apples. The main imports are machinery, cotton piecegoods, consumer goods etc. (12)

The total population of Sikkim is about 162,189, which is

---

(8) Ibid.

(9) Ibid.

(10) Ibid., p. 4.

(11) Ibid.

(12) Ibid.

composed mainly of the Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese. (13) The Lepchas were the original inhabitants of the country, and number about 14,847. (14) Their origin is doubtful but they are supposed to have come from the East along the foot of the hills from the direction of Assam and Upper Burma. (15) There are two accounts regarding the origin of the name Lepcha. According to the first version, the name "Lepcha" had been derived from a Nepali word 'Lapcha' meaning 'vile speakers'. According to the second version, there is a type of fish in Nepal, known as Lapcha, which is very submissive in nature like the Lepcha people who are also noted for their submissiveness and as such the Nepalese termed them as Lepcha not in contempt but to give them credit for their submissive temperament. The word "Lapcha" was modified in English pronunciation as 'Lepcha'. (16) The Lepchas were originally animists, but most of them now profess Buddhism. They are noted for their mild, quiet and indolent disposition.

The next group of people to enter Sikkim were the Khambas, popularly known as the Bhutias. They were immigrants from Tibet. They number about 14,000. They profess Buddhism and are generally very strong hardy, warlike and good tempered.

The Nepalese immigrants now far outnumber the Lepchas or the Bhutias. They are almost all Hindus by religion. At present

---

(13) A. Mitra, comp., Census of India, 1961, Paper No. 1 of 1961 (Delhi, 1964), p. 49.

(14) A. Mitra, comp., Census of India, 1961, vol. 1, pt 2c(ii), Language Tables (Delhi, 1964), p. clviii.

(15) J.C. White, Sikhim and Bhutan: Twenty Years on the North-East Frontier 1887-1908 (London, 1909), p. 3.

(16) Das and Banerjee, n. 2, p. 3.

they number about 108,165. (17) They are on the whole "a steady, industrious and thrifty people". (18)

Mahayana Buddhism is the state religion of Sikkim but the Sikkimese are allowed full freedom of worship. There are about 67 monasteries in the country and the most important among them are located at Pemayang-tse, Tashiding, Phodang, Ralang etc. (19)

The three numerically important languages are Nepali, Sikkim Bhutia and Lepcha, spoken respectively by 74,359, 36,577 and 14,847 people. (20) English is used extensively and officially for internal and external correspondences and communications. (21)

Sikkim is a hereditary monarchy. Under the 1953 Constitution a legislative body called the Sikkim State Council was formed. It consists of a president, 14 elected members and 6 nominated members. The president is nominated and appointed by the Ruler. Of the 14 elected members 6 seats are reserved for Bhutias and Lepchas, 6 seats for Nepalis, 1 seat for the Sanga (Monks) and one general seat.

The State Council enacts, with the assent of the Ruler, laws for the peace, order and good government of the state. It, however, cannot discuss or deal with matters relating to external relations and the appointment of the Principal Administrative Officer who is also ex-officio president of the Sikkim State Council.

---

(17) Census of India 1961, n. 13, p. 49.

(18) White, n. 15, p. 9.

(19) Sikkim - The land and its people, n. 7, p. 5.

(20) Census of India 1961, n. 14, p. clviii.

(21) Sikkim, the land and its people, n. 7, p. 6.

The Executive Council of the State consists of the Principal Administrative Officer and four elected members of the Council who are chosen from time to time and hold office during the pleasure of the Ruler. The Executive Councillors are in charge of Education, Public Health, Excise, Bazars, Forests, Public Works, Agriculture, Press and Publicity. (22)

Very little is known about the early history of Sikkim. The Lepchas, as mentioned earlier, were the original inhabitants of Sikkim and they claim to be autochthones of Sikkim proper. (23) In the beginning of the seventeenth century A.D., three Lamas came from Tibet into Sikkim to convert the people to their doctrines. They found at Gangtok, one Penchu Namgyal, the great-grand-son of Guru Tashe, a Tibetan whose noble family was connected with the ruling dynasty of China. (24) The lamas selected and invested the youngman as the Gyalpo or the King of Sikkim. This event took place in 1641 at a place called Yoksam. Penchu Namgyal thus became the first ruler of the present Namgyal dynasty. The Kingdom of Sikkim in those times was very extensive and included the Chumbi Valley of Tibet and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal.

For the next 150 years after the accession of Penchu Namgyal to the Sikkim throne in 1641, succession passed from father to son. During the reign of the third Gyalpo, Chador Namgyal, Sikkim was overrun by the Bhutanese in 1706. Tibet then came to the rescue

---

(22) Ibid., pp. 7-8.

(23) H.H. Risley, ed., The Sikkim Gazetteer (Calcutta, 1894), p. 1.

(24) J.A.H. Louis, The Gates of Thibet (Calcutta, 1894), p. 78.

of Sikkim and drove out the Bhutanese from the country. The Sikkim King in gratitude founded the great monastery at Pemiongchi. It is the largest in Sikkim and wholly Tibetan in character. (25)

During the reign of Gyurma Namgyal, Sikkim lost the province of Limbuana to Nepal. (26) In the time of the sixth Gyalpo, Tenzing Namgyal, the Nepalese invaded Sikkim and overran the country as far eastward as the Tista river including the Morung or the low-lands at the foot of the hills. (27) Tenzing Namgyal died in 1793 and was succeeded by his son Chugphui Namgyal. Shortly after his accession to the throne, war broke out between Nepal and Tibet, in the course of which the Nepalese established themselves firmly in Sikkim, South and West of the Tista. (28)

According to a tradition, the Chinese after expelling the Nepalese from Tibet called on the Sikkimese to show their boundaries. Chugphui Namgyal, being a minor and a fugitive could not come forward to protect the interests of his kingdom. The Chinese thereupon gave the region west of the Tista to Nepal. The Chola-Jelap range was made the north and east boundary of Sikkim. The Chumbi valley was given to Tibet. (29)

British relations with Sikkim commenced in 1814-15, when the East India Company which had brought great part of India under

---

(25) White, n. 15, pp. 16-17.

(26) Ibid., p. 17.

(27) C.U. Aitchison, comp., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta, 1929), vol. 12, p. 61.

(28) Ibid., pp. 61-62.

(29) C.U. Aitchison, comp., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta, 1909), vol. 2, p. 311.

its control, was involved in a war with Nepal. The factors that had obliged the Company to establish contacts with Chugphud Namgyal, and the Company's subsequent relations with Sikkim are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter One

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S RELATIONS WITH SIKKIM 1814-1857

Sikkim did not attract the attention of the East India Company until the year 1814 when it was involved in a war with Nepal. The war arose out of the encroachments of the Gurkhas, the ruling class of Nepal, into Company's territory of Gorakhpur Terai, situated immediately south of the lower Himalayan slopes, in the province of Oudh. The campaign was an arduous one in which the Gurkhas fought bravely and with much success. (1) It was rumoured that Nepal and Bhutan, separated by the small kingdom of Sikkim, were about to conclude a military alliance against the Company. The Company therefore wanted to isolate Nepal and prevent it from getting assistance from any quarter, especially China, since the latter exercised suzerainty over Nepal from 1792 onwards. J. Adam, Secretary to the Government of India felt that the Company's objective could be achieved if it opened relations with Sikkim since the princes of that kingdom were closely connected by matrimonial relations as well as religious affinities with Tibet, a dependency of China. (2)

The opening of relations with Sikkim, thus became a political and a military necessity. The alliance with Sikkim seemed to promise to the Company three advantages, namely 1) facilitate communication with China, via Tibet, 2) prevent Nepalese-Bhutanese intrigues against the Company, and 3) level an

---

(1) C.U. Aitchison, comp., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta, 1909), vol. 2, p. 94.

(2) Papers Relating to Nepaul War (London, 1824), p. 268.

an attack on the Gurkha flank. In view of these advantages the Company instructed Captain Barre Latter of the Bengal Army to establish contacts with Chugphui Namgyal, the ruler of Sikkim. (3)

In the spring of 1815, Captain Barre Latter, succeeded in establishing contacts with the Sikkim authorities. Captain Latter, in order to induce Raja Chugphui Namgyal to bring a large number of troops against Nepal, promised to help him to recover his territories lost to Nepal. (4) It may be mentioned here that in 1780 Nepal had invaded Sikkim and during the course of the following thirty years, overran its territory as far east as the River Tista and conquered and annexed the Terai or the low-lying area. (5) Sikkim agreed to support the Company, and undertook to play the role of a faithful ally. It accorded useful assistance to the extent its resources permitted. (6)

The Nepal war came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Segauli on 2 December 1815, by the Company and Nepal. Under Article Three of the Treaty, Nepal ceded to the Company the following tracts of territory:

1) The whole of the low-lands between the Rivers Kali and Rapti

2) The whole of the low-lands (with the exception of Bootwul and Khass) lying between the Rapti and Gunduck

---

(3) Ibid., p. 258.

(4) Letter of Barre Latter to J. Adam, Secretary to the Government of India, dated 23 March 1816. Quoted in the Memorandum on "the connection of Sikkim Raja with the British Government" by P. Melville, Under-Secretary to the Government of India. F.P.P., 14 November 1846, 29.

(5) Aitchison, n. 1, p. 311.

(6) Melville's Memo, n. 4.

3) The whole of the low-lands between the Gunduck and Coosah, in which the authority of the British Government has been introduced, or is in actual course of introduction

4) All the low-lands between the Rivers Mitchee and the Teestah

5) All the territories within the hills eastward of the River Mitchee, including the fort and lands of Nagree and the pass of Nagarcote, leading from the Morung into the hills, together with the territory lying between that pass and Nagree. (7)

Lord Moira (afterwards Marquess of Hastings), the Governor-General of India, decided to cede to Sikkim a part of the territory wrested from Nepal. By this gesture he wanted to establish the Company's relations with that kingdom on a firmer footing with a view to checking the Gurkha expansion towards the east. He, therefore, authorized Barre Latter to hand over the territory lying between the Rivers Mechi and Tista to Sikkim on certain conditions. The Raja accepted the conditions by signing a Treaty with the Company at Titalia on 10 February 1817. The conditions were incorporated into Articles Two to Eight of the Treaty. (8)

The Treaty of Titalia and its Significance

The Treaty of Titalia ran into ten Articles. Under Article one of the Treaty, the Company ceded to the Raja of Sikkim, Chugphui Namgyal, the territory lying between the Rivers Mechi and the Tista. The Raja, for his part, agreed 1) not to commit aggression on the Gurkhas or any other state (Article two); 2) to submit to the arbitration of the Company his disputes with Nepal and other neighbouring states (Article three); 3) to render

---

(7) Aitchison, n. 1, pp. 110-13.

(8) Melville's Memo, n. 4.

military assistance to the Company in case of need when they are engaged in war in the hills (Article four); 4) not to allow any European or American to reside in his kingdom without obtaining the permission of the Company (Article five); 5) to deliver up British-Indian dacoits who may take refuge in his kingdom (Article six); 6) not to afford protection to the British-Indian revenue defaulters or other delinquents (Article seven); and 7) not to levy transit duties on British merchandize and to afford protection to merchants and traders from Company's provinces (Article eight). In return for these privileges, the Company under Article nine, guaranteed to the Raja and his successors the peaceable possession of the territory ceded to him under Article one. The parties agreed to ratify the treaty within one month of its signing (Article ten). (9)

The political significance of the treaty of Titalia cannot be over emphasized. Firstly, it helped to check the Nepalese expansion towards the east. With the restoration of the territory between the Rivers Mechi and the Tista to Sikkim, the latter became a strong buffer state between Nepal and Bhutan. In the words of H.T. Prinsep, Secretary to the Government of India, the effect of the Treaty of Titalia had been

> to shut out the Nepalese from any ambitious views of aggrandizement to the east, and to circumscribe their territory on three sides while on the fourth, the stupendous range of the Heemalya and the Chinese frontier present an effectual barrier. (10)

---

(9) Aitchison, n. 1, pp. 322-4.

(10) H.T. Prinsep, History of the Political and Military Transactions During the Administration of Marquess of Hastings 1813-1823, 2 vols (London, 1825), vol. 1, p. 207.

Secondly, it brought Sikkim for the first time under the influence of the Company, as Articles two to eight had limited the freedom of action of Sikkim to a large extent. Thirdly the Company gained many trade privileges, the most important of them being the right to trade up to the Tibetan frontier. For the first time the Company acquired a clearly defined right to trade up to the Tibetan frontier through the territory of a friendly kingdom. Moreover, Sikkim was found to "afford a more ready communication with Lassa and China than that through Bootan". (11) The Treaty of Titalia thus marked the beginning of British interest in Sikkim as a trade route to Tibet and as a factor in India's security. Lord Moira considered the establishment of relations with Sikkim as a diplomatic triumph "which we could never have imposed by force of arms from the extreme difficulty of the country". (12)

The Cession of the Morung

Two months after the signing of the Treaty of Titalia, Lord Moira, on the recommendation of Barre Latter ceded to Sikkim an additional territory of the Morung, that is, the low-lands lying between the rivers Mechi and the Mahanadi. (13) The cession of the Morung was made as a matter of policy since the Company wanted to strengthen Sikkim as a buffer between Nepal and British India. Barre Latter maintained that the Company could execute that policy only by ceding the Morung to the Raja of Sikkim as it

---

(11) Ibid., vol. 2, p. 86.

(12) The Marchioness of Bute, ed., The Private Journals of Marquess of Hastings, 2 vols (London, 1858), vol. 1, p. 146.

(13) Melville Memo, n. 4.

would enable him to "subsist the garrisons he must maintain for the protection of the passes" between his country and Nepal. (14)

The Morung was ceded to the Raja under certain conditions, namely, that 1) the Articles of the Treaty of Titalia were to be in force in the Morung also; 2) that Sikkim was to surrender to the Company all British Indian criminals and other public defaulters who may take refuge in the Morung, and to allow the police officers of the Company to pursue them into those lands so as to arrest them; and 3) that in times of emergency the Governor-General's order to the local authorities were to be obeyed in the same manner, as coming from the Raja of Sikkim. (15)

It is evident from the above conditions that the Company had lost nothing by ceding the Morung to the Raja. On the contrary, it gained control over him since he was obliged, under the terms of the grant, to allow the Company to exercise suzerain rights over the Morung. (16)

---

(14) Letter of Barre Latter to J. Adam, Secretary, Government of India, dated 23 March 1816. Quoted in Melville's Memo, n. 4.

(15) Aitchison, n. 1, p. 324.

(16) The East India Company made the grant of the Morung to the Raja of Sikkim as a "feudatory of the British Government" under the 'Sanad' dated 7 April 1817. The use of the word "feudatory" might suggest overlord-vassal relationship between the Company and the Raja of Sikkim. But that was not the case as the word "feudatory" had only a limited connotation. In his letter to the Government of India, dated 25 March 1816, Barre Latter recommended that the 'Sanad' might be granted to the Raja of Sikkim "suitable to his situation as an ally to the British Government". Capt. Latter wanted the use of the word "feudatory" in the 'Sanad' simply to retain the proprietory rights of the Company over the ceded tract.
Quoted in Melville's Memo, n. 4.

Murder of Buljeet Karjee

From 1817 to 1826 no notable transactions were made between the Company and Raja Chugphui Namgyal. (17) In 1819 a serious quarrel arose between the Raja and his Dewan or Chief Minister, Buljeet Karjee. The quarrel was patched up and an agreement was made. Another agreement was made in the following year and a third in 1824. But about this time, the Rani or the queen, who was on friendly terms with the Dewan died. Raja Chugphui Namgyal, freed from all restraint determined to make way with Buljeet Karjee. Finally in 1826, Buljeet Karjee was murdered by Tungyik Menchoo, father of Dunya Namguay, better known as Dewan Namguay and Pagla Dewan or mad Chief Minister. (18) The second reason for the murder of the Dewan might have been the rivalry between the Lepcha and the Tibetan sections of the Sikkim population. Buljeet Karjee was the leader of the Lepchas, while the Raja supported the Tibetan faction due to his close matrimonial and religious ties with Tibet. As the Raja ordered the extirpation of Buljeet's relations, his cousin, Eklathoop fled to Nepal along with 800 of his Lepcha followers. (19) Both Chughphui Namgyal and Eklathoop petitioned the Company for support. The Raja sought the intervention of the Company to obtain the extradition of his subjects from Nepal, while Eklathoop also begged for the support of the Company for justice and protection against the Raja. The Company ignored both the requests as it did

---

(17) Aitchison, n. 1, p. 312.

(18) H.H. Risley, ed., The Sikhim Gazetteer (Calcutta, 1894), p. 19.

(19) Aitchison, n. 1, p. 312.

not think it proper to intervene in the quarrels between the Raja and his subjects. However, in 1832, it informed the Raja through N. Smith, the Magistrate of Rungpur, that it would request the Government of Nepal to impose restrictions on the activities of the Lepcha refugees from Sikkim, but at the same time it advised the Raja to adopt a conciliatory policy towards his refugee subjects. (20)

This incident highlights the measure of the Company's hold over Sikkim. The Raja lost his power of independent action because under Article three of the Treaty of Titalia, he was prohibited from having any direct dealings with Nepal or any other state. Therefore even for the extradition of his subjects from Nepal, he had to seek the intervention of the Company. The Lepchas on their part looked to the Company as their saviour.

The Cession of Darjeeling

While the Raja was involved in disputes with his Lepcha subjects, a boundary dispute occurred in 1827 between his kingdom and Nepal over the jurisdiction of a piece of hill-land called Ontoo, situated on the eastern side of the Mechi River. The Raja referred the dispute to the arbitration of the Governor-General of India as laid down in Article three of the Treaty of Titalia of 1817. The Governor-General, Lord William-Bentinck, deputed in 1828 two officers of the Company, Captain G.W. Lloyd and G.W. Grant to investigate the dispute. During the course of their investigation, they came across a small hill village called Dorjeling.

---

(20) Letter of the Government of India to N. Smith, Magistrate, Rangpur, 20 February 1832. F.P.C., 20 February 1832, 27.

They realised that it was ideally located both for a sanatorium and a military station. Their observations were brought to the notice of the Governor-General, Lord Bentinck, who then deputed Captain Herbert, a surveyor, to examine the place along with Lloyd and Grant. Their findings suggested that the site would not only make an ideal health resort but also confer considerable political benefits on the Company. (21)

In view of these findings, Lord Bentinck proposed to his Council, in 1830 that they should open negotiations with Raja Chugphui Namgyal for the transfer of Darjeeling to the East India Company. Sir Charles Metcalfe, a member of the Council opposed the proposal on the grounds that it would not only rouse the suspicions of the Raja and eventually involve the British in disputes with him, but also the jealousy of the Nepalese who might consider the Company's possession of Darjeeling, so near their frontier as a preliminary step to the British invasion of Nepal. (22) These opinions prevailed and the subject was dropped for the time being. In 1833 it was again revived when the Lepcha refugees in Nepal who had fled from Sikkim in 1826, made an inroad into Sikkim. Bentinck wanted to exploit that situation to acquire Darjeeling. He, therefore, proposed to his Council that Lloyd should be deputed to negotiate with the Raja of Sikkim for the cession of Darjeeling in exchange for an equivalent either in land or money. (23) He further proposed to obtain the opinion of

---

(21) Arthur Jules Dash, Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling (Alipore, 1947), p. 37.

(22) Melville's Memo, n. 4.

(23) Quoted in Bentinck's Minute of 8 January 1835. F.P.P., 23 January 1835, 1.

B.H. Hodgson, the British Resident at Kathmandu as to the likely reaction of the court of Nepal to the establishment of a British sanatorium at Darjeeling, so near their frontier. Hodgson replied that any attempt to sound and conciliate Nepal with reference to the Company's proposal for a sanatorium at Darjeeling would result in more "harm than good". (24) He therefore suggested that they should make a "casual and careless" intimation as soon as the matter was ripe for implementation and not before. Once again, the project was dropped due to the opposition of Sir Charles Metcalfe. (25)

In January 1835, Lloyd, in a private letter to Captain T.H. Taylor at the Government House enquired whether the Government intended to establish a sanatorium at Darjeeling. He felt that the suspicion of the Raja of Sikkim about the British intentions was the only obstacle to its establishment, but he was sure that it could be removed. (26) The enquiry of Lloyd revived the Company's interest in the project. On 8 January 1835, Lord Bentinck, proposed to his Council that Lloyd might be sent to Sikkim to negotiate with the Raja regarding the transfer of Darjeeling to the East India Company. The Governor-General was interested in the project so much that he would not take a serious note of the possible feelings of Nepal. He 'confessed' that "the satisfaction of the Nepal Darbar (Court) weigh with me as nothing". (27) This

---

(24) Letter of Hodgson to Government of India, 1 November 1833. Quoted in Melville's Memo, n. 4.

(25) Melville's Memo, n. 4.

(26) Ibid.

(27) Minute of Lord William Bentinck, 8 January 1835. F.P.P., January 1835, 1.

time the Council which did not include Sir Charles Metcalfe, approved of the proposal and decided to depute Lloyd to Sikkim to negotiate with the Raja for the transfer of Darjeeling to the Company in exchange for "such equivalent either in land or money" Further it wanted that Lloyd should explain to the Raja that the British interest in Darjeeling was only motivated by the idea of establishing a sanatorium there. (28)

Lloyd left for Sikkim on 8 February 1835, and after journeying ten days reached Tumlong, the then capital of Sikkim. Immediately on reaching Tumlong, he paid a courtesy call on the Raja. The next day he again saw the Raja in full Darbar. Before he could request the Raja for the transfer of Darjeeling to the Company, the Raja himself made three requests to Lloyd. The requests were 1) that the boundary of his kingdom might be extended upto Konchi; 2) that Kunmo Pradhan, the embezzler of the Morung revenues be seized up and delivered to him and 3) that Debgong might be added to his kingdom. (29) Lloyd pleaded his inability to accede to the Raja's first request as it was beyond his power. Regarding the Raja's second request, Lloyd did not say anything except expressing the wish that he might mediate between the Raja and the Lepchas and their Kazis so as to settle their disputes.

---

(28) Letter of Macnaughton, Secretary, Government of India to Lloyd, 23 January 1835. F.P.P., 23 January 1835, 3.

(29) Kunmo Pradhan was the agent of the Raja in the Morung. He was appointed to that position, on the recommendation of Scott, Magistrate of Rangpur. He embezzled the revenues of the Morung and escaped into the British territory. He instigated the Lepchas and their Kazis or headmen to defy the Raja.

Debgong had once belonged to Sikkim. Nepal which had occupied it, ceded to the Company in 1815. The Company in its turn ceded it to the Raja of Jalpaiguri in 1828.

As to the third request of the Raja Lloyd did not make any comment except mentioning that the Governor-General desired to have Darjeeling in exchange for lands in the plains or for a sum of money. (30) On hearing this the Raja informed Lloyd that he would give the answer the next day.

The Raja did not give his promised answer the next day, but sent his officers to discuss with Lloyd the different points connected with his requests. It is not known what had transpired at these discussions. On the sixth day of his stay at Tumlong, Lloyd met the Raja for the last time and requested him to give a definite answer regarding the cession of Darjeeling to the Company. On hearing that, the Raja gave to Lloyd, a paper containing a statement of what he (the Raja) wanted in exchange for Darjeeling. The statement contained two requests, namely that 1) Kunmo Pradhan should be made to account for the embezzlement, and restore his plunder and 2) that Debgong should be ceded. The Raja, further informed Lloyd that if his requests are complied with, he would give Darjeeling to the Company "out of friendship". (31)

The Raja gave to his officers, escorting Lloyd, on his way back from Sikkim to Darjeeling, the Deed of the Darjeeling Grant. The officers were instructed to hand over that document to Lloyd as soon as the Raja's requests are complied with. (32) Lloyd, who happened to see the document found it to be imperfectly drafted.

---

(30) Letter of Lloyd to Government of India, 9 March 1835. P.P.P., 6 April 1835, 100.

(31) Ibid.

(32) Ibid.

He, therefore, drafted a new deed and sent it to the Raja with a request that he should "substitute this or similar paper" for the one he had delivered to his officers.

When Lloyd sent the new draft to the Raja, he was perfectly aware that the Company could get Darjeeling only by acceding to the Raja's requests. This is evident from his letter to the Government wherein he stated that it could obtain Darjeeling by ceding Debgong to Sikkim and by compelling Kunno Pradhan to make good the Morung revenues to the Raja. (33) Lloyd considered it important to obtain the possession of Darjeeling for reasons other than its cold climate because "as a military post that must stand pre-eminent". He further informed the Government that Darjeeling would be cheaply got in exchange for Debgong. (34)

The Government considered the Raja's conditions for the cession of Darjeeling as impracticable since Debgong was already given to the Jalpaiguri Raja in 1828 and regarding the other condition it doubted whether it would be justified in compelling a settlement of accounts between the Raja and his subjects. (35)

Here one must pause and consider whether the Government was justified in rejecting the Raja's request for the surrender of Kunno Pradhan. Under Article Seven of the Treaty of Titalia, the Raja of Sikkim was bound "not to afford protection to any defaulters of revenue or other delinquents when demanded by the British Government through their accredited agents". The desire of the Raja of

---

(33) Letter of Lloyd to Macnaughton, Secretary, Government of India, 23 March 1835. F.P.P., 6 April 1835, 103.

(34) Ibid.

(35) F.P.P., 6 April 1835, 104.

Sikkim to make that article naturally binding was natural enough, especially when Kunmo Pradhan was charged with serious offence like the criminal misappropriation of revenue. The Company neither arrested Kunmo Pradhan nor compelled him to render account of the default. The plea of the Governor-General to the Raja that "it is not consistent with our practice to call people to account for money transactions which have taken place in foreign territories" was not convincing to the Raja especially when he suspected that Kunmo Pradhan had treasonable intentions of giving away Morung to Nepal. (36)

The Government, after rejecting the Raja's conditions for the transfer of Darjeeling, asked Lloyd to point out any waste land in the neighbourhood of Sikkim which could be transferred to the Raja in exchange for Darjeeling. If there was no such waste land, Lloyd was asked to give his opinion regarding the amount of pecuniary compensation which the Raja may consider sufficient in exchange for Darjeeling. (37) Lloyd was unable to point out any waste land, which could be given to the Raja in exchange for Darjeeling. Regarding pecuniary compensation he valued Darjeeling at Rs. 120,000 but doubted its acceptance by the Raja since he attached little value to money. (38) On hearing this, Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Officiating Governor-General of India, ordered

---

(36) Letter of the Governor-General to the Raja of Sikkim, 8 February 1836. F.P.P., 8 February 1836, 88.

(37) Letter of Macnaughton to Lloyd, 4 May 1835. F.P.P., 4 May 1835, 104.

(38) Quoted in the Minute of T.H. Maddock, Member, Governor-General's Council, dated 29 September 1846. F.P.P., 14 November 1846, 30.

Lloyd to abstain from further negotiations with the Raja as he was not "cordially disposed to cede it". (39)

On receiving that order, Lloyd informed the Government that the Deed of the Darjeeling Grant was already in his hands ! He did not inform the Government of this very important fact as soon as he received the Deed, for reasons best known to him.

Here it must again be pointed out that Lloyd while on his way back from Sikkim to Darjeeling, sent to the Raja a new draft of the Darjeeling Deed requesting him to "substitute this or similar paper" for the one he had delivered to his officers. The Raja on receiving that new draft, which was back dated 1 February 1835, affixed his red seal and returned it to Lloyd. That was the Deed of the Grant of Darjeeling. It is important to note that the new Deed was the substitute for the original one which the Raja gave to his officers with instructions that it should be delivered to Lloyd as soon as his (Raja's) requests are complied with.

When Lloyd received the Deed of the Darjeeling Grant, he was aware that the Government was not going to comply with the Raja's conditions. In fact he was asked by the Government to refrain from further negotiations with the Raja. The plain course left for him was to return the Deed to the Raja, but instead of doing that he wrote a letter to the Raja asking him to mention whether he desired to give Darjeeling to the British Government out of friendship. This action of Lloyd not only violated the orders of the Government of 15 June 1835, wherein

---

(39) Letter of Macnaughton to Lloyd, 15 June 1835, quoted in Melville's Memo, n. 4.

he was asked to refrain from further negotiations with the Raja but also went against the clear mandate of Lord Bentinck who in his minute of 17 June 1830 cautioned his officers that "the cession (of Darjeeling) should not be ultimately insisted on, unless the terms offered as an equivalent to the Sikkim Raja should be really satisfactory to him". (40) Further Lloyd did not send to the Government a copy of the letter he had addressed to the Raja. The Raja's reply is on record. It is an important document since it was on receiving it that Lloyd considered himself at liberty to make use of the Grant, and forwarded it to the Government who thereupon took possession of Darjeeling. The Raja's reply was as follows:

> Your letter and present of a box has reached me and having been understood (sic) afforded me much pleasure. You write that vakeels from Nepaul have arrived, and having been waiting a long time, but that my vakeels have not come and you wish to know the reasons for their delay and request that on receipt of your letter I would despatch them in order that the boundary of Siddikola may be ascertained and fixed. You have thus written to me but I am now sending you both the vakeels and have the goodness to settle firmly the boundary for me - and you have also many times written about Darjeeling, but last year the grant of Darjeeling under my red seal was delivered to you through my vakeels and there can never be any departure from that by my Government - if you have understood that differently I cannot help it - continue to gratify me with your welfare. I send three yards of Cochin as present. (41)

The Raja's letter looks as if it was a reply to more than one letter and on different subjects. The main theme of the letter was in relation to the boundary dispute with Nepal and

---

(40) Quoted in Melville's Memo, n. 4.

(41) Letter of Raja of Sikkim to Lloyd received on 1 January 1836. F.P.P., 8 February 1836, 86.

the non-arrival of the vakeels or agents from Sikkim to Lloyd. Darjeeling was mentioned casually and all that the Raja said about it was that having given the Grant in 1835 he could not depart from it. From this reply one can well infer the tone and language of Lloyd's letter to the Raja. It is quite possible that the letter might have touched the matter concerning the boundary dispute between Sikkim and Nepal which was pending since 1827 and which was under Lloyd's investigation.

From the Raja's reply Lloyd concluded that the cession of Darjeeling was unconditional and informed the Government that the Raja "makes the grant freely, mentions no conditions whatsoever and seem to regret that he has been misunderstood". (42) The Government replied to Lloyd in the following notable terms:

> As it now appears that the transfer has been unconditionally made by the Raja, it only remains to consider the best means of turning it to the advantage of the British Government. (43)

The claim of Lloyd that the transfer of Darjeeling had been made unconditionally by the Raja looks strange in view of the above stated facts.

Whatever might have been the methods by which the cession of Darjeeling was secured, there is no doubt that it was an important event in the history of East India Company's relations with Sikkim. Darjeeling became the observation post of the British in the Himalaya and placed them in close touch with all

---

(42) Letter of Lloyd to Macnaughton, 5 January 1836. F.P.P., 8 February 1836, 85.

(43) Letter of Macnaughton to Lloyd, 8 February 1836. F.P.P., 8 February 1836, 87.

the hill states of the Eastern Himalaya and also constantly reminded them of the possibilities of trade with Tibet.

It will be interesting to examine in this connection the grant of Darjeeling in the light of the Sikkimese theory of land-holding brought forward by Hope Namgyal, the present Gyalmo (Maharani) of Sikkim. According to her, Sikkim law provides that all land belongs to the King, and only usufructage, not outright ownership devolves on the occupants of the land. Therefore, she raises the question whether Darjeeling was not given "in the traditional context of a grant for usufructage only; ultimate jurisdiction, authority and the right to resume the land being implicitly retained". (44) The argument appears to be rather ingenious since in all transactions between sovereign powers only the principles of international law are applied. Therefore the Sikkim law of land-holding cannot be applied to the grant of Darjeeling.

Secondly, she is mistaken in regarding that "Darjeeling was given for its particular usage as a health resort". (45) In the deed of the grant the Raja had not enjoined any conditions for the use of Darjeeling. He simply made a passing reference to the desire of the Governor-General to make use of it as a sanatorium. All that the Raja said was that it was presented to the Governor-General "out of friendship".

---

(44) Hope Namgyal, "The Sikkimese Theory of Land-holding and the Darjeeling Grant", Bulletin of Tibetology, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 47-59.

(45) Ibid., p. 59.

Compensation for Darjeeling

While deputing Lloyd to open negotiations with Chugphui Namgyal, the Raja of Sikkim, for the cession of Darjeeling, Lord Bentinck, the Governor-General of India, as noted earlier, authorized Lloyd to offer to the Raja "such equivalent either in land or money". However, the Government relying on Lloyd's letter of 5 January 1836 believed that the cession of Darjeeling was an "unconditional transfer" and issued orders for its occupation and conversion into a sanatorium. Lloyd in forwarding the grant deed to the Government expressed the hope that it might consider sending to the Raja of Sikkim a letter of acknowledgement and a "handsome present" in return for his ready compliance with the Governor-General's request, for he begged to say that the Raja's gift "is no small one considering the limited extent of his country". (46) Accordingly the Government sent to Raja a letter of acknowledgement and some presents. The presents - one double barelled gun, one rifle, 20 yards of red-broad cloth, two pairs of shawls, one of superior variety and the other of inferior variety, can scarcely be called "handsome". They were not despatched until the following month of June. (47)

The relations between the Raja and the East India Company became strained as the latter failed to compensate the former adequately for his cession of Darjeeling. He persisted in his requests for compensation to Lloyd who however took no notice of them. In 1839 Dr. A. Campbell of the Indian Medical Service

---

(46) Letter of Lloyd to Macnaughton, 5 January 1836. P.P.P., 8 February 1836, 86.

(47) Letter of the Governor-General to the Raja, n. 36.

and the British Resident in Nepal was transferred to Darjeeling as Superintendent. In that capacity he was in charge not only of the civil, criminal and fiscal administration of the district, but also of the political relations with Sikkim. (48) Campbell soon after his appointment as Superintendent of Darjeeling received a letter from the Raja of Sikkim complaining that though he had ceded Darjeeling, he received "nothing in return". (49) To the Governor-General also the Raja addressed a letter mentioning that Lloyd had promised to give him "whatever land or money I required", and requested that the small tract of land east of the Mahanadi and west of the Tista may be given to him in exchange for Darjeeling. (50)

Campbell expressed surprise at the Raja's request for compensation as he felt that the latter desired nothing in return for the cession of Darjeeling except the "satisfaction" of having met the wishes of the British Government. (51) Campbell believed that the Raja was mistaken in asserting that Lloyd had promised him to procure land or money in exchange for Darjeeling. He thought that Lloyd was authorised to offer to the Raja "any suitable piece of available Terai land" in the neighbourhood of Darjeeling, and that he could not point out to the Government any such available land. (52)

---

(48) Jules Dash, n. 21, p. 37.

(49) Letter of the Raja of Sikkim to Campbell, November 1839. F.P.C., 12 February 1840, 102.

(50) Letter of the Raja of Sikkim to the Governor-General, 27 December 1839. F.P.C., 12 February 1840, 103.

(51) Letter of Campbell to the Raja of Sikkim, 19 December 1839. F.P.C., 12 February 1840, 104.

(52) Letter of Campbell to Government of India, 11 January 1840. F.P.C., 7 September 1840, 98.

Campbell here apparently pretended the ignorance of transaction by which the cession of Darjeeling was brought about. Lloyd was not authorised at the time of his meeting with the Raja to offer "any suitable piece of waste Terai" in exchange for Darjeeling. He was simply asked to procure the cession of Darjeeling either for land in the plains or money. The Government while declining to accept the two conditions of the Raja for the cession of Darjeeling asked Lloyd to suggest any waste land which the Raja would accept and further to state his opinion regarding the pecuniary compensation. Lloyd was unable to point out any waste land which could be offered to the Raja. As to the pecuniary compensation he said that the Raja sets little value on money and suggested that he might be given a valuable present like a pearl necklace. (53) He valued Darjeeling at Rs. 120,000 or Rs. 6,000 a year and said "could I as an individual purchase the land and had I the money I should be glad to give Rs. 100,000 for it !" (54)

The Raja was embittered with the Company for not receiving adequate compensation for the cession of Darjeeling. He prevented his people from visiting that place for purposes of trade and commerce, which retarded the progress of the settlement. Campbell, therefore, informed the Government that it must show to Raja that it was not insensible to the benefits derived through his gift. (55)

---

(53) Letter of Lloyd to Government of India, 25 May 1835. Quoted in Melville's Memo, n. 4.

(54) Ibid.

(55) Letter of Campbell to Government, 11 January 1840. Quoted in the Minute of F. Millet, Member Governor-General's Council, dated 20 Octobet 1846. F.P.P., 14 November 1846, 31.

The Government of India thereupon asked Campbell in March 1840 to inform the Raja that it was not possible to make any territorial grant to him, but that it was anxious to make yearly payments as shall far exceed the value of Darjeeling under his Government. The Government felt that Rs. 1,000 a year would be an adequate compensation for the Raja, but at the same time it informed Campbell that it was willing to enhance that amount provided the Raja allows "free intercourse between Darjeeling and the interior of Sikkim". (56)

It was only in January 1841 that negotiations were opened with the Raja. Campbell told the Raja's vakeel (agent) that an annual compensation of Rs. 3,000 will be paid to the Raja from the date of cession to upto date and regularly for the future. (57) The Government, meanwhile informed Campbell that the enhanced allowance may increase the Raja's "spirit of discontent" since he had again applied to the Governor-General for the cession of Debgong. (58) Thereupon Campbell suggested to the Government that the Raja's compensation need not have retrospective effect from the date of cession. The Government accepted that suggestion and informed the Raja that he would be paid the annual compensation of Rs. 3,000 and that the payment would commence from "the date of your closing with the offer". (59)

---

(56) Letter of the Government of India to Campbell, 2 March 1840. F.P.C., 2 March 1840, 101.

(57) Quoted in the Minute of Millet, n. 55.

(58) Ibid.

(59) Letter of Government of India to Raja of Sikkim, 12 April 1841. F.P.P., 12 April 1841, 88.

It is clear from the above that, at first the Raja was offered a compensation of Rs. 3,000 a year from the date of the cession of Darjeeling, and that it was subsequently modified at the instance of Campbell to the effect that the payment was to commence from the date of the Raja accepted the Company's offer. The Raja accepted the first and not the second offer. That was clear from the Raja's letter to Campbell. That letter significantly states:

> the offer of rupees in exchange for Darjeeling has vexed me but out of friendship which I bear to the British Government, and which is important to me I agree to take rupees 3,000 annually in exchange for Darjeeling tract from the time Darjeeling was made over to the British Government to this time. (60)

Campbell, however, thought that the Raja had accepted the second offer. (61) The Government also took no notice of this material misrepresentation. In 1842, the Raja demanded the arrears for seven years since Darjeeling was ceded to the Company in 1835. (62) The Government however paid no heed to that demand. From the above it is clear that the attitude of the Company towards the Raja, in connexion with the payment of compensation for Darjeeling, was anything but graceful.

Campbell's first visit to Sikkim

Ever since the establishment of the Darjeeling settlement, the relations between the Company and Sikkim were unfriendly. This was due to many reasons. Firstly, Raja Chugphui Namgyal was

---

(60) Letter of Raja to Campbell dated 9 September 1841, F.P.P., 27 September 1841, 101. (emphasis added)

(61) Melville's Memo, n. 4.

(62) F.P.P., 17 January 1842, 98.

dissatisfied with the treatment he had received from the Company after the cession of Darjeeling. Secondly, the growth of Darjeeling from an uninhabited place in 1835 to a flourishing settlement of 10,000 people within a decade, had roused the jealousy of the Sikkimese. Moreover the presence of a British enclave in the midst of the Sikkim territory created troubles. The troubles started over the question of the extradition of slaves and criminals who used to escape to Darjeeling or Sikkim as the case may be. The Sikkim authorities resented the refusal of the British to surrender the slaves who took refuge in Darjeeling. Similarly the British frowned upon the non-cooperation of the Sikkimese in apprehending British Indian criminals who took refuge in Sikkim. (63) Added to these there was one more cause of discontent and complaint associated with Campbell. It was the loss of Ontoo Hill by Sikkim. (64) The loss of that area was made a subject of complaint by the Raja which evidently added to his discontent. (65)

---

(63) Sir R. Temple, Journals Kept in Hyderabad, Cashmir, Sikkim and Nepal, 2 vols (London, 1887), vol. I, p. 168.

(64) In 1827 a dispute occurred between Sikkim and Nepal regarding a piece of hilly land on the eastern side of the Mechi River. The dispute was commonly referred to as the Ontoo hill dispute. The Raja of Sikkim referred it to the arbitration of the Governor-General of India since he was obliged under Article Three of the Treaty of Titalia to refer all his disputes with Nepal and other states to the arbitration of the Government of India and to abide by its decision. The Government of India deputed Lloyd to investigate the dispute. On his findings the Government of India decided the dispute in favour of Sikkim. Nepal appealed against that decision. The Government of India admitted that appeal and in 1838 deputed Campbell to re-examine the case. On Campbell's findings, the Government of India reversed its earlier decision in favour of Sikkim and gave verdict in favour of Nepal.

(65) Letter of Campbell to Bushby, Secretary Government of India, 23 November 1846. F.P.C., 20 March 1847, 87.

Campbell on his part was unable to pull on well with the Raja. On 8 June 1846 he addressed a letter to the Raja charging him on eight different counts: 1) causing "vexatious delays and exactions" upon traders and labourers passing through Sikkim, to and from Darjeeling; 2) non-co-operating with the British power in the apprehension and surrender of the British Indian criminals; 3) delaying the settlement of the southern boundary of Darjeeling territory; 4) "preventing and obstructing" his subjects from visiting Darjeeling for purposes of trade and labour; 5) "prohibiting" the people of Bhutan from passing through his territory to Darjeeling for purposes of trade and labour; 6) preventing the British the use of the lime deposits in his country; 7) causing "obstructions and vexatious exactions" on Tibetan traders coming to Darjeeling; 8) demanding the surrender of slaves and others who had settled in Darjeeling and against whom there were no criminal charges. (66) The Raja was warned that if he persisted in his "unfriendly course" the Government would be compelled to attach his possessions in Morung. (67)

It is evident from the above letter that the charges against the Raja were baseless since none of his actions except the one mentioned under the head seven relating to the obstructions in the way of the Tibetan traders can be regarded as an actual breach of the Treaty of Titalia. The intention of Campbell seemed to be to force the Raja to accept the Government's demands under the threat of resuming the Morung. Campbell's bullying tactics paid

---

(66) Letter of Campbell to the Raja of Sikkim, 8 June 1846. P.P.C., 22 August 1846, 21.

(67) Ibid.

dividends, for in August 1846 the Raja sent his Dewan or Chief. Minister, Ilam Sing to Darjeeling to reply to the charges of Campbell. Ilam Sing met Campbell on 17 August 1846 and afterwards he had two more meetings with him on 3 October and 3 December 1846.

With reference to Campbell's first charge, namely, that the Raja was causing "vexatious delays and exactions" upon traders passing through Sikkim to and from Darjeeling, the Raja in his letter to Campbell received on 2 October 1846, denied the charge, but agreed to attend to any future complaints of the Superintendent in that regard. Regarding the second charge relating to the non-co-operation of the Raja's officials in the arrest and surrender of the British Indian criminals who had taken refuge in the Sikkim Hills and the Morung, the Dewan denied the charge and stated that strict orders have been issued to all Sikkim officials to attend to the British requisitions under that head. As to the settlement of the southern boundary of Darjeeling, Campbell and Ilam Sing agreed that the matter should lie over until the Raja had received the letter of the Governor-General dated 3 November 1846, regarding that affair. The Dewan denied the fourth charge of Campbell, namely, that obstructions were placed in the way of the Sikkimese visiting Darjeeling for purposes of trade and labour and said that many Sikkimese were already employed at Darjeeling. Campbell agreed that it was so. Similarly the fifth charge relating to the obstruction in the way of the Bhutanese passing through Sikkim to Darjeeling was denied. The Dewan however explained that the Bhutanese could use only the southern route by way of Dalimkote and Ranjit river since there

was risk of collision with the local inhabitants if the Bhutanese use the Chadam-Dakiling route. As to the sixth charge, the Dewan agreed to allow the British the use of Sikkim lime-deposits. As to the seventh charge relating to the "obstructions and vexatious exactions" from the Tibetan traders passing through Sikkim to and from Darjeeling, the Raja in his letter of 2 October 1846 explained to Campbell that the duties levied on the Tibetan traders were very light and that they were levied with moderation. Regarding Campbell's last charge relating to the Raja's demands for the surrender of slaves who had settled down at Darjeeling, it was agreed that in future the Raja would not demand their surrender, but write to the Superintendent if his household slaves take refuge in Darjeeling.

Campbell informed the Government that with the exception of the matter relating to the southern boundary of Darjeeling, the Raja had agreed to what was asked in a "proper and becoming manner" and that the matters under discussion were settled. (68)

While Ilam Sing was offering explanations to Campbell's charges against the Raja of Sikkim, the Government of India reviewed all its proceedings with the latter in connexion with and subsequent to the Grant of Darjeeling. It found in Campbell's correspondence with the Raja "a tone of rebuke and superiority". He was therefore enjoined to avoid in future all proceedings and correspondence of a "harsh and irritating nature". Further he was asked to treat the Raja "not as a dependent, but as a prince who though possessed of little power, is regarded by the British Government as one of its

---

(68) Letter of Campbell to Bushby, Secretary Government of India, 7 December 1846. F.P.C., 26 December 1846, 193.

allies". (69) Apart from these instructions to Campbell, the Government of India decided to increase the amount of Raja's annual compensation from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 6,000 with effect from 1846, since it found that it had not adequately compensated the Raja for the cession of Darjeeling.

Even after the enhancement of the compensation, the relations between Sikkim and the British Government did not improve. On the other hand they deteriorated further. This was due to many reasons. The first was the death of Ilam Sing in 1847. Campbell considered Ilam Sing, as the only individual in Sikkim who could be trusted in word or deed. (70) The second was the confused state of Sikkim politics. After the death of Ilam Sing, Tokhang Donyer Namguay became the Dewan of Sikkim. Namguay was a Tibetan who had married the Raja's illegitimate daughter. He used that influence in his rise to power. His ascendancy was not unchallenged. He was opposed by the Lepchas. The opposing faction was led by Aden Chebu Lama. The two factions led by Namguay and Chebu Lama were involved in an intense rivalry over the question of succession to the throne. The Raja's only surviving son Sidkeong Namgyal was a celibate Lama. As such he was considered ineligible to succeed his father Raja Chugphui Namgyal. The only other candidate was the Raja's illegitimate son, whose sister married Dewan Namguay. Naturally the Dewan supported the candidature of his brother-in-law, the illegitimate

---

(69) Letter of Bushby to Campbell, 3 November 1846. F.P.C., 14 November 1846, 32.

(70) Campbell, Journal of Trip to Sikkim in 1848. F.P.C., 16 December 1849, 140.

son of the Raja. The faction led by Aden Chebu Lama was opposed to this. It wanted the succession of the Raja's Lama son, Sidkeong Namgyal. To remove the difficulties in the way of succession of Sidkeong Namgyal, Chebu Lama in 1848, persuaded the Dalai Lama to dispense with the vows of celibacy of the former and also arranged his marriage. (71)

In 1848, the British were involved in the internal conflict of Sikkim. In that year, Dr. Joseph Hooker, the distinguished English naturalist came to Darjeeling to explore Sikkim and the Himalaya. Campbell, with the permission of the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, wrote to the Raja to permit Hooker to travel through Sikkim. The Raja declined the permission on the ground that the foreigners were prohibited to travel in his kingdom. (72) But after further correspondence Hooker was allowed to visit Sikkim.

The correspondence of the Government of India with Sikkim was carried through the latter's vakeel or Agent at Darjeeling. Campbell suspected that his letters had never reached the Raja, but handed over to the Dewan Namguay who was opposed to the free travel of Europeans into Sikkim and whose policy was to enter "as little as possible with an active alliance with us". (73) Campbell felt that he could not satisfactorily carry on the business with the Raja unless he had access to him. He therefore obtained the permission of the Governor-General to visit the Raja

---

(71) Ibid.

(72) Letter of the Raja of Sikkim to Campbell, received on 7 October 1848. F.P.C., 15 December 1849, 139.

(73) Letter of Campbell to Government of India. F.P.C., 15 December 1849, 138.

of Sikkim as it was the only means of "ascertaining his real sentiments and feelings to our Government". (74) The Government gave the permission, but enjoined on Campbell not to transact any business with the Raja, during the visit. The Dewan Namguay met him on the way and tried to prevent him from meeting the Raja by giving all sorts of excuses. (75) Campbell brushed aside all those objections and met the Raja. The meeting was purely a formal affair as Campbell was instructed by the Government not to transact any business with the Raja, during the visit. Campbell during his short stay in Sikkim, gained sufficient insight into its politics. He realised that the Sikkimese were "woefully ignorant" and "misinformed" regarding the real nature of the British power in India. (76)

Campbell's Second visit to Sikkim

Campbell made his second trip to Sikkim in 1849. It came out like this. Dr. Hooker who was then touring Sikkim complained to Campbell that the Sikkim officials are causing him "excessive annoyances and obstructions". On receiving that complaint Campbell, addressed a letter to the Raja of Sikkim asking him to punish the concerned officials. Meanwhile he learnt from Hooker that the Sikkim officials who had caused him annoyances in the Lachen valley did not fully acknowledge the authority of the Raja and were

---

(74) Journal of Campbell, n. 70.

(75) "First there was religious exercises, second his extreme old age, he is seventy, third the road is not fit for "Doolie" travelling, fourth the time for preparation was so short, fifth the Lassa people might be jealous and prevent his going to Teshoo Lamboo next year, sixth when he met Col. Lloyd twelve years ago, the meeting took two years to arrange and lastly yes I think it was the last reason the Bootanese may be jealous and annoyed at his friendship with me." Ibid.

(76) Ibid.

in some degree subordinate to Tibet. To understand the causes of obstruction to Hooker's travel in the Lachen valley, Campbell considered it necessary to proceed to that quarter. (77)

Campbell, with the permission of the Raja entered Sikkim in September 1849. He was accompanied by Chebu Lama, Sikkim's vakeel at Darjeeling. On 2 October 1849 he visited Tumlong and sent a letter to the Raja asking him to punish the officials who were responsible for causing "annoyances and obstructions" to Hooker. While at Tumlong, he was met by Hooker. After a short stay he along with Hooker proceeded to the Kangralama pass and entered into Tibet despite the protests from the Sikkim officials and the Tibetan frontier guards. They returned to Sikkim via Donkya pass. The entry of Campbell and Hooker into Tibet was a clear violation of the regulations of that country which had prohibited the entry of Europeans. Campbell's entry into Tibet was brought to the notice of the Raja of Sikkim. The Raja, who was believed to be, in some degree subordinate to Tibet, sent a letter to Campbell when he visited Tumlong again in November 1849, requesting him to return to Darjeeling. (78)

The Arrest and Imprisonment of Campbell
November-December 1849

Campbell decided to ignore the letter as he felt that by returning to Darjeeling he would be abandoning his demand on the Raja for the punishment of his officials responsible for

---

(77) Letter of Campbell to Government of India, 19 January 1850. F.P.C., 14 June 1850, 422.

(78) Ibid.

'obstructions' in the way of Hooker's travels. (79) He wanted to meet the Raja but failed to get an audience. He then left Tumlong, along with Hooker, and proceeded to the Chola pass and crossed into the Chumbi valley of Tibet which he wanted to investigate as the possible route for Indian trade for Tibet. As soon as they entered Tibet for the second time, they were met by Tibetan soldiers who refused to allow them to proceed further and escorted them back to Sikkim frontier. On reaching the Sikkim territory on 7 November 1849, they were arrested by the Raja's officials. They were then taken to Tumlong.

Here one must pause and note the cause of Campbell's arrest. The Raja in his letter to the Governor-General gave his own version of the arrest of Campbell. In that letter he stated that he allowed Hooker to travel freely in Sikkim, but he did not allow him to cross the Tibetan and Bhutan frontiers. Regarding Campbell he said that he could not receive him as his health was bad but sent him a message that he would be able to see him in two days. As Campbell paid no attention to that message and went to Chola, he sent his Dewan with presents to meet him. The Dewan met Campbell on the second day and offered him presents and informed him that it would be dangerous to cross the "Chinese and Bhotia territories" and implored him not to bring trouble to their country. The Raja further informed the Governor-General that Campbell thrashed "most severely" his (Raja's) servants. From that conduct of Campbell the Raja was "greatly distressed". He therefore out of "necessity" detained Campbell. (80)

---

(79) Ibid.

(80) Letter of the Raja of Sikkim to the Governor-General, 11 November 1849. F.P.C., 29 December 1849, 197.

From that letter it is evident that Campbell's trespass to Tibet was the cause of his arrest. Campbell on the other hand maintained that his entry into Tibet had nothing to do with his arrest for before he went to Tibet he had fully satisfied himself through Chebu Lama that the Raja had no treaty with Tibet and was not bound by any engagement to be the "guardian of that country's limits". He insisted that he was arrested as the Raja wanted to force him to accept Lasso Kazi as his vakeel at Darjeeling, and to surrender the Sikkim slaves settled at Darjeeling. (81) Here it may be pointed out that in April 1849 Lasso Kazi, an adherent of Dewan Namguay, was appointed as Sikkim's vakeel at Darjeeling. Campbell refused to receive him and successfully insisted upon the appointment of the pro-British, Aden Chebu Lama in his place.

According to Captain Byng, officiating Superintendent of Darjeeling, Campbell brought the mischief upon himself by repeated defiance of the Raja's wishes and authority "such as no sovereign however insignificant so ever could be expected to endure". (82) In the light of the above facts it is clear that Campbell's arrest did not result from a sundry official matter alien to his Tibetan visit. Campbell's argument that Sikkim was not the guardian of the Tibetan frontier was not tenable when we consider the position of Sikkim <u>vis-a-vis</u> Tibet and China. Capt. Byng felt that Sikkim ought not to be subjected to the "wrath of China" unless they are prepared to "protect and compensate" Sikkim. (83)

---

(81) Letter of Campbell to Government of India, 19 January 1850, n. 77.

(82) Letter of Byng to Government of India, 29 November 1849. <u>F.P.C.</u>, 29 December 1849, 232.

(83) Letter of Byng to Government of India, 23 November 1849. <u>F.P.C.</u>, 29 December 1849, 230.

In London, the Political and Military Committee of the East India Company regarded "the infringement of Dr. Campbell of the Chinese regulations prohibiting the entry of strangers to their territory was an act of grave indiscretion". (84) In the light of these views it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Tibetan trespass was largely responsible for Campbell's arrest.

Annexation of the Morung

The news of Campbell's arrest caused considerable panic at Darjeeling. All the attempts to secure his release had failed. The Raja, Chugphui Namgyal, refused to comply with the demand of the Governor-General Lord Dalhousie for the release of Campbell and Hooker on the plea that the Governor-General's letters did not bear proper seals. To retrieve its prestige Government felt it "indispensably necessary" that the "savage insolence" of the Sikkim Raja "should be severely chastized" and that he should be made to "feel the power of the Government" with which he had to deal. (85)

C.H. Lushington was appointed to act as the Superintendent of Darjeeling and was instructed to procure the immediate release of the prisoners, failing which he was asked to advance on Sikkim capital Tumlong and occupy the country. (86) Lushington addressed a letter to the Raja demanding the release of the prisoners. Even

---

(84) Political letter from the Secretary of State to the Governor-General, 30 July 1851, No. 28.

(85) Letter of Halliday, Secretary Government of India, to Lushington, Acting Superintendent of Darjeeling, 4 December 1849. F.P.C., 29 December 1849, 243.

(86) Ibid.

before the letter reached the Raja, the prisoners were released on 9 December 1849, as the Raja, or more properly speaking the Dewan, was afraid of the serious consequences when the British demonstrated their strength by moving their troops to the Ranjit river.

On 27 December 1849 Lushington, demanded from the Raja, the surrender of all the persons responsible for the arrest and imprisonment of Campbell and Hooker. The Raja was asked to make his personal appearance at Darjeeling by 10 January 1860, failing which he was threatened with the occupation of his country. The Raja ignored Lushington's demands. The Government, on its part, failed to enforce its threat of occupation of Sikkim as General Young, the Commander of the British forces, expressed doubts as to the feasibility of occupying Sikkim. He felt that the terrain of the country was an obstacle to their advance. He was supported by Sir Charles Napier who, in his military report, spoke of the difficulties to be encountered in a jungle country like Sikkim. (87) Under these circumstances, Lushington doubted the advisability of advancing to Tumlong. He was afraid that Tibet and Bhutan may come to the aid of Sikkim and felt that the British success depended on a "succession of fortutious circumstances which require to be combined to ensure it". (88)

Lushington felt that by conquering Sikkim all that they would obtain was a "country which is almost worthless and which

---

(87) "North and North-Eastern Frontier Tribes" in Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India, vol. 4, compiled in the Intelligence Branch Division of the Chief of the Staff, Army Headquarters, India (Simla, 1907), pp. 45-46.

(88) Letter of Lushington to Government of India, 22 January 1850. F.P.C., 14 June 1850, 405.

it would be useless to ourselves to hold". (89) Therefore, he suggested that the idea of the occupation of the whole of Sikkim should be given up; instead the country to the west of the Tista upto the junction of the Great Ranjit with that river, and from thence all the country to the west and south of the Ranjit and Rummam rivers be annexed. The Government accepted the suggestion and annexed that area, and also the Morung. The Raja's annual compensation of Rs. 6,000 for Darjeeling was also stopped. These annexations brought about significant change in the relations between Sikkim and the British India. Previously Darjeeling was an enclave in the Sikkim territory. After the above annexations it became contiguous with the British districts of Purnea and Rangpur in the plains. At the same time the Sikkim Raja was cut off from access to the plains except through the British territory.

After effecting the annexations mentioned above, the Government of India was faced with the problem of whether or not to withdraw the guarantee of security given to the Sikkim Raja under the Treaty of Titalia. Lushington was firmly against withdrawing the British guarantee, for, in that event Nepal might take possession of Sikkim and Bhutan and would be in a position to render itself "very powerful and disagreeable neighbour in the event of any misunderstanding with our Government". (90) Campbell was also opposed to the withdrawal of the British guarantee for "to cancel this engagement (i.e. the Treaty of Titalia) is virtually an invitation to all these (Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan)

---

(89) Ibid.

(90) Letter of Lushington to Government of India, 1 February 1850. F.P.C., 14 June 1850, 426.

to possess the remainder of Sikkim. Nepal and Bootan would be at once in the field for the spoil and as the former is the most powerful in arms, she would have it, and after having it a short time would enable her to extend her dominion over Bootan". Nepal in that case would be within ten miles of Darjeeling. It would be then necessary for the British to maintain a huge army to prevent Darjeeling from becoming "an insular speck in the immense mountain kingdom of Nepal". (91) The Government of India influenced by these arguments, thought it expedient to continue its connexion with Sikkim.

Rejection of Raja's Mercy Petitions

The Raja was reduced to a state of extreme poverty as a result of the annexation of the Morung and the stoppage of his yearly compensation for Darjeeling. He dismissed the Dewan Namguay and sent mercy petitions to the Government of India for the renewal and enhancement of his allowance. Lushington, pitying the miserable plight of the Raja, recommended to the Government of India that the Raja may be paid an yearly grant of Rs. 12,000. But the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, turned it down on the ground that its adoption would place the Government of India in a "very humiliating position" in reference to the "Hill Savage" like the Sikkim Raja and would tend to "bring the power of the Government into contempt with other savages like the Raja of Sikkim". (92)

---

(91) Campbell's Memorandum to Government of India, 1 February 1850. F.P.C., 14 June 1850, 433.

(92) Minute of Lord Dalhousie, 3 June 1850. F.P.C., 16 August 1850, 149.

From the above account it is evident that the crisis of 1849 had brought into focus the real position of Sikkim *vis-a-vis* the Government of India. When the Company established its relation with Sikkim in the second decade of the last century it regarded the Raja as its ally and afterwards granted him the Morung suitable to that situation. But within three decades and a half the position of the Raja was so reduced that he was contemptuously regarded as a "Hill Savage". The decline in the status of the Raja was the outcome of Sikkim's reduced size and importance. In 1815 Sikkim was given importance as Nepal was then still unsubdued. With the British ascendancy in Nepal Sikkim's importance correspondingly diminished. Moreover, by the Treaty of Titalia the Company gained influence over Sikkim. That treaty marked the beginning of the end of Sikkim's independence. Not only did Sikkim lose its right of independent action in its disputes with Nepal and other neighbouring states, but it also began to lose its territory bit by bit. In 1835 it was forced to give to the Company Darjeeling as a "gift". By this cession, though the Company gained a bit of territory, it lost the goodwill of Sikkim with the result that by 1849 it was virtually at war with Sikkim. The 1849 crisis resulted in the Company gaining an additional Sikkimese territory to the extent of 640 sq. miles. If the Company did not annex the whole of Sikkim it was because of the political expediency of maintaining that kingdom as a separate entity. Sikkim was not wiped out of the map because of its strategic situation between Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet and British dominion in India. But interestingly enough the non-annexation of the whole of Sikkim did not result in the increase of British

influence there. This was due to the strength of the Tibetan faction in Sikkim. The real power was not the Raja but the Tibetan Dewan, Namguay. Though ostensibly dismissed after the 1849 crisis, he staged a come back and within few years became a power to be reckoned with. Though Tibet did not actively intervene on behalf of Sikkim during the crisis, it granted the Raja an allowance when the British stopped his Darjeeling grant. This gesture increased the Tibetan influence so much that in the next decade the Government of India was forced to undertake another military expedition into Sikkim to re-establish its position.

Chapter Two

THE BRITISH EXPEDITION TO SIKKIM AND THE TREATY OF 1861

The crisis of 1849, as noted in the preceding chapter had resulted in the loss to Sikkim of its fertile territory to the extent of 640 sq. miles. That loss, together with the refusal of the Government of India to renew the annual allowance of Rs. 6,000, embittered Raja Chugphui Namgyal very much towards the British. Taking advantage of the Raja's strained relations with the British, ex-Dewan Namguay, who was reported to have been banished from the country on account of his involvement in the 1849 crisis, staged a comeback and began to take prominent part in Sikkim politics. The Raja, as he became too old to govern the country himself, retired to Chumbi in Tibet leaving the administration in the hands of Namguay. (1)

In March 1859, Namguay, in the name and with the knowledge of the Raja, sent a deputation to the Government of Bengal, demanding the payment of the enhanced annual allowance of Rs. 12,000 or as an alternative the restoration of Sikkim's territory confiscated in 1850. (2) The Government of Bengal viewed this as an affront to its prestige and demanded an apology from the Raja. The latter not only ignored the demand, but also prevented his subjects from travelling to the British territories for purposes of trade or labour. (3) This was followed by raids on British territory of

---

(1) Arthur Jules Dash, Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling (Alipore, 1947), p. 40.

(2) From 1858 to 1906 the Government of Bengal acted as the Agent of the Government of India in its dealings with Sikkim.

(3) F.P.P., May 1860, 339-43.

Darjeeling. British Indian subjects were carried off and sold as slaves or detained in Sikkim. (4) On 19 March 1860 a grave case of kidnapping was reported to the Government of Bengal. Some 13 Sikkimese raided a British Indian village called Tukdan and kidnapped two women. The raiders eventually turned out to be the relations of Dewan Namguay. In April and May 1860 two more cases of kidnapping were reported to the Bengal Government. (5)

Sir J.P. Grant, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, suggested to Government of India to take retaliatory measures, such as the destruction of the Raja's property or the arrest of his subjects. (6) The Government of India rejected the suggestion to arrest the subjects of the Raja as it felt that innocent third parties should not be subjected to coercion. (7)

On the suggestion of the Government of India, Dr. Campbell, the Superintendent of Darjeeling, opened negotiations with the Raja. While the negotiations were in progress, on 1 October 1860, Campbell sent an ultimatum to the Raja, demanding 1) the restoration of the kidnapped persons, 2) compensation to those who have been plundered and 3) the arrest and surrender of the kidnappers and plunderers. The Raja was warned that if within one month of the receipt of the letter the demands were not complied with, his territory lying to the west of the river Great Ranjit and north of

---

(4) Dash, n. 1, p. 40.

(5) C.U. Aitchison, comp., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta, 1909), vol. 2, p. 313.

(6) Letter of the Government of Bengal to Government of India, 27 April 1860. F.P.P., May 1860, 339.

(7) Letter of the Government of India to the Government of Bengal, 30 April 1860. F.P.P., May 1860, 341.

the river Rammam shall be occupied. (8)

On the receipt of that ultimatum, Kabi Kaji, a Sikkim official informed Campbell that the Sikkim Government had decided to depute Chebu Lama, the Raja's vakeel at Darjeeling, to meet him. He therefore requested Campbell not to be displeased till he met Chebu Lama. (9) On 23 October 1860 Campbell received a letter from Raja Chugphui Namgyal himself stating that he would not be "playing fool with the British Government". (10) Two days after the receipt of the Raja's letter, i.e. on 25 October 1860, Chebu Lama met Campbell and informed him that he failed to get the criminals or kidnapped persons even though the Raja had directed him to call upon his defiant officers to arrest the criminals and hand them over to Campbell. From that conversation Campbell concluded that the Raja or his advisers had "wilfully and deliberately" ignored the demands of the Government of India. (11) He therefore decided to execute the threat of the occupation of the Sikkim territory lying to the west of the river Great Ranjit and to the north of the River Rummam.

The Advance and the Retreat of Campbell 1860

On 1 November 1860, Campbell crossed the Rummam river and entered the Sikkim territory with a small force under the command

---

(8) Letter of Campbell to the Raja of Sikkim, 1 October 1860. F.P.P., November 1860, 393-416.

(9) Letter of Kabi Kaji to Campbell, 12 October 1860. F.P.P., November 1860, 393-416.

(10) Letter of the Raja to Campbell dated 12 September 1860, received by Campbell on 23 October 1860. F.P.P., November 1860, 393-416.

(11) Letter of Campbell to Chebu Lama, 25 October 1860. F.P.P., November 1860, 393-416.

of Captain Murray and advanced as far as Rinchinpung. The difficulties presented by the physical features of the country were immense. (12) In spite of these difficulties the occupation was effected without encountering any resistance. Campbell reported to the Bengal Government that he had received the "cordial assistance and support" of all classes of population including the officers of the Raja in all grades. (13)

Everything seemed to be progressing most favourably up to the morning of 27 November 1860. But during that afternoon Chebu Lama's spies brought the information that the Dewan intended to attack the British position. Here it may be mentioned that the pro-British Chebu Lama was with Campbell since 25 October 1860. The intelligence brought by the Chebu Lama's spies proved to be correct for, on the very night of 27 November 1860, the Dewan attacked the British position. The next morning i.e., on 28 November 1860, the Dewan's son-in-law addressed a letter to Campbell asking him to withdraw to Darjeeling. The letter ended with a warning that if Campbell decides to fight, he would see whether the Sikkimese were "men or women". (14)

Campbell ignored that letter. The next day, i.e. on 29 November 1860, the Sikkimese made another attack with a large force and tried to carry the British stockade. The attack lasted for about sixteen hours. When the fighting stopped on the morning

---

(12) Campbell felt that no country in the world could exceed Sikkim mountains in the difficulty of moving troops and carrying stores and luggage. Letter of Campbell to Government of Bengal, 23 November 1860. F.P.P., December 1860, 86.

(13) Ibid.

(14) Letter of Dewan's son-in-law to Campbell, 28 November 1860. F.P.P., December 1860, 89-127.

of 30 November 1860, the pro-British Head Lama of the Rinchinpung monastery came and informed Campbell of the rumour that Darjeeling was attacked. That information tallied with the earlier information Campbell received that Lasso Kazi, one of the adherents of Dewan Namgumy, was intending to attack Darjeeling.

Thereupon, Captain Murray, the commander of the British forces, checked the stock of ammunition available with him and realised the "impossibility of standing another attack". A Council of War was held and after considering three points, namely 1) the non-receipt of the Government reply for their earlier appeal for additional troops and ammunition, 2) the impossibility of holding the position with knives only, and 3) the impossibility of receiving support from Darjeeling should that place been attacked, which they had every reason to believe was the case, it was decided to retreat to the British territory. (15)

The retreat which commenced on 30 November 1860 was nearly a rout. The Sikkimese waylaid the British forces and captured a large quantity of their ammunition including seventy rifles. (16) Campbell while crossing the trees was thrown down the khud but providentially escaped unhurt. (17) After marching fifty miles during the night Campbell reached on 1 December 1860 a place called Goke in the British territory. Murray tried to justify the

---

(15) Letter of Murray to Maitland, Commander at Darjeeling, 10 December 1860. F.P.P., January 1861, 30.

(16) "North and North-Eastern Frontier Tribes" in Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India, vol. 4, compiled in Intelligence Branch Division of the Chief of the Staff, Army Headquarters, India (Simla, 1907), p. 40.

(17) Letter of Murray, n. 15.

decision to retreat on the ground that it had prevented the death or capture of every one in the stockade. He felt that the capture of Campbell would have placed the Government of India in a "most unpleasant position". (18) Campbell also justified the retreat on the same ground. (19)

Whatever the justification for the retreat - it is hard to justify Campbell's expedition on any ground. The alleged provocation for it was the Raja's non-compliance of the British demand for the surrender of the kidnapped persons. But the facts do not fully warrant the allegation, for seven of the kidnapped persons were restored at different times. (20) Of course the Raja failed to hand over the criminals, but that was due to no other reason than his inability to apprehend them since some of them had escaped to Bhutan. All the persons from the Raja down to the officials tried their best to meet the demands of the Government of India. That was evident from the letters of Kabi Kaji and the Raja to Campbell. The Raja's letter of 12 September 1860 clearly indicated that he realized the necessity of keeping on good terms with the British. Campbell ignored that letter and proceeded with his plan of occupation of the Raja's territories lying to the west of the river Great Ranjit and north of the river Rummam. Had Campbell given the Raja some more time to comply with the demands of the Government of India, perhaps the need for the expedition would not have arisen.

---

(18) Ibid.

(19) Letter of Campbell to Government of Bengal, 15 December 1860. P.P.P., December 1860, 59-127.

(20) Letter of Campbell to Government of Bengal, 4 November 1860. P.P.P., November 1860, 393-416.

The expedition of Campbell in spite of the Raja's letter and his partial compliance with the demands of the Government of India gives support to the belief that Campbell wanted to avenge himself for his arrest and imprisonment in Sikkim in 1849.

The second reason for Campbell's expedition was his belief that the rule of Dewan Namguay was so unpopular that he would not meet with any opposition to his advance. As a matter of fact he expected warm welcome in Sikkim. (21) Sir J.P. Grant was convinced that Campbell's opinion as to the alleged grinding rule of the Dewan and the eagerness of the many people to overthrow it were not well-founded. (22) How thoroughly Campbell was mistaken in his belief was proved by the events of 27-30 November 1860 when the Sikkimese very nearly annihilated the British position at Rinchinpung.

Campbell considered the Sikkimese attack as "terribly treacherous". The allegation is entirely baseless. As already noted, on 29 November 1860, i.e. one day before the Sikkimese renewed attack on the British position at Rinchinpung, the Dewan's son-in-law asked Campbell by letter to withdraw to Darjeeling. Campbell ignored the letter and prepared to fight. It looked as though to justify his retreat Campbell characterized the Sikkimese attack as "treacherous". If any one had reason to complain of treachery it was the Sikkimese for it was Chebu Lama who gave Campbell the intelligence of Dewan's attack. Campbell confessed that it was entirely due to the timely intelligence of Chebu Lama

---

(21) Letter of Campbell to Government of Bengal, 1 November 1860. F.P.P., November 1860, 393-416.

(22) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 30 January 1861. F.P.P., February 1861, 208.

that they had escaped the onslaught of Sikkim. (23) The Governor-General, Lord Canning, saw no proof of treachery in Campbell's reports and did not accept that allegation. (24) In a word, Campbell's expedition to Sikkim was uncalled for and it had not solved any of the British problems with that kingdom. On the contrary, it had complicated them further and necessitated the Government of India to undertake a military expedition into that kingdom.

The Expedition of Colonel Gawler

The retreat of Campbell from Sikkim was a great blow to the British prestige. The Government of India, therefore, thought it necessary to take immediate steps not only to show its power and rehabilitate its prestige in Sikkim but also to counteract the likely adverse political effects upon Tibet and Bhutan. Campbell felt that the immediate objectives of the Government of India in Sikkim should be 1) the release of prisoners captured by the Sikkimese in their recent attack; 2) enforcement of its earlier demand for the restoration of the kidnapped British Indian subjects; 3) infliction of punishment on the Raja; and 4) security against future aggression and "treachery". (25)

He, therefore, informed the Bengal Government that the above objectives could be achieved by following one of the three

---

(23) Letter of Campbell to Government of Bengal, 16 December 1860. F.P.P., January 1961, 28-55.

(24) Instructions of the Government of India to Ashley Eden, Political Officer, attached to Sikkim expeditionary force, 28 December 1860. F.P.P., December 1860, 148.

(25) Letter of Campbell to Seton Karr, Secretary, Government of Bengal, 24 December 1860. F.P.P., February 1861, 209.

alternative policies he had thought of. The first was the permanent annexation of the territory lately occupied i.e. the territory lying to the west of the river Great Ranjit and north of River Rummam with suitable guarantee against future aggression. He, however, felt that this would be an "inadequate" compensation, since the area to be annexed is very small. He, therefore, as a second alternative suggested that in addition to the territory mentioned in the first alternative, the territory lying between the Rivers Great Ranjit and the Tista, should be annexed permanently. Even these annexations, he felt to be "barely adequate". He, therefore, as an third alternative suggested the annexation of the entire kingdom of Sikkim as it would "secure us all our objects". (26)

Campbell wanted that the Government of India should consider his second suggestion in case it does not want to annex the entire kingdom of Sikkim, on the ground that it would bring the British Indian Empire into direct territorial contact with Tibet. He informed the Government that his second suggestion had the approval of Chebu Lama, Sikkim's vakeel at Darjeeling, who felt that the Government of India by annexing only a portion of Sikkim would be keeping the door open for reconciliation in some form or other with the Raja. (27)

The suggestions of Campbell for the partial or full annexation of Sikkim did not find favour with the Bengal Government. Sir J.P. Grant felt that by partial annexation of Sikkim they would not be solving their difficulties with that kingdom. At the same time he was not in favour of the complete annexation of Sikkim, as it

---

(26) Ibid.

(27) Ibid.

would likely to bring them into difficulties with Tibet. He, therefore, suggested to the Government of India that it should enter into a treaty with the Raja under which Sikkim was to 1) keep a vakeel at Darjeeling; 2) permit the Government of India to make a road through its territory up to the Tibetan frontier; 3) grant waste lands to British subjects; 4) deliver up criminals and 5) restore all kidnapped subjects. (28)

The Government of India accepted the suggestion of Sir J.P. Grant and decided "not to annex any portion of Sikkim to British dominions". But to remove the discredit it had suffered on account of Campbell's retreat and to punish the Raja it considered two things as indispensable. They are 1) the threatened occupation of the Raja's lands adjoining the British territory was to be made good and 2), a blow should be struck in the interior of Sikkim by advancing the British forces up to Tumlong. To attain these objectives, it decided to send a Military Expedition into Sikkim under the command of J.C. Gawler, with Ashley Eden as the Political Officer attached to it. (29)

Instructions to Ashley Eden

The Government of India wanted that the punishment of the Sikkim Raja Chugphui Namgyal should be manifest to all. To attain this, Ashley Eden was instructed to secure the surrender or the dismissal and banishment from Sikkim of Dewan Namguay together with the substitution of a minister in his place who should be

---

(28) Letter of the Government of Bengal to Government of India, 30 January 1861. F.P.P., February 1861, 208.

(29) Instructions to Ashley Eden, n. 26.

"peaceably and justly disposed" towards the British. Secondly, the Raja was to enter into a treaty of friendship and alliance with the Government of India in the presence of his officers and British forces and proclaim it in his capital. In the event of both the Raja and the Dewan escaping from the capital, Eden was asked to destroy their residences. However, Eden was specially cautioned not to say or do anything "which shall give ground for the supposition that the British rule is to be planted permanently in any part of Sikkim". (30)

It may be pointed out here that many considerations had weighed with the Government of India in its policy of non-annexation of Sikkim. The first was the awareness that the annexation of Sikkim would result in a "long, tedious and most expensive war", with the Himalayan states like Bhutan and Nepal, since they were likely to make a common cause with Sikkim due to their dread of the "proverbial acquisitiveness" of the British. In order to keep them aloof from the British quarrel with Sikkim, Eden had to assure them that the Government of India had no intention to annex Sikkim. In his letter to the Government of Bengal, Eden stated thus:

> I attribute it entirely to the confidence which was placed in these assurances (i.e. of non-annexation of Sikkim) that the surrounding states held aloof altogether from the quarrel.... Had these states not distinctly understood that we were not advancing with any intention of annexation it is impossible to believe that with such a combination of interests, they would have joined to oppose us, if not avowedly at least secretly. (31)

---

(30) Ibid.

(31) Letter of Eden to Government of Bengal, 8 April 1861. P.P.P., May 1861, 17.

Secondly, the Government of India was afraid that by annexing Sikkim outright it might find itself in a quarrel with Tibet or China, since all the Himalayan states had close connexions with them. Eden explained that inter-relations thus: "Nepal is a tributary to China, Tibet is tributary to China, and Sikkim and Bhutan are tributary to Tibet and therefore secondarily to China". (32) Therefore, the Government of India did not want to injure the susceptibilities of China by its activities in Sikkim. It may be mentioned here that the Government of India had always proceeded cautiously in its dealings with the Himalayan states. As already noted, the Company in its war with Nepal in 1814 took care to explain its case against Nepal to China, through Sikkim. Apart from the Chinese susceptibilities, the Government of India long ago realised the importance of maintaining Sikkim as a buffer state between Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet and British India. The Viceroy, Lord Canning, followed that policy and instructed Ashley Eden that the Government of India "does not wish that an independent state (of Sikkim) should cease to intervene - between the British dominions and the vast and intractable people and Government of the Chinese Tartary". (33)

Thirdly, trade considerations weighed heavily with the Government of India in its policy towards Sikkim. From the early fifties of the last century the importance of Sikkim as an easy trade route to Tibet and the lands beyond was recognised. In 1854 W.B. Jackson of the Bengal Civil Service in his report on trade

---

(32) Ibid.

(33) Instructions to Ashley Eden, n. 24.

argued that Sikkim route could be of considerable commercial importance. Similarly, Hodgson, the former British Resident at Kathmandu, and Campbell became the ardent champions of the Tibetan trade via Sikkim. Besides, the rapid development of the tea industry in the neighbourhood of Darjeeling convinced the Government of the need to tap the great tea market of Tibet. Therefore it took care not to spoil its trade prospects with Tibet by antagonizing China by annexing Sikkim.

Lastly, the non-annexation of Sikkim was dictated by the internal political considerations. The memory of the Indian revolt of 1857 was still fresh in the mind of the Government of India. It was afraid that the annexation of Sikkim might have adverse political repercussions elsewhere in India.

Signing of the Treaty

The British Expeditionary Force left Darjeeling on 1 February 1861 and met with little or no opposition. Dewan Namguay fled to Tibet the moment the British troops approached the Tista. The Raja agreed to enter into a treaty with the British. On 28 March 1861, at Tumlong the treaty was signed on behalf of the Government of India by Ashley Eden, and by Sidkeong Namgyal, the son of the Raja Chugphui Namgyal. (34) With the conclusion of the Treaty, British relations with Sikkim were once again normalised.

---

(34) Sidkeong Namgyal signed the Treaty on behalf of his father Raja Chugphui Namgyal since the latter was too old and afraid to come over to his capital, Tumlong, from Chumbi where he was then staying.

Articles of the Treaty

The Treaty consisted of 23 Articles. Article one cancelled all the former treaties between the British Government and Sikkim. Under Article two, the Government of India restored the territory under its occupation to the Raja. (Hereafter the Raja will be referred to as the Maharaja, since he was mentioned as such in the Treaty). The Maharaja undertook to restore to the Government of India, all its property lost during Campbell's retreat (Article three); to pay an indemnity of Rs. 7,000 (Article four); to prevent depredations on British territory (Article five); and to surrender all British criminals and other delinquents who may take refuge in Sikkim (Article six). Under Article seven, the Sikkim Government agreed not to allow Dewan Namgusy or his blood relations to enter into Sikkim or hold any office under the Maharaja or his family either at Sikkim or in Chumbi. Articles eight to twelve dealt with matters relating to trade. Under these Articles, the Government of Sikkim agreed to abolish all restrictions on travellers or monopolies in trade (Article eight); to afford protection to merchants or traders of all countries (Article nine); not to levy import or export duties on British goods (Article ten); to levy only 5 per cent ad valorem duties on goods imported from or exported to Tibet, Bhutan and Nepal (Article eleven); to prevent fraud, the Sikkim Government got the right to purchase goods on their face value, from the traders (Article twelve). The Government of India got the right to construct road through Sikkim (Article thirteen); to conduct topographical or geological surveys of Sikkim (Article fourteen). The Government of Sikkim agreed to abolish slave trade (Article fifteen); grant freedom of movement

to its subjects (Article sixteen); to refer to the British arbitration all its disputes with the neighbouring states (Article seventeen); to assist the British with its army when they are engaged in the hills (Article eighteen); not to cede or lease any portion of its territory without the British permission (Article nineteen); or allow the armed forces of other countries to pass through its territory without the prior British permission (Article twenty); to secure for the British, the seven criminals escaped to Bhutan (Article twentyone). Under Article twentytwo the Maharaja agreed not to stay in the Chumbi valley of Tibet for more than three months in a year. The last Article twentythree provided for the ratification of the treaty by the Viceroy of India within six weeks from the date of its signing. (35)

The Significance of the 1861 Treaty

The Treaty of 1861 was very significant in the British-Sikkim relations in that it brought Sikkim under the British control. Sikkim lost all freedom of action and became a de facto protectorate of the Government of India. All the demands of the Government of India were realized by that Treaty. Firstly, Dewan Namguay who was mainly responsible for Sikkim's anti-British activities was banished from that state. Secondly, the Maharaja agreed not to stay for more than three months in a year in the Chumbi valley of Tibet. These two measures seemed to secure the British interests in Sikkim. Thirdly, the British gained many trade privileges, under Article eight free trade between Sikkim and British India was assured. The British expected some opposition

---

(35) F.P.P., May 1861, 279.

from the Sikkim Maharaja for this privilege but contrary to the general expectation it was most readily conceded. (36) The trade privileges were such that Eden hoped that within a short time

> A very considerable trade will spring up between Lassa ... and Darjeeling. The Tibetans will be only too glad to exchange gold dust, musk, borox, wool, and salt for English cloth, tobacco, drill etc. and the people of Sikkim will gain as carriers of this trade, and their Government will raise considerable revenue from the transit duties. (37)

Apart from the trade privileges, the British gained many other important concessions like the right to lay road, and conduct topographical and geological surveys of Sikkim. The Governor-General Lord Elgin confessed that the readiness with which Sikkim accepted the British demands regarding right of transit, roads, transit duties was beyond his "expectation". (38)

Eden claimed that the treaty aroused no ill-feeling between the British and the Sikkimese or the Tibetans. He maintained that he obtained from the Sikkimese all the concessions "freely and voluntarily". (39) So far as Tibet was concerned, Eden believed that their proceedings in Sikkim were viewed by it with "thorough satisfaction". (40)

---

(36) Letter of Eden to Government of Bengal, 29 March 1861. P.P.P., May 1861, 270-86.

(37) Ibid.

(38) Minute by Lord Elgin, Governor-General, 8 March 1862. P.P.P., March 1862, 223A.

(39) Letter of Eden to Government of Bengal, 29 March 1861, n. 36.

(40) Letter of Eden to Government of Bengal, 8 April 1861, n. 31.

Although the British had gained substantial advantages, without having the need to annex Sikkim, still the treaty suffered from two weaknesses. One was the non-definition of the de jure status of Sikkim, and the other was the privilege granted to the Maharaja, under Article twentytwo, to stay in Chumbi for three months in a year. These two weaknesses manifested themselves within three decades, and were mainly responsible for the subsequent difficulties of the Government of India with Tibet and China.

Succession of the Maharaja Sidkeong Namgyal, 1862

In 1862 the aging Maharaja Chugphui Namgyal abdicated the throne in favour of his legitimate eldest son Sidkeong Namgyal. (41) The twelve year rule of Sidkeong was the most happy period in the British-Sikkim relations. Soon after his accession to the throne in 1862, the Government of India restored "as a matter of grace" to the Maharaja Sidkeong Namgyal the annual allowance of Rs. 6,000 forfeited in 1850. (42) It was increased to Rs. 9,000 in 1868. (43) In March 1873 the Maharaja Sidkeong visited Darjeeling to meet Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. That was the first time the Sikkim Maharaja had visited the British territory although he was invited to do so many times before. The main object of the Maharaja's visit was to request the Government to

---

(41) Sidkeong Namgyal's succession, as already noted in Chapter one, was supported by the pro-British faction led by Chebu Lama.

(42) Minute of the Governor-General, 8 March 1862, n. 38.

(43) Aitchison, n. 5, p. 314.

increase his annual allowance from Rs. 9,000 to Rs. 12,000. (44)

Sir George Campbell recommended to the Government of India to increase the Maharaja's allowance on conditions that 1) he should give assistance to British officers like Edgar, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling and others when they visit Sikkim; 2) he should help the Government of India in the opening and development of trade with Tibet; and 3) he should keep the Government of India informed of all the happenings beyond his northern frontier. While recommending the increase of the Maharaja's allowances, Sir George Campbell reminded the Government of India that the territories taken from Sikkim were becoming yearly of greater value. From Darjeeling and the Morung alone the Government was deriving annually rents to the tune of Rs. 17,946 and Rs. 59,747 respectively. Moreover the development of tea industry and the growing importance of Darjeeling as a sanatorium made it, a tract of great value to the Government. (45)

The Government of India accepted the proposal of the Lieutenant-Governor and increased the Maharaja's allowance from Rs. 9,000 to Rs. 12,000 a year with effect from the year 1873. But in increasing the allowance the Government of India made it clear that the grant was made without any reference to the increased value of Darjeeling but purely as a mark of consideration for the Maharaja and as an indication of the desire of the Govern-

---

(44) F.P.P., October 1873, 491.

(45) Letter of the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 17 June 1873. F.P.P., October 1873, 492.

ment to assist him in improving his country and developing trade. (46)

To conclude, the British Military Expedition to Sikkim was an unqualified success. The power of Maharaja was completely reduced and he submitted himself to the mercy of the Government of India. The latter decided not to annex Sikkim on various political, military and economic considerations. By this policy it did not lose anything since all its demands were accepted by the Maharaja. Moreover under Articles 8 to 12 of the 1861 Treaty, the Government of India gained from Sikkim many trade privileges. Eden expressed the hope that a great trade would develop between Bengal and Tibet via Sikkim. In the next chapter it will be seen how the Government of India tried to exploit its privileges to develop Sikkim as the trade route to Tibet.

Chapter Three

THE MISSION OF JOHN EDGAR

It was seen in the last chapter that Ashley Eden, who had brought the British military expedition to Sikkim to a successful conclusion by forcing the Maharaja to enter into a treaty with the Government of India on 28 March 1861, expressed the hope that within a few years a very considerable trade would spring up between Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, and Darjeeling by the Sikkim route and that the Tibetans would be only too glad to exchange gold dust, musk, borox, wool and salt for English cloth, tobacco and drill.

The optimistic tone of Eden's report and the stupendous development of tea industry at Darjeeling increased the interest of the Government of India in the Tibetan trade via Sikkim. (1) It may be noted that the British interest in the Tibetan trade was not a new development. As early as 1772, Warren Hastings, the Governor General of Bengal, had sent George Bogle, an officer of the East India Company, to Shigaste, the headquarters of the Panchen Lama, to make an attempt to open Tibet for the British trade. Bogle could not achieve any success during that visit due to the suspicion of the Tibetan Government at Lhasa. He, therefore, planned to visit Shigaste for the second time in 1779 but that plan could not materialize as the Panchen Lama

---

(1) By the end of 1866, about 10,000 acres of land around Darjeeling was brought under tea cultivation. The annual outturn was over 433,000 lbs. Arthur Jules Dash, Bengal District Gazetteer: Darjeeling (Alipore, 1947), p. 113.

had left for Peking where he later died. (2) In 1782 Hastings made yet another attempt by sending another officer Captain Samuel Turner to Shigaste on the occasion of the re-incarnation of the Panchen Lama. Turner, though he was received favourably, was unable to forge any trade relations with Tibet. (3)

In the beginning of the last century the Governor-General of India, Lord Minto, resumed Warren Hastings' unfinished task of opening Tibet for the British trade, by sending Thomas Manning, an English scholar and a traveller to Lhasa in 1811. (4) Manning also failed to achieve any success due to the suspicions of the Tibetans and opposition of the Chinese.

After these repeated failures, the Government of India changed its policy. Instead of attempting to open Tibet directly, it adopted the policy of indirect approach to spread its influence in the Tibetan border states of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. First of all its attention was turned towards Nepal, the strongest of these states. In 1815 the East India Company defeated Nepal and forced on it the Treaty of Segauli dated 2 December 1815 by which the Company gained much influence in Nepal.

Very soon after the defeat of Nepal, as noted in Chapter One, Sikkim also came under the influence of the Company and granted to it, under the Treaty of Titalia of 1817, many

---

(2) Clements R. Markham, comp., The Diary of George Bogle (London, 1876), p. 135.

(3) Samuel Turner, An Account of an Embassy to the Court of Teshoo Lama in Tibet (London, 1806), pp. 306-26.

(4) Spencer Chapman, Lhasa: The Holy City (London, 1938), p. 129.

concessions including the privilege to trade up to the Tibetan borders. However, the Company failed to exploit that privilege. But ever since the Company came in possession of Darjeeling in 1835, it was constantly reminded of the great possibilities of trade with the lands beyond the Himalaya through Sikkim. Campbell, the Superintendent of Darjeeling, tried to impress upon the Government of India, the need to extend the trade of Bengal to Tibet through the Sikkim route, which had amounted to Rs. 60,000 a year despite many restrictions imposed and obstructions caused by the Sikkimese. It was not for that small amount of trade alone that Campbell advocated the development of the Sikkim route but for the "prospective and sure increase of it". He was confident that the Sikkim route would become in course of time the principal route for the trade of Bengal with Lhasa instead of the "circutous and more difficult route of Nepal". (5)

The Government of India did not receive the proposal favourably. Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, considered that if a trade of any real importance with Sikkim or with any country beyond Sikkim through the Sikkim route, existed it was "the immediate pecuniary interest of the Raja to promote it". (6)

It was only after the 1861 expedition when Sikkim became a *de facto* protectorate of the British and after the receipt of Eden's optimistic report on the prospects of the Tibetan trade that the Government of India revived its interest to open Tibet

---

(5) Letter of Campbell to Government of Bengal, 6 October 1853. *F.P.C.*, 21 October 1853, 39.

(6) Minute of Lord Dalhousie, 14 October 1853. *F.P.C.*, 21 October 1853, 40.

for the British trade. The opening of Tibet, however, was intimately connected with the problem of opening communications with its Government.

Attempts to Open Communications with Tibet

To open communications with Tibet, the Government of India sent in 1863, Captain E. Smyth of the Bengal Army, to western Tibet. He was authorized to cross into the very remote regions opposite to Kumaon, but he was stopped on the border by the Tibetan frontier officials who told him that he cannot proceed further without passports issued in Peking. (7)

While the Government of India was endeavouring to open communication with Tibet, T.T. Cooper, an English traveller tried, with the knowledge and support of the British merchant community at Shanghai, to enter Tibet from the side of China. In 1867 he obtained a passport from the Viceroy of Szechuan to go to India via Lhasa, but on the Tibet frontier he was stopped by the frontier guards who refused him to proceed further. In 1869 he tried to enter Tibet from India, but again he was stopped by the Tibetan frontier guards. (8)

Cooper, though he had failed to reach Tibet, was able to give much publicity to the prospect of developing Indian tea trade with that country which consumed annually six to eight million pounds of Chinese brick tea. His advocacy of this point had a profound effect on the subsequent Anglo-Tibetan relations. (9)

---

(7) P.P.A., April 1864, 133-34.

(8) P.P.A., February 1871, 110.

(9) T.T. Cooper, The Mishmee Hills (London, 1873), p. 2.

Haughton's Proposals

In October 1869, Colonel J.C. Haughton, Commissioner of Cooch-Behar and officer in charge of British relations with Bhutan, in his letter to the Bengal Government expressed the opinion that it was desirable that the Government of India should cultivate the friendship of Tibet and asked for permission to open communications with the Tibetan authorities. He felt that the Government of India should have friends beyond its northern frontier as it had none at that moment and as during its war with Bhutan in 1864-65 it had no means of obtaining information from the interior. (10)

The Bengal Government did not share the views of Haughton and felt that any attempt to open communications with Tibet "might excite suspicions as to our motives and do more harm than good".(11) Sir William Grey, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, thought it undesirable to disturb the existing satisfactory relations between India and Tibet. In his letter to the Government of India he stated thus:

> These relations (between India and Tibet) are at present so satisfactory that the Government of that country (Tibet) have always, it is believed declined to take any action in matters relating to frontier politics when applied to for its interference by its two quasi feudatories, Sikkim and Bhutan, for the fear by so doing, it should be brought into collision with the British Government. Their reply to application from these frontier states has always been that so long as the British forces does not

---

(10) Letter of Haughton to Government of Bengal, 23 October 1869. F.P.A., January 1870, 124.

(11) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 15 November 1869. F.P.A., January 1870, 123.

attempt to interfere with the frontiers of Tibet proper they have no desire to intervene. (12)

Further, Sir William Grey, believed that the Government of India was able to invade Sikkim and Bhutan in 1861 and 1865 respectively as it had acted without making any reference to the Government of Tibet. He, therefore, wanted that Tibet should not be brought into any future discussion about the British frontier, for the Government of India may find itself in the critical position of "choosing either to let the offending states go unpunished, or of refusing a request of a friendly power". (13)

The Government of India, however, thought that no danger would arise from opening communications with Tibet. Therefore it did not object to Haughton's proposal of sending a verbal or written communication of a friendly kind to the Lamas of Tibet through the Maharaja of Sikkim, Sidkeong Namgyal, or other suitable channel. (14)

The Duke of Argyll, Secretary of State for India, concurred with the views of the Government of India that benefit might be expected by abandoning its recent policy of isolation towards Tibet and resuming the former friendly relations with its rulers which were originally opened by Warren Hastings and which had "unfortunately been so long in abeyance". (15)

---

(12) Letter of the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 19 January 1870. F.P.A., March 1870, 92.

(13) Ibid.

(14) Letter of the Government of India to Government of Bengal, 10 March 1870. F.P.A., March 1870, 95.

(15) Despatch of the Secretary of State for India to Government of India, 5 May 1870. F.P.A., June 1870, 102.

Haughton thus encouraged examined the whole question of British commercial and frontier relations with Lhasa and submitted his proposals for the removal of the barriers to free trade with Tibet. He proposed that 1) the Court of Peking should be moved to take effectual steps in the spirit of existing treaties to remove all restrictions on the free passage of British and Indian merchants and travellers to Tibet, 2) the Maharaja of Sikkim should be asked to obtain from the Tibetan authorities information as to the duties levied on their frontier, and prohibition if any, to the import of particular article, with a view if necessary for further communication. He felt that if the barriers were removed "a very important increase to commerce by way of Sikkim and Bhutan would take place ... and a branch of traffic (viz. in tea) of much importante to Darjeeling might be developed". (16)

The Government of India asked for the opinion and suggestions of Sir Thomas Wade, the British Minister at Peking, also regarding the opening of Tibet for Indian trade. Wade's reply to the Government of India was not at all encouraging. He was of the view that no useful purpose would be served by banking on the co-operation of the Chinese. The only suggestion he gave was to bribe the 'Amban' or Chinese Resident, at Lhasa because

> he is always a Manchu or a Mongol never a Chinese, and is nowadays certainly a needy man to whom a sum of money in our eyes of no great amount would be an important consideration. All that he receives from his own government is the pay of his proper

---

(16) Letter of Haughton to Government of Bengal, 22 July 1870. F.P.A., October 1870, 70.

office probably from £ 500 to £ 1000 a year, which in these times he most probably does not draw ! (17)

Letter to the Tibetan Authorities

The Government of India, however, acting on the suggestion of Haughton, sent a letter to the Jongpen of Phari, a Tibetan frontier official, through Sidkeong Namgyal, the Maharaja of Sikkim, asking the Jongpen to transmit the letter to his superiors in Lhasa. The Jongpen refused to receive the letter on the ground that it was contrary to policy of his government which had prohibited all communications with the rulers of India.

Haughton regarded Jongpen's refusal to receive the letter of the Government of India as an affront to its prestige and wanted that Tibet should be warned of the dangers involved in refusing the friendly British overtures. (18) The Government of India was, however, opposed to such a policy and preferred to wait for a more favourable opportunity of opening communications with Tibet. (19) The Government of India once again asked Wade to make representations to the Chinese Government and secure the removal of Tibetan trade restrictions. Wade did not expect any help from the Chinese in the opening of Tibet for British trade. In 1872 he was able to feel the pulse of the Ministers of the 'Tsungli yamen' or Chinese Foreign Office, while discussing with them the ill-treatment of an English traveller, T.T. Cooper, in

---

(17) Letter of Wade to Government of India, 16 November 1870. F.P.A., February 1871, 110.

(18) Letter of Haughton to Government of Bengal, 31 July 1871. F.P.A., October 1871, 619.

(19) Letter of Government of India to Government of Bengal, 21 October 1871. F.P.A., October 1871, 621.

Yunan and near Tibet. He realized that the Chinese were not prepared to allow European travellers or traders to enter Tibet at any point. He was sure that the Chinese "instead of moving the Tibetans in the right direction of improved intercourse will use their influence in the opposite sense". Accordingly, he informed the Government of India that any representations to the Chinese foreign office would be of no avail "unless our proposition be of such a nature as to make it impossible for the Chinese to decline to entertain it, we are certain to be met 'inlimine' by the rejection of it". All that he assured to do was that he would not hesitate to exploit any unexpected opportunity that might present itself in future. (20) In August 1872 he again assured the Government of India that he was "not indifferent to the consideration of any scheme by which the trade of Her Majesty's subjects or dependents in any part of the world may be extended". But he cautioned that it would be vain to look for aid until the minority of the Chinese emperor came to an end which event "may be nearer than we think". (21)

Traders Memorandum April 1873

While the Government of India was trying its best to open Tibet for British trade, in England itself a similar movement was started by the mercantile community. Fascinated by the immense possibilities of trade in the Himalayan and trans-Himalayan

---

(20) Letter of Wade to Lord Northbrook, Viceroy of India, 17 June 1872. F.P.A., August 1872, 403.

(21) Letter of Wade to Northbrook, 17 August 1872. F.P.A., November 1872, 11.

regions, the traders began to press the British Government to secure the early opening of Tibet for trade. On 25 April 1873 the "Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce" presented a Memorandum to the Duke of Argyll, Secretary of State for India. The Memorandum pointed out the desirability of gaining access to Tibet not only from Nepal and Bhutan routes, but also from the side of Sikkim. To improve trade by the Sikkim route various measures were suggested, namely, 1) the early completion of the Calcutta-Darjeeling railway, 2) the establishment of a mart on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier after the example of Kiatchta on the Russo-Chinese frontier, and 3) the opening of consular agencies at Lhasa and Shigatse. Further it pointed out that the British Minister at Peking should exert pressure on the Chinese Government to "grant full permission to trade along the whole frontier of Tibet". (22)

There was nothing new in the Memorandum. All its suggestions were more or less in tune with the aims of the Government of India. The importance of the Memorandum, however, lies in the fact that it had concentrated its attention on the Sikkim route to the exclusion of all other routes across the Himalaya.

Stoppage of trade on Sikkim-Tibet Frontier

Apart from the Tibetan and Chinese opposition, the chief obstacles for the development of Indo-Tibetan commerce were the frequent stoppages of trade by the Tibetan officials on the

---

(22) F.P.A., October 1873, 134.

Sikkim-Tibet frontier and the lack of good roads on the Sikkim route.

In 1873 the trade on Sikkim-Tibet frontier was stopped by the Tibetan authorities. This the Government of India could ill-aford at a time when it was actively interested in developing Himalayan and trans-Himalayan trade. It was afraid that its hope of developing commercial ventures with Tibet would be doomed, unless something was done to prevent the stoppage on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier. The Bengal Government, therefore, felt it desirable to send a British official to the Sikkim-Tibetan border to enquire into the causes and significance of the frequent stoppages of trade. It took advantage of the visit of Sidkeong Namgyal, Maharaja of Sikkim, to Darjeeling in March 1873, to secure his consent for the visit of J.W. Edgar, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling to Sikkim. The main object of the Maharaja's visit to Darjeeling was, as noted in the preceding chapter, to request the Government to increase his annual allowance from Rs. 9,000 to Rs. 12,000.

Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, wanted to use the Maharaja as an instrument in the opening of Tibet. He, therefore, recommended to the Government of India, that the Maharaja's annual allowance might be increased on certain conditions namely that 1) he should give assistance to British officers like Edgar and others when they visit Sikkim, 2) he should help the British in the opening and development of trade with Tibet, and 3) he should keep the Government of India informed of all the happenings beyond his northern frontier. (23)

---

(23) Letter of the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 17 June 1873. F.P.A., October 1873, 492.

The Government of Bengal justified Edgar's Mission to Sikkim on the ground that it was its policy

> to seize every opportunity of opening up and developing trade with Central Asia, and to secure by increased frequency of communication more full and accurate knowledge of what goes on in the hills. (24)

Added reason was provided by the statement of the Dewan of Sikkim that the Tibetans were anxious to open relations with British India but that they were prevented from doing so by the fear of the Chinese. It seemed that Edgar might achieve much from friendly talks with the Tibetan officials on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier. (25)

Edgar's Visit to Sikkim

The Government of India accepted the proposal of the Bengal Government and deputed Edgar to visit Sikkim in October 1873. He was instructed to make himself thoroughly acquainted with "the present state of things there (Sikkim-Tibet frontier) - the actual condition, extent and prospects of trade with Thibet - the best line for the road to take, and the advisability of opening one - and all other matters likely to enable the Government to act with certainty on this important question". (26)

In October 1873 Edgar entered Sikkim and visited the passes into the Chumbi valley of Tibet and talked with the Tibetan officials like the Jongpen of Phari and also ex-Dewan

---

(24) Ibid.

(25) Bengal Administrative Report 1872-73 (Calcutta, 1873), pt 2, pp. 46-47.

(26) J. Ware Edgar, Report on a visit to the Sikkim and Tibetan Frontier (Calcutta, 1874), p. 7.

Namguay. (27) As soon as Edgar reached the Tibetan frontier of the Chumbi valley, messengers of ex-Dewan Namguay came and enquired from the former whether he would like to receive the latter. Edgar decided to receive ex-Dewan Namguay even though he was prohibited from entering Sikkim under Article Seven of the Treaty of 1861. Edgar felt that by meeting Namguay, he would be able to find out the latter's "exact position and influence as well as his present sentiments towards our Government". Moreover, he felt that he would be able to obtain more information regarding Tibet from Namguay than from any one else.

Edgar was not disappointed in his hope of getting valuable information from Namguay. He, in fact, obtained more information regarding Tibet from the ex-Dewan than from all other sources. He found Namguay to be a man of "great mental and bodily ability and unusually quick intelligence". From his interview, Edgar felt that Namguay was very anxious to gain the favour of the Government of India. (28)

Interview with the Sikkim Dewan

After his interview with the ex-Dewan Namguay, Edgar met the Dewan of Sikkim and told him that he wanted to enter into the Chumbi valley of Tibet to meet the Maharaja of Sikkim who

---

(27) Namguay after his expulsion from Sikkim in 1861 received a grant of land from the Dalai Lama and a decoration of "a high class button" from the Amban. In consideration of these favours, he was to give his advice on Sikkim affairs to the Jongpen of Phari, whenever required.

Ibid.

(28) Ibid.

was then staying there. (29) On learning this, the Tibetan frontier official, the Jongpen of Phari informed Edgar that the crossing of the Tibetan frontier by the Europeans was forbidden under an agreement between Tibet and China. He further explained that the direct management of the Tibetan frontier affairs had been entrusted to the 'Amban'. (30)

Ex-Dewan Namgyay informed Edgar that there had been in Tibet a move in favour of abandoning the policy of isolation. He however, cautioned Edgar, that it would take a long time to witness any change of policy in Tibet and advised him to move to Peking to get the obstacles removed. (31)

Letter of the Amban to the Maharaja of Sikkim

The Amban, on learning about the proposed visit of Edgar to Sikkim and the Tibetan frontier, wrote a letter to the Maharaja of Sikkim, ordering him that "the Peling Sahibs (the Britishers) should not be allowed to cross the frontier" (of Tibet). (32) The Maharaja was asked to do all that was in his power to prevent the British officers from entering Tibet. The Maharaja was informed that in case he failed to stop the British officers from entering Tibet, the Jongpen of Phari would explain to them that the crossing of the Tibetan frontier by the

---

(29) Under Article 22 of the 1861 treaty the Government of India allowed the Maharaja of Sikkim to stay for three months in a year in Chumbi valley of Tibet.

(30) Edgar's Report, n. 26, pp. 11-12.

(31) Ibid., pp. 13-14.

(32) Letter of the Amban to the Maharaja of Sikkim, August 1873. Quoted in Edgar's Report, n. 26.

Europeans was contrary to custom. He was, however, cautioned not to do any thing "which could possibly give rise to complications in the future". Finally, the Maharaja was warned in the following strong terms

> Your state of Sikkim borders on Tibet. You know what is in our minds, and what our policy is, you are bound to prevent the peling sahibs from crossing the frontier; yet it is entirely through your action in making the roads for the sahibs through Sikkim that they are going to make the projected attempt.
>
> If you continue to behave in this manner it will not be well with you. (33)

The letter of the Amban to the Maharaja indicated a change in the Tibetan policy towards Sikkim. Prior to 1861 it took for granted its suzerainty over Sikkim and did not take a serious note of the latter's affairs. This indifference cost Tibet a great deal, as the British had extended their control and established de facto protectorate over Sikkim in 1861. It was only then that Tibet realized the necessity of re-asserting its suzerainty over Sikkim to forestall further British expansion towards the North. The news of Edgar's proposed visit to Sikkim came as an excellent opportunity for Tibet to warn the Maharaja and thereby the British that the latter cannot claim any suzerain rights over the former kingdom. The subsequent British relations with Tibet revolved around the 'de jure' status of Sikkim.

Edgar's Conversation with the Jongpen

Edgar, on learning about the contents of Amban's letter to the Maharaja of Sikkim, gave up the idea of entering into

---

(33) Ibid.

Tibet. He, however, took the opportunity to explain to the 'Jongpen' the British policy towards the Himalayan states which he stated as one of "encouragement of trade to the utmost of our power and the maintenance of strong friendly states along the frontier". (34) He pointed out that Tibet was the only country on the frontier which was not maintaining friendly relations with the British by following a policy of isolation in contradistinction to the policy of friendship pursued by Nepal.

When the 'Jongpen' requested Edgar to use the British influence to restrain the "aggressive designs" of Nepal on Tibet, Edgar told him that the British would not choose to interfere "unasked between friendly state (Nepal) and one (Tibet) that refuses to have any friendly relations with us". (35)

Edgar's Proposals

After his return to Darjeeling from Sikkim tour in December 1873, Edgar made a number of proposals to the Government of India to improve its relations with Tibet. First, he suggested that the British Minister at Peking should make an effort to get from the Tsungli yamen a declaration that the exclusion of the British subjects from Tibet was not authorized by the Chinese Government. He felt that such a declaration would be as effective as an order for their admittance. Secondly, he suggested that the British officers should lose no opportunity of cultivating friendly relations with the Tibetan frontier

---

(34) Edgar's Report, n. 26, p. 19.

(35) Ibid., pp. 20-21.

officials, but he cautioned that they should not show any eagerness to enter into Tibet. Thirdly, he advocated the establishment of a trade mart on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier. (36) Lastly, he recommended the construction of a road to the Tibetan frontier through Sikkim. He felt that with the construction of such a road "friendly relations with Thibet and a trade singularly advantageous to both countries would follow almost of themselves". He was surprised as to why steps were not taken to construct a road after the Treaty of 1861. (37)

Wade's Suggestion

Acting on the suggestion of Edgar, the British Foreign Office, which was also evincing keen interest in the opening of Tibet, asked Thomas Wade, the British Minister at Peking to contact the Tsungli yamen to get Tibet opened for British trade.(38) But Wade did not expect any help from the Tsungli yamen as it had previously told Mayers, an official of the British Legation in Peking that the Tibetans would not open their country to Europeans as they felt that it would be a threat to their religion. He

---

(36) Edgar at first wanted that the trade mart should be established at a place called Gnatong in the uplands of Sikkim. He felt that place would be convenient to the Tibetans, since they dreaded visiting the lower valleys which were supposed to be unhealthy. The Sikkimese, however, disliked Gnatong as it was situated very near to the Bhutan border; instead, they suggested another place called Gangtok. Edgar, was not in favour of that place as its climate was too hot for the people of Tibet. As a compromise, he suggested another place called Dunsong which was at a higher elevation than Gangtok and "quite well-suited to be the site of a mart". Ibid., pp. 77-79.

(37) Ibid., pp. 79-80.

(38) Letter of Earl of Derby to Thomas Wade, 8 April 1874. Despatch No. 32 of 8 April 1874.

therefore, informed Earl of Derby, the British Foreign Secretary that

> If trade be worth the effort, I think that it might possibly be opened were a mixed official and commercial mission pushed forward without reference to the Court of Peking which is always careful to declare that in this, or any other matter, Tibet may act as she pleases, and if the mission were authorized at the first instance to spend money rather freely. (39)

Bengal Government's Support for Edgar's proposal for a road through Sikkim

Sir Richard Temple, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, believed that trade with Tibet could be developed simply by improving the communications between India and Tibet frontier through Sikkim. He, therefore, endorsed Edgar's proposal for the construction of a road to the Tibetan frontier through Sikkim and wanted that it should be completed within three or four years. (40)

The Reaction of the Government of India

The Government of India, unlike the Bengal Government, did not react favourably to Edgar's proposal for the construction of a road to the Tibetan frontier through Sikkim. It felt that the time was not ripe for its implementation since the main obstacle for the development of the Tibetan trade, namely, the Chinese and Tibetan opposition was not removed. (41)

---

(39) Letter of Wade to Earl of Derby, 14 July 1874. F.P.A., February 1875, 25.

(40) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 24 August 1874. F.P.A., January 1875, 31.

(41) F.P.A., February 1875, 24-37 (K.W.).

Even though the Government of India did not accept the proposals of Edgar, the latter's visit to Sikkim was not in vain. It had, in fact, resulted in the increase of the British influence in that kingdom. Edgar was able to repair the damage done to the British prestige by the Amban's letter to the Maharaja remonstrating his (Edgar's) visit to Sikkim. The Maharaja supported Edgar's proposals for the establishment of a trade mart on Sikkim-Tibet frontier and for the construction of a road up to the Tibet frontier. He, in fact, agreed to assist the Government of India in the construction of the road.

From the above survey it is evident that the Government of India had deputed Edgar to Sikkim because it wanted to use the Maharaja as an instrument in the opening of Tibet for British trade. The suggestion to open Tibet for British trade came from Haughton. The reasons for that were two-fold. First, he felt that with the coming of the hill states bordering on Tibet under British influence, and the weakening of China, time was ripe to open Tibet. Secondly, since he worked near the tea growing areas he was anxious to tap the large Tibetan market for that product.

Haughton in his anxiety to open Tibet failed to perceive the probable extent of trade and the real obstacles in its way. He, like Edgar, failed to realize that Tibet was opposed to British entry into its territory. The fact of the matter was that Tibet, alarmed at the British expansion towards its frontier took steps to halt that process. The letter of the Amban to the Maharaja of Sikkim remonstrating the visit of Edgar

to Sikkim-Tibet frontier indicated a change in the Tibetan policy towards Sikkim. Edgar failed to perceive the full implications of that change when he suggested that Tibet should be opened with the help of China. That line of action became the pet theme of the succeeding British Indian officers like Colman Macaulay. By advocating such action they unwittingly acknowledged the suzerainty of China over Tibet and made the former a factor in the opening of Tibet. In the succeeding chapter it will be seen how Tibet for its part tried to frustrate the British attempts to develop trade with it by raising the question of the de jure status of Sikkim.

Chapter Four

THE MISSION OF COLMAN MACAULAY

The Succession of Thothab Namgyal 1874

It was seen in the last chapter that Edgar's visit to Sikkim in 1873 had increased the British influence in that kingdom. The following year witnessed a still more striking assertion of British supremacy over that kingdom, when the Government of India succeeded in nominating its own candidate as the ruler, on the death of the Maharaja Sidkeong Namgyal in April 1874. The late Maharaja had no issue, but only two half-brothers, one legitimate and the other illegitimate. The legitimate half-brother was Thothab Namgyal. The illegitimate half-brother was known as Tinley Namgyal. His sister was married to the ex-Dewan Namguay. As early as 1868 there were rumours that the ex-Dewan was instigating or supporting the attempts to get the throne for his brother-in-law, Tinley Namgyal. (1) That was why in 1868, the Government of India rejected the request of the late Maharaja Sidkeong Namgyal, to permit the ex-Dewan Namguay to return to Sikkim. (2)

On the death of Maharaja Sidkeong Namgyal, Edgar, the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, received a letter from "certain officers of the Sikkim Darbar" informing him of the event but making no mention about the successor to the throne. Edgar suspected that an attempt might be made to set aside the

---

(1) F.P.A., May 1869, 145-47 (K.W.)

(2) Ibid.

succession of Thothab Namgyal in favour of Tinley Namgyal, since the former had a hare-lip which was considered as a disqualification by ex-Dewan's faction on the alleged ground that it indicated a want of intellect. To prevent such a contingency, Edgar informed the Sikkim Darbar that the Government of India would not recognize any succession which would have for its object, the restoration of ex-Dewan Namguay's influence. (3) Meanwhile he recognized in anticipation of the sanction of the Government of India the succession of Thothab Namgyal as the ruler of Sikkim. This quick action of Edgar had not only increased the British influence in Sikkim, but also struck a blow to the possible Tibetan pretence of suzerainty over that kingdom. Further it revealed two facts namely, 1) that the British were not prepared to allow any man suspected of pro-Tibetan leanings to sit on the throne of Sikkim and 2) that the British influence in Sikkim had grown so much that the Government of India became the undisputed kingmaker. H.H. Risley, afterwards Secretary to the Government of India, commented on this episode thus:

> Not a whisper was heard on the frontier of the remonstrance against this vigorous piece of king-making, and Tibet acquiesced silently in an act which struck at the roots of any claim on her part to exercise a paramount influence in the affairs of the Sikkim State. (4)

The subsequent events in Sikkim were in tune with the British paramount position in that kingdom. Sir Richard Temple, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, visited Sikkim in 1875, and during his tenure of office from 1874-77 a road was constructed

---

(3) F.P.A., July 1874, 27-33 (K.W. 1).

(4) H.H. Risley, ed., The Gazetteer of Sikhim (Calcutta, 1894), p. vi.

from Darjeeling to the Tibetan frontier at Jelep Pass. (5) In this work, the Government of India received the active assistance of the Sikkim kingdom, and met with no objection on the part of Tibet, though it was well known that the Government and people of that country looked on the British road building activities in Sikkim with a certain amount of suspicion and uneasiness. (6)

Invitation to Maharaja Thothab Namgyal to attend the Imperial Assembly at Delhi 1877

The Government of India sent a formal invitation to the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal to attend the Imperial Assembly at Delhi on 1 January 1877. Sir Richard Temple, felt that the Maharaja's attendance at Delhi would be worth having on two considerations, namely 1) that it would be noticed at Lhasa and result in the increase of the British prestige to a "high degree", and 2) that the Maharaja would be impressed by the might of the British Empire. The Government of India, however, decided not to press the Maharaja's attendance at Delhi on three considerations, namely, that 1) the Maharaja had never gone beyond Darjeeling and had great dread of the climate of Delhi; 2) that he could not speak any Indian language and ignorant of the ways of the Indian people, and 3) that it would entail an expenditure of Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 20,000 which the Sikkim kingdom was not in a position to bear. (7)

The Government of India, however, presented the Maharaja with a banner, a medal and a ring, at a special ceremony held at

---

(5) Ibid.

(6) Ibid.

(7) F.P.B., December 1877, 145-47.

Tumlong on 1 January 1877. The decoration of the Maharaja was intended to demonstrate to the outside world the increased British influence in Sikkim.

Settlement of the Nepalese in Sikkim

The increased British influence in Sikkim made the pro-Tibetan party uneasy. Its leader, Tinley Namgyal, who had fled to Tibet in 1874, after his failure to secure the throne, tried to undermine the British position in Sikkim by exploiting the resentment of the local people against the settlement of the Nepalese. It may be pointed out here that ever since the British had gained influence in Sikkim they made it a policy to settle Nepalese in that kingdom. This they did, in the first place to accelerate the economic growth of the sparsely populated Sikkim by settling the hardworking Nepalese who were well suited to work in the hills. Secondly, they wanted to counteract the possible danger to their supremacy from the Sikkim Royal family whose allegiance they suspected, by settling foreign Nepalese who would naturally look to them for protection.

The Nepalese settlers, by their industry and their fecundity, soon began to displace the local inhabitants. The Sikkimese were afraid that they may be reduced to a minority in their own country. To prevent that danger the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal visited Kalimpong in November 1878, to request Sir Ashley Eden, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, to restrict the number of Nepalese settlers in Sikkim. The Lieutenant-Governor agreed to restrict the settlement of Nepalese to south

Sikkim. (8) But the agreement did not work well due to the intrigues of the pro-Tibetan party. In 1880, riots broke out between the Nepalese settlers and the local people at a place called Rhenok. The Bengal Government deputed one of its officers A.W. Paul, to pacify the two groups, who succeeded in bringing about an understanding between the two groups, on 14 April 1880. (9) The agreement was a great disappointment to the pro-Tibetan party. It, therefore, tried to foment anti-British feeling in Tibet.

Sarat Chandra Das's Visit to Tibet

It was probably to counteract the anti-British feeling in Tibet, that the Government of India deputed Sarat Chandra Das, Head Master of Bhutia School at Darjeeling, to visit Tibet and establish contacts with the Panchen Lama. Two years earlier, in 1879, Sarat Chandra Das, visited Tashi Lumpo the headquarter of the Panchen Lama. He was commissioned by the Bengal Government to conduct geographical surveys in Tibet in the guise of a student of Buddhism. He was accompanied by a Sikkimese Lama named Ugyen Gyatso. He was able to develop friendly contacts with the Minister of the Panchen Lama, who had requested Sarat Das to fetch certain European goods like lithographic press, photographic goods etc. and to visit Tashi Lumpo again. (10)

---

(8) C.U. Aitchison, comp., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta, 1929), vol. 12, p. 54.

(9) Ibid.

(10) Macaulay's Memorandum to the Government of India on "British Relations with Tibet", F.S.E., May 1885, 752.

During his second visit to Taghi Lumpo in 1881, Sarat Das stayed with the Minister of the Panchen Lama. He visited Lhasa and important places in Southern Tibet. He gathered valuable information and compiled reports on important geographical features of Tibet. He constructed new maps of lake Yardok Yutso. Owing to his secret explorations, the Tibetan Government, suspected that he was the agent of the Government of India and ordered his arrest, but he escaped.

Soon after the return of Sarat Das to Darjeeling in 1883, trade on Sikkim-Tibet frontier was stopped. The Government of India which was interested in developing trade with Tibet, was intrigued at this stoppage. The Bengal Government suggested to the Government of India that a repetition of Mission to Sikkim, like Edgar's of 1873, was essential to investigate the causes of trade stoppage on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier. The Government of India approved of the suggestion and asked the Bengal Government to depute its Finance Secretary, Colman Macaulay, to visit Sikkim in October 1884.

The Government of Bengal instructed Macaulay to enquire into the causes of stoppage of trade, to ascertain whether a direct route could be opened to the province of Tsang in Tibet, noted for its high quality of wool, through the Lachen valley of Sikkim, and if possible to communicate a friendly message of the Government of India to the Minister of the Panchen Lama at Tashi Lumpo. (11) Macaulay arrived in Sikkim in October 1884 and met the Maharaja Thothab Namgyal. He could not get any information

---

(11) Ibid.

from the Maharaja regarding the causes of the stoppage of trade; However, the Maharaja informed Macaulay that the trade on the frontier was resumed on 20 October 1884.

The failure of Macaulay to get any information from the Maharaja is significant. It showed that the British influence in Sikkim was not as effective as it was few years before. In fact the British influence in Sikkim began to decline since the death of the first Maharani in 1880. The Maharaja Thothab Namgyal married his brother's widow by name Pendling in 1875. By her he had two sons Tchoda Namgyal born in 1877 and Sidkeong (Chotal) Namgyal born in 1879. The Maharani died in 1880. After her death the Maharaja was induced by his mother and by the ex-Dewan Namguay, to marry a Tibetan girl. The new Maharani remained unfaithful to the Maharaja by becoming the mistress of his half-brother, Tinley Namgyal. With the Maharaja's second marriage the influence of the Tibetan faction had increased and consequently the British influence declined. In 1883 the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal, brought his family to Tibet to have an audience with the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan Government gave them unusually fine reception, and before the party returned to Sikkim, everyone from the Maharaja down to his servants were given presents of clothing. In addition the Maharaja was presented with large quantities of Chinese brick tea and barley. By these favours Tibet gained an influence over the Maharaja.

Macaulay's talks with Jongpen of Khamba

On 8 November 1884, Macaulay met the Tibetan official the Jongpen of Khamba. Khamba is a small town north of the Sikkim-Tibet border, on the way of Shigatse. At first the Jongpen was

very reserved and distant in his talk, but on learning that Macaulay had no desire to cross the frontier into Tibet, he became more communicative. The next morning Macaulay had another interview with him and learnt that the Chinese alone were responsible for the continued isolation of Tibet. The Jongpen informed Macaulay that the common people of Tibet had no dislike or suspicion towards the British and that the only party opposed to the British were the monks of Sera, Depung, Gahden and Mulu. The monks, he stated were afraid of losing their influence and profits of their monopoly, if trade was thrown open to outsiders. (12)

The Jongpen further stated that the British had an excellent opportunity at the moment to open Tibet for trade, provided they secure the consent of China. He told that after the 1883 Nepalese-Tibetan riots in Lhasa, the influence of China in Tibet had become enormous. (13) The Lhasa Government had requested China to send four Ambans instead of two in order to support its authority against the monks. The Jongpen was

---

(12) Ibid.

(13) In the spring of 1883 during the Great Prayer festival at Lhasa, a quarrel broke out between two Tibetan women and a Nepalese shopkeeper over some coral beads which he accused the Tibetan women of stealing. The women denied the guilt and soon a crowd gathered round. The crowd, mostly composed of the monks, supported the Tibetan women.

The argument between the women and Nepalese merchant developed into anti-Nepalese riot in which the houses of 84 Nepalese were destroyed. The Government of Nepal objected strongly to this affair and demanded huge compensation. In 1884 Tibet came to terms and agreed to pay Nepal Rs. 3,00,000 as compensation for the damage done to the Nepalese property in Lhasa in 1883.

confident that there was good prospect for Indo-Tibetan trade since "Whenever a man gets an article of English manufacture a hundred people come to look at it". (14)

The Jongpen demonstrated his friendship towards the British by transmitting the letters and presents of the Government of India to the Minister of the Panchen Lama at Tashi Lumpo. This unexpected but welcome development so thrilled Macaulay that he felt that the Government of India had succeeded "after much neglect and many failures" in opening friendly communications with Tibet. (15) After a lapse of a hundred years once again the authorities at Tashi Lumpo corresponded with the British. Macaulay saw special significance in the letter as it announced the sixth re-incarnation of the Panchen Lama in 1884. He felt that at last the Government of India got a chance to revive the Tibet policy of Warren Hastings since the Minister's letter announcing the sixth re-incarnation of the Tashi Lama in 1884 "is a precise parallel to the letter of the Regent announcing the incarnation of the fourth in 1782". (16)

After his interview with the Jongpen, Macaulay formed an optimistic picture regarding the British trade prospects with Tibet and Central Asia. He felt that if free trade was allowed the British goods would capture the Central Asian Market from the Russian hands. He saw a great demand for broad cloth, cutlery, and piece goods. So far as tea was concerned, he had

---

(14) Macaulay's Memo, n. 10.

(15) Ibid.

(16) Macaulay's Memorandum for Lord Randolph Churchill, 1 July 1885. F.S.E., October 1885, 1-23 (K.W. 3).

no doubt that "with a large tea-drinking population on one side of the passes and a large production of tea on the other ... the producers and consumers would come to an understanding if the opportunity were allowed". (17)

It is evident that Macaulay in his zeal for the opening of Tibet for British trade had tended to attach too much of significance to the words of the Jongpen of Khamba. He never realized that it had become almost a habit for the Tibetan frontier officials to paint a rosy picture of trade and throw all the blame for its obstruction on China so as to shift responsibility and avoid unpleasantness. Macaulay, like Edgar, before him, was taken in by the words of the Jongpens, and felt that China, and China alone, was the main obstacle to the opening of Tibet and the free flow of trade. It will be seen that all his subsequent proceedings were conditioned by that prejudice against the Chinese. Of course, China did not welcome the idea of opening Tibet, but at the same time Tibet was also equally if not more opposed to that prospect.

Macaulay's Proposals

Macaulay on his return from Sikkim proposed to the Government of India that it should obtain the permission of the Chinese Government to the despatch of a mission to Lhasa so that it might confer with the 'Amban' and the officials of the Government of Tibet on the free admission of native Indian traders to Tibet as well as for the removal of obstructions on trade through Sikkim-

---

(17) Macaulay's Memo, n. 10.

Darjeeling route. In case the Chinese refuse to give the British, the necessary permission to send a Mission to Lhasa, he wanted that the Government of India should request the Chinese to allow a small British mission to proceed to Tashi Lumpo, the headquarters of the Panchen Lama. He wanted that the mission should proceed to Tashi Lumpo at the time of the identification of the Panchen Lama, so that it could keep alive the friendly feelings of the Government authorities and the people of that province towards the British. If these measures were successful he advised the Government to secure the goodwill of the monks at Lhasa through presents. (18)

Sir Rivers Thompson, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, supported Macaulay's proposals with enthusiasm and recommended the despatch of an officer to Peking to state the British case for a Mission to Tibet to the Chinese Government, through the British Legation there. (19)

Reaction of the Government of India

The Government of India did not receive Macaulay's proposals with enthusiasm. The Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, was afraid that any attempts to open Tibet might involve the Government of India in complications with China. Moreover his hands

---

(18) Ibid.

(19) Minute of Sir Rivers Thompson, 19 February 1885. F.S.E., May 1885, 75.

were full with the affairs in Afghanistan and Burma. (20) He therefore decided to ignore the proposals for the time being.

It will be interesting to note how the Bengal Government and the Government of India reversed their respective stands on the opening of Tibet, within two decades. Previously it was the Government of India that was very active in the schemes for the opening of Tibet, whereas the Bengal Government was somewhat sceptical about them. Now it was just the opposite. The Bengal Government was all out for Macaulay's proposals, whereas the Government of India refused even to look at them. The reasons for the change of stand were not far to seek. The Government of India had become sober by the repeated rebuffs it received from China in its attempts to open Tibet. Moreover, as noted earlier, its hands were full with the affairs in Afghanistan and Burma.

---

(20) During the last decades of the nineteenth century, Russia made rapid advances towards Central Asia and Afghanistan. In 1884 a dispute arose between Russia and Afghanistan over the border town of Panjdeh. On 30 March 1885 Russians expelled the Afghans from the disputed place and forcibly occupied it. This is commonly referred to as the Panjdeh crisis. The Government of India was alarmed that the Russian occupation of Panjdeh was a prelude to further aggression. It was alarmed of the safety of the Indian Empire. In order to check the Russian advance, Dufferin cultivated the friendship of Abdur Rahman, the Amir (ruler) of Afghanistan. The Amir was entertained at a Durbar held in his honour at Rawalpindi in 1885. The Panjdeh incident subsided without further trouble. The dispute was referred to the arbitration of the King of Denmark who decided it in favour of Russia.

Dufferin soon after his arrival in India as the Viceroy in 1884, launched a campaign against King Thibaw of Ava in Upper Burma and annexed his kingdom to the British Empire in the later part of 1885. He visited Upper Burma in January 1886 and officially inaugurated the British rule there.

It had therefore no inclination to add to its worries by creating problems in the north. Apart from these considerations, the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, did not share Macaulay's optimism regarding political and commercial results flowing from the Mission to Tibet.

The Bengal Government supported the proposals because of Macaulay himself. He was adept in selling his ideas to others. He found no difficulty in converting Sir Rivers Thompson to his proposals who earnestly supported them.

Support of the British Government

In the summer of 1885, Macaulay came to England on leave. He took that opportunity to see the Secretary of State for India, Lord Randolph Churchill, and convinced him of the need to send a mission to Tibet to secure political and commercial advantages. He pointed out that the commercial advantages were bound to be immense as "Darjeeling is the natural outlet and inlet for trade of Tibet and Southern Mongolia". As regards political advantages, he expected much from the friendship with "the two great pontiffs of the Buddhist Church who exercise boundless influence over the wild tribes of Central Asia". Their influence was so great that "the present dynasty of China has had to conciliate it in order to secure its own existence". He felt that time has passed for waiting "till the wall of Chinese obstruction should fall as fell the walls of Jericho". He therefore wanted that the British should act at once and send a special envoy to Peking to secure the Chinese permission for a British mission to

Lhasa. (21)

Lord Randolph Churchill was very much attracted by these proposals and agreed to send Macaulay first to Peking to arrange with the Chinese foreign office for the passports and then as the head of the Mission to Tibet. The Government of India had no alternative, but to allow Macaulay to "try his luck", especially when it was pointed out that the Chinese Government were well disposed towards the British and that the Chinese embassy in London was favourable to the proposal. (22)

N.O'Conor, the British Charge d'Affaires in China, did not welcome Macaulay's visit to Peking as he felt that it would advertise without need the Tibetan project. He felt that he could by himself arrange quietly for the passports. The British foreign office did not appreciate O'Conor's suggestion. It, however, assured him that Macaulay would not take any steps except in concert with the British legation there. (23)

The grant of passports

Macaulay, accompanied by Sarat Das, about whom we referred to earlier, arrived in Peking on 9 October 1885. By that time the subject of the mission was already discussed by the Chinese Government. O'Conor learnt that the Chinese Government was not favourably disposed to the British proposals for a Mission to Tibet and that Sung, formerly Amban in Tibet, and then tutor to the young Chinese Emperor, was particularly active in fomenting

---

(21) Macaulay's Memo for Lord Randolph Churchill, n. 16.

(22) F.S.E., October 1886, 1-23 (K.W. 1).

(23) Telegram of O'Conor to British Foreign Office, 18 August 1885. F.S.E., October 1885, 40.

opposition to them. (24)

From the very beginning the Tsungli Yamen, the Chinese Foreign Office raised an objection to the issue of passports on the ground that the Tibetans would oppose it, and that the Chinese Government had no power to impose its wishes on Tibet. Macaulay countered the first objection of the Tsungli yamen by asserting that the Tibetan frontier officials whom he had met in the course of his official tour of the Sikkim Tibet frontier, pointed out that the prohibition to the entry of Europeans into Tibet was due to Chinese insistence only. Further, he told the Tsungli yamen that he had seen a placard on the Tibetan frontier with Chinese characters and Imperial seal affixed to it, prohibiting all passage to foreigners. The Tsungli yamen denied that and considered that the placard was "probably a forgery". (25) After a good deal of argument, finally in November 1885, the passports were granted, but the request for a copy of instructions to be sent to the Amban at Lhasa was declined on the ground that it would be contrary to etiquette. (26)

Nature and Size of the Mission

O'Conor believed that the grant of passports was not the end of the matter, but only the beginning of their difficulties. He feared that both the Chinese and Tibetan local influence would throw obstacles in the way of the Mission's entry into Tibet. To

---

(24) F.S.E., July 1886, 744.

(25) Ibid.

(26) F.S.E., January 1886, 373-502 (K.W. 1)

obviate their difficulty he recommended that the Mission should be organized on a commercial rather than a political footing, by which he meant that it should not be accompanied by a large military escort, which would certainly give the Tibetans the impression that the Mission was an advance guard of an invading army. He wanted that the Mission, on its admission into Tibet should remain there indefinitely until the matters were smoothened over and satisfactory arrangements made for the future. He cautioned the Government of India that "if the Tibetan trade is not forced upon under present advantages, the country may be closed firmly than ever and years elapse before we could get the point now arrived at". (27)

Macaulay did not accept O'Conor's view that the Mission should be organized on a commercial basis. He wanted that it should be organized on a political basis by which he meant that it should be accompanied by a large military escort. He laid more emphasis on the political results of the Mission since he looked upon the despatch of friendly Mission to Lhasa as an important "link in a great chain by which we should seek to connect the interests that exist in Corea with those that exist in Herat". (28) Secondly, he felt that the Mission could well supplant the Russian influence in Central Asia by that of the British. In Tibet, he continued, the constantly discussed

---

(27) Letter of O'Conor to Dufferin, 16 November 1885. F.S.E., January 1886, 494.

(28) Letter of Macaulay to Government of India, 21 January 1886. F.S.E., July 1886, 744.

question was, which of the two great "absorbing powers" the British or the Russian, was going to supplant the Chinese sovereignty and extinguish the great line of the lama of Potala. That fear, he believed was the cause of the Tibetan policy of exclusion and hoped that by demonstrating that they had no intention of annexing Tibet they could enormously increase their influence in Central Asia. Moreover he felt that the cordial reception of the Mission at Lhasa would lead to a better understanding with China. Once the British envoy and the Chinese Amban were able to meet in the court of the Dalai Lama on cordial terms, he had no doubt that the British influence in Central Asia would receive tremendous boost as the different tribes of that region owe their spiritual and temporal allegiance to the Dalai Lama and the Chinese emperor respectively. At the same time he was confident that they could checkmate the Russian expansion in Central Asia by bringing home to the minds of the people of that region "the difference between the Russian and British policy in Asia" and induce a feeling in "our favour". (29)

Macaulay, it is evident, had overemphasized the possible political results of the Mission. He was no doubt correct in his anticipation that the British influence would receive an accession of strength in case of favourable reception at Lhasa. But the question was whether the Mission would ever be able to reach Lhasa. Subsequent events proved that this was the case. Moreover he was not correct in his thinking that the despatch of the British Mission to Lhasa would lead to the establishment of cordial relations with the Chinese. The Chinese, though agreed

---

(29) Ibid.

to the despatch of the British Mission to Lhasa, were never happy about it. The British annexation of Upper Burma had upset them. They were apprehensive of the British designs over Tibet. In those circumstances it was too much to expect that they would welcome the British presence in Tibet. Macaulay was too gullible a person to understand the complexities of the Chinese character and the subtility of their diplomacy.

Dufferin did not share Macaulay's belief in the profound political results of the Mission, and he thought that the commercial results also would prove for sometime to be "inconsiderable". He therefore agreed with O'Conor that the Mission should be organized on a small scale. (30)

Tibetan Opposition to the Mission

Early in 1886, the Mission was organized and assembled at Darjeeling under the leadership of Macaulay. Though O'Conor and Dufferin agreed that it should be small it grew larger. All the details of the Mission like its constitution, the size of its escort etc., were published in British newspapers and that information soon reached the Chinese Government. (31) The Tsungli yamen informed O'Conor that the Viceroy of Szechuan province, under whose special direction Tibet was placed, was alarmed at the British usurpation of Upper Burma, and being ignorant of the British intensions in Tibet thought it desirable to despatch certain number of troops into that country so as to

---

(30) F.S.E., July 1886, 744-795 (K.W. 1).

(31) Letter of O'Conor to Dufferin, 11 May 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 428.

"guard against a surprise". (32)

In Tibet, the news of the Mission caused alarm. Both the Amban and the Viceroy of the Szechuan province reported to the Chinese Government of the Tibetan opposition to the Mission and warned that it would be resisted. (33) Similarly an influential Tibetan Lama on a visit to Peking informed the Viceroy Li Hung Chang that the Tibetans were opposed to the Mission as they feared that their territory and religion would be interfered with. The Viceroy calmed the fears of the lama and told him to use his influence to obtain commercial and trading facilities for British Indian subjects and to find a certain place where they could exchange merchandize. Li Hung Chang felt that a small escort of ten members would be "more likely a larger one to forward the objects of the Mission". (34)

The Mission did not start immediately since in February 1886 the Amban at Lhasa was recalled and the new Amban was not expected to join his post until after few months. Meanwhile the news came that the Tibetans had decided to oppose it. (35) The Tibetan determination to oppose the Mission came to surface when the Jongpen of Phari refused to receive from the Maharaja of Sikkim, the communication of the Government of India to the

---

(32) Ibid.

(33) Quoted in Yao-ting Sung, Chinese-Tibetan Relations 1890-1947 (London, 1949), p. 19.

(34) Letter of O'Conor, n. 31.

(35) Telegrams of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 22 and 26 May 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 413-475 (K.W. 1).

Tibetan Government, intimating the date of the Mission's departure. The Jongpen refused to receive the communication on the ground that he was under strict orders from Lhasa not to allow any communications or persons to cross the frontier. (36)

Meanwhile, further news was received that the Tibetans had assembled their army on the frontier. Macaulay proposed to the Government of India that the Mission should advance to the Sikkim-Tibet frontier and hold parleys with the Tibetan frontier officers. He stated that his views were supported by the Prime Minister of Sikkim who had attributed the Tibetan opposition to the Mission to the failure of the Amban at Lhasa to fulfil the instructions from his Government, as he had no influence over the Tibetans due to his impending departure. He further informed the Government of India that the Sikkim Prime Minister had offered to proceed in advance to Tibet to explain to the monks the pacific intentions of the Mission. (37)

Macaulay further suggested to the Government of India to use, when the Mission had reached the Sikkim-Tibet frontier, the services of the Maharaja of Sikkim, Thothab Namgyal, to secure a preliminary interview between the former and the Tibetan officials at Phari. In case the Maharaja declined, or was unable to effect this, Macaulay proposed that he should sit down at the border, demand interview with the Amban, issue a proclamation in the Tibetan language containing the text of the passport, distribute

---

(36) Telegram from Lieut Governor of Bengal to Viceroy, 18 May 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 415.

(37) Telegram of Macaulay to Government of India 3 June 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 421.

largesse and await the result. (38)

From the above it is clear that Macaulay wanted to push the Mission across the frontier at any cost. This need not cause any surprise, since he was the brain behind the Mission. The assertion that the Prime Minister of Sikkim had recommended that the Mission should go to the frontier to hold parleys with the Chinese officials need not be taken seriously. The "Sikkim Prime Minister" was after all a petty official who dared not say anything to displease a British official.

The Government of India was not in a mood to accept Macaulay's suggestion and asked him to stay at Darjeeling and await further orders. (39) All that he was allowed to do was to employ the Dewan of Sikkim in his personal capacity, as the servant of the Maharaja, but not as British envoy or representative, to ascertain the real feelings of the Tibetans. In this way it wanted to escape all the harm to its prestige if a countermand was issued after an unsuccessful formal negotiation.

The action of the Government of India in turning down the suggestion of Macaulay was reasonable, for there was no guarantee that his plan would succeed. When the Government was not prepared to force a passage across the frontier, the return of the Mission would have been most humiliating and delayed the opening of Tibet for a long time.

Mission Countermanded

While the Mission stayed idly at Darjeeling, other

---

(38) Ibid.

(39) Telegram from Government of India to Macaulay, 7 June 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 423.

developments had taken place. As noted earlier, Dufferin had annexed in the latter part of 1885, Upper Burma, a country with traditional ties to China. He was, therefore, anxious to obtain the Chinese recognition of this annexation. China, taking advantage of the British anxiety secured the countermand of the Mission. In return, it agreed to recognise British rule and supremacy in Burma, to enter into a trade convention, and take steps to promote and stimulate trade between India and Tibet. (40) On 26 July 1886, the Secretary of State for India, asked the Government of India to countermand the Mission. (41)

The failure of the Mission is not a surprise. From the very beginning it met with determined opposition from both the Chinese as well as the Tibetans. The British, instead of allaying the suspicions of the Chinese, roused them by their inept handling of the negotiations. When Macaulay went to Peking for passports, the Chinese were under the impression that the British proposed to send the Mission to Tibet through the mainland of China since the passports were issued under the terms of the Chefoo Convention of 13 September 1876. (42) The change of the Mission's

---

(40) S.C.E., September 1886, 390.

(41) Letter of Secretary of State for India to Viceroy, 26 July 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 389.

(42) In 1874, the British sent a Mission of exploration to the Burma-Yunnan border, under the command of Colonel Browne. It included as Chinese interpreter A.R. Margary, an official of the British legation at Peking. Margary was murdered and there was strong suspicion that the local Yunnan Government was involved in it. Taking advantage of this incident the British forced on the Chinese the Chefoo Convention of 13 September 1876. Under the final article of the Convention the British were allowed to send to Tibet "a mission of exploration next year by the way of Peking through Kansu and Koko-Nor, or by the way of Ssu-Ch'uan to Tibet, and thence to India...." The separate article was ignored and the British did not send a Mission to Tibet in 1877 as provided in the last article of the Convention. The Convention was not ratified in its entirety until 1886.

route, the size of the Mission coming soon after the British annexation of Upper Burma, confirmed the Chinese suspicions as to its objectives. They became more determined to resist than ever when they learnt that the original commercial purpose of the Mission was enlarged to include the investigation of the mineral resources of Tibet. The Mission included Dr. Oldham, the Geologist.

Apart from the Chinese opposition the Mission was unlucky to have Macaulay as its leader. He lacked the necessary diplomatic skill for such enterprise. The way in which he sold the project to Randolph Churchill, over the head of Dufferin, was hardly calculated to win the support of the Government of India for the Mission. Moreover, Macaulay was unable to keep anything secret. Even while the talks were in progress at Peking for the grant of passports, O'Conor found it necessary to caution the Government of India not to give publicity to the negotiations, as he felt that if the matter became public, Russia, France, and other countries would certainly harass China with similar demands. (43) The Government of India found it necessary to warn Macaulay to be specially discreet in the matter. Finally, Macaulay's insistence on pomp and show proved fatal to the Mission. Had the Mission been small there would perhaps have been no trouble in reaching the destination.

Leaving aside all these considerations, the political situation in Central Asia was not conducive to the success of the Mission. The advance of Russia by gigantic strides towards

---

(43) Letter of O'Conor to Government of India, 16 November 1885. F.S.E., January 1886, 373-502 (K.W.).

Afghanistan was the most important event of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Russian advance to Merv and the Panjdeh crisis of 1885 emphasized the need to maintain friendly relations with China. The necessity of conciliating China became apparent as it seemed to be the bulwark against Russian expansion in Asia. Even as early as 1883, the British parliamentary Under-Secretary announced that the British Government "was fully aware of the great and transcendent importance of good understanding" with China. (44) The need for an understanding with China became essential with annexation of Burma to the British Empire. To obtain Chinese recognition of its annexation which it considered more important than Tibet, the Government of India cancelled Macaulay Mission to Tibet.

To conclude, Macaulay's Mission had failed because of the inability of the Government of India to gauge the intensity of the feelings of the Tibetans against the opening of their country to foreigners. Moreover, during the years 1885-86, when this Mission was organized and countermanded, the Government of India was involved in affairs concerning Afghanistan and Burma. It had no time to devote its attention wholly to the affairs concerning Tibet. It, therefore, thought it desirable to wait for some time for the opening of Tibet.

The failure of Macaulay's Mission, however, brought into focus two flaws in the British Treaty with Sikkim (1861) namely 1) the non-definition of the de-jure status of Sikkim

---

(44) Quoted in E.V.G. Kiernan, British Diplomacy in China 1880-1885 (London, 1939), p. 301.

and 2) the privilege granted to the Maharaja to stay for three months in a year at Chumbi in Tibet. Tibet tried to exploit these weaknesses to prevent the British expansion towards the north of the Himalaya. In the next chapter it will be seen how the subsequent relations of the Government of India with Tibet revolved around the status of Sikkim.

Chapter Five

THE SIKKIM CONVENTION 1890

No sooner had the Macaulay Mission been abandoned than the news came that the Tibetans had advanced thirteen miles into Northern Sikkim across the Jelap pass and occupied a place called Lingtu on the Darjeeling road. The Government of India thought that the Tibetans had resorted to that action due to their fear of the Macaulay Mission and hoped that they would withdraw on learning about its abandonment. At the same time it was afraid of the political effects of that aggression on the Himalayan states of Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. Therefore it very much wanted to get the aggression vacated, but was not prepared to achieve that either by force of arms or with the help of China as it might lead to very embarassing results. H.M. Durand, Secretary to the Government of India, summed up the situation in the following words:

> There remains the unpleasant fact that the Tibetans are holding a piece of Sikkim. They might go back when they know that our Mission has broken up, but they may not and if not the political effect would be decidedly bad. Tibet and China do undoubtedly exercise a certain influence in Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal, but we do not want that influence increased and solidified. Sikkim stands in a very peculiar position. It is by treaty practically an Indian feudatory state.... Nevertheless, the Maharaja is much in the hands of the Tibetans. It will, I fear, be difficult to get them out of the country if they take fancy of staying there and assert.. claims to suzerainty. Any discussion on these points with China might have very embarassing results. (1)

---

(1) Official note by H.M. Durand, 2 August 1886. F.S.F., September 1886, 413-76 (K.W. 1).

Macaulay proposed to the Government of India that he should be deputed to the Sikkim-Tibet frontier to discuss the matter with the Amban and representatives of Tibet. The Government rejected the proposal as it felt that any advance by him across the British border would probably be misconstrued by the Chinese and might lead to "embarassing collision or rebuff". (2) Moreover, Dufferin felt that "whatever is done in reference to the threatened aggression of the Tibetans, should not be done through Mr. Macaulay". (3) He, therefore instructed, Macaulay to break up his Mission "completely and expediously". (4)

Attitude of the Maharaja

The Tibetans showed no signs of withdrawal from their position at Lingtu, even when they learnt that the Macaulay Mission had been abandoned. Instead they took steps to consolidate their position by building a fort at that place. The Maharaja of Sikkim, Thothab Namgyal, who was then staying in the Chumbi valley of Tibet supported the Tibetan action and declared that the land in occupation really belonged to Tibet, even though Sikkim as a matter of grace was allowed to use it. He maintained that Tibet had asserted its rights and resumed the tract as "the Sikkim people have exposed their country to the English like meat before a dog". (5)

---

(2) Telegram of Government of India to Macaulay, 4 August 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 453.

(3) F.S.E., 1886, 413-75 (K.W. 1).

(4) Telegram of Government of India to Macaulay, n. 2.

(5) Quoted in the note on 'Tibetan Aggression in Sikkim" by W. Oldham, Dy. Commissioner of Darjeeling, 31 July 1886. F.S.E., September 1886, 473.

The action of the Maharaja in supporting the Tibetan claims was not surprising as he himself was a half Tibetan, while his mother and wife were pure Tibetans. As already noted in the last chapter, he was under the influence of his Tibetan wife whom he had married in 1880. She became the chief advocate of the Tibetan point of view in the Sikkim Darbar. Further, the Maharaja, in contravention of Article Seven of the Treaty of 1861 with the Government of India, appointed Ex-Dewan Namguay as his Minister at Chumbi. As a matter of fact, the Maharaja's action was the logical outcome of his secret treaty with Tibet which he had signed at a place called Galing in Tibet in 1886. The treaty was in the form of a petition from the Maharaja to the 'Amban'. It ran as follows:

> ... from the time of Chogal Penchoo Namguay (the first Raja of Sikkim) all our Rajas and other subjects have obeyed the orders of China.... You have ordered us by strategy or force to stop the passage ... between Sikkim and British territory, but we are small and the Sarkar (the Government of India) is great, and we may not succeed, and may then fall into the mouth of the tiger-lion. In such a crisis, if you, as our old friend, can make some arrangement, even then in good and evil we will not leave the shelter of the feet of China and Tibet.... We all, King and Subjects, priests and laymen, honestly promise to prevent persons from crossing the boundary. (6)

To prevent further mischief, the Government of Bengal reminded the Maharaja that his support to Tibet was a violation of Articles 19 and 20 of 1861 Sikkim Treaty with the Government of India. (7) He was therefore asked to return at once to his

---

(6) Quoted in H.H. Risley, ed., The Sikhim Gazetteer (Calcutta, 1894), p. viii.

(7) Articles 19 and 20 of 1861 treaty respectively forbade Sikkim to cede or lease any part of its territory to another state without British permission, or allow passage of armed forces through its territory without British consent.

capital. (8) The Maharaja paid no heed to that advice.

The Suggestions of the Bengal Government 1886

The Government of Bengal was very much worried of the continued Tibetan presence in Sikkim as it was causing alarm among the inhabitants of Darjeeling and also resulted in a severe damage to the British prestige in the Himalayan states. Sir Rivers Thompson, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, wanted that the Government of India should take steps to secure the immediate withdrawal of the Tibetans from Lingtu. For securing this object he made three alternative suggestions namely 1) negotiations with Tibetan frontier officials, 2) intervention of China, and 3) use of force. As to the first suggestion, he felt that negotiations with local officers were of no use. The second proposal, that is, China's intervention was mentioned casually and not discussed fully. He felt that as a final resort, force had to be used. (9)

The Government of India was not favourably disposed to the use of force as it felt that the local Tibetan authorities might appeal to Lhasa and Peking. It was afraid that the result of such an appeal cannot be foreseen, but in all likelihood it may find itself involved in a quarrel with China which was likely to intervene in the dispute to re-assert its suzerain

---

(8) Letter of Dy. Commissioner of Darjeeling to the Maharaja of Sikkim dated 28 July 1886. Quoted in Oldham's note, n. 5.

(9) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 13 September 1886. F.S.E., October 1886, 543.

rights over Sikkim. As a matter of fact in certain Government of India circles the suzerain rights of China over Sikkim were recognised. G.S. Forbes, Under Secretary to the Government of India noted that:

> Sikkim is undoubtedly a tributary to Lhassa, and is commonly so regarded by all the inhabitants. The payment of tribute to Lhassa means in the last resort suzerainty of China. (10)

Further, he felt that China was aware of its rights over Sikkim. He noted:

> The claim of China upon Sikkim as a feudal state of the empire is, ... well known at Peking Foreign Office. This is confirmed by the conversation which Mr. Macaulay had with Viceroy Li.... In examining a map of India and talking about Chinese suzerain rights Li asked Macaulay to point out on the map of the Sikkim territory with the name of which he appeared to be quite familiar, as he wished to see our red line drawn around it. The significance of this allusion is evident. (11)

In order to avoid the embarassing question of the de-jure status of Sikkim, the Government of India thought that it would be most prudent to leave the Tibetans alone for the moment and to see whether a "delay of few weeks or months may not end in their quite retirement". (12)

The expectation was belied. The Tibetans showed their intention to annex Lingtu permanently by "consecrating" the spot. To the Bengal Government the situation was annoying.

---

(10) Official note of G.S. Forbes, Under Secretary, Government of India, 19 September 1883. F.S.P., October 1886, 543-553 (K.W. 1).

(11) Ibid.

(12) Letter of Government of India to Government of Bengal, 9 October 1886. F.S.P., October 1886, 553.

Therefore it once again asked the Government of India to use force and suggested a "local treatment" i.e. the expulsion of the Tibetans either by the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling or by the Sikkim Dewan supported by British arms. (13) Once again the Government of India rejected the suggestion as it feared that any forceful expulsion of the Tibetans from Lingtu might be viewed by the Chinese as an attempt to force a passage into Tibet. It further stated:

> It is, ... of far greater importance to prove that the terms of the Burma-Chinese Convention have been, and will be scrupulously respected, than to get rid of troublesome handful of men at Langthu. (14)

Dufferin was more anxious to settle with China all the questions relating to the newly acquired territory of Burma. He thought that the problem of Tibetans in Sikkim could afford to wait a little longer. Moreover he was afraid that any forceful expulsion of the Tibetans from Lingtu might result in all stoppage of trade on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier. In view of these considerations, all that the Bengal Government allowed was to warn the Maharaja of Sikkim of the "probable consequences of his practical abandonment of Sikkim". (15)

As the Tibetans did not vacate Lingtu even by end of 1886, the Government of India thought that the impasse cannot be resolved without the intervention of Sir John Walsham, the British

---

(13) F.S.E., February 1887, 288-300 (K.W. 1).

(14) Letter of Government of India to Government of Bengal, 20 January 1887. F.S.E., February 1887, 297.

(15) Ibid.

Minister at Peking. Therefore on 20 January 1887, the Government of India requested Walsham to seek the Chinese intervention for the withdrawal of the Tibetans from Lingtu provided that:

> any request for the withdrawal of the Tibetans should not be based on their being within the limits of Sikkim nor even that your Excellency should mention the fact that their position is in Sikkim, because any mention of the boundary might give rise to a specific assertion of China's suzerainty over Sikkim, which it is very desirable to avoid. (16)

New Suggestions of the Bengal Government 1887

While the Government of India was in correspondence with Walsham, Sir Rivers Thompson made certain new suggestions to the former. Firstly, he wanted that Maharaja Thothab Namgyal might be invited to Darjeeling to enter into a new treaty with the Government of India, so that the weaknesses of the 1861 Treaty regarding the status of Sikkim, the right of the Maharaja to levy transit duties, and his privilege to reside in the Chumbi valley of Tibet, could be removed. Secondly he wanted that the Maharaja might be used as a mediator to carry the Viceroy's letter of warning to the Tibetan Government, intimating that the intruders at Lingtu would be expelled from that place if they do not withdraw by 1 October 1887. Thirdly, he suggested that Tibet might be asked to send representatives to meet the British officials, to demarcate the Sikkim-Tibet boundary. (17) In order to induce the Maharaja to enter into a new treaty,

---

(16) Letter of Government of India to Walsham, 20 January 1887. F.S.E., February 1887, 298.

(17) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 18 March 1887. F.S.E., June 1887, 280.

Sir Rivers Thompson recommended to the Government of India that the annual allowances of the former might be increased from Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 18,000.

The Government of India accepted the first two suggestions of Sir Rivers Thompson but rejected his last one on the ground that time was not ripe for entering into direct negotiations with Tibet for the demarcation of Sikkim-Tibet boundary. (18)

The suggestion of Sir Rivers Thompson to invite the Maharaja of Sikkim to Darjeeling to make him enter into a new treaty was a shrewd move, for the Maharaja's visit to Darjeeling would be an appropriate sequence to his prolonged stay at Chumbi and his association there with the anti-British party. Secondly it would give confidence to the people of Sikkim that the Government of India was determined neither to set aside the reigning family, nor to abandon the state to the Tibetan faction and their instigators across the frontier.

In March 1887, the Government of Bengal sent an invitation to Maharaja Thothab Namgyal asking him to visit Darjeeling on or before 13 June 1887. Meanwhile the Tibetans showed further indications of making their annexation of Lingtu permanent by levying taxes. Sir Steuart Bayley, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was worried about the likely repercussions of the continued Tibetan occupation of Lingtu, on the Sikkimese. He informed the Government of India that its policy of

> non-interference can only be interpreted by them (the Sikkimese), by the Tibetans and by our own people as a sign of weakness and the end is

---

(18) Letter of Government of India to Government of Bengal, 13 May 1887. F.S.E., June 1887, 289.

> likely to be further aggression on the part of the Tibetans, while the people of Sikkim finding we do not stir a finger to help them will gravitate towards Tibet and accept the policy imposed on them from there. (19)

To avoid such a contingency he advocated the use of force rather than acquiesce permanently in the Tibetan usurpation. But he felt that the problem could be solved by making a reference to China, acknowledging its paramount position in Tibet. (20)

Maharaja declines to visit Darjeeling

The Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal, declined the invitation of the Government of Bengal to visit Darjeeling on the lame excuse that he had not received a reply to the letter which he had addressed to the Government of Tibet on the subject of construction of a fort at Lingtu.

The Lieutenant-Governor renewed the invitation for October 1887 and warned the Maharaja that if he chose to disregard the invitation, other measures would be taken to put an end to the "complicated condition of affairs" in Sikkim. He further informed him that all future correspondence of Government of India with the kingdom would be made with its two notables, Khangsa Dewan and the Phodang Lama, who would be regarded for the time being as the responsible administrators of the kingdom. (21) The Bengal Government resorted to this action as it learnt that the

---

(19) Letter of Sir Steuart Bayley to Mackenzie Wallace, Personal Secretary to Viceroy, 24 May 1887. F.S.E., 1887, 293-295 (K.W. 3).

(20) Ibid.

(21) F.S.E., July 1887, 261.

Maharaja had contemplated appointing the pro-Tibetan Yangthang Kazi as the head of the Government. (22)

The Maharaja declined the renewed invitation of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to visit Darjeeling on the ground that he had been ordered by the Chinese and Tibetan authorities not to cross into the British territory. He informed the Government of Bengal that he was bound to China and Tibet by the Treaty signed by him in 1886. Further he protested against the Bengal Government's orders providing for the administration of his kingdom in the hands of the Khangsa Dewan and the Phodung Lama during his absence. He demanded the payment of his annual allowance which the Government of India had suspended in 1886. (23)

The letter of the Maharaja is very important as it not only contained a definite statement of his submission to the Governments of Tibet and China, but also because of the fact that it practically amounted to a repudiation of all his engagements with the Government of India by which he was bound not to spend more than three months a year in Tibet. After staying in Tibet for about two years, in spite of the repeated remonstrances of the Government of Bengal, he declared himself unable to meet the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal at Darjeeling on the ground that

---

(22) Yangthang Kazi was for several years Sikkim's vakeel (agent) at Darjeeling. He resigned that office in 1884, and left for Chumbi where he became the adviser of the Maharaja's mother who had great influence over her son.

(23) Letter of Maharaja of Sikkim to Government of Bengal, dated nil, Received on 8 September 1887. F.S.E., January 1888, 2.

In 1886, the Government of India suspended the annual allowance of Rs. 12,000 to the Maharaja as he refused to return to his capital Gangtok from Chumbi in Tibet where he was then staying.

he had been forbidden to do so by the Tibetan Government and the Amban at Lhasa.

The reason for the Maharaja's action was obvious. He concluded from the weak policy of the Government of India that it did not mean business. He was asked to return to his capital as long ago as September 1886, he declined; he was invited to visit Darjeeling in June 1887, again he declined; the invitation was repeated for October 1887; once again he declined; yet beyond the stoppage of his pension nothing came of all this. The only inference he could draw was that the Government of India was afraid of China and Tibet as strong powers. It was true that he had lost his annual allowance and had entertained some indistinct fear that something might happen, but the Tibetan danger being clear and manifest prevailed. Further he was surrounded by persons wholly Tibetan in feeling whom he could not disobey.

The letter of the Maharaja convinced Sir Steuart Bayley, of the dangers involved in the policy of inaction of the Government of India. He was afraid that the Maharaja's refusal to visit Darjeeling together with the Tibetan occupation of Lingtu may force the pro-British Lepcha faction to make a submission to Tibet. Moreover he felt that the process of the decline of their influence in Sikkim was so rapid that unless some means of checking it be speedily adopted, they would soon find themselves face to face with the necessity of re-conquering Sikkim from the pro-Tibetan faction. (24) He was convinced that:

---

(24) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 28 September 1887. F.S.E., January 1888, 1.

> the occupation of Lingtu is not an isolated measure of aggression taken by the local authorities on their own motion, but a part of the general policy adopted by Tibet of controlling the affairs of Sikkim in a spirit hostile to the British Government. (25)

The inaction of the Government of India was commented upon both in England and India. In England, the Chambers of Commerce of Manchester and Leeds began to press the Government to open Tibet for trade and pointed out that if the British did not hurry up and open Tibet for trade, they might well find themselves forestalled by another nation. (26) In India, the tea planters were very much alarmed at the presence of the Tibetans in Sikkim, and feared for their considerable investment in territory the title to which might soon be in dispute. (27) In view of the above fears, Dufferin decided to expel the Tibetans from Lingtu by force, without further delay. He conveyed his decision to Walsham.

Walsham's Attempts

Walsham had already made informal approaches to the Tsungli Yamen, the Chinese Foreign Office, on this matter, but did not specify to them that the Tibetans were in Sikkim territory as he felt that "there might be considerable awkwardness if a question of jurisdictional rights were stated". (28) But on learning that

---

(25) Ibid.

(26) Alastair Lamb, Britain and Chinese Central Asia (London, 1960), p. 182.

(27) Risley, n. 6, pp. xv-xvi.

(28) Letter of Walsham to Dufferin, 1 November 1887. F.S.E., January 1888, 36.

the Government of India decided to expel the Tibetans by force, he intimated to the yamen, the place of the Tibetan aggression. The Yamen, thereupon requested Walsham that nothing decisive should be done until they receive a report of the situation from Lhasa. He was requested to persuade the Government of India, pending amicable settlement, to postpone its decision to expel the Tibetans by force since that "might affect friendly relations".(29)

Throughout the winter of 1887-88 the Yamen and the Chinese legation at London fought hard to delay the expulsion of the Tibetans. Sir Halliday Macartney, the Secretary of the Chinese Legation at London, requested the British Foreign Office that the proposed measures to drive out the Tibetans from Lingtu might be postponed since his Government had sent orders to the Amban to secure the withdrawal of the Tibetan force. (30) In view of these requests the Viceroy deferred the action till 15 March 1888. (31)

Paul's deputation to Sikkim November 1887

As soon as the Government of India decided to expel the Tibetans by force, the Government of Bengal deputed A.W. Paul, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling to visit Gangtok, the new capital of Sikkim, in the beginning of November 1887. He was

---

(29) Telegram of Walsham to Salisbury, 19 November 1887. F.S.E., January 1888, 37.

(30) Letter of the British Foreign Office to India Office, 9 December 1887. F.S.E., January 1888, 168.

(31) Letter of India Office to British Foreign Office, 15 December 1887. F.S.E., February 1888, 171.

asked to ascertain the actual state of things there and beyond the frontier; the general feeling of the population etc.; and also to induce the Maharaja to return to his country. The real object of Paul's visit was to boost up the morale of the pro-British faction which had begun to lose heart due to the prolonged absence of the Maharaja in Tibet and frequent threats and aggressive attitude of the Tibetan party. Paul found that Yangthang Kazi, about whom we referred to earlier, and the monks of Pemionchi, who were largely recruited from Tibet supported the Tibetan faction, whereas all the officers of the Sikkim Government supported the British. In spite of that they were attached to the Maharaja's family. (32)

In December 1887, the Maharaja Thothab Namgyal returned to his kingdom. His return was an indication that he had realised the consequences of disregarding the warnings of the Government of India. His return, though a welcome development so far as the Government of India was concerned, had put the members of the pro-British faction in an awkward position. They were afraid that the Maharaja may take violent measures against them for supporting the Government of India, during his absence. To inspire them with confidence, the Bengal Government, stationed a party of Reserve Police at Kalimpong.

Fresh appeals for postponement of expulsion

In December 1887, the Government of India intimated to the Tibetan military officer at Lingtu that the British forces

---

(32) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 10 February 1888. F.S.E., February 1888, 188C.

would occupy that place if it was not vacated by 15 March 1888. On learning about this, the Tsungli Yamen and the Chinese Legation at London respectively requested Walsham and Lord Salisbury the British Foreign Secretary, to get the action postponed by few months on the ground that their new Amban was on his way to Lhasa. The Chinese Government hoped that the British would recognize the desirability of evacuation by the Tibetans at Lingtu by "the pacification of China than by the Indian Government having reccurse to arms".

Salisbury was not convinced of the need to delay the action of the Viceroy. Thereupon Dufferin intimated Walsham that he would not postpone the proposed action on 15 March 1888, but assured him that the British troops would not enter Tibet unless they were attacked. (33)

General Graham's Expedition

In March 1888, a force of about 2,000 men under the command of General Graham took the field. A.W. Paul and J.C. White, an Executive Engineer of the Bengal Service, were attached to it as Political and Assistant Political Officers respectively. The force encountered little opposition and on 21 March 1888 it took Lingtu after a brief clash with the Tibetans. This was the first time the Tibetans had clashed with the army of a Western power and they were badly defeated by the disciplined and well-equipped British Indian army. They were not dismayed by the British show of force. Exactly two

---

(33) Telegram of Dufferin to Walsham, 11 February 1888. F.S.E., February 1888, 188B.

months after their expulsion from Lingtu, on 21 May 1888, they made a surprise attack on the British position at a place called Gnatong in Sikkim and nearly succeeded in capturing Sir Steuart Bayley who happened to be there at that time. The attack was repulsed with heavy loss to the Tibetans. Graham wanted to advance across the border into Tibet, but the Government refused to give him the necessary permission. (34)

The news of the Tibetan defeat caused considerable alarm in China. The Chinese Legation in London made enquiries with the British Foreign Office whether Dufferin had ordered the Indian army to cross the Tibetan frontier as was alleged in The Times of 24 May 1888. (35) The Chinese were, however, assured that the Indian army would not enter the Tibetan territory, unless attacked by the Tibetans, in which case it would enter their territory to make the victory complete. (36)

After the attack on Gnatong, all remained quiet on the frontier. The Government of India informed Tibet that it was prepared to consider any overtures the latter may desire to make. Tibet, however, ignored all such feelers. (37)

The defeat of the Tibetans resulted in a slight change in the attitude of the leaders of the Tibetan faction towards the Government of India. They became more submissive to the

---

(34) "North and North-Eastern Frontier Tribes" in Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India, vol. 4, compiled in Intelligence Branch, Division of the Chief of the Staff, Army Headquarters, India (Simla, 1907), p. 55.

(35) Telegram of Secretary of State to Viceroy, 28 May 1888. F.S.E., June 1888, 304.

(36) Telegram of Viceroy to Secretary of State, 28 May 1888. F.S.E., June 1888, 305.

(37) F.S.E., July 1888, 344.

British than formerly. Barmik Kazi, a leader of the pro-Tibetan faction, voluntarily submitted his dispute with the Ralong monastery to the decision of Paul. But in general their attitude was one of neutrality as "they still fear to throw in their lot with us, as they are still doubtful whether they will get any thing from us, and dread in default of our protection, the anger of the Tibetans". (38)

The attitude of the Maharaja was "unsatisfactory". He did not give any information of the Tibetan attack on Gnatong even though his half-brother Tinley Namgyal was aware of the Tibetan plans. (39) He allowed his Maharani to visit her father in the Chumbi, and on 27 April 1888 sent his three children to his mother who was also there.

Final defeat of the Tibetans

In September 1888, the Tibetans were found to be concentrating their army near Gnatong. Therefore, General Graham made an attack and pushed them across the border. On 26 September 1888, he advanced into the Chumbi Valley, but he vacated it the next day. (40)

---

(38) Letter of Paul to Government of Bengal, 9 July 1888. F.S.E., August 1888, 156.

(39) Ibid.

(40) Letter of the Government of India to the Secretary of State for India, 8 October 1888. F.S.E., October 1888, 126.

During General Graham's advance into the Chumbi valley, a remarkable map of Sikkim was found in a house at Rinchingong. In that map the Tibetan border was shown as extending up to the Rishi river i.e. about thirty miles in advance of the recognised frontier. Although the borders of Tibet were to this extent enlarged, the assertion of Tibetan paramount authority over Sikkim was not indicated

...contd. on next page

Soon after the expulsion of the Tibetans from Gnatong, a small force of British Indian army entered Gangtok. This measure alarmed the Maharaja. He fled to Chumbi, but was seized by the British army which had occupied that area for one day on 26 September 1888. Though he was asked to return to his kingdom, his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal and his half-brother Tinley Namgyal were allowed to remain in Tibet.

The real reason for the marching of the troops to Gangtok was to re-assert the British position in Sikkim which had become critical by September 1888. The Tibetan faction re-asserted itself and there was complete collapse of the leading men of the British faction. Col. Mitchell, an officer attached to the expeditionary force, felt that "as a political move the marching of troops to the capital of Sikkim has had a beneficial effect; the cordiality with which we have everywhere been greeted, and the hospitality received show that the friendly relations have been established". (41)

Contd. from previous page

> on the map, for Sikkim was painted red while Tibet was painted yellow. Darjeeling district was shown as belonging to Sikkim as it was painted by the lighter shade of the red colour. H.H. Risley afterwards, Secretary to the Government of India, commented upon this map thus:
>
> > As a political manifesto, the map is of peculiar interest at the present time, and one is disposed to wonder that our barbarous neighbour should have been so ready to adopt one of the characteristic weapons of modern diplomacy.
> >
> > - The Sikhim Gazetteer, n. 6, p. ix.

(41) Quoted in Overseas Expeditions, n. 34, p. 61.

The defeat of the Tibetans was severe and the British power was shown in unmistakable terms to the Maharaja of Sikkim and his people. The Government of India felt that "all along the northern border, not only in Sikkim and Tibet, but also in Bhutan and Nepal, the events of the last few years will have an excellent effect". (42)

The Maharaja on his return threw himself on the clemency of the Government of India explaining that his flight was caused by fear and bad advice of those around him. Paul advised him to go to Darjeeling and make personal submission to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, but the latter decided that the Maharaja need not come to Darjeeling but remain at Gangtok. (43)

The Lieutenant-Governor's decision not to receive the Maharaja was based on the fear that it might be represented by the Tibetans and the Chinese that the Maharaja had been taken off as a prisoner by the British. He feared that it might lead to a further procastination on the part of the Tibetans or possibly even to Amban's delaying his journey to the frontier in order to ascertain what has actually happened.

Negotiations

The defeat of the Tibetans convinced the Chinese that if they failed to come to terms with the British, they might lose their influence in Tibet. Therefore they announced that their Amban at Lhasa, Shen Tai, would proceed to the frontier to open negotiations with the British. On 21 December 1888, the Amban

---

(42) Letter of Government of India to Secretary of State, n. 40.

(43) F.S.E., March 1889, 29.

arrived at Gnatong and the talks began. (44)

The Government of India was represented by its Foreign Secretary H.M. Durand and A.W. Paul, the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling. It announced that it was taking part in the talks out of the consideration that "the Chinese Government have shown a very conciliatory spirit towards England throughout the course of the Tibetan difficulty". Durand was instructed that the main objects of the negotiations were the "formal recognition of their exclusive supremacy in Sikkim and restoration of friendly relations with Tibet". He was cautioned not to enter into any discussions with the Chinese regarding Sikkim since it was a "feudatory of the British Empire and its position as such was defined by the treaty". He was also asked to make it clear that "the Government of India cannot recognize the existence of any foreign rights or influence within the state (of Sikkim) and will not permit any interference with its affairs on the part of any foreign power". As to the Sikkim-Tibet boundary, the Government of India felt that there was no need to define it as that was already established. (45)

From the very beginning the talks headed towards a failure. The Amban, Shen Tai, refused to recognize the dispute as one between the British and the Tibetans. He took the ground that Tibet was part of the Chinese empire and the rights and interests of Tibet were the rights and interests of China. He desired to take the matter entirely into his hands and prevent any direct

---

(44) Overseas Expeditions, n. 34, p. 61.

(45) Memorandum of Instructions given by Dufferin to Durand, dated 16 November 1888. F.S.E., May 1889, 327.

dealings on the part of the British with Tibet. He engaged to obtain the formal assent of Lhasa Government to any agreement he may make, but made it clear that 'shaffes' or Tibetan councillors then in Chumbi were wholly incompetent to affix their signatures on that agreement. (46)

Though the British had recognized the suzerainty of China over Tibet, Durand refused to accept the contention of the Amban as he had refused to grant the British any trade facilities in Tibet on the ground that the lives of the British subjects other than Buddhists would be unsafe in Tibetan territory. Durand felt that the Amban while claiming "full rights and privileges appertaining to China as suzerain of Tibet ... declines to recognize the existence of corresponding responsibilities". (47)

As regards Sikkim, the Amban agreed to acknowledge the de facto supremacy of the British, provided the Maharaja continued to pay tribute to the Grand Lama and to the Government of Tibet, and pay homage to the Amban at Lhasa. He further demanded that the Maharaja should be allowed to retain his dress and wear the hat and button conferred upon him by the Chinese Government. (48)

The Chinese terms were not acceptable to Durand as he felt that the question of homage was not a mere point of ceremonial, but an important one underlying the British position as a suzerain power. He refused to yield on this point and

---

(46) Durand's Memorandum on the negotiations with Amban dated 1 January 1889. F.S.E., May 1889, 325.

(47) Ibid.

(48) Ibid.

observed that:

> If we give away in respect to Sikkim, we must be prepared to do so, at some future time, not only with regard to Bhutan and Nepal, but with regard to Kashmir and her feudatories, such as Hunza and Nagar, and with regard to any of the smaller Himalayan states which may have committed themselves. We might even have China claiming suzerain rights over Darjeeling and the Bhutan Dooars, which we acquired from her so-called feudatories. (49)

Durand, therefore, recommended to the Government of India to refuse to recognize "any transaction on the part of the Raja of Sikkim which can be regarded in the light of a homage to a foreign power". He, however, thought that the Government of India should make certain minor concessions to the Chinese. These were, 1) that the Government of India should leave the question of trade for separate consideration and settlement as it was difficult to obtain trade facilities without the use or show of force; 2) that as an act of courtesy to the Chinese Government, the Maharaja of Sikkim, Thothab Namgyal, might be permitted to wear the hat and button conferred on him by the Chinese; 3) that the Maharaja of Sikkim might be permitted to send annually to the Dalai Lama and other heads of the Buddhist Church suitable letters and presents; 4) and that, as regards the Amban himself, the Maharaja of Sikkim might be permitted to send in future annual letters of purely complimentary character "which should not be couched in the language of an inferior addressing a superior or be regarded in the light of an homage". (50)

---

(49) Durand's Memorandum on the course of Negotiations with Amban, dated nil. F.S.E., May 1889, 382.

(50) Durand's Memo on Negotiations, 1 January 1889, n. 46.

Durand suggested that these concessions may be given only in the last resort to prevent the negotiations from breaking down. He, however, felt that the Amban might not accept them as they fell short of his demand. As a matter of fact the attitude of the Amban was threatening. He told Durand that in the event of the failure of the talks war might break out between China and England. To that Durand replied that he had no doubt as to the result and added that it would not be decided in Sikkim, but in China. On hearing Durand's reply the Amban "shut up like a telescope" and begged Durand not to take his (Amban's) words seriously, but to consider them as a joke". (51)

Durand wanted that the Government of India should give up the negotiations if the Amban refused to accept its terms. Moreover, he felt that the continued presence of the Amban on the frontier was doing damage to Indian interests, since the Maharaja of Sikkim tried to pay his "respects" to the Amban. (52) After the breakdown of the talks, Durand felt that the Government of India should occupy Phari and enforce a settlement on Tibet without referring to China. He felt that Tibet would come to its knees once Phari was occupied. He noted that the outcome of such a policy would be that;

> We should put an end once and for all to our troubles with Tibet, and to our exclusion from that country, which would then be opened to our trade. We should entirely break the influence of the Tibetans, not only in Sikkim, but also

---

(51) Percy Sykes, Sir Mortimer Durand (London, 1926), p. 166.

(52) The Maharaja of Sikkim sent a letter of apology to the Amban saying that he could not pay his respects to him as he was prevented by the British troops.

> in Bhutan; and we should greatly raise our reputation in the Himalayan states. (53)

He however admitted that such a policy might be "resented and resisted" by the Chinese. Moreover, it would be unpopular in England and involve some immediate expense. As an alternative he suggested that they should make a simple declaration of their position in Sikkim and threaten strong action if their rights were again violated. He felt that, though the above measure appeared to be "very lame and impotent" it would create a feeling in the border that the Amban had failed to impose discredited terms upon them. (54)

Exterment of the Maharaja of Sikkim

Since the activities of Thothab Namgyal, in trying to show his subordination to the Amban, caused considerable embarassment to the Government of India, Durand suggested that the Maharaja might be removed to the British territory as it would have "good effect" upon both the Maharaja and the Amban. (55) He further suggested that the Maharaja should be prevented from visiting Chumbi. The consequence of that action, he asserted, would be that all questions of homage and the like would disappear unless the Chinese deliberately raise them. The Government of India accepted the suggestion and removed the members of the Sikkim Royal family to Kalimpong where they were

---

(53) Durand's Memo on the course of Negotiations with Amban, n. 49.

(54) Ibid.

(55) Letter of Durand to Mackenzie Wallace, Private Secretary to Viceroy, 3 January 1889. F.S.E., May 1889, 259-351 (K.W. 2).

kept under house arrest. After the removal of the Maharaja to Kalimpong, J.C. White was appointed as Political Officer for Sikkim and posted at Gangtok to look after the administration of the state. A representative Council selected from the leading men of the state was created to assist him in the administration.

Breakdown of the Talks

The Amban refused to give up his demand of "letters and presents". The Government of India therefore informed him that the talks have ended. That made the Chinese uneasy, for they felt that unless they come to an agreement with the British, their influence in Tibet would be threatened. Therefore they announced that James Hart, brother of Sir Richard Hart, Inspector-General of Chinese Maritime Customs, would resume the negotiations.

The Government of India was not very anxious to re-open the negotiations, unless the Chinese were prepared to accept its exclusive supremacy in Sikkim and recognise the frontier indicated by it. Walsham, the British Minister at Peking, protested against this rigid attitude of the Government of India. (56) Lord Cross, Secretary of State for India, advised the new Viceroy of India, Lord Lansdowne, to resume talks with the Chinese, without insisting on any preliminary basis since the British Foreign Office considered the points in dispute were to a great extent mere matters of form. (57)

---

(56) Telegram of Walsham to British Foreign Office, 20 April 1889. F.S.E., May 1889, 641.

(57) Telegram of Secretary of State to Viceroy, 30 April 1889. F.S.E., May 1889, 650.

Resumption of Talks

In April 1889 talks were re-opened. A.W. Paul was the British delegate and James Hart represented the Chinese. Hart produced as the basis for discussion a draft article of agreement which ran as follows:

> Sikkim and Tibet boundary to remain as before, and British to act on Sikkim side in accordance with the Treaty with Raja, and Raja to send letters and presents as usual. China to engage that Tibetan troops shall neither cross nor disturb Sikkim frontier, and England to engage that British troops shall similarly respect Tibetan frontier. (58)

This article did not meet the requirements of the Government of India. It wanted clarification on three points 1) whether the draft meant a definite re-assertion of the Amban's demand to receive from the Maharaja, for himself and the Tibetan Government, the same letters and presents as were demanded in January 1888, 2) whether it recognized the full powers of the Government of India to make any changes that might be expedient in the treaty with Sikkim, which have been found insufficient and have been violated by the Maharaja, and 3) whether it provided against the Tibetan interference in the internal affairs of Sikkim, and that China guarantees that the Tibetan influence would not be used directly or indirectly to disturb their relations with the state. (59)

As to the last two points of clarification regarding the Government of India's right to make changes in the Treaty with

---

(58) Letter of Hart to Paul, 29 April 1889. F.S.E., May 1889, 617-655 (K.W. 1).

(59) F.S.E., June 1889, 101-111 (K.W. 1).

Sikkim, and the intervention of Tibet in the internal affairs of Sikkim, Hart told Paul that the Government of India had "a perfectly free hand in Sikkim" and that China guarantees that the Tibetan influence would not be used directly or indirectly "so as to disturb India Government's relations with that state". (60)

As to the first point of clarification, Hart explained that the draft article was intended to stipulate that the same letters and presents which used to be sent by the Maharaja to the Chinese and the Tibetan authorities at Lhasa, should continue to be sent to the same personages. But he added that the letters and presents might be sent with the permission of the Government of India. He stated as his personal opinion that the letters are the letters of courtesy, not implying homage, and articles sent with the letters and presents are not tribute. (61) In other words, Hart's proposals did not make any advance over those made by the Amban in January 1888. Hart maintained that Sikkim, though a British protected state, had never been annexed by the British. Consequently, China cannot be expected to make a treaty "ignoring relations formerly and still existing" with Sikkim which the British had not destroyed and Chinese not consented to annul. He therefore refused to yield on the question of "letters and presents". (62)

Lord Lansdowne was also equally determined not to yield on this point. He felt that any concession on this point would

---

(60) F.S.E., June 1889, 107.

(61) Ibid.

(62) Letter of Hart to Paul, 19 June 1889. F.S.E., September 1889, 13.

be detrimental to their authority in Kashmir and elsewhere. He was convinced that further negotiations between Paul and Hart would not solve this impasse.' At the same time he was not prepared to entrust the negotiations to Sir John Walsham, the British Minister at Peking, since he feared that it would "sacrifice ... Indian interests and do serious harm". Therefore he recommended to the British Government that the negotiations might be abandoned. (63)

Lord Salisbury did not accept that suggestion. In July 1889, the British Foreign Office informed the India Office that:

> Lord Salisbury would greatly deprecate anything like an abrupt rejection of Chinese proposals, or an absolute denial of rights to which, however shadowy in their nature, the Chinese Government are found to attach so much importance. Such a denial is almost certain to lead to their re-assertion in some inconvenient manner. (64)

He, however, agreed that discussions between Hart and Paul should terminate if there was no prospect of agreement or formula to represent the future position of Sikkim. (65)

In August 1889, Hart came with another proposal which also insisted that "the Raja of Sikkim shall continue to send letters and presents to the Chinese and Tibetan authorities as formerly". (66) Lord Lansdowne refused to accept that proposal

---

(63) Telegram of Lord Lansdowne to Lord Cross, 28 June 1889. F.S.E., September 1889, 14.

(64) Letter of British Foreign Office to India Office, 19 July 1889. F.S.E., September 1889, 50.

(65) Ibid.

(66) Telegram of Paul to Government of India, 2 August 1889. F.S.E., September 1889, 26.

and informed Lord Cross, Secretary of State for India, that such an agreement,

> would have remained on record as formal evidence of the success of the Chinese whose reputation, already inconveniently great among our ignorant feudatories, we could not have afforded to increase in this way at our own expense. From one end of the Himalaya to the other we should have weakened our influence. In India it is essential to the stability of our rule that we should permit no attempt at interference by foreign powers with any portion of the Empire. (67)

The Government of India's rejection of Hart's August proposals made the Chinese Government once again very uneasy. China felt that "the Sikkim affair ought not to end thus, and that a specific agreement is essential for the future good understanding on all sides". (68) Therefore in November 1889, Hart submitted to Paul, the revised Chinese proposals, which tried to meet the Government of India's objections regarding letters and presents. The revised proposals offered to recognize India's sole protectorate over Sikkim. The Chinese Government assured Walsham that:

> the external relations of the protected State will be solely conducted by India and consequently the practice of presents and letters to the Tibetan Government would virtually cease. (69)

Signing of the Convention March 1890

Thereupon Lansdowne agreed to re-open negotiations with the Chinese as new proposals recognized British supremacy over

---

(67) Letter of Lord Lansdowne to Lord Cross, 23 August 1889. F.S.E., September 1889, 54.

(68) Letter of Hart to Paul, 23 September 1889. F.S.E., November 1889, 27.

(69) Telegram of Walsham to Lansdowne, 15 November 1889. F.S.E., December 1889, 80.

Sikkim. In December 1889, the Government of India submitted draft proposals to Hart and to Amban. They accepted the proposals with slight modifications, and on 17 March 1890, the Sikkim-Tibet Convention was signed at Calcutta by Lord Lansdowne and the Amban Shan Tai.

Provisions of the Convention

The convention admitted the Government of India's control over the internal and external affairs of Sikkim (Article Two). The boundary between Sikkim and Tibet was placed at the watershed of the Tista river (Article One). It was defined as follows:

> The boundary of Sikkim and Tibet shall be the crest of the mountain range separating the water flowing into the Sikkim Teesta and its affluents from the waters flowing into the Tibetan Mochu and northwards into other rivers of Tibet. The line commences at Mount Gipmochi on the Bhutan frontier and follows the above mentioned parting to the point where it meets Nipal territory.

Article Three provided for the joint Anglo-Chinese guarantee of the Sikkim-Tibet frontier. The questions of trade, pasturage and the method by which official communication between Government of India and the Tibetan Government was to be conducted (Articles Four to Six) were reserved for further discussion and agreement. Article Seven stipulated that within six months of the ratification of the Convention a joint Anglo-Chinese Commission should be constituted to discuss these outstanding questions. (70)

There were many weaknesses in this Convention. First of all, Tibet neither signed the convention nor approved of it. The second weakness was the failure of China to realize that it

---

(70) F.S.E., March 1890, 24.

was not in a position to enforce the Convention on Tibet.

In spite of these weaknesses, the Convention settled once and for all the status of Sikkim, which, for all practical purposes, became a part and parcel of British India and lost its separate existence and identity. Durand in unmistakable terms emphasized this point when he said that "Sikkim is part of the Indian Empire.... It can have no dealings with foreign powers to whose eyes India should be all red from Himalayas to Cape Comerin". (71)

The Trade Regulations 1893

After the conclusion of the Convention, the Government of India suggested to the Chinese Government that the three unsettled matters relating to pasturage, communications and trade should be taken up immediately. China accepted the suggestion and in January 1891 James Hart communicated to Paul an outline of the settlement of those three Reserved Articles. There was no difficulty in arriving at a settlement on the first two matters connected with pasturage and communications. Since China had acknowledged the British protectorate over Sikkim, it agreed to allow the Government of India to make such regulations regarding pasturage as it saw fit. Similarly the problem of communications was settled very easily as the Government of India wanted to communicate not with the Tibetan Government proper but with the Amban at Lhasa.

---

(71) Durand's official note dated 21 May 1889. F.S.E., June 1889, 101-111 (K.W. 1).

It was on the question of trade that difficulties regarding the location of the trade mart and the importation of Indian tea into Tibet cropped up. Over the location of the trade mart the Government of India refused to accept a place called Yatung suggested by the Chinese because of its bad location in the corner of the valley. As an alternative it suggested a place called Phari, the gateway between Lhasa and Bhutan. (72) The Chinese were unable to accept the suggestion because of the fact that the Tibetans were determined not to let the Mart move an inch beyond Yatung. (73)

The Chinese Government, though it was able to sign the 1890 Convention over the head of Tibet, found itself in a difficult position when it came to the question of opening a trade mart within the Tibetan territory. The Government of India, realizing that it had no option but to accept Yatung, made a virtue out of the necessity by informing James Hart that it had agreed to accept Yatung temporerily in consideration of the embarassment that may be caused to China if it were to press for Phari as the trade mart. (74)

Over the question of the importation of Indian tea into Tibet, China insisted that India should not export tea to Tibet, but at the same time wanted that India should allow the import of Chinese brick tea into Sikkim. The Government of India refused

---

(72) Yatung is a small village on the Sikkim-Tibet border in the Chumbi valley.

(73) Letter of James Hart to Paul, 15 September 1891. F.S.E., July 1892, 4.

(74) Letter of Paul to James Hart, 2 January 1892. F.S.E., July 1891, 10A.

to accept this patently unfair proposal. Thereupon China suggested a compromise, namely, that after five years of the signing of the trade agreement "Indian tea may be imported into Tibet at the same rate of duty as the Chinese tea into England".(75) On 5 December 1893, Regulations regarding Trade, Communications and Pasturage, generally known as the Trade Regulations of 1893, were signed at Darjeeling by A.W. Paul for the Government of India and by James Hart and Ho Chang Jung for China. (76)

Provisions of the Convention

The Convention consisted of nine Articles. Articles One to Six dealt with trade. Yatung was declared a mart for purposes of trade with effect from 1 May 1894 (Article One). The British subjects were granted liberty to travel freely to and fro between the Sikkim-Tibet frontier and Yatung (Article two). Import and expert of arms, ammunition and military stores, salt, liquor, intoxicating and narcotic drugs was prohibited (Article three). Trade in other goods was to be duty free for the first five years from the date of the opening of the mart, but after that period, it may be imported into that country at a rate not exceeding that at which Chinese tea was to be imported into England (Article four). Goods passing through the mart were to be examined and registered at its customs house (Article five). All the trade disputes arising in Yatung were to be settled in personal conference of the Chinese frontier officer and British political

---

(75) Letter of James Hart to Lansdowne, 18 April 1893. F.S.E., August 1893, 1-45 (K.W. 2).

(76) C.U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta, 1929), vol. 12, pp. 67-69.

officer for Sikkim (Article six). Article seven provided that the despatches from the Government of India to the Amban were to be handed over to the Chinese frontier officer, while Article eight provided that the despatches from the Amban to the Government of India were to be handed over to the political officer for Sikkim. Article nine dealt with the question of pasturage. It empowered the Government of India to regulate as it saw fit the conditions under which Tibetans might graze their flocks and herds across the Sikkim-Tibet border.

The Trade Convention suffered from the same weaknesses as the Sikkim Convention. The Convention though it concerned Tibet, did not make Tibet a party to it. Neither its signature nor its assent was taken. Many of the problems between the Government of India and Tibet remained unsolved. Articles seven and eight determined the mode of communication between the Government of India and the Amban at Lhasa, but it did not settle the more important problem of communication between the Government of India and Government of Tibet. Finally the problem of importation of Indian tea into Tibet was not clearly decided. Article four simply mentioned that Indian tea might be imported into Tibet. The ambiguity in language was to cause troubles in future.

To conclude, the Convention of 1890 settled once and for all the status of Sikkim as the protectorate of the Government of India. It had thus removed the main weakness of the Treaty of 1861. The second weakness of the 1861 Treaty, relating to the privilege of the Maharaja to stay at Chumbi

for three months in a year, was also removed. The Government of India had made it clear to the Maharaja that he could no longer visit or stay at Chumbi. The Regulations of 1893 though primarily concerned with trade, did not satisfactorily settle the question of the import of Indian tea into Tibet. In this respect, the new treaty was hardly an improvement on the old one. Both suffered from the same weaknesses. Even though they were primarily concerned with Tibet, the Government of Tibet neither signed the treaties nor approved of them. This weakness was responsible for the subsequent difficulties of the Government of India with Tibet.

Chapter Six

RECOGNITION OF SIDKEONG NAMGYAL AS SUCCESSOR TO THE SIKKIM THRONE

It was noted in the last chapter that during the last stages of the Anglo-Chinese negotiations over the status of Sikkim, the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal, was kept under house arrest at Kalimpong since the Government of India felt that he had caused considerable embarassment to the British by trying to show his respect and obedience to the Amban. Nearly a year after the signing of the Sikkim Convention, that is, in February 1891, the Maharaja was allowed to return to his kingdom, but his freedom of movement was restricted and he was asked to stay at one of the three specified places, namely, Tumlong, Gantok and Rabdenchi. He chose Rabdenchi instead of his capital Gangtok since he wanted to avoid the presence of J.C. White, the British Political Officer for Sikkim, with whom his relations were not friendly. In October 1891, the Sikkim Council, which was created during 1889-90 to assist the political officer in the administration of the state, requested the Maharaja to return to his capital Gangtok, but he refused to accede to its request. Thereupon, Sir Steuart Bayley, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, ordered the Maharaja to return to Gangtok and also bring his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal to Sikkim from Tibet where he was then staying. The Maharaja took no notice of these orders. (1)

In January 1892, J.C. White visited Rabdenchi and met the Maharaja in order to explain to him "the importance of obeying

---

(1) "Report on the State of Sikkim for 1891", F.S.E., July 1892, 241-45.

the orders of the Government". The Maharaja agreed to return to his capital, but declined to call back his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal from Tibet, on the ground that it would interfere with his education. The Maharani, who was present at the time of White's interview with the Maharaja expressed her indignation at the restrictions imposed on the movement of the Royal family by remarking that a strong power like the British "should be ashamed to bully a weak power" like Sikkim. She further informed White that it was very hard for them to be told at one time that they might live either at Gangtok, Tumlong or Robdenchi and then be asked to go back to Gangtok. (2)

It is obvious from Maharani's remarks that the Government of India by restricting the movement of the Sikkim Royal family had treated them more like the prisoners of the British, than as the rulers of the kingdom. White did not make any reply to the Maharani's complaints, but before he left Robdenchi for Gangtok, he warned the Maharaja, even though he had agreed to return to his capital, that the consequences of his disobedience of the Lieutenant-Governor's orders would be "very serious". On his return to Gangtok he suggested to the Government of India that the allowances of the Maharaja might be stopped and that his second son, Sidkeong Namgyal be brought to Darjeeling for education, so that, in case of need, he could better serve the British interests. (3)

---

(2) Letter of White to the Dy. Commissioner of Darjeeling, 24 January 1892. F.S.F., June 1892, 149.

(3) Ibid.

Attempted flight of the Maharaja to Tibet

Two months after his interview with White, in March 1892, the Maharaja Thothab Namgyal, started on a journey to several holy places on his way to Gangtok, but instead of returning to his capital he crossed into Nepal along with the Maharani and nine followers in a bid to escape to Tibet. The journey was very arduous and the Maharani lost her daughter on the way. (4) At the Wallang pass on the Nepal-Tibet frontier the Maharaja and the party were arrested by the Nepalese authorities and handed over to the British authorities at Darjeeling. (5) The Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling thought that the Maharaja's attempted flight was due to his desire to meet the Amban at Rinchingong. (6) But this reason seems to be hardly plausible for the Maharaja would not have ventured simply for the sake of meeting the Amban, to embark upon perilous journey by the out of the way route of Wallang. Perhaps the real reason was, the Maharaja's annoyance at the treatment he had received from the Government of India and White. It was no secret that the relations between White and the Maharaja Thothab Namgyal were not at all cordial. As a matter of fact the Maharaja after his arrest refused to speak with White or in his presence and regarded him as his enemy. (7)

---

(4) Letter of White to Dy. Commissioner of Darjeeling, 4 April 1892. F.S.E., June 1892, 164.

(5) Letter of Dy. Commissioner of Darjeeling to Commissioner of Rajshahi Division, 24 March 1892. F.S.E., June 1892, 158.

(6) Ibid.

(7) Letter of Sir C.A. Elliott, Lt. Governor of Bengal to Lord Lansdowne, Viceroy, 7 June 1892. F.S.E., August 1892, 54-72 (K.W. 2).

Internment and temporary deposition of the Maharaja

The Government of India as soon as it got hold of the Maharaja from the Nepalese authorities interned him at a monastery at Darjeeling. The new Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Charles Elliott, wanted to punish the Maharaja 'mildly' for his disobedience of the Bengal Government's order and escapade. He confessed that the Maharaja had become a "puzzling problem" to him and that it was hard to put pressure and deal with such a "savage". (8) Elliott however hoped to get a hold over the Maharaja since the latter dreaded the climate of Darjeeling which was too hot for him and wanted to get back to Sikkim. (8)

The Maharaja's second son, Sidkeong Namgyal, was brought to Darjeeling and arrangements were made for his education. The Lieutenant-Governor directed the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling that Sidkeong should receive education in Hindi and English and that two monks should be brought from Sikkim to instruct him in his religious studies as he was regarded by his countrymen as an 'Avatar' or incarnation of Sidkeong Namgyal, the founder of the Phodung monastery in Sikkim. The Maharaja objected to the education of his son in English on the ground that the prince is an incarnation of a lama; but the Bengal Government informed him that the arrangements would be reconsidered if his eldest son was brought to Darjeeling. It is clear from this that the Government of Bengal by making arrangements for the education of Sidkeong wanted to put pressure on the Maharaja to bring back his eldest son from Tibet.

---

(8) Ibid.

The Government of Bengal was very anxious that the Maharaja's eldest son Tchoda Namgyal should not prolong his stay in Tibet since the British relations with that state were not happy. Therefore after making arrangements for the education of Sidkeong Namgyal, the Government of Bengal sent Nolan, Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division, to interview the Maharaja and induce him to bring back his eldest son from Tibet. The Maharaja once again declined to bring back his eldest son from Tibet on the ground that it would interfere with his education.

After his interview with the Maharaja, Nolan suggested to the Government of India that the former should be 'temporarily' deposed and kept under house arrest. Sir Charles Elliott, supported the proposal of Nolan as he felt that by temporarily deposing the Maharaja the Government of India could exert pressure on him to get back his eldest son from Tibet. Sir Charles Elliott felt that the Maharaja's eldest son, Tchoda Namgyal should not be exposed to anti-British influences in Tibet during his formative period. Moreover he was anxious for the return of Tchoda Namgyal since the succession of the Maharaja's second son, Sidkeong Namgyal, was riddled with inherent difficulties as he was considered, by the people of Sikkim, to be the 'Avatar' or incarnation of the founder of the Phodung monastery and as such ineligible for temporal duties.

Sir Charles Elliott was afraid that the public announcement of the Maharaja's temporary deposition might create an uproar in the press. He, however, felt that the formal announcement of the Maharaja's temporary deposition may be good in three ways: first it would prevent the Dewan and the Kazis of Sikkim from obeying

the Maharaja's orders, if he were to incite them to defy the British authority. Secondly, it might bring about some improvement in Maharaja's own sentiments and lead him to obey the orders of the Government of India. Thirdly, the Maharaja's eldest son Tchoda Namgyal who was believed to be under the control of his relations at Tibet might make an effort on his own part to accept the summons of the Government of India and come to Darjeeling lest he may forfeit his right of succession. In view of all these advantages, Sir Charles Elliott, advised the Government of India to disregard any possible outcry and inform the Maharaja that he was deposed for a period of three years and that the affairs of his kingdom would be managed by the British Political Officer and the Council as it was done before during his absence. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal felt that at the end of three years, the Government of India could decide upon whether to restore the throne to the Maharaja or to instal his second son in his place. He felt that no practical advantage was likely to be gained by withholding the announcement of the Maharaja's temporary deposition and by merely retaining him under surveillance. (9)

The Government of India accepted the suggestion of Sir Elliott and deposed the Maharaja Thothab Namgyal for three years beginning from July 1892. It however withheld the formal announcement of the Maharaja's deposition as it might "provoke excitement or attract attention". (10)

---

(9) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 1 July 1892. F.S.E., August 1892, 64.

(10) Letter of the Government of India to Government of Bengal, 19 July 1892. F.S.E., August 1892, 70.

Sikkim Council's letter to Tchoda Namgyal

After the temporary deposition of Maharaja Thothab Namgyal, the pro-British Sikkim Council addressed a letter to Maharaja's eldest son Tchoda Namgyal making it clear to him that it would be to his advantage to return to Sikkim lest he might imperil his right of succession to the throne. The young prince, in reply, informed the Council that he cannot return until his education was completed or without the orders of the Maharaja. (11)

On receiving the above reply, the Sikkim Council, which was under the influence of White, recommended to the Government of India in November 1892 that the Maharaja's second son Sidkeong Namgyal should succeed his father. The Council, through one of its important members, the Phodung Lama, explained to the Commissioner of Darjeeling that Sidkeong Namgyal's position as an Avatari Lama would not prevent him from marrying or from ruling the Sikkim kingdom, since he had not yet taken the final vows. The Phodung Lama further explained to the Commissioner that no religious dispensation from Tibet was necessary to release the young prince from his Avatarishipe. The Commissioner in reply informed the Phodung Lama that time had not come to think about a permanent arrangement since the Maharaja might obey the Government of India's orders or the eldest son might return to Sikkim. (12)

Restoration of Thothab Namgyal 1895

In early 1895, Thothab Namgyal informed the Government of

---

(11) Quoted in the letter of Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 16 January 1899. F.P.A., March 1899, 105.

(12) Ibid.

India that he was prepared to obey its orders and requested that his throne may be restored to him. In April 1895, Sir Charles Elliott visited Gangtok and informed the Sikkim Council of the Maharaja's decision. The Council opposed the restoration of Thothab Namgyal and expressed the wish that he should be permanently deposed and that his second son Sidkeong Namgyal should be made the Maharaja. (13)

The Council's wish that Maharaja Thothab Namgyal should be deposed permanently and that his second son Sidkeong Namgyal should be made his successor was not strange considering the personal relations between the Maharaja and White. The latter informed the Government of India that the Maharaja was disliked by everyone and that his return was "looked with fear and misgivings by all classes of Sikkim population". But Nolan, the Commissioner of Rajshahi Division and the immediate superior of White disbelieved that statement and felt that the dislike of the Maharaja's personality was confined to the members of the Sikkim Council who, as already noted, were under the influence of White. Sir Charles Elliott concurred with the opinion of Nolan, and declined to support the request of the Sikkim Council to depose Maharaja Thothab Namgyal permanently. (14)

Sir Charles Elliott proposed to the Government of India that Maharaja Thothab Namgyal might be restored to his position

---

(13) F.S.E., August 1895, 240.

(14) Quoted in the letter of the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 2 August 1895. F.S.E., October 1895, 462.

on the following conditions namely 1) that he should write to his elder son Tchoda Namgyal and bring him back from Tibet to Sikkim; 2) that he should accept the new constitution provided for his kingdom. Under the new constitution, the administration of Sikkim was to be controlled by a Council of leading monks and laymen presided over by the Maharaja when present and, in his absence, all decisions were to be submitted to him. If the Maharaja differed on any point with the Council the matter was to be referred to the political officer and if he agreed with the Maharaja, the Council was bound to yield. The decision of the Council was to be carried out in the joint names of the Maharaja and that body. The Maharaja accepted all the conditions laid down by the Government of India and in November 1895 he was restored to his throne. (15)

As regards the successor to the Sikkim throne, Sir Charles Elliott did not concur with the view of White that all classes of Sikkim population would welcome the succession of the Maharaja's second son, Sidkeong Namgyal. He felt that the objections of the different monasteries to the succession of an Avatari Lama cannot be easily removed. He, however, advised the Government of India to make proper arrangements for the education of Sidkeong Namgyal as a possible successor to the Sikkim Raj. The Government of India accepted the advice of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and placed Sidkeong Namgyal under the charge of Sarat Chandra Das at Darjeeling. He was taught English, Hindi as well as Tibetan. (16)

---

(15) F.S.E., December 1895, 3.

(16) Letter of the Government of Bengal, n. 14.

Warning to Tchoda Namgyal

Soon after the restoration of Thothab Namgyal to the Sikkim throne, the Government of India gave another chance to Tchoda Namgyal, the eldest son of the Maharaja, to return to Sikkim by warning him that he would forfeit his claims to the throne if he failed to return to Gangtok by 1 April 1896. (17) In August 1896, Tchoda Namgyal replied that his return was not possible as the passes between Sikkim and Tibet were closed and that no one was allowed to cross the frontier on account of the boundary dispute between the two countries. (18) He therefore requested the Government of India not to be displeased but allow him time. White disbelieved the statement and felt that the Tibetans would not place any obstacles in the way of the prince had he really wanted to return. Nolan concurred with White's view and pointed out to the Government of India that the succession of Tchoda Namgyal was undesirable on various counts. Firstly, he was ignorant of the important local languages of Sikkim and therefore cut off from the 'pahadis' or hill men, who formed a large portion of Sikkim's population. That deficiency, Nolan felt, would prevent Tchoda Namgyal from introducing reform in the internal administration. Secondly, the Sikkim Royal family had hitherto showed real allegiance to Tibet and Tchoda Namgyal's education in Tibet would not have removed that defect. Nolan felt that objections to the succession of Sidkeong Namgyal, being an Avatari Lama were not insuperable. (19)

---

(17) F.S.E., May 1896, 423.

(18) The boundary dispute between Sikkim and Tibet is discussed in the next chapter.

(19) Letter of Nolan to Government of Bengal, 6 August 1896. F.S.E., October 1896, 65.

Decision on Successor deferred

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal wanted that the succession to the Sikkim throne should remain in abeyance, until the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal, who was about 38 years of age, died, or his death appears to be approaching and in the meantime, he proposed that the education of the Maharaja's second son, Sidkeong Namgyal should proceed as was already arranged. He suggested that no reply need be given to Tchoda Namgyal's request for time, but that the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal should be informed that the Government, having already communicated its orders, would not send a reply to Tchoda Namgyal. (20) The Government of India accepted the suggestion of Alexander Mackenzie and deferred the consideration of the question of the succession to the Sikkim throne. (21)

Sidkeong Namgyal recognized as successor 1899

After deferring the question of succession to the Sikkim throne, the Government of India got the information that Tchoda Namgyal was living on an estate called Taring, near Gyantse on the Lhasa road.

In 1899 the question of succession to the Sikkim throne was again revived as White and Nolan wanted that the future of Sidkeong Namgyal who had approached the age of 19 years should not be kept in suspense. They wanted that if Sidkeong Namgyal was not to succeed to the throne, he should proceed more thoroughly with his religious studies so as to fit him to take

---

(20) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 2 September 1896. F.S.I., October 1896, 64.

(21) F.S.E., October 1896, 69.

his place as the head of the Phodung monastery. Nolan felt that the Government of India had given to Sidkeong Namgyal, education which was calculated to make him a good Maharaja but a bad monk and that it would be hardly fair to close against him the career for which he had been trained, leaving him to follow the doubtful prospects of a religious vocation for which he was no longer suited. Apart from that, Nolan felt that the interests of the people of Sikkim required that their Maharaja should not be a man who had spent the most impressionable part of his life as a "de-nationalised exile". (22)

Sir Alexander Mackenzie discussed the question of succession to the Sikkim throne with Nolan and White. The latter believed that the leading men of Sikkim would view with satisfaction the recognition of Sidkeong Namgyal as the successor-designate to the Sikkim throne. The Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal did not express his views on the subject, but it was assumed that his natural feeling was towards the preservation of the right of his eldest son to the succession. The monasteries were not consulted, but both Nolan and White believed that they would acquiesce in any decision taken by the Government of India and that one of the great monasteries such as Pemionchi would be quite willing to grant dispensation to free the second son from his character as an Avatari or incarnation of the founder of the Phodung monastery, as it would confer upon it an importance over other monasteries of the state. (23)

---

(22) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 16 January 1899. F.E.A., March 1899, 105.

(23) Ibid.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, however, felt that it would be unfair to supersede Tchoda Namgyal without giving him a further warning since he had just then attained the age of 21 and as such was expected to exercise his own judgement. He therefore recommended to the Government of India that Tchoda Namgyal might be given further time to return to Sikkim. In case he failed to return within the prescribed time, the Lieutenant-Governor recommended that necessary arrangements might be made by political officer for Sikkim, to secure the dispensation of Avatarship of Sidkeong Namgyal, from a monastery in Sikkim. (24)

Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, did not accept the suggestion of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. He felt that it would be "subversive of the dignity and self-respect of Government" to re-open a case so "peremptorily and definitely decided". He considered that from the point of moral right Tchoda Namgyal, may justly be regarded as having already by his own act surrendered his claim to the succession, and as a matter of political expediency he found no reason to adopt a different attitude. He therefore, in February 1899, recognized Sidkeong Namgyal as the successor designate to the Sikkim throne. At the same time Tchoda Namgyal was prohibited from entering Sikkim. (25)

The recognition of Sidkeong Namgyal (who will hereafter be referred to as the Maharaja Kumar or Kumar for short) once again showed that the Government of India was determined as it was on a previous occasion in 1874, not to allow a man of

---

(24) Ibid.

(25) Letter of Government of India to Government of Bengal, 21 February 1899. F.E.A., March 1899, 106.

suspected Tibetan proclivites to sit on the throne of Sikkim. It, moreover, showed the high degree of British influence in Sikkim as none of the monasteries dared to protest against the succession of an Avatari Lama. Further it revealed the power of the local British officers to meddle successfully in important issues concerning the Sikkim Royal family. As already noted, in 1874, Edgar decided the successor to the Sikkim throne by recognizing the claims of Thothab Namgyal. Similarly in 1899 it was White who to a large extent decided the selection of Sidkeong Namgyal as the successor-designate of the Sikkim throne.

On learning that his second son, Sidkeong Namgyal was recognized as the successor-designate to the Sikkim throne, the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal, appealed to the Government of India to reconsider its decision on the ground that the rules of his religion (Buddhism) compel an "avatar", or incarnation of Lama to lead a life of celibacy and religious exercises. He felt that his second son was ineligible to undertake secular duties of the throne and therefore requested the Government to allow his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal to return to Sikkim from Tibet. The Government of India rejected the Maharaja's appeal since it felt that "to allow the eldest son to return to Sikkim just after he has been disinherited would be to court intrigue". (26)

The Maharaja after the rejection of his petition acquiesced in the decision of the Government of India. The Government to placate him increased his annual allowances. He was invited to attend the Imperial Darbar held at Delhi on 1 January 1903. He could not attend owing to his illness, but sent the Kumar to

---

(26) F.E.A., August 1901, 107-16.

represent him. The Kumar was awarded the Gold-Delhi Darbar medal. (27)

In December 1906, the Maharaja and the Maharani and the Kumar accepted the invitation of the Government of India to visit Calcutta on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales to the capital. During his stay in Calcutta, the Maharaja paid formal visits on the Viceroy and the Prince of Wales and received the honour of return visits. (28)

Maharaja's request for additional powers 1906

In March 1906, the Maharaja petitioned to the Government of India that he might be given powers to control the finances of his kingdom. White advised the Government of India to reject the Maharaja's request since he felt that "it would not be to the advantage of either himself or the state". (29) The Government accepted White's advice and rejected the Maharaja's request for additional powers. (30)

Request of Tchoda Namgyal to visit Sikkim

In April 1906, Tchoda Namgyal and Tinley Namgyal respectively, the eldest son and the half-brother of the Maharaja, Thothab Namgyal, in a petition to the Government of

---

(27) C.U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta, 1909), vol. 2, pp. 318-19.

(28) Ibid., p. 319.

(29) Letter of White to Government of India, 1 April 1906. F.E.A., May 1906, 139.

(30) Letter of Government of India to White, 7 May 1906. F.E.A., May 1906, 140.

India expressed their regrets for their past behaviour and requested the Government to permit them to reside in Sikkim. White advised the Government of India to reject their petition since he learnt through a "reliable source" that in the event of their visiting Sikkim, the Maharani intended to get her eldest son by Tinley Namgyal, appointed as the head of Pemionchi monastery. (31)

The Government of India, acting on the advice of White, rejected the petitions of Tchoda Namgyal and Tinley Namgyal. As a matter of fact they were unable to re-visit Sikkim during the rest of their lives. Since his brother was not allowed to visit Sikkim, the Maharaja Kumar, Sidkeong Namgyal requested the Government of India that he might be permitted to visit Tibet to see his elder brother Tchoda Namgyal. White supported the petition of the Kumar as he thought that there was no danger if the latter saw his brother in Tibet, and offered to accompany him to Tibet. Lord Curzon, however, rejected the petition of the Kumar since he felt that:

> It is most undesirable that the Kumar should have any opportunity of meeting his brother whom he has not seen since childhood, over whose head he has been placed and with whom he cannot possibly have any fraternal relations.

He frowned upon White's offer to accompany the Kumar to Tibet, by remarking that White "is much too fond of bear leading the young Kumar hither and thither". (32)

---

(31) Letter of White to Government of India, 12 April 1906. F.S.E., June 1906, 5-13.

(32) F.S.E., June 1906, 755-56.

Kumar's visit to England for higher education

After his recognition as the successor-designate to the Sikkim throne, the Maharaja Kumar was sent to St. Paul's school at Darjeeling, to improve his education in English. In the winter of 1900-01 he was sent on a tour with White to Calcutta, Rangoon, Mandalay, Colombo and other places. At Calcutta he had an interview with Lord Curzon. The Kumar rendered valuable services to the Government of India, during the course of Younghusband's expedition to Tibet. He personally supervised the laying out of the road in the Lachen valley and also supplied the required labour force for the Mission. White was immensely satisfied with the work of the 'Kumar', and recommended to the Government of India that a personal distinction such as the Companionship of Indian Empire or a Gold Kaiser-i-Hind medal might be conferred on the Kumar. (33) Lord Curzon rejected the suggestion since he felt that "to give the Kaisar-i-Hind gold medal for services in war would be like rewarding an Agent to the Governor-General by making him Archdeacon". White was therefore asked to convey to the Maharaja Kumar the "thanks" and the "appreciation" of the Government of India. (34)

Since the Government of India could not find an appropriate way of rewarding the Kumar for the services rendered by him to the Younghusband expedition, White proposed that the Kumar and three of his companions, sons of the Kazis or headmen, be allowed to

---

(33) Letter of White to Government of India, 29 March 1905, F.E.A., June 1905, 68.

(34) Letter of Government of India to White, 2 June 1905. F.E.A., June 1905, 69.

complete their education in England. (35)

There was some opposition to White's proposal from some of the officials of the Government of India. L. Russel, the Deputy Secretary, reminded the Government that the late Sir John Woodburn who as the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal took special interest in the education of the Kumar was strongly opposed to his being too much Europeanized. He felt that despite their best endeavours to keep the Kumar in touch with his own people, he had become in some degree estranged from them. He therefore opposed White's proposal to send the Kumar to England for higher education. Moreover he found no reason why Indian education which had sufficed for the heir-apparents of Hyderabad and Mysore should not suffice for the future ruler of Sikkim. He therefore wanted that the Kumar should be educated at Gangtok only. (36)

L.W. Dane, Secretary to the Government of India, disagreed with his deputy's views and supported White's proposal for educating the Kumar in England, since he felt that the future Maharaja of Sikkim would always have a great deal to do with Europeans, more especially if the mineral resources of his state were to be developed. He thought that the main danger of educating the Kumar in England, would be that he might marry an English woman. He, however, felt that the Government of India should take that risk in consideration of the active loyalty displayed by the Kumar during the Younghusband's Expedition to

---

(35) Letter of White to Government of India, 20 March 1906. F.E.A., October 1906, 30-42.

(36) Official note of L. Russel, 18 May 1906. F.E.A., October 1906, 30-42 (K.W.).

Tibet. (37) Lord Minto, the Viceroy of India, concurred with the opinion of his Secretary and agreed to send the Kumar to England for higher education as he expected "much good" from it. (38)

On 2 September 1906, the Kumar accompanied by White left for England for higher education. After staying in England for about a year, he returned to Sikkim. He became the Maharaja, after the death of his father Thothab Namgyal on 11 February 1914. He was not destined to rule for a long time. He died, unmarried on 5 December 1914, and was succeeded by his younger half-brother Tashi Namgyal, who was born at Darjeeling in 1893 during his father's captivity there.

From the above survey it is evident that within a decade after the signing of the Sikkim-Tibet Convention in 1890, the Government of India had consolidated its authority in Sikkim to such an extent that it was able to meddle with impunity in important affairs concerning the Royal family. The temporary deposition of Thothab Namgyal in 1892 was intended to warn the Maharaja that he dared not disobey the orders of the Government of India. Similarly, the recognition of the Maharaja's second son, Sidkeong Namgyal, as the successor-designate to the Sikkim throne, ignoring the claims of the eldest son Tchoda Namgyal, was intended to demonstrate that no man suspected of anti-British proclivities could sit on the throne of Sikkim. The silent acquiescence of the Maharaja and the people in the decisions of the Government of India indicated the nature and extent of British authority in Sikkim.

---

(37) Official note of L.W. Dane, 18 May 1906. Ibid.

(38) Remarks of Lord Minto, 21 May 1906. Ibid.

Chapter Seven

SIKKIM-TIBET FRONTIER

As seen in the last chapter, Tchoda Namgyal, eldest son of Thothab Namgyal, the Maharaja of Sikkim, informed the Government of India that he was unable to accept its orders to return to Sikkim from Tibet, since the passes between the two countries were closed due to their border dispute. The border dispute between Sikkim and Tibet came to light when J.C. White, the British Political Officer for Sikkim, visited Yatung in Tibet, in May 1894, to attend to the opening of the Trade Mart which was established there under the terms of the Trade Regulations of 1893. White was disappointed both with the location and the working of the Trade Mart at Yatung. He found that the site of the mart had been "exceedingly badly chosen" and wanted that it should be removed lower down the valley to some other place near Rinchingong. (1)

During his stay at Yatung White informed the Government of India that "certain places" in the North-East of Sikkim and within the boundary as laid down by the Convention of 1890 had been occupied by the Tibetan 'soldiers'. He wanted that the Government of India should authorize him "to open the question" with the local Chinese officials at Yatung and "settle" the matter. (2) The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Charles Elliott, supported White's proposal and recommended it to the

---

(1) Letter of White to Nolan, Commissioner of Rajshahi Division, 9 June 1894. F.S.E., October 1894, 135.

(2) D.O. letter of White to Nolan, 4 June 1894. F.S.E., October 1894, 91-150 (K.W. 2).

Government of India, which, however, declined to accept it with a view to avoiding all controversy with Tibet and to develop trade. Moreover it regarded the boundary question as of minor importance. However, on 9 August 1894, Lord Elgin, the Viceroy of India, addressed a letter to Kwei Hwean, the Chinese Amban at Lhasa drawing the latter's attention to the reported occupation of 'certain places' in Sikkim by the Tibetans. He suggested to him that the officials of both the Governments should "travel together" along the frontier to get acquainted with the actual boundary line. (3)

On 4 October 1894, the Amban replied to the Viceroy pointing out that the Tibetan Council had objected to the travel of the Indian officers inside Tibet, but that they had agreed to comply with the proposal to send officers to define the boundary. The Amban further informed the Viceroy that the Chinese and the Tibetan representatives would meet the officers of the Government of India "to inspect the border" between Sikkim and Tibet as defined by the Convention of 1890 and to make a careful examination in order that "the boundary pillars may be erected which shall for ever respected by either side". (4)

As the Amban's reply seemed reasonable, the Government of India did not take exception to the Tibetan objection to the travel of the British officers inside their frontier and considered it sufficient to erect the pillars at the passes which could be approached from Sikkim. On 6 December 1894 the Viceroy

---

(3) Letter of Elgin to Kwei Hwean, the Chinese Amban at Lhasa, 9 August 1894. F.S.E., October 1894, 143.

(4) Letter of Kwei Hwean to Elgin, 4 October 1894. F.S.E., January 1895, 247.

informed the Amban that it would be desirable on considerations of climate to commence the examination of the frontier between 1 May and 1 July 1895. (5) The Amban accepted the suggestion and arranged a preliminary meeting of the Chinese, Tibetan and British delegates at Yatung on 6 April 1895, where it was decided that the representatives of the three Governments should meet on 7 May 1895 at Pemaringo pass and commence the demarcation at Gipmochi.

Erection of the pillars

White proceeded to the Pemaringo pass on 7 May 1895 and found that the Chinese and Tibetan delegates were absent. However, on 18 May, the Chinese delegate Major Tu Hsi-hsun met White at Jelep pass and explained to him that he could not come on the appointed day as he could not secure the necessary transport. He, however, did not explain the reasons for the absence of the Tibetan delegates, but requested White to delay the demarcation for some more time in order to give the Tibetans a chance to turn up, but White declined the request. Thereupon, on the next day i.e. on 19 May White fixed a boundary pillar at the Jelep pass in the presence of Major Tu. After erecting that pillar, White and Tu agreed that they should meet again on 1 June at Doka Pass, and that in the meantime White should erect a pillar at Donchuk Pass which the Chinese would examine afterwards. After the erection of the pillar at the Jelep Pass, White received from the Amban a letter dated 14 May requesting that the demarcation

---

(5) Letter of Elgin to Kwei Hwean, 6 December 1894. F.S.E., January 1895, 249.

work may be postponed for sometime to "avoid trouble" as the lamas of the three Tibetan monasteries of Sera, Drebung and Gaden were "full of suspicion". (6) White replied to the Amban on 19 May stating that it was not possible to accede to his request for the postponement as the work on the demarcation had already commenced. (7) On 1 June the Chinese delegate Major Tu once again failed to keep up his appointment with White at the Doka Pass. Thereupon, White erected a pillar without waiting for the Chinese or Tibetan representatives.

Destruction of the Pillars

On 4 June White informed the Government of India that the boundary pillar at the Jelep Pass which he had fixed in the presence of the Chinese delegate Major Tu was demolished by the Tibetans and the numbered plaque attached to it was removed. (8) The Government of India felt that the destruction of the pillar might be the work of the "ignorant common people". (9) But White insisted that it was the mischief of the Tibetan officials and wanted that the Government should demand "immediate and ample apology" from Tibet for the "outrages" and compel it to proceed with the demarcation. (10) On 11 June he again informed the

---

(6) Letter from Kwei Hwean to White, 14 May 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 137.

(7) Letter of White to Kwei Hwean, 19 May 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 138.

(8) Telegram of White to Government of Bengal, 5 June 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 143.

(9) Telegram of Government of India to Government of Bengal, 5 June 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 144.

(10) Telegram of White to Government of Bengal, 6 June 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 148.

Government that the pillar he had erected at Donchuk Pass was also damaged and as that was an unfrequented pass he considered the outrage to be deliberate.

Sir Charles Elliott supported White's suggestion for stern action against Tibet. But the Viceroy, Lord Elgin, wanted to adopt a pacific policy towards China as the Amban had "hitherto displayed a friendly spirit in his communications and dealings with the Government of India". (11) Elgin, therefore, ordered White to withdraw from the immediate neighbourhood of the border, unless he had reason to anticipate that his retirement might encourage the Tibetans to violate the frontier. (12) At the same time Elgin suggested to the Amban the need for the early completion of the demarcation. (13)

It is evident from the above that the work of demarcation which had begun very smoothly became complicated within a short time due to White's hasty action in erecting the pillars all alone by himself at the Doka and Donchuk passes. His refusal to accede to the reasonable request of the Amban for the postponement of the demarcation cannot be justified on any ground, especially when the Convention of 1890 did not provide for the demarcation and when there were no practical difficulties in the frontier being undemarcated. White's action in unilaterally erecting the

---

(11) Letter of the Government of India to Government of Bengal, 13 June 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 154.

(12) Telegram of the Government of India to Government of Bengal, 10 June 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 149.

(13) Letter of Elgin to Kwei Hwean, 13 June 1895. F.S.E., July 1895, 155.

pillars not only compromised the principle of joint demarcation proposed by the Viceroy and accepted by the Amban, but also brought no advantage whatsoever to the Government of India; for, if there was no dispute regarding the frontier where was the need for the pillars; and again if there was a dispute, no ex-parte decision could be of any avail for the Government of India· could at once be confronted with the criticism that it had insisted for demarcation where it was not provided for. It was because of that realization, the Government of India declined White's suggestion for stern measures against Tibet, and adopted pacific tone in its communication with the Amban.

Amban's Suggestion for five year postponement of demarcation

On 3 July the Amban, Kwei Hwean, requested Lord Elgin, that the demarcation might be postponed for five years, as the lamas of the three great monasteries of Sera, Drebung and Gaden had sent him "petition after petition" to retain the "ancient boundary". As regards the destruction of the pillars, he informed the Viceroy, that the Tibetan Council was not responsible for it. He added that he had given orders to examine the affair and to punish those responsible for it. (14)

Sir Charles Elliott's suggestion

Sir Charles Elliot thought that further delay in demarcation would result in loss of prestige for the British. It might be looked upon by the Tibetans as a rebuff to British authority

---

(14) Letter of Kwei Hwean to Elgin, 3 July 1895. F.S.P., October 1895, 191.

and might result in "high handed acts and demands and possibly outrages". He, therefore, advised the Viceroy, Lord Elgin, to make it plain to the Amban that unless demarcation were speedily carried out the Chumbi Valley of Tibet would be occupied by British troops. (15)

Elgin was prepared neither to accept the Amban's suggestion for the five year postponement of the demarcation, nor to adopt the strong measure advocated by Sir Charles Elliott. He therefore solicited the opinion of Sir N. O'Conor, the British Minister at Peking. O'Conor advised the Viceroy against the postponement. (16) He felt that any forbearance on the part of the Government of India would "encourage the Chinese as well as the Tibetans to offer next year and the year after the same opposition to the work of demarcation and thus probably postpone it indefinitely". (17) Following that advice, Elgin declined Amban's suggestion for a five year postponement of the demarcation, but expressed the hope that it would be possible for the Tibetans and the Chinese to commence the work in the next season i.e. in 1896. The Amban accepted the suggestion to demarcate the frontier in 1896. (18)

Nolan's talks with the Chinese and the Tibetan delegates

In November 1895, Nolan the Commissioner of the Rajshahi

---

(15) Letter of the Government of Bengal to Government of India, 22 July 1895. F.S.E., October 1895, 185.

(16) Telegram of O'Conor to Elgin, 5 August 1895. F.S.E., October 1895, 194.

(17) Letter of O'Conor to Elgin, 21 August 1895. F.S.E., October 1895, 456.

(18) Letter of Elgin to Kwei Hwean, 17 August 1895. F.S.E., October 1895, 205.

Division and the immediate superior of White was deputed by the Government of India to visit Yatung to hold preliminary discussions with the Chinese and Tibetan delegates. Nolan met the Chinese delegate, Major Tu, and the Tibetan delegate Tenzing Wangpu. The Chinese delegate informed Nolan that his Government had requested the Dalai Lama to send the Tibetan representatives to participate in the work concerning the demarcation of Sikkim-Tibet frontier. At the same time Major Tu assured Nolan that if the Tibetan representatives failed to appear, the Chinese would be prepared, without waiting for the Tibetans, to carry on the work with the officers of the Government of India. (19)

The Tibetan delegate Tenzing Wangpu told Nolan that Tibet would be reluctant to give up any land merely because it lay on the Sikkim side of the line indicated in the Convention of 1890. But, he added, that the matter was one to be treated in the spirit of conciliation. (20) From Wangpu's statement, Nolan realized that the Tibetans were no longer willing to accept the arrangements made on their behalf by the Chinese, and felt that any discussions with them regarding their claim to the Sikkim area of Giagong would reopen the entire Sikkim-Tibet boundary question. Therefore, he suggested to the Government of India that it should demarcate the boundary alone and drive out the Tibetans from Giagong. Sir Charles Elliott supported Nolan's proposals and renewed his suggestion to annex the Chumbi valley, if Tibet refused to recognize the newly demarcated frontier.

---

(19) Letter of Nolan to Government of Bengal, 24 November 1895. F.S.E., March 1896, 253.

(20) Ibid.

Lord Elgin was not prepared to adopt, for two reasons, the strong line suggested by the Bengal Government. Firstly, that would give an excuse for the Chinese or the Tibetans to re-open discussions on Sikkim-Tibet frontier. Secondly, it might result in the total stoppage of trade at Yatung, which had shown signs of increase, and in which the commercial bodies in England like the Bradford Chamber of Commerce evinced interest. Moreover, the Viceroy believed that the Tibetans had reasonable claims to Giagong. (21) Similarly, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, felt that the boundary line was not worth quarreling about and that the occupation of the Chumbi would not only be "inequitable" but also "impolitic". (22)

In view of all these considerations, Elgin decided to adopt a pacific policy towards Tibet. On 4 March 1896 he informed the Amban that the Government of India was prepared to examine the Tibetan claims to Giagong, since it wanted to develop friendly relations and trade with that country. The Amban was asked to send his delegates, accompanied by Tibetan representatives to meet White at Gangtok or any other convenient place in Sikkim so that they could proceed to Giagong to conduct a local enquiry. Pending the local enquiry he agreed to postpone the demarcation.(23) Lest the proposal to discuss the Tibetan claims to Giagong be

---

(21) Elgin's note dated 29 January 1896, in F.S.E., March 1896, 252-71 (K.W. 1, Part 1).

(22) Note by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 25 January 1896. Ibid.

(23) Letter of Elgin to Amban, 4 March 1896. F.S.E., March 1896, 266.

taken as a sign of British weakeness, Elgin instructed White to point out to the Chinese and Tibetan delegates during the proposed meet, how easy it would be for the British to expel the Tibetans from Giaogong. To emphasize that warning the Government of India decided to construct a road up to the Lachen Valley, the approach to the Giaogong. (24) The Secretary of State for India, Lord Hamilton, approved of the moderate policy of Elgin, but cautioned him not to surrender any territory without final and complete demarcation of the frontier. (25)

The Amban accepted the proposal of Elgin to hold local enquiry regarding Giaogong, but in May 1896, the Chinese Government requested the Government of India that the proposed enquiry should be kept in abeyance pending the arrival of the new Amban. The new Amban did not reach Lhasa until early 1898. (26)

New Amban's proposals

Soon after his arrival, Wen Hai, the new Ambap, addressed a letter to Lord Elgin, on 11 March 1898, suggesting that the Tibetans should be allowed to inspect the frontier as laid down in the Convention of 1890, so that they would have no excuse for "holding back or reverting to old arguments". (27) The Bengal Government opposed the suggestion of Wen Hai as it suspected that it was made with the object of gaining time. But Elgin brushed

---

(24) F.S.E., March 1896, 252-271 (K.W. 1, Part I).

(25) Telegram from Hamilton to Elgin, 2 March 1896. F.S.E., March 1896, 263.

(26) F.E.A., April 1898, 18-22.

(27) Letter of Wen Hai to Elgin, 11 March 1898. F.E.A., June 1898, 102.

aside Bengal's opposition and informed Wen Hai that he was agreeable to his proposal. (28)

On 17 November 1898, White held discussions at Yatung with the Chinese frontier officer Li Yu Sen and the Tibetan delegate Tenzing Wangpu to examine the Tibetan claim to Giaogong. The Tibetans produced a tracing showing the frontier as claimed by them and indicated the evidence on which they relied. White considered the evidence to be meagre but asked the Tibetan delegates whether they were prepared to afford better trading facilities if the Government of India accept the Tibetan claim. The Tibetan representatives replied that they were authorized only to settle the boundary as claimed by them and that they had no knowledge or order with regard to trade matters. They, however, agreed to submit any proposal the Government of India would like to make, to the Tibetan Grand Council which was to meet at Lhasa on 2 December 1898. It is not known what has transpired at the meeting of the Tibetan Grand Council, but, on 8 December 1898 Wen Hai, proposed to Elgin that the delimitation of the frontier as claimed by the Tibetans should be carried out by the officers representing China, India and Tibet and in return for that he promised to secure the Tibetan consent for the removal of the Trade Mart from Yatung to Rinchingong. (29)

---

(28) Letter of Elgin to Wen Hai, 2 June 1898. F.E.A., June 1898, 106.

(29) Letter of Wen Hai to Elgin, 8 December 1898. F.E.A., April 1899, 109.

White's Proposals

White saw no advantage in Wen Hai's proposal to shift the Trade Mart to Rinchingong since that place is situated very near to Yatung. He therefore proposed to the Government of India that it should accept the Tibetan claims to Giagong provided the Tibetans agree 1) to shift the Trade Mart from Yatung to a new place called Phari, situated on the Tibetan plateau, 2) to place no restrictions on the functioning of the Mart and 3) to sign an extradition treaty with the Government of India. (30)

Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, supported White's proposals and advised the Government of India to transfer Giagong to Tibet on the condition that the native Indian merchants are allowed to trade at Phari. (31)

A study of White's proposals shows that his attitude towards Tibet had stiffened. In 1894 when he visited Yatung he asked the Government to demand the shifting of the trade mart from that place to Rinchingong, but in 1898 when Tibet was willing to accept that demand, he advised the Government to press for Phari - a place located on the edge of the Tibetan plateau. That change in White's stand was due to two developments of far-reaching importance. The first was the growth of Nationalism in Tibet and the second was the rumours of Russian interest in Tibet.

The Tibetan attempts to assert its independence from China came to light, as already noted, when its representative Tenzing

---

(30) Letter of White to Nolan, 9 December 1898. F.S.E., April 1899, 113.

(31) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 20 February 1899. F.S.E., April 1899, 114.

Wangpu made it clear to Nolan that Tibet would not give away Giogong simply because it was required to do so by the Convention of 1890. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, Tibetan Nationalism was accelerated by two events. The first was the assumption of power by the thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1895, and the second was the defeat of China by Japan in the same year. The coming of the thirteenth Dalai Lama to power in 1895 was an event of great importance in the modern history of Tibet. For the first time in ninety years since the death of the eighth Dalai Lama in 1804, Tibet got a leader exercising real power and authority. The four Dalai Lamas, nine to twelve, died before assuming power and it was during those years that China strengthened its hold on Tibet. The thirteenth Dalai Lama assumed power at a time when China was defeated by Japan in 1895. That defeat exposed China's weakness to defend Tibet against the possible foreign attacks on its territory. The Dalai Lama, in order, to free his country from the Chinese rule and to prevent its absorption by the ever growing British empire, turned to Russia for help. This development caused some misgivings in the minds of the British frontier officers. As early as 1898 White informed the Government of India that:

> The Russians are making progress in the north and have already ... tried to make their importance felt in Tibet. We should certainly be there before them and not allow the Tibetan markets to be closed for English goods. (32)

It was because of the fear that Russia may replace China in Tibet that White wanted the Government of India to demand the

---

(32) Letter of White to Nolan, n. 30.

shifting of the trade mart to Phari, so that it could make its influence felt more effectively at Lhasa. White's proposals came at a proper moment when the cautious Elgin was replaced by the more vigorous Curzon as the Viceroy of India.

Curzon's Tibetan Policy

With the coming of Lord Curzon as the Viceroy of India, in January 1899, the Tibetan policy of the Government of India became more vigorous. That was due to many reasons. Firstly, Curzon was a man of unbounded energy, who wanted to settle all the matters left pending by his predecessor without delay. Secondly, foreign affairs was his chief interest, and he was determined that other powers should not gain ascendancy in the areas bordering India. (33) The rapid advance of Russia towards Central Asia during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the possibility of its influence in Tibet alarmed him, as it posed a threat to the security of India. To ward off such a contingency, Curzon decided to adopt strong measures towards Tibet. Shortly after his arrival Curzon decided to act on the proposals made by White. On 25 March 1899, he informed the Amban, Wen Hai, that the Government of India was prepared to give Giagong to Tibet, in exchange for trade facilities at Phari. (34) To that offer, Wen Hai replied that the Tibetans would object to the opening of Phari as a trade mart. (35)

---

(33) S. Gopal, British Policy in India 1858-1905 (Cambridge, 1965), p. 228.

(34) Letter of Curzon to Wei Hai, 25 March 1899. F.S.E., April 1899, 125.

(35) Letter of Wen Hai to Curzon, 22 April 1899. F.S.E., August 1899. 58 (Encl. 3).

From the Amban's reply, Curzon realized that it is impossible for the Government of India to secure its demands from Tibet through the medium of China. He concluded that the policy of the Government of India, up to that time had been a "mistake" since it "ignored Tibet" and treated China as "the de facto suzerain" of Tibet. Therefore, he wanted to 'reverse' that policy and enter into direct communications with the Dalai Lama ignoring that "preposterous Amban". Moreover, he felt the special need for a direct communication with the Dalai Lama as he had "very little doubt" that the Russians were in communication with Lhasa. (36) Curzon's policy of direct communications was approved by the Home Government. (37)

Attempts of Ugyen Kazi

The Government of India realized that the opening of direct communications with the Dalai Lama was not an easy affair. Firstly, the Dalai Lama never entered into direct communications with the Foreign Governments. Secondly, all the communications were channelled through the Amban. Thirdly, Tibet did not allow the foreigners to enter its territory. To overcome these difficulties the Government of India decided to send its letter to the Dalai Lama through a native secret agent and selected Ugyen Kazi for that purpose. Ugyen Kazi was the vakeel (agent) of Bhutan at Darjeeling. He often visited Lhasa and received by the Dalai Lama. The Government of India felt that it could depend

---

(36) Curzon's Note, 17 May 1899. F.S.E., August 1899, 56-57 (K.W.).

(37) Letter from Hamilton to Curzon, 2 June 1899. F.S.E., August 1899, 64.

on the loyalty of Ugyen Kazi since he owned much land in the Darjeeling district.

As early as June 1897 and January 1898, the Bengal Government suggested to the Government of India that it should appoint Ugyen Kazi as its Secret Agent to Lhasa. But these suggestions were then declined. However, in September 1899 when Ugyen Kazi was about to visit Lhasa on his own business, the Government of India decided to utilize his services and asked him to write a letter on his own behalf to the Dalai Lama informing him that the Government of India would be willing to receive a high Tibetan official to discuss the frontier and trade matters. In November 1899, Ugyen Kazi returned from Tibet and informed the Government that he failed to receive any favourable response to his letter. In December 1899, he again wrote to the Dalai Lama, but that also failed to evoke a favourable response.

Curzon's First Letter to the Dalai Lama

As Ugyen Kazi had failed to receive a satisfactory reply from the Dalai Lama, the Government of India decided to communicate with the Dalai Lama directly. The British Resident in Kashmir, Sir Adelbert Talbot, informed the Government of India that his assistant who annually visits Leh, the capital of Ladakh, should enter into negotiations with the joint Governors of Western Tibet, known as Urkhus of Gartok and through their agency secure the delivery of the Viceroy's letter to the Dalai Lama. (38) Acting on that suggestion the Government of India deputed Capt. R.L. Kennion, Assistant Resident in Kashmir, to visit Gartok in

---

(38) Letter of Adelbert Talbot to Government of India, 31 May 1900. F.S.E., September 1900, 96.

the autumn of 1900, to do the needful. (39) Kennion handed over Viceroy's letter to Chaktar Urkhu who undertook to deliver it to the Dalai Lama. But after a delay of six months the letter was returned to Kennion with the intimation that the Urkhus had not dared in the face of the regulations against the intrusion of foreigners into Tibet, to send it to Lhasa.

Curzon's Second Letter to the Dalai Lama

Having failed to secure communication with the Dalai Lama through the agency of Urkhus, Curzon once again utilized the services of Ugyen Kazi. A favourable opportunity occurred in June 1901. The Dalai Lama had asked Ugyen Kazi to purchase two elephants. Ugyen Kazi could therefore proceed to Lhasa without exciting suspicion. The Government of India entrusted the Viceroy's letter to Ugyen Kazi, asking him to deliver it to the Dalai Lama.

Unlike the first letter, the second letter was strongly worded and warned the Dalai Lama that if the British overtures for intercourse were treated with indifference, the Government of India reserved the right to take such steps as may seem necessary and proper to enforce the treaty of 1890 and to ensure the proper observance of the Regulations of 1893. (40)

In October 1901, Ugyen Kazi returned from Lhasa with the Viceroy's letter unopened and its seals intact. He said that the Dalai Lama had refused to receive the letter on the ground that

---

(39) Letter of the Government of India to Adelbert Talbot, 25 July 1900. F.S.E., September 1900, 98.

(40) Letter of Curzon to the Dalai Lama, 8 June 1901. F.S.E., August 1901, 18-28.

he was bound not to correspond with foreign governments without consulting the Tibetan Council of the State and the Chinese Amban.

Expulsion of the Tibetans from Giaogong June 1902

The failures of Ugyen Kazi and Kennion to open direct communications with the Dalai Lama convinced Curzon that he should adopt some other method to deal with Tibet. As to the alternative measures, White suggested to the Government of India, that the occupation of the Chumbi Valley would be the only effective measure. (41) The Government of India rejected that suggestion as it felt that the British Government would not sanction it. (42) Another alternative measure suggested by White, namely, the stoppage of all trade between India and Tibet was also given up as it would entail hardship on Indian traders and might ultimately result in the diversion of the Tibetan trade to Nepal. (43)

Curzon informed Lord Hamilton, the Secretary of State for India, that the only "feasible" alternative was to send White to tour along the Sikkim-Tibet boundary, as laid down by the Convention, to erect pillars wherever necessary or desirable, and to evict the Tibetans from Giaogong or elsewhere on the British side of the border or exact small tax from them. He felt that if the Tibetans chose to resist the progress of the political officer or destroy the pillars erected by him or endeavour to assert their claims to Giaogong "they would have themselves to thank for any

---

(41) White's Note, 15 March 1901. F.S.E., August 1901, 1901, 18-28 (K.W.).

(42) F.S.E., March 1902, 1-77 (K.W.).

(43) Letter of Curzon to Hamilton, 13 February 1902. F.S.E., March 1902, 76.

collision that might ensue". (44) Curzon recommended the occupation of the Chumbi valley if the Tibetans maintain their hostility even after their expulsion from Giagong. He complained of the impossibility of holding direct communication with Lhasa as "the most extraordinary anachronism of the twentieth century". (45) Hamilton permitted Curzon to expel the Tibetans from Giagong, but advised him "not to cross the border in any event". (46)

On 20 June 1902 White went up to Giagong and expelled the Tibetans. The expulsion was a very tame affair, and the Tibetans offered no opposition whatsoever. In December 1902 the Chinese notified the appointment of Yu Tai as their new Amban at Lhasa. Curzon did not attach any importance to that announcement and felt that any further discussions with the Chinese would only postpone the matters. Therefore on 8 January 1903, he submitted his "famous despatch" to Hamilton pressing for drastic action on Tibet. (47)

The Despatch of 8 January 1903

In that despatch Curzon reviewed the history of the Tibetan question and observed that the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was a "constitutional fiction" and that the Amban at Lhasa was not the Viceroy of Tibet, but the Ambassador of China. He believed that all their attempts to open direct communications with the Dalai

---

(44) Ibid.

(45) Ibid.

(46) Letter of Hamilton to Curzon, 11 April 1902. Papers Relating to Tibet, Cmd. 1920 (London, 1904), No. 45.

(47) Letter of Curzon to Hamilton, 8 January 1903. Ibid., No. 66.

Lama had failed because of the intervention of the third party, namely China. He therefore wanted that they should send a Mission to Lhasa in which a properly qualified Tibetan representative should take part instead of an "obscure junta" masked by the Chinese Amban. He felt that the time was suitable for such talks since for the first time for over a century there was a Dalai Lama "who is neither an infant nor a puppet". He wanted that the negotiations should cover not merely "the small question of the Sikkim frontier, but the entire question of our future relations, commercial and otherwise with Tibet" and that the negotiations should culminate in the appointment of a permanent British representative, consular or diplomatic, to reside at Lhasa. To secure the Mission against the possible Tibetan attack, Curzon proposed that the Mission should be accompanied by an armed escort. (48)

From the above despatch it is evident that one of the intentions of Curzon in proposing a Mission to Lhasa was to enter into an agreement with Tibet so that there might not be any doubt regarding the status of Sikkim as the protectorate of the Government of India. The Tibetan refusal to accept the 1890 Convention, and the news of Tibet Missions to Russia under the leadership of Dorjeiff alarmed Curzon. He felt that the security of India would be in danger unless the British assert their influence in Tibet.

L.W. Dawe, Secretary to the Government of India felt that India could effectively intervene in Tibet in June 1903 when the Dalai Lama left Lhasa for Shigatse. He suggested that if Tibet

---

(48) Ibid.

refused to accept the terms of the Government of India, the latter should either stop the journey of the Dalai Lama or intercept him if he tried to go. He felt that the Government of India "shall never get such a chance again as both Russia and China have their hands full". He wanted that Tibet should be forced to "look to us (Government of India) for protection and support and place no reliance on distant powers like China and Russia". (49)

Younghusband Expedition to Tibet

In June 1903, Curzon, after obtaining the consent of the British Government despatched an expedition to Tibet under the leadership of Colonel Francis Younghusband, the British Resident at Indore. Younghusband summed up the position of the Government of India vis-a-vis Tibet and the task of the Expedition in the following words:

> ... we have now to go back to the position we were in at the close of the Sikkim campaign (of 1888); to look upon the subsequent settlement (the Convention of 1890) as much waste paper; to recognize that the Chinese had no power to make a settlement on behalf of the Tibetans; to make now a new settlement with the Tibetans as well as the Chinese; and by force of arms exact a material guarantee that they will keep to it when made. (50)

From the above statement it is evident that the Government of India was determined to remove the flaws in the 1890 Convention and secure international sanction for its protectorate over Sikkim.

On 3 December 1903, the Expedition crossed the Jelep Pass and entered Rinchinpong on 13 December 1903. In the middle of

---

(49) Official Note of L.W. Dane, Secretary to the Government of India, 19 May 1903. F.S.E., July 1903, 38-95 (K.W.).

(50) Younghusband's Note on "the present unsatisfactory situation in Tibet with proposals for measures necessary to remedy it", 23 October 1903. F.S.E., January 1904, 358-393.

January 1904 it reached a place called Tuna where it halted for three months awaiting the arrival of the Tibetan and Chinese delegates. Younghusband turned down the request of the Tibetan Commander, to withdraw the Expedition to the British territory and commence talks at Yatung. (51) On 11 April 1904, the Expedition proceeded to Gyantse and awaited the arrival of the Amban and the Tibetan delegates, but neither of them turned up. On the other hand the Tibetans attacked the Expedition in May 1904. In view of that attack, the Expedition was permitted to proceed to Lhasa, in case negotiations could not be held at Gyantse. (52) On 1 June 1904 Younghusband sent an ultimatum to Lhasa demanding the appearance of the Amban and the Tibetan delegates before 25 June 1904. As the ultimatum was ignored the Expedition entered Lhasa on 4 August 1904. The Dalai Lama fled to Urga, the capital of Mongolia. Thereupon, Yu Tai, the Chinese Amban agreed for talks, and commenced negotiations with the Mission.

The Lhasa Convention

On 7 September 1904, the Convention between Great Britain and Tibet generally known as the Lhasa Convention was signed at the Potala Palace, Lhasa. It contained nine Articles under which Tibet agreed to recognize the Sikkim frontier as laid down in the 1890 Convention, and to erect the boundary pillars (Article one); to open Gyantse and Gartok as Trade Marts (Article two); to

---

(51) Telegram of Younghusband to Government of India, 31 March 1904. F.S.E., July 1904, 67-105.

(52) Telegram of Lord Brodrick, Secretary of State for India, to Lord Curzon, 12 May 1904. Further Papers Relating to Tibet III, in continuation of Cmd. 2054 (London, 1905), No. 13.

discuss subsequently the question of the amendment of the Trade Regulations of 1893 (Article three); not to levy duties except those provided for in the mutually agreed tariff (Article four); to keep the roads open to the new marts and to transmit letters between the British Trade Agent and the Chinese and Tibetan authorities (Article five); to pay an indemnity of Rs. 75,00,000 in seventy five instalments (Article six); to place the Chumbi valley under British occupation as a security for the payment of indemnity (Article seven); to raze all fortifications between the British frontier and Gyantse (Article eight); and not to have any kind of dealings with foreign powers without the British consent (Article nine). (53)

The British Government considered the indemnity terms to be severe. Therefore it agreed to reduce the indemnity to Rs. 25,00,000 and to evacuate Chumbi in three years provided the indemnity was paid and the Convention was observed in other respects. (54)

The Peking Convention

The Lhasa Convention was not final, as the assent of China whose suzerainty over Tibet, Great Britain had recognized, was not given. Therefore, after the return of the Expedition to the British territory, the necessary negotiations with China were undertaken. On 27 April 1906 the Convention between Great Britain and China,

---

(53) Further Papers Relating to Tibet, Cmd. 5240 (London, 1910), No. 1.

(54) Telegram of Brodrick to Curzon, 16 September 1904, Further Papers Relating to Tibet, Cmd. 2370 (London, 1905), No. 156.

generally known as the Peking Convention, was signed at Peking. The treaty contained six Articles. China gave its formal sanction to the Lhasa Convention (Article one). Great Britain agreed not to annex Tibet, while China agreed not to allow other foreign states to interfere in the internal affairs of Tibet (Article two). Britain got the right to connect the Trade Marts with India by Telegraph lines (Article three). The Sikkim Convention of 1890 and the Trade Regulations of 1893 remained in force (Article four). Article five made the English version of the treaty authoritative. Article six provided the ratification within three months. (55)

Boundary demarcation given up

The proposal to demarcate the boundary, which was mainly responsible for the Lhasa Convention was given up. Curzon felt that there was no need to erect pillars on the Sikkim-Tibet boundary on two considerations, namely, 1) the physical impossibility of erecting them all along the frontier which was at some places as high as 18,000 feet, and 2) the fear that they may be knocked down by the Tibetans who thereby create the very situation which the Government of India wanted to avoid. (56)

But Curzon's successor, Lord Minto, thought it desirable to erect pillars. He therefore wanted to remind the Tibetans of their obligation to demarcate the boundary. (57) Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, who did not agree with the opinion

---

(55) Further Papers Relating to Tibet, n. 53, No. 94.

(56) Curzon's Note dated 15 April 1905. F.E.A., May 1905, 64-65.

(57) Letter of Lord Minto to Lord Morley, Secretary of State for India, 17 May 1906. F.S.E., May 1906, 254-56.

of the Viceroy informed the latter that so long as Tibet observed Article one of the Lhasa Convention, it was neither necessary nor expedient to "raise the question of erecting the pillars". (58)

Transfer of the political charge of Sikkim from Government of Bengal to Government of India April 1906

The Government of India used to conduct its affairs with Sikkim through the medium of the Government of Bengal, but in 1901 Lord Curzon decided that the internal administration of Sikkim should remain under the control of the Bengal Government, while on political and commercial questions, the political officer should correspond directly with the foreign department of the Government of India. While deciding that arrangement Lord Curzon noted thus:

> Should the Russians get into Tibet or should their influence become predominant there, it may be very desirable that we should place Sikkim under foreign department. (59)

Though the success of Younghusband Expedition to Tibet removed the contingency of Russian influence in Sikkim, A.H.L. Fraser, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, thought it desirable to transfer to the Government of India, the complete political and administrative charge of Sikkim as the political questions connected with that kingdom were far more than "provincial importance". (60)

---

(58) Letter of Morley to Minto, 13 July 1906. F.S.E., September 1906, 203-09.

(59) F.S.E., March 1902, 35.

(60) Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India. F.S.E., July 1905, 21-45.

The Government of India agreed with the views of Fraser and took over the political and administrative charge of Sikkim with effect from 1 April 1906. (61)

From the above it is evident that the Government of India had exploited the dispute concerning Sikkim-Tibet boundary to open Tibet. The success of the Younghusband Expedition in opening Tibet and forcing it to sign the Lhasa Convention on 7 September 1904 had solved all the British difficulties regarding the status of Sikkim and its boundary with Tibet. Tibet had not only recognized the protectorate of the Government of India over Sikkim but also confirmed the Sikkim-Tibet boundary as laid down in the Convention of 1890. China confirmed the Lhasa Convention by signing the Peking Convention with Britain in 1906. The influence of these two treaties on Sikkim was far reaching. In the first place the de jure status of Sikkim as the protectorate of the Government of India had received international sanction. In the second place, the Government of India by demonstrating its power in Tibet was able to consolidate its position in Sikkim. It no longer had any troubles either from the Maharaja or the pro-Tibet faction which vanished altogether.

---

(61) F.E.A., June 1906, 55-66.

CONCLUSIONS

The British relations with Sikkim were marked by four successive stages. The first stage was during the years 1814-15. During this period, the East India Company developed friendly relations with Sikkim as it was involved in a war with Nepal. The Company's policy during this period had three aims, namely, 1) to use Sikkim as a link between Calcutta and Lhasa, 2) to utilise its strategic location between Nepal and Bhutan to prevent the rumoured alliance of the latter two states against the Company, and 3) to utilize its armed forces to open a second front on Nepal. In view of these political and military considerations, the Company treated Sikkim as its ally against the common enemy Nepal. The Nepal war came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Segauli in December 1815, and with it also came to an end the first stage of British relations with Sikkim.

The years 1816-61 marked the second stage of British relations with Sikkim. During this period, the British succeeded in making advantageous treaties with Sikkim which led to their ultimate domination and partial annexation of that kingdom.

At the end of the Nepal war in 1815, the Company found no necessity to treat Sikkim as its ally, but at the same time decided to continue contacts with that kingdom as it wanted to surround Nepal on three sides with the territory under British control or protection. In this policy Sikkim played a crucial role. In order to ensure the support of that kingdom, the

Company wanted to enter into an agreement with it. To induce the Raja to enter into a treaty with the Company, the Governor-General of India, Lord Moira handed over a portion of the territory wrested from Nepal to Sikkim. As expected by the Company, the Raja was tempted by that bait of territory and signed the Treaty of Titalia on 10 February 1817.

The Treaty of Titalia marked the beginning of the end of Sikkim's existence as an independent state. By this Treaty the Company gained many political and commercial privileges from Sikkim. Though the Company did not fully take advantage of the commercial privileges, it was not slow to exploit the political privileges to secure from the Raja the strategically important place of Darjeeling.

The cession of Darjeeling was an event of great importance in the history of British relations with Sikkim. It not only placed the British in close contact with the hill states of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, but also provided a constant reminder of the possibilities of trade with Tibet. The cession of Darjeeling, however, led to the crisis of 1849 when Drs. Campbell and Hooker were arrested by the Sikkim authorities. The Company exploited the incident to annex from Sikkim, the Morung and other fertile areas measuring 640 sq. miles.

The above annexations brought about a significant change in the relations between Sikkim and the Company. Previously, Darjeeling was an enclave in Sikkim territory. After the annexation it became contiguous with the Company's territory in the plains. At the same time, Sikkim was cut off from access to the plains except through British territory. The Company did not

annex the whole of Sikkim because of the policy of maintaining it as a buffer between Nepal and Bhutan, and Tibet and British India.

Though Sikkim retained its separate identity as a kingdom, it lost all respect in the eyes of the Company. The Raja who was considered as an ally of the Company in 1814, became a 'hill-savage' in 1849. The Raja's devalued status was the direct outcome of the reduced importance of his state. As long as Nepal remained a power to be reckoned with, the Company gave importance to Sikkim, but once the former came under its dominant influence, it had very little to do with the latter.

The British annexation of Sikkimese territory following the 1849 crisis led to a further deterioration of their relations. In February 1861, the Government of India sent a military expedition to Sikkim. The expedition was sent at a time when China was suffering repeated defeats at the hands of Britain and France. China, therefore, was not in a position to render any help to Sikkim. Similarly, Tibet, due to its defeat at the hands of Nepal in 1858, was not in a position to offer any effective opposition to British expansion towards the North. The British Expedition was thus a success, and Sikkim was forced to sign a treaty with the Government of India in 1861. The treaty marked the end of the second stage of the British relations with Sikkim, which now became, for all practical purposes, a protectorate of the Government of India.

The years 1862-90 mark the third stage of the British relations with Sikkim. During this period British interest in Sikkim had undergone a great change. They began to value Sikkim

not so much on military and political considerations, but on commercial considerations as it offered the shortest and the easiest route from India to the Chumbi valley in the Southern Tibet. Ashley Eden, who had accompanied the 1861 expedition to Sikkim as the political officer, prophesized that within a short time, Sikkim would become a flourishing trade route between Lhasa and Darjeeling. The Government of India was forced to take great interest in the Tibetan trade as the tea industry developed rapidly around Darjeeling.

The period from 1861 to 1886 saw the height of agitation for the opening of Tibet. Much of the agitation came from the Bengal officers who had worked in the great tea growing areas of the frontier not far away from Tibet. The arguments of Campbell, Eden, Haughton and Macaulay induced the Government of India to despatch a mission to Tibet in 1886 under the leadership of Macaulay. The mission was, however, opposed by the Tibetans.

The Tibetans not only refused to allow Macaulay Mission to enter into their country, but also occupied a place called Lingtu in Sikkim, which the British considered as their protectorate since 1861. This development placed the Government of India in a most critical position. It was able neither to expel the Tibetans from Lingtu nor ignore their occupation of that place. It did not want to use force to expel the Tibetans from Lingtu lest it might find itself involved in discussions with China regarding the status of Sikkim. At the same time it was aware that to ignore the Tibetan aggression would mean the loss of the British prestige in the Himalaya. Further it might give rise to the possible Tibet-

Chinese claims over Nepal, Bhutan and even over Darjeeling. For two years Dufferin ignored the Tibetan occupation of Lingtu and vainly hoped that they would withdraw of their own accord. As his hopes were belied, the Tibetans were forcibly expelled from Lingtu in 1886.

The decision to eject the Tibetans from Lingtu was in line with the Government of India's general policy towards the Eastern Himalayan states. This policy to see that no other power should gain influence in that corner of India, since that would pose a threat to the security of the Indian Empire. The peculiar position of Sikkim as a weak but strategically important state made it impossible for the Government of India to ignore that state or treat it as a semi-independent state as Nepal. It was afraid that once the British withdraw from Sikkim it would become a bone of contention between the neighbouring states of Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet. In other words Sikkim would become "the Alsatia of the Eastern Himalayas". Such a state of affairs would not only react very adversely on the security of India, but also create a feeling of nervousness among the planters who had brought every inch of land on the frontier under tea cultivation. Further it would create fresh troubles with Sikkim, since many of the British Indian subjects, namely Tibetans, Lepchas and Nepalese who had settled down at Darjeeling, continue to have transactions and interests with that kingdom.

The apprehension of the Government of India that the forceful expulsion of the Tibetans from Lingtu would involve it in discussions with China regarding the status of Sikkim came true. Soon after the forceful expulsion of the Tibetans, the Chinese realized that they would lose influence in Tibet if they did not

come to terms with the British regarding Sikkim-Tibet boundary. Therefore they announced that their Amban at Lhasa would proceed to the Tibet-Sikkim frontier to open negotiations with the British. This announcement placed the Government of India in a critical position, for it realized that it would be faced with the very kind of negotiations it wanted to avoid. It had sent military expeditions to Lingtu to deal with the specific problem of expelling the Tibetans from Sikkim, but not to bring about a settlement regarding Sikkim-Tibet frontier. It, however, decided to participate in the negotiations as it wanted to utilise that opportunity to secure the Chinese recognition of the status of Sikkim as a British protectorate.

The negotiations resulted in the signing of the Sikkim Convention in 1890 by Britain and China. The Convention decided once and for all the status of Sikkim as the protectorate of the Government of India. In 1893, the Trade Regulations were signed, but the Government of India did not press hard for the import of Indian tea into Tibet. The reason for this was obvious. After the failure of Macaulay Mission its interest in Tibetan trade had for the time being receded into the background as it was more concerned with preventing Sikkim from becoming a 'border Alsatia'. The Sikkim Convention thus marked the end of the third stage of the British relations with Sikkim. The de facto and de jure status of Sikkim as a British protectorate received tthe Chinesel recognition.

The years following the Sikkim Convention marked the fourth and final stage of British relations with Sikkim. During the course of the next few years, the Government of India succeeded in

consolidating its authority in Sikkim to such an extent that in 1892 it found no difficulty whatsoever in deposing temporarily Maharaja Thothab Namgyal. Further in 1899 it recognized the Maharaja's second son, Sidkeong Namgyal, as the successor designate to the throne, as it felt that he would better serve the British interests than his elder brother, Tchoda Namgyal. Both the Maharaja and the monasteries silently acquiesced in the selection of Sidkeong Namgyal, even though they considered him ineligible for secular duties as he was supposed to be the Avatar or incarnation of the founder of the Phodung monastery.

One factor that had helped the British in strengthening their position in Sikkim was the steady change in the composition of the latter's population. When they had established contacts with that kingdom, the Lepchas and the Bhutias formed the main groups of the population. But after 1861, the Government of India initiated the policy of settling the Nepalese in Sikkim. Within a short time the Nepalese outnumbered the Lepchas and the Bhutias. This development satisfied the British as they very well knew that the Nepalese being the hereditary enemies of Tibet would eradicate the latter's influence in Sikkim.

After 1895 Sikkim once again came into lime light due to its border dispute with Tibet. The dispute dragged on till 1902 when the Government of India expelled the Tibetans from the disputed area of Giagong in Sikkim. After 1902 Sikkim continued to be in limelight due to the growing influence of Russia in Tibet. Lord Curzon was alarmed at this development as he felt that it posed a threat to the security of India. He, therefore, despatched Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa in 1903 to make the

British influence felt in Tibet and to force the Tibetan Government to accept India's protectorate over Sikkim. The Expedition, in September 1904, succeeded in forcing Tibet to sign the Lhasa Convention. Under this Convention Tibet, for the first time, acknowledged the suzerainty of India over Sikkim. China approved of the Lhasa Convention by signing a Convention with Britain at Peking in April 1906. These two Conventions, thus, secured for India international recognition of its suzerainty over Sikkim.

By 1906, the Government of India had consolidated its position in Sikkim to such an extent that it had no trouble whatsoever, for the remaining period of the British rule in India, either from the Maharaja or from the outside powers like Tibet and China. The power and influence of India over Sikkim was reflected in the smooth successions to the throne. When Maharaja Thothab Namgyal died on 11 February 1914, his second son, Sidkeong Namgyal whom the Government of India had recognised as the successor ignoring the claims of his elder brother, became the Maharaja. As he died unmarried, on 5 December 1914 his brother Tashi Namgyal became the Maharaja and ruled the country. till his death on 2 December 1963.

The British never relaxed their hold on Sikkim till their withdrawal from India in 1947. Sikkim due to its strategic location between Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet and India formed a vital point of India's defence in the Eastern Himalaya. Its location enabled the Government of India to watch the developments in the neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet. Another British interest in Sikkim was trade. The traditional trade

route from India to southern Tibet was from Darjeeling to Gyantse through Sikkim. The British always recognized Sikkim's importance both for the defence of India and for the development of its trade with Tibet and the countries beyond.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

TREATY OF TILALIA 1817

Treaty, Covenant, or Agreement entered into by Captain Barre Latter, Agent on the part of His Excellency the Right Honorable the Earl of Moira, K.G., Governor-General, &c., &c., &c., &c., and by Nazir Chaina Tenjin and Macha Teinbah and Lama Duchim Longdoo, deputies on the part of the Rajah of Sikkimputtee, being severally authorized and duly appointed for the above purposes, - 1817.

Article 1

The Honorable East India Company cedes, transfers, and makes over in full sovereignty to the Sikkimputtee Rajah, his heirs or successors, all the hilly or mountainous country situated to the eastward of the Mechi River and to the westward of the Teesta River, formerly possessed and occupied by the Rajah of Nepaul, but ceded to the Honorable East India Company by the treaty of peace signed at Segoulee.

Article 2

The Sikkimputtee Rajah engages for himself and successors to abstain from any acts of aggression or hostility against the Goorkhas or any other state.

Article 3

That he will refer to the arbitration of the British Government any disputes or questions that may arise between his subjects and those of Nepaul, or any other neighbouring state, and to abide by the decision of the British Government.

Article 4

He engages for himself and successors to join the British troops with the whole of his Military Force when employed in the Hills, and in general to afford the British Troops every aid and facility in his power.

Article 5

That he will not permit any British subject, nor the subject of any European and American state, to reside with in his dominions, without the permission of the English Government.

Article 6

That he will immediately seize and deliver up any dacoits or notorious offenders that may take refuge with in his territories.

Article 7

That he will not afford protection to any defaulters of revenue or other delinquents when demanded by the British Government through their accredited Agents.

Article 8

That he will afford protection to merchants and traders from the Company's Provinces, and he engages that no duties shall be

levied on the transit of merchandize beyond the established custom at the several golahs or marts.

Article 9

The Honorable East India Company guarantees to the Sikkimputtee Rajah and his successors the full and peaceable possession of the tract of hilly country specified in the First Article of the present Agreement.

Article 10

This treaty shall be ratified and exchanged by the Sikkimputtee Rajah within one month from the present date, and the counterpart, when confirmed by His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor-General, shall be transmitted to the Rajah.

Done at Titalya, this 10th day of February 1817, answering the 9th of Phagoon 1873 Sumbut, and to the 30th of Maugh 1223 Bengallie

BARRE LATTER
NAZIR CHAINA TINJIN
MACHA TIMMAH
LAMA DUCHIM LONGADOO

MOIRA
W.B. EDMONSTONE
ARCHD. SETON
GEO. DOWDESWELL

Ratified by the Governor-General in Council, at Fort William, this Fifteenth day of March, one thousand Eight hundred and Seventeen.

J. ADAM
Acting Chief Secretary to Government.

Appendix II

COPY OF A SUNNUD GRANTED TO THE RAJAH OF SIKKIM, DATED 7TH APRIL 1817

The Honorable East India Company, in consideration of the services performed by the Hill tribes under the Control of the Rajah of Sikkim, and of the attachment shown by him to the interest of the British Government, grants to the Sikkimputtee Rajah, his heirs and successors, all that portion of the low land situated eastward of the Meitchie River, and Westward of the Maha Nuddee, formerly possessed by the Rajah of Nepaul, but ceded to the Honorable East India Company by the treaty of Segoulee, to be held by the Sikkimputtee Rajah as a feudatory, or as acknowledging the supremacy of the British Government over the said lands, subject to the following conditions:-

The British Laws and Regulations will not be introduced into the territories in question, but the Sikkimputtee Rajah is authorized to make such laws and regulations for their internal government, as are suited to the habits and customs of the inhabitants, or that may be in force in his other dominions.

The Articles or provisions of the treaty signed at Titalya on the 10 February 1817, and ratified by His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor-General in Council on the 15th March following, are to be in force with regard to the lands hereby assigned to the Sikkimputtee Rajah, as far as they are applicable to the circumstances of those lands.

It will be especially incumbent on the Sikkimputtee Rajah and his officers to surrender on application from the officers of the Honorable Company, all persons charged with criminal offences, and all public defaulters who may take refuge in the lands now assigned to him, and to allow the police officers of the British Government to pursue into those lands and apprehend all such persons.

In consideration of the distance of the Sikkimputtee Rajah's residence from the Company's provinces, such orders as the Governor-General in Council may, upon any sudden emergency, find it necessary to transmit to the local authorities in the lands now assigned, for the security or protection of those lands, are to be immediately obeyed and carried into execution in the same manner as coming from the Sikkimputtee Rajah.

In order to prevent all disputes with regard to the boundaries of the low lands granted to the Sikkimputtee Rajah, they will be surveyed by a British officer, and their limits accurately laid down and defined.

Appendix III

TRANSLATION OF THE DEED OF GRANT MAKING OVER DARJEELING TO THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, DATED 29TH MAUGH, SAMBUT 1891, A.D., 1ST FEBRUARY 1835.

The Governor-General having expressed his desire for the possession of the Hill of Darjeeling, on account of its cool climate, for the purpose of enabling the servants of his Government, Suffering from Sickness, to avail themselves of its advantages, I, the Sikkimputtee Rajah, out of friendship to the said Governor-General, hereby present Darjeeling to the East India Company, that is, all the land South of the Great Runjeet River, east of the Balasur, Kahail, and Little Runjeet Rivers, and West of the Rungno and Mahamuddi Rivers.

A. CAMPBELL
Superintendent of Darjeeling and
in charge of political relations
with Sikkim.

Seal of the Rajah
prefixed to the document.

Appendix IV

TREATY, COVENANT, OR AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO BY THE HONORABLE ASHLEY EDEN, ENVOY AND SPECIAL COMMISSIONER ON THE PART OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, IN VIRTUE OF FULL POWERS VESTED IN HIM BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE CHARLES, EARL CANNING, GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL, AND BY HIS HIGHNESS SEKEONG KUZOO, MAHARAJAH OF SIKKIM ON HIS OWN PART, - 1861

****

Whereas the continued depradations and misconduct of the officers and subjects of the Maharajah of Sikkim, and the neglect of the Maharajah to afford Satisfaction for the misdeeds of his people have resulted in an interruption, for many years past, of the harmony which previously existed between the British Government and the Government of Sikkim, and have led ultimately to the invasion and conquest of Sikkim by a British force; and whereas the Maharajah of Sikkim has now expressed his sincere regret for the misconduct of his Servants and Subjects, his determination to do all in his power to obviate future misunderstanding, and his desire to be again admitted into friendship and alliance with the British Government, it is hereby agreed as follows:-

1

All previous treaties made between the British Government and the Sikkim Government are hereby formally cancelled.

2

The whole of Sikkim territory now in the occupation of the British forces is restored to the Maharajah of Sikkim, and there shall henceforth be peace and amity between the two states.

3

The Maharajah of Sikkim undertakes, so far as is within his power, to restore within one month from the date of signing this Treaty, all public property which was abandoned by the detachment of British Troops at Rinchinpoong.

4

In indemnification of the expenses incurred in 1860 by the British Government in occupying a portion of the territory of Sikkim as a means of enforcing just claims which had been evaded by the Government of Sikkim, and as a Compensation to the British Subjects who were pillaged and kidnapped by the Subjects of Sikkim, the Sikkim Government agrees to pay to the British authorities at Darjeeling the Sum of 7,000 (Seven thousand) Rupees in the following instalments, that is to say:-

May 1st, 1861	1,000
November 1st, 1861	3,000
May 1st, 1862	3,000

As Security for the due payment of this amount, it is further agreed that, in the event of any of these instalments not being duly paid on the date appointed, the Government of Sikkim shall make over to the British Government that portion of its territory bounded on the South by the River Ramman, on the east by the Great Runjeet River, on the north by a line from the Great Runjeet to the Singalselah Range, including the monasteries of Tassiding, Pemonchi, and Changacheling, and on the west by the Singalselah Mountain Range, and the British Government shall retain

possession of this territory and collect the revenue thereof, until the full amount, with all expenses of occupation and collection and interest at 6 per cent per annum, are realized.

5

The Government of Sikkim engages that its Subjects shall never again commit depradations on British territory, or kidnap or otherwise molest British Subjects. In the event of any such depradation or kidnaping taking place, the Government of Sikkim undertakes to deliver up all the persons engaged in such malpractice, as well as the Sirdars or other chiefs conniving at or benefitting thereby.

6

The Government of Sikkim will at all times seize and deliver up any criminals, defaulters, or other delinquents who may have taken refuge with in its territory, on demand being duly made in writing by the British Government through their accredited agents. Should any delay occur in complying with such demand, the police of the British Government may follow the person whose surrender has been demanded into any part of Sikkim territory, and shall, on showing a warrant, duly signed by the British Agent, receive every assistance and protection in the prosecution of their object from the Sikkim officers.

7

Inasmuch as the late misunderstandings between the two Governments have been mainly fomented by the acts of the ex-Dewan

Namgnay, the Government of Sikkim engages that neither the said Namgnay, nor any of his blood relations shall ever again be allowed to set foot in Sikkim or to take part in the Councils of, or hold any office under, the Maharajah or any of the Maharajah's family at Choombi.

8

The Government of Sikkim from this date abolishes all restrictions on travellers and monopolies in trade between the British territories and Sikkim. There shall henceforth be a free reciprocal intercourse, and full liberty of Commerce between subjects of both countries; it shall be lawful for British subjects to go into any part of Sikkim for the purpose of travel or trade, and the subjects of all countries shall be permitted to reside in and pass through Sikkim, and to expose their goods for sale at any place and in any manner that may best suit their purpose, without any interference whatever, except as is hereinafter provided.

9

The Government of Sikkim engages to afford protection to all travellers, merchants or traders of all countries, whether residing in, trading in, or passing through Sikkim. If any merchant, traveller or trader, being a European British subject, shall commit any offence contrary to the laws of Sikkim, and such person shall be punished by the representative of the British Government resident at Darjeeling, and the Sikkim Government will atonce deliver such offender over to the British authorities for

this purpose, and will, on no account, detain such offender in Sikkim on any pretext or pretence whatever. All other British subjects residing in the country to be liable to the laws of Sikkim; but such persons shall, on no account, be punished with loss of limb, or maiming, or torture, and every case of punishment of a British subject shall atonce reported to Darjeeling.

10

No duties or fees of any sort shall be demanded by the Sikkim Government of any person or persons on account of goods exported into the British territories from Sikkim, or imported into Sikkim from the British territories.

11

On all goods passing into or out of Thibet, Bhootan or Nepaul, the Government of Sikkim may levy a duty of customs according to such a scale as may, from time to time, be determined and published, without reference to the destination of the goods, provided, however, that such duty shall, on no account, exceed 5 per cent on the value of goods at the time and place of the levy of duty. On the payment of the duty aforesaid a pass shall be given exempting such goods from liability to further payment on any account whatever.

12

With the view to protect the Government of Sikkim from fraud on account of under valuation for assessment of duty, it is agreed that the custom officers shall have the option of taking

over for the Government any goods at the value affixed on them by the owner.

13

In the event of the British Government desiring to open out a road through Sikkim, with the view of encouraging trade, the Sikkim Government will raise no objection thereto, and will afford every protection and aid to the party engaged in the work. If a road is constructed, the Government of Sikkim undertakes to keep it in repair, and to erect and maintain suitable travellers' rest-houses throughout its route.

14

If the British Government desires to make either a topographical or geological survey of Sikkim, the Sikkim Government will raise no objection to this being done, and will afford protection and assistance to the officers employed in this duty.

15

Inasmuch as many of the late misunderstandings have had their foundation in the custom which exists in Sikkim of dealing in slaves, the Government of Sikkim binds itself, from this date, to punish severely any person trafficking in human beings, or seizing persons for the purpose of using them as slaves.

16

Henceforth the subjects of Sikkim may transport themselves without let or hinderance to any country to which they may wish to remove. In the same way the Government of Sikkim has authority to

permit the subjects of other countries, not being criminals or defaulters, to take refuge in Sikkim.

17

The Government of Sikkim engages to abstain from any acts of aggression or hostility against any of the neighbouring states which are allies of the British Government. If any disputes or questions arise between the people of Sikkim and those of the neighbouring states, such disputes or questions shall be referred to the arbitration of the British Government, and Sikkim Government agrees to abide by the decision of the British Government.

18

The whole military force of Sikkim shall join and afford every aid and facility to British Troops when employed in the Hills.

19

The Government of Sikkim will not cede or lease any portion of its territory to another state without the permission of the British Government.

20

The Government of Sikkim engages that no armed force belonging to any other country shall pass through Sikkim without the sanction of the British Government.

21

Seven of the criminals, whose surrender was demanded by the British Government, having fled from Sikkim and taken refuge in Bhootan, the Government of Sikkim engages to do all in its

power to obtain the delivery of those persons from the Bhootan Government, and in the event of any of these men again returning to Sikkim, the Sikkim Government binds itself to seize them, and to make them over to the British Authorities at Darjeeling without delay.

22

With the view to the establishment of an efficient Government in Sikkim, and to the better maintenance of friendly relations with the British Government, the Maharajah of Sikkim agrees to remove the seat of his Government from Thibet to Sikkim and to reside there for nine months in the year. It is further agreed that a Vakeel shall be accredited by the Sikkim Government, who shall reside permanently at Darjeeling.

23

This treaty, consisting of twenty-three Articles, being settled and concluded by the Honorable Ashley Eden, British Envoy, and His Highness Sekeong Kunsoo Sikkimputtee, Maharajah, at Tumloong, this 28th Day of March 1861, corresponding with 17th Dao Neepoo 61, Mr. Eden has delivered to the Maharajah a copy of the same in English, with translation in Nagri and Bhootiah, under the seal and signature of the Said Honorable Ashley Eden and His Highness the Sikkimputtee Maharajah, and the Sikkimputtee Maharajah has in the like manner delivered to the said Hon'ble Ashley Eden another copy also in English, with translation in Nagri and Bhootiah, bearing the seal of His Highness and the said Hon'ble Ashley Eden. The Envoy engages to procure the delivery to His

Highness, within six weeks from this date, of a copy of this Treaty duly ratified by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council, and this Treaty shall in the meantime be in full force.

SEKEONG KUZOO SIKKIMPUTTEE

ASHLEY EDEN
ENVOY

CANNING

Ratified by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council at Calcutta on the Sixteenth day of April 1861.

C.U. AITCHISON
UNDER-SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Appendix V

CONVENTION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND CHINA RELATING TO SIKKIM AND TIBET, - 1890

Whereas Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and His Majesty the Emperor of China, are sincerely desirous to maintain and perpetuate the relations of friendship and good understanding which now exists between their respective Empires, and whereas recent occurrences have tended towards a disturbance of the said relations, and it is desirable to clearly define and permanently settle certain matters connected with the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet, Her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the Emperor of China have resolved to conclude a Convention on this subject and have, for this purpose, named plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, His Excellency the Most Hon'ble Henry Charles Keith petty Fitzmaurice, G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.I.E., Marquess of Lansdowne, Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

And His Majesty the Emperor of China, His Excellency Sheng Tai, Imperial Associate Resident in Tibet, Military Deputy Lieutenant-Governor.

Who having met and communicated to each other their full powers, and finding these to be in proper form, having agreed upon the following Convention in eight Articles.

I.

The boundary of Sikkim and Tibet shall be the crest of the mountain range separating the waters flowing into Sikkim Teesta and its affluents from the waters flowing into the Tibetan Mochu and northwards into other rivers of Tibet. The line commences at Mount Gipmochi on the Bhutan frontier and follows the abovementioned water parting to the point where it meets Nipal territory.

II.

It is admitted that the British Government, whose protectorate over the Sikkim state is hereby recognised, has direct and exclusive control over the internal administration and foreign relations of that state, and except through and with the permission of the British Government, neither the Ruler of the State nor any of its officers shall have official relations of any kind, formal or informal with any other country.

III.

The Government of Great Britain and Ireland and the Government of China engage reciprocally to respect the boundary as defined in Article I, and to prevent acts of aggression from their respective sides of the frontier.

IV.

The question of providing increased facilities for trade across the Sikkim-Tibet frontier will hereafter be discussed with a view to a mutually satisfactory arrangement by High Contracting powers.

V.

The question of pasturage on the Sikkim side of the frontier is reserved for further examination and future adjustment.

VI.

The High Contracting powers reserve for discussion and arrangement the method in which official communications between the British authorities in India and the authorities in Tibet shall be conducted.

VII.

Two joint commissioners shall, with in six months from the ratification of this Convention, be appointed one by the British Government in India, the other by the Chinese Resident in Tibet. The said Commissioners shall meet and discuss the questions which by the last three preceding Articles have been reserved.

VIII.

The present Convention shall be ratified, and the ratification shall be exchanged in London as soon as possible after the date of the signature thereof.

In witness whereof the respective negotiators have signed the same and affixed thereunto the seals of their arms.

Done in quadruplicate at Calcutta this seventeenth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety, corresponding with the Chinese date the twenty-seventh day of the second moon of the sixteenth year of Kuang Hsu.

LANSDOWNE

CHINESE SEAL AND SIGNATURE

Appendix VI

REGULATIONS REGARDING TRADE, COMMUNICATION, AND PASTURAGE (TO BE APPENDED TO THE SIKKIM-TIBET CONVENTION OF 1890), - 1893.

Trade

I.

A trade-mart shall be established at Yatung on the Tibetan side of the frontier, and shall be open to all British subjects for purposes of trade from the first day of May 1894. The Government of India shall be free to send officers to reside at Yatung to watch the conditions of British trade at that mart.

II.

British subjects trading at Yatung shall be at liberty to travel freely to and fro between the frontier and Yatung, to reside at Yatung, and to rent houses and godowns for their own accommodation and the storage of their goods. The Chinese Government undertake that suitable buildings for the above purposes shall be provided for British subjects, and also that a special and fitting residence shall be provided for the officer or officers appointed by the Government of India under Regulation I to reside at Yatung. British subjects shall be at liberty to sell their goods to whomsoever they please, to purchase native commodities in kind or in money, to hire transport of any kind, and in general to conduct their business transactions in conformity with local usage, and without any vexatious restrictions. Such British subjects shall receive efficient protection for their persons and property. At Lang-Jo

and Ta-Chun, between the frontier and Yatung, where rest-houses have been built by the Tibetan authorities, British subjects can break their journey in consideration of a daily rent.

III.

Import and export trade in the following articles:- arms, ammunition, military stores, salt, liquors, and intoxicating or narcotic drugs, may at the option of either Government be entirely prohibited, or permitted only on such conditions as either Government on their own side may think fit to impose.

IV.

Goods, other than goods of descriptions enumerated in Regulation III, entering Tibet from British India, across the Sikkim-Tibet frontier, or vice-versa, whatever their origin, shall be exempt from duty for a period of five years commencing from the date of opening of Yatung to trade; but after the expiration of this term, if found desirable, a traffic may be mutually agreed upon and enforced.

Indian tea may be imported into Tibet at a rate of duty not exceeding that at which Chinese tea is imported into England, but trade in Indian tea shall not be engaged in during the five years for which other commodities are exempt.

V.

All goods on arrival at Yatung, whether from British India or from Tibet, must be reported at the customs station there for examination, and the report must give full particulars of the description, quantity and value of the goods.

VI.

In the event of trade disputes arising between British and Chinese or Tibetan subjects in Tibet, they shall be enquired into and settled in personal conference by the political officer for Sikkim and the Chinese frontier officer. The object of personal conference being to ascertain facts and do justice; where there is a divergence of views the law of the country to which the defendant belongs shall guide.

Communication

VII.

Despatches from the Government of India to the Chinese Imperial Resident in Tibet shall be handed over by the political officer for Sikkim to the Chinese Frontier Officer, who will forward them by special courier.

Despatches from the Chinese Imperial Resident in Tibet to the Government of India will be handed over by the Chinese frontier officer to the Political Officer for Sikkim, who will forward them as quickly as possible.

VIII.

Despatches between the Chinese and Indian officials must be treated with due respect, and Couriers will be assisted in passing to and fro by the officers of each Government.

Pasturage

IX.

After the expiration of one year from the date of the opening of Yatung, such Tibetans as continue to graze their cattle in Sikkim will be subject to such Regulations as the British Government may from time to time enact for the general conduct of grazing in Sikkim. Due notice will be given of such Regulations.

General Articles

I.

In the event of disagreement between the political officer for Sikkim and the Chinese Frontier officer, each official shall report the matter to his immediate superior, who, in turn, if a settlement is not arrived at between them, shall refer such matter to their respective Governments for disposal.

II.

After the lapse of five years from the date on which these Regulations shall come into force, and on six months' notice given by either party, these Regulations shall be subject to revision by Commissioners appointed on both sides for this purpose who shall be empowered to decide on and adopt such amendments and extensions as experience shall prove to be desirable.

III.

It having been stipulated that Joint Commissioners shall be appointed by the British and Chinese Governments under the Seventh

article of the Sikkim-Tibet Convention to meet and discuss, with a view to the final settlement of the questions reserved under articles 4, 5 and 6 of the said Convention; and the Commissioners thus appointed having met and discussed the questions referred to, namely, Trade Communication and Pasturage, have been further appointed to sign the agreement in nine Regulations and three general articles now arrived at, and to declare that the said nine Regulations and the three general articles from part of the Convention itself.

In witness whereof the respective Commissioners have hereto subscribed their names.

Done in quadruplicate at Darjeeling this 5th day of December, in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three, corresponding with the Chinese date the 28th day of the 10th moon of the 19th year of Kuang Hsu.

HO CHANG-JUNG

A.W. PAUL
British Commissioner.

JAMES H. HART
Chinese Commissioner.

The 5th December 1893.

Appendix VII

CONVENTION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND TIBET, 1904.

Whereas doubts and difficulties have arisen as to the meaning and validity of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890, and the Trade Regulations of 1893, and as to the liabilities of the Tibetan Government under these agreements; and whereas recent occurrences have tended towards a disturbance of the relations of friendship and good understanding which have existed between the British Government and the Government of Tibet; and whereas it is desirable to restore peace and amicable relations, and to resolve and determine the doubts and difficulties as aforesaid, the said Governments have resolved to conclude a Convention with these objects, and the following articles have been agreed upon by Colonel F.E. Younghusband, C.I.E., in virtue of full powers vested in him by His Britannic Majesty's Government and on behalf of that said Government, and Lo-Sang Gyal-Tsen, the Ga-den Ti-Rimpoche, and the representatives of the Council, of the three monasteries Se-ra, Dre-Pung and Ga-den, and of the ecclesiastical and lay officials of the National Assembly on behalf of the Government of Tibet:-

I.

The Government of Tibet engages to respect the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 and to recognize the frontier between Sikkim and Tibet, as defined in Article I of the said Convention, and to erect boundary pillars accordingly.

II.

The Tibetan Government undertakes to open forthwith trade marts to which all British and Tibetan subjects shall have free right of access at Gyantse and Gartok, as well as at Yatung.

The Regulations applicable to trade mart at Yatung, under the Anglo-Chinese Agreement of 1893, shall, subject to such amendments as may hereafter be agreed upon by Common Consent between the British and Tibetan Governments, apply to the marts above mentioned.

In addition to establishing trade marts at the places mentioned, the Tibetan Government undertakes to place no restrictions on trade by existing routes, and to consider the question of establishing fresh trade marts under similar conditions if development of trade requires it.

III.

The question of the amendment of the Regulations of 1893 is reserved for separate consideration, and the Tibetan Government undertakes to appoint fully authorized delegates to negotiate with representatives of the British Government as to the details of the amendments required.

IV.

The Tibetan Government undertakes to levy no dues of any kind other than those provided for in the tariff to be mutually agreed upon.

V.

The Tibetan Government undertakes to keep the roads to Gyantse and Gartok from the frontier clear of all obstruction and in a state of repair suited to the needs of the trade, and to establish at Yatung, Gyantse, and Gartok, and at each of the other trade marts that may hereafter be established, a Tibetan Agent who shall receive from the British Agent appointed to watch over British trade at the marts in question any letter which the latter may desire to send to the Tibetan or to the Chinese authorities. The Tibetan Agent shall also be responsible for the due delivery of such communications and for the transmission of replies.

VI.

As an indemnity to the British Government for the expense incurred in the despatch of armed troops to Lhasa, to exact reparation for breaches of treaty obligations, and for the insults offered to and attacks upon the British Commissioner and his following and escort, the Tibetan Government engages to pay a sum of pounds five hundred thousand - equivalent to rupees seventy-five lakhs - to the British Government.

The indemnity shall be payable at such place as the British Government may from time to time, after due notice, indicate whether in Tibet or in the British districts of Darjeeling or Jalpaiguri, in seventy-five annual instalments of rupees one lakh each on the 1st January in each year, beginning from the 1st January 1906.

VII.

As security for the payment of the above-mentioned indemnity, and for the fulfilment of the provisions relative to trade marts

specified in Articles II, III, IV, and V, the British Government shall continue to occupy the Chumbi valley until the indemnity has been paid and until the trade marts have been effectively opened for three years, whichever date may be the later.

VIII.

The Tibetan Government agrees to raze all forts and fortifications and remove all armaments which might impede the course of free communication between the British frontier and the towns of Gyantse and Lhasa.

IX.

The Government of Tibet engages that, without the previous consent of the British Government, -

a) no portion of Tibetan territory shall be ceded, sold, leased, mortgaged or otherwise given for occupation, to any European Power;

b) no such Power shall be permitted to intervene in Tibetan affairs;

c) no Representatives or Agents of any Foreign Power shall be admitted to Tibet;

d) no concessions for railways, roads, telegraphs, mining or other rights shall be granted to any Foreign Power, or to the Subject of any Foreign Power. In the event of Consent to such concession being granted, similar or equivalent concessions shall be granted to the British Government;

e) no Tibetan revenues, whether in kind or in cash, shall be pledged or assigned to any Foreign Power, or to the subject of any

Foreign Power.

X.

In witness whereof the negotiations have signed the same, and affixed hereunto the seals of their arms.

Done in quintuplicate at Lhasa, this 7th day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and four, corresponding with the Tibetan date, the 27th day of the seventh month of the Wood Dragon year.

DECLARATION SIGNED BY THE VICEROY OF INDIA ON THE 11TH NOVEMBER 1904, AND APPENDED TO THE RATIFIED CONVENTION OF 7TH SEPTEMBER 1904.

His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, having ratified the Convention which was concluded at Lhasa on 7th September 1904 by Colonel Younghusband, C.I.E., British Commissioner for Tibetan Frontier Matters, on behalf of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and by Lo-Sang Gyal-Tsen, the Ga-den Ti-Rimpoche, and the representatives of the Council, of the three monasteries Sera, Dre-Pung, and Ga-den, and of the ecclesiastical and lay officials of the National Assembly, on behalf of the Government of Tibet, is pleased to direct as an act of grace that the sum of money which the Tibetan Government have bound themselves under the terms of Article VI of the said Convention to pay His Majesty's Government as an indemnity for the expenses incurred by the latter in connecti with the dispatch of armed forces to Lhasa, be reduced from Rs. 75,00,000, to Rs. 25,00,000, and to declare that the British occupation of the Chumbi valley shall cease after the due payment

of three annual instalments of the said indemnity as fixed by the said Article, provided, however, that the trade marts as stipulated in Article II of the Convention shall have been effectively opened for three years as provided in Article VI of the Convention and that, in the meantime, the Tibetans shall have faithfully complied with the terms of the said Convention in all other respects.

AMPTHILL
Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

This declaration was signed by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council at Simla on the eleventh day of November, A.D., one thousand nine hundred and four.

S.M. Fraser,
Secretary to Government of India,
Foreign Department.

Appendix VIII

CONVENTION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND CHINA, 1906

Whereas His Majesty the King of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty the Emperor of China are sincerely desirous to maintain and perpetuate the relations of friendship and good understanding which now exist between their respective Empires;

And whereas the refusal of Tibet to recognize the validity of or to carry into full effect the provisions of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 17th March 1890, and Regulations of 5th December 1893 placed the British Government under the necessity of taking steps to secure their rights and interests under the said Convention and Regulations;

And whereas a Convention of ten articles was signed at Lhasa on 7th September 1904, on behalf of Great Britain and Tibet, and was ratified by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India on behalf of Great Britain on November 11th, 1904, a declaration on behalf of Great Britain modifying its terms under certain conditions being appended thereto;

His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the Emperor of China have resolved to conclude a Convention on this subject and have for this purpose named plenipotentiaries, that is to say:-

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Sir Ernest Mason Satow, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished

Order of St. Michael and St. George, His Said Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister plenipotentiary to His Majesty to the Emperor of China;

AND HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF CHINA:

His Excellency Tong-Shao-yi, His Said Majesty's High Commissioner plenipotentiary and a Vice-President of the Board of Foreign Affairs, who having communicated to each other their respective full powers and finding them to be in good and due form have agreed upon and concluded the following Convention in six articles:-

Article I.

The Convention concluded on 7th September, 1904, by Great Britain and Tibet, the texts of which in English and Chinese are attached to the present Convention as an annexe, is hereby confirmed, Subject to the modifications stated in the declaration appended thereto, and both of the High Contracting parties engage to take at all times such steps as may be necessary to secure the due fulfilment of the terms specified therein.

Article II.

The Government of Great Britain engages not to annex Tibetan territory or to interfere in the administration of Tibet. The Government of China also undertakes not to permit any other foreign state to interfere with the territory or internal administration of Tibet.

Article III.

The concessions which are mentioned in Article 9(d) of the Convention Concluded on 7th September, 1904 by Great Britain and

Tibet are denied to any state or to the subject of any state other than China, but it has been arranged with China that the trade marts specified in Article 2 of the aforesaid Convention Great Britain shall be entitled to lay down telegraph lines connecting with India.

Article IV.

The provisions of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 and Regulation of 1893 shall, subject to the terms of this present Convention and annexe thereto, remain in full force.

Article V.

The English and Chinese texts of the present Convention have been carefully compared and found to correspond, but in the event of there being any difference of meaning between them the English text shall be authoritative.

Article VI.

This Convention shall be ratified by the Sovereigns of both Countries and ratifications shall be exchanged at London with in three months after the date of Signature by the plenipotentiaries of both powers.

In token whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed and sealed this Convention, four copies in English and four in Chinese.

Done at Peking this twenty-seventh day of April, one thousand nine hundred and six, being the fourth day of the fourth month of the thirty-second year of the reign of Kuang-hsu.

Sd. TONG SHOA-YI
L.S.

Sd ERNEST SATOW

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Government Records and Documents

National Archives of India, New Delhi

Foreign Political Consultations.

Foreign Political Proceedings.

Foreign Secret Consultations.

Foreign Secret Proceedings.

Foreign Miscellaneous Proceedings (Demi-official Letters).

Foreign Political Consultations (Supplementary).

Foreign Department Proceedings, General Branch.

Foreign Department Proceedings, External Branch.

Foreign Department Proceedings, Secret E Branch.

Foreign Department Proceedings, Political Branch.

General Letters to the Court of Directors.

General Letters from the Court of Directors

Political Letters from the Court of Directors.

Political Letters to the Court of Directors.

Secret Despatch from the Court of Directors to the Governor-General.

Secret Despatch from the Governor-General to the Court of Directors.

India Despatch to the Court of Directors.

Public Documents, Reports etc.

Aitchison, C.U., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, II, Calcutta, 1909, XII, Calcutta, 1931.

East India : Sikkim Expedition: Accounts and Papers, 1862, XL.

Edgar, J.W., Report on a Visit to Sikkim and the Tibetan Frontier (in October, November and December 1873), Calcutta, 1874.

Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India. Compiled by the Intelligence Branch, Division of the Chief of Staff, Army Head Quarters, Simla, 1907, Vol. IV. North and North Eastern Frontier Tribes.

MaCaulay, Colman, Report of a Mission to Sikkim and the Tibetan Frontier with a Memorandum on our Relations with Tibet, Calcutta, 1885.

Narratives of the Political Relations of the Government of India with Native States, Calcutta, 1862.

Papers Relating to Bhutan Accounts and Papers 1865, XXXIX.

Further Papers Relating to Bhutan Accounts and Papers 1866, LII.

Papers Relating to the Nepaul War Printed in Conformity to the Resolution of the Court of Proprietors of the East India Stock of 3rd March 1824, 1824.

Papers Relating to Tibet, 1904. (Cmd. 1920).

Further Papers Relating to Tibet, 1904. (Cmd. 2054).

Further Papers Relating to Tibet, 1905. (Cmd. 2370).

Report on the Internal Trade of Bengal for the year 1877-78, Calcutta, 1878.

Reports on the External Trade of Bengal with Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan 1880-1906.

Pemberton, R.B., Report on Bootan, Calcutta, 1839.

Political Missions to Bootan, Comprising the Reports of the Hon'ble Ashley Eden - 1864; Captain R.B. Pemberton, 1837, 1838, with Dr. W. Griffith's Journal; And the Account by Baboo Kishen Kant Bose, Calcutta, 1865.

Wheeler, J.T., Summary of the Affairs of the Government of India in the Foreign Department for 1864-1865, Calcutta, 1868.

Gazetteers

Dash, A.J., Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling, Alipore, 1947.

Hunter, W.W., Imperial Gazetteer of India, XII, London, 1887; XXII, Oxford, 1908.

O'Malley, L.S.S., Bengal District Gazetteers: Darjeeling, Calcutta, 1907.

Risley, H.H., Gazetteer of Sikkim, Calcutta, 1894.

Books

Baird, J.G.A., Private Letters of Marquess of Dalhousie, Edinburgh and London, 1911.

Bute, Marchioness of, The Private Journals of Marquess of Hastings, 2 vols., London, 1858.

Hertslet, G.E.P., Treaties between Great Britain and China, 2 vols., London, 1908.

Kaye, J.W., The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe, 2 vols., London, 1858.

_____, Selections from the papers of Lord Metcalfe, London, 1875.

Markham, Clements R. comp., The Diary of George Bogle, London, 1876.

_____, Narrative of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa, London, 1879.

Turner, Samuel, An Account of the Embassy to the Court of Teshoo Lama in Tibet, Containing a Narrative of a Journey through Bootan and a part of Tibet, London, 1806.

Secondary Sources

Books

Ballantine, H., On India's Frontier or Nepal: The Gurkhas Mysterious Land, London, 1896.

Banerjee, A.C., The Eastern Frontier of British India 1784-1826, Calcutta, 1946.

Banerjee, Nityanarayan, The Himalayas, In and Across, Calcutta, 1937.

Basak, Radhagovinda, History of the North East India, Calcutta, 1934.

Bayley, H.V., Dorje-ling, Calcutta, 1838.

Bell, Charles, Tibet, past and present, Oxford, 1924.

_____, The Religion of Tibet, Oxford, 1931.

Bhuyan, S.K., Anglo-Assamese Relations, 1881-1826, Gauhati, 1949.

Bladenburg, Major Ross of, The Marquess of Hastings, Oxford, 1900.

Boulgar, D.C., Central Asian Questions, London, 1885.

_____, England and Russia in Central Asia, London, 1879.

Buckland, C.E., Bengal under the Lieutenant Governors, 2 vols., Calcutta, 1901.

Cammann, Schuyler, Trade Through the Himalayas, the Early British Attempts to Open Tibet, Princeton, 1951.

Chapman, Spencer, Lhasa: The Holy City, London, 1938.

Clark, G., Tibet, China and Great Britain, Peking, 1924.

Cooper, T.T., Journal of an Overland journey from China towards India, Calcutta, 1869.

_____, The Mishmee Hills, London, 1873.

Crosby, Oscar T., Tibet and Turkestan, New York, 1906.

Curzon, G.N., Russia in Central Asia, London, 1889.

_____, Frontiers, Romanes Lecture, Oxford, 1907.

Das, A.K., and Banerjee, S.K., The Lepchas of Darjeeling District, Calcutta, 1962.

Das, S.C., Narrative of a journey to Lhasa, Calcutta, 1885.

Das, Taraknath, British Expansion in Tibet, Calcutta, 1928.

Donaldson, Florence, Lepcha Land or Six Weeks in the Sikkim Himalaya, London, 1900.

Dozey, E.C., Darjeeling, Past and Present, Darjeeling, 1917.

Fraser, L., India Under Curzon and After, London, 1911.

Freshfield, D., Round Kanchenjunga, London, 1903.

Gowler, J.C., Sikkim, With Hints on Mountain and Jungle Warfare, London, 1873.

Gopal, S., British Policy in India 1858-1905, Cambridge, 1965.

Goyal, N., Political History of the Himalayan States, edn 2, New Delhi, 1966.

Hastings, Marquess of, Summary of the Administration of the Indian Government from October 1813 to January 1823, London, 1824.

_____, The Administration of the Indian Government, Edinburgh, 1825.

Hathorn, J.G., A Hand-book of Darjeeling, Calcutta, 1863.

Herbert, J.D., Particulars of a visit to the Sikkim Hills etc. Gleanings in Science, Calcutta, 1830.

Hoffmeister, Werner, Travels in Ceylon and Continental India, Including Nepal and other parts of the Himalayas, to the borders of Thibet, With Some Notices of the overland Routes, Edinburgh, 1848.

Hooker, J.D., Himalayan Journals, 2 vols, London, 1855.

Igglulden, H.A., The Second Battalion Derbyshire Regiment in the Sikkim Expedition of 1888, London, 1900.

Karan, P.P., and Jenkins (Jr.) W.M., The Himalayan Kingdoms Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal, Princeton, 1963.

Kiernan, E.V.G., British Diplomacy in China 1880-'85, Cambridge, 1939.

Lamb, Alastair, Britain and Chinese Central Asia, The Road to Lhasa 1767 to 1905, London, 1960.

Landon, Percival, Lhasa, 2 vols, London, 1905.

_____, Nepal, 2 vols, London, 1928.

Lattimore, Owen, Inner Frontiers of China, New York, 1951.

Louis, J.A.H., The Gates of Thibet, edn 2, Calcutta, 1894.

Lyall, A., Life of Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, 2 vols., London, 1905.

_____, The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India, London, 1920.

Malcolm, J., Political History of India from 1784 to 1823, 2 vols, London, 1826.

Mersey, Viscount, The Viceroys and Governors-General of India, 1757-1947, London, 1949.

Morris, C.J., The Gurkhas, Delhi, 1953.

Morse, H.B., Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China, vols II, III, Oxford, 1926.

Northey, W.B., The Land of the Gurkhas, or the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal, Cambridge, 1937.

Prasad, Bisheshwar, The Foundation of Indian Foreign Policy, Calcutta, 1955.

Prinsep, H.T., History of the Political and Military Transactions in India During the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings, 1813-1823, 2 vols, London, 1825.

Rennie, Surgeon, Bhotan and the Story of the Dooar War, London, 1866.

Roberts, P.E., History of British India, Continued by Spear, T.G.P., Oxford, 1952.

Ronaldshay, Earl of, Lands of Thunderbolt, London, 1923.

Rose Leo and Fisher, Margaret, England, India, Nepal, Tibet, China-1765-1958, University of Berkeley, 1959.

Sanwal, B.D., Nepal and the East India Company, Bombay, 1965.

Shakabpa, Tsepon W.D., Tibet: A Political History, New Haven and London, 1967.

Shakespear, C.W., History of Upper Assam, Upper Burma, and North East Frontier, London, 1914.

Sung, Yao-ting, Chinese-Tibetan Relations, 1890-1947, London, 1949.

Sykes, P., Sir Mortimer Durand, London, 1926.

Temple, Richard, Journals Kept in Hyderabad, Kashmir, Sikkim and Nepal, 2 vols, London, 1887.

White, J.C., Sikhim and Bhutan, Twenty-one years on the North-East Frontier 1887-1908, London, 1909.

Wyllie, J.W.S., Essays on the External Policy of India, ed. by W.W. Hunter, London, 1875.

Younghusband, F., India and Tibet, London, 1910.

_____, Memorandum on our Relations with Tibet both past and present, Simla, 1903.

_____, Our Position in Tibet, London, 1910.

Articles in periodicals

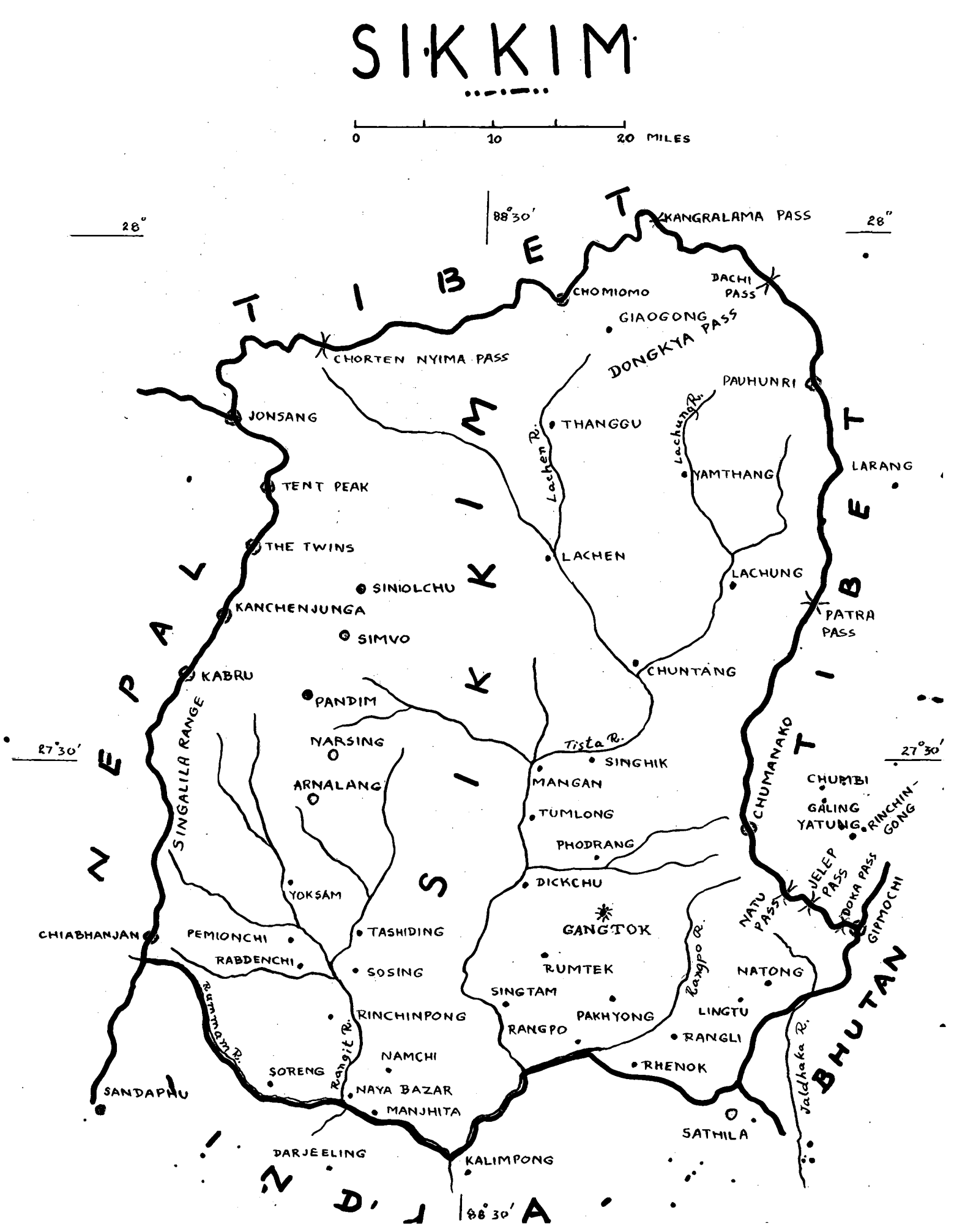
Blanford, W.T., "Account of a visit to the Eastern and Northern Frontiers of Independent Sikkim", Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. 40, no. 4 (1871), pp. 367-420.

Kiernan, E.V.G., "India, China and Sikkim 1886-90", Indian Historical Quarterly, vol. 31 (March 1955), pp. 32-51.

Mason, K., "Great Figures in the Nineteenth Century Himalayan Exploration", Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, vol. 43, pt III (July-October 1956), pp. 169-75.

:::::::::::::::::::::

MAP OF SIKKIM


SIKKIM
0
10
20 MILES
28°
88°30'
KANGRALAMA PASS
28°
TIBET
CHOMIOMO
DACHI PASS
GIAOGONG
DONGKYA PASS
CHORTEN NYIMA PASS
PAUHUNRI
JONSANG
THANGGU
Lachen R.
Lachung R.
LARANG
YAMTHANG
TENT PEAK
THE TWINS
LACHEN
LACHUNG
SINIOLCHU
KANCHENJUNGA
PATRA PASS
SIMVO
KABRU
CHUNTANG
PANDIM
NEPAL
SIKKIM
TIBET
SINGALILA RANGE
NARSING
Tista R.
27°30'
SINGHIK
27°30'
ARNALANG
MANGAN
CHUMANAKO
CHUMBI
GALING
YATUNG
RINCHIN-GONG
TUMLONG
PHODRANG
JELEP PASS
NATU PASS
DOKA PASS
GIPMOCHI
YOKSAM
DICKCHU
CHIABHANJAN
PEMIONCHI
TASHIDING
GANGTOK
RABDENCHI
SOSING
RUMTEK
NATONG
Rangpo R.
SINGTAM
Rammam R.
RINCHINPONG
PAKHYONG
LINGTU
RANGPO
Rangit R.
RANGLI
NAMCHI
RHENOK
SORENG
NAYA BAZAR
Jaldhaka R.
BHUTAN
SANDAPHU
MANJHITA
SATHILA
DARJEELING
KALIMPONG
INDIA
88°30'