

Chapter II

A Brief History of Sikkim

The British were aware of some commercial possibilities with Tibet ever since the establishment of their occupation in India. They were also aware of the traditional trade contact between the Newars of Nepal and Tibet. Thus the English East India Company became more interested to secure the hold of Tibetan trade at their will. The desire to secure Tibetan gold was one of the primary reasons to send Kinloch to Tibet in 1767. But this expedition proved a failure. Therefore, the idea of India-Tibet trade through Nepal had to be suspended for sometime¹. But the colonial power was in search of other ways and means to realise their trade interest between India and Tibet. The opportunity in this direction came with the appointment of Warren Hastings as the Governor General of the Company's possession in India. In 1772, when a war broke out between Bhutan and Cooch Behar, Warren Hastings sent some troops to help Cooch Bihar as the latter sought the Company's help. Tashi Lama of Tibet, on the other hand, communicated to Hastings not to harm the Bhutanese, as the latter was a vassal of Tibet². Hastings found it a suitable opportunity for the colonial power to open ways for negotiation with Tibet.

The trade interest of the colonial authorities grew more when it sent a mission to Bhutan and Tibet in 1773 and 1774-75 respectively. Later Panchan Lama of Tibet sent two messengers to Calcutta and presented gilded Russian leather, Chinese silk, small ingots of gold and silver, purses of gold dust and Tibetan wool to the Governor General. In return Hastings also sent Indian articles to the Panchan Lama as presents. The exchange of presents between Warren Hastings and the Panchan Lama announced the purpose to open mutual and equal trade communication between the people of Tibet and Bengal. Bogle's mission to Tibet in 1774 was to serve as a reconnaissance concerned almost entirely with trade than diplomacy.³ Bogle reported that the Panchan Lama was keen to visit India and strengthen India-Tibet trade relations. Bogle also reported that it was equally necessary to establish relations with China because the latter held its suzerainty over Tibet.⁴ After Bogle's death in 1781 Warren Hastings sent another mission in

1783 led by Samuel Turner.⁵ The primary objective of this mission was to discuss further possibilities of trade in Tibet. The mission reached Lasha after a brief halt in Bhutan because of civil war there.⁶ In the initial stage, the mission had to face some difficulties because Russia was extending its authority towards Tibet and this was considered very serious.⁷

During his stay in Tibet Turner was received well by the agents of *the Dalai Lama*. On the eve of his return to Bengal Turner called on the Panchan Lama.⁸ Turner reported that there was possibility of trade between India and Tibet. He also reported to the Bengal Government that he had received assurance from the Panchan Lama that Indian merchants would be welcomed in Tibet in future.⁹ Turner pointed out that mineral products of Tibet, which Bogle had already pointed out, could be articles of import. "Turner elaborated somewhat saying that the returns of Bengal's trade with Tibet have always been made in gold dust, silver, borax and musk. The value of these Turner continued was appropriate to the quality in the market at any given time".¹⁰ Turner further reported that copper which was plenty in Tibet was still unexported could be utilised for trade.¹¹ Warren Hastings showed his happiness with the outcome of the mission. He felt that the precious metals from the north would relieve Bengal's chronic currency problems. The trade, which was established with great efforts after two important missions flourished in a very cordial way till the year 1792.¹² It was again disturbed with a fresh Gorkha invasion in Tibet. The Tibetan refused to accept Nepalese coinage. This situation offered the colonial authorities an opportunity to strengthen trade relations with Tibet. Gradually the British tried to woo the Chinese authorities to allow them to enter into Tibet.¹³

Incidentally all the efforts mentioned above to open a trade route to Tibet was tried through Bhutan. But the situation suddenly changed with the departure of Warren Hastings to England. The new Governor General Lord Cornwallis could not follow the policy of his predecessor. The success, which was achieved by Samuel Turner regarding India-Tibet, could not be utilised because of Cornwallis' policy of non-involvement in the Trans-Himalayan Trade.¹⁴

The above account shows that the objective of opening undisturbed trade relations with Tibet via Bhutan proved a failure. In spite of the change of Governor generals, the main motive of the colonial authorities in India, *i.e.* a trade route to Tibet did not die. After some years of gap the Government of

India directed its attention again towards Nepal. It could not establish friendly relations with Nepal also. Moreover, the Gorkhas went for a war against the English East India Company in 1814. This war gave the English an excellent opportunity to make contact with Sikkim, the third Himalayan state. Southwest of Sikkim was under the Gorkhas since 1775 and with whom Bhutan's relations were not friendly.¹⁵ The British could not rely on both Bhutan and Nepal as both the countries had bad relations with the British. So, it was only Sikkim with whom the British could expect to open a trade route to Tibet. Moreover, the Sikkimese princes had matrimonial relations with Tibet. It was also a political and military necessity so far as colonial interest in the Himalayan regions were concerned.¹⁶

I

History from the point of the British influence (1814-1889)

The first contact of the East India Company with Sikkim appears to be necessary in 1814, when it was involved in a war with Nepal.¹⁷ The Company became interested to establish its relations with Sikkim because of its "strategic importance".¹⁸ The opening of relations with Sikkim became a "political and military necessity"¹⁹ on account of the reasons, which have been detailed, in subsequent study.

- (a) The British had been casting a longing eye on the Tibetan trade, but no opening seemed to be in sight. They were naturally interested in Sikkim, as one of the possible routes to Tibet lay via Sikkim. As yet no opportunity had presented itself for establishing contacts with the ruler of Sikkim. After the Anglo-Nepalese war (1814), on the pretext of handing over the territories, which were taken by Nepal in 1790, the British established its relations with Sikkim.
- (b) The British realised that establishment of sound relations with Sikkim would facilitate communication with Tibet since the princes of Sikkim were closely connected by matrimonial relation as well as religious affinities with Tibet.
- (c) The East India Company seemed to be apprehensive about the possible alliance between Nepal and Bhutan against them, as the Company had bad relations with both the powers. So, the Company wanted to isolate Nepal and prevent it from getting assistance from any quarter. The Company also felt that its economic and commercial goal would be

realised if it opened relations with Sikkim.²⁰

In view of above reasons the East India Company deputed Captain Barre to establish contact with the *Maharaja* of Sikkim. Captain Barre promised the ruler of Sikkim to recover the territories lost to Nepal in 1790. Thus the *Maharaja* was brought into contact with the East India Company. Sikkim became a party to the Government of India. After the Anglo-Nepalese war and with the signing of Segauli Treaty on December 2, 1815, the Nepalese ruler was asked not to disturb the *Raja* of Sikkim. It was agreed by both the rulers of Sikkim and Nepal that they would accept the arbitration of the British in case of all differences arising between Sikkim and Nepal.²¹

To establish sound relations with Sikkim, the colonial power restored all the territories between Mechi and Teesta to Sikkim by signing a treaty at Titaliya on 10 February 1817. But the British, however, "reserved to themselves the right to arbitrate in any dispute that might arise between Nepal and Sikkim".²² The political importance of the treaty of Titaliya is noteworthy. Sikkim became a strong buffer state between Nepal and Bhutan. For the first time Sikkim was brought under the influence of the colonial authorities in India. The State was restricted to political freedom. The Company was benefited in respect of trade upto Tibetan frontier.²³ The treaty of Titaliya marked the beginning of the colonial interest in Sikkim. The treaty also gave a blow to the Gorkha ambition towards the east and the possibilities of alliance between Nepal and Bhutan against the British came to an end. On the other hand the treaty did not speak anything regarding the criminals of Sikkim who had already taken shelter in the British territory. This caused a number of problems in the days to come on the India-Sikkim relations. The colonial authority gradually established its supremacy on all the lands between the Mechi and Mahanadi rivers. It took the *Raja* of Sikkim for a feudatory.²⁴ The motive of the colonial power to transfer these lands was to make Sikkim a strong buffer state and to enable Sikkim ruler to subsist the garrisons he must maintain for the protection of the passes between Nepal and Sikkim.²⁵ The condition of granting Morung (the land between Mechi and Mahanadi rivers) was that the provision of the Treaty of Titaliya would be enforced in the Morung also with the addition that the colonial force would be allowed to arrest the criminals and all public defaulters even inside the Morung; and that, if required, the Governor General in the council might transmit to the local authorities in the Morung

and this should be immediately obeyed and carried into execution in the same manner as was done in the case of that coming from the Sikkim *Raja*.²⁶ Thus, the colonial power made its hold very strong in the region. On the other hand the *Raja* who felt unsafe earlier was but restored under the British control and protection.

No significant development took place between 1817 and 1826 in the process of India-Sikkim relations. Baljeet Karzi/Karjee (Sikkimese called him Chagzod Bolod), a leader of the Lepcha faction and the then *Dewan* of Sikkim had quarreled on different issues with the *Raja* Tsugphut in 1826. To this episode the regional version of Sikkim history states that Chagzod Bolod, leader of the Lepcha fraction, failed to pay the revenue due to the *Maharaja* and also forgot his allegiance to the later. This was taken as a serious crime. The *lamas* and the *Kazis* decided to arrange meetings between the *Raja* and Bolod to make a peace settlement. Between 1819 and 1824 a series of meetings were held. This attitude of Bolod deeply offended the *Raja* and as a result he ordered to kill Bolod. Accordingly in 1826 Amji Tshering Tondup, Lachos, Kimpon Bhalu, Ximchung Titen, Jongdol Machen Dzompa, Namthang Dingpan Tinlay, Don-nyer Tsegyal and Godrang Chupan Passang assassinated Bolod and his family including his brothers as per the order of the *Raja*.²⁷

The *Raja* confirmed the assassination by issuing a document of charges. This attitude of the *Raja* further annoyed the members of Kotapa family (the family of Bolod). After the assassination of Bolod, his nephews Dathup, Jorung Denon and Kazi Gorok left Sikkim taking with them about eight hundred houses of Lepcha subjects from Chidam and Namthang and settled down in Illam, Nepal. These Lepchas requested the government of Nepal for help to fight against Sikkim. By this time J.W Grant, an English officer was surveying different places of Sikkim. He thought that if the British could bring a solution of the incident, it might be beneficial to both Sikkim and India. Grant wrote to the *Raja* in 1831 that he desired to meet the former in Darjeeling. Grant also assured the *Raja* that the British did not have any intention to annex any land given to the *Raja*. He further wrote that the British desired to help Sikkim to extend friendship. Tsugphut Namgyal accepted the letter of Grant as positive step to solve the problem. In reply the *Raja* wrote a letter to Captain Lloyed. He mentioned that he had already despatched a letter to the Governor General regarding the boundary between

Sikkim and India, as the boundaries had not been demarcated as per original possessions. He also requested the British for the restoration of the original lands and pressurise the Gurkha Government to return the Lepchas settled in Nepal. He hoped that the request would be conveyed to the Governor General.

On the other hand the *Raja* endeavoured to settle rebellious Kotapas on his own. He sent Tsepa Tagzig and Phodar with a small number of forces to Nagri to negotiate with the rebellious Kotapas. But the Kotapas suspected the messengers of the *Raja* and "bent upon vengeance blankly refused to come to any terms". The Kotapas attacked the messengers and killed some of them, though the leaders barely escaped with their lives. After the incident the Kotapas tried to cross the Rangeet River but were obstructed by Badong Kazi and Pemionchi *Lamas*. Again the rebels attempted to cross Rammam River through Daramdin. The efforts of Sikkim force failed at this point of time. The rebels became successful in their efforts. They plundered villages and killed several persons on their way. They penetrated upto Dzongu and even intended to destroy the Tumlong Palace. The rebels had to retreat when they learnt that the Bodang Kazi, Gangtok Kazi and the Rumtek Kazi obstructed them from different directions. Though they were repelled, they kept up a constant petty warfare, which proved a recurring problem to the Sikkim state.

It was because of repeated raids of the Kotapas, the people dwelling below the Teesta River had to be shifted to further north and upwards. The Barmiok *Magpan* named Kardag; a leader of the Sikkim forces was assigned special duty to check the attacks of the Kotapas. He was confirmed as leader by a letter or *sanad* from the *Raja*. Side by side the *Raja* also requested the Tibetan Government and Chinese Resident in Tibet to open a negotiation with the Gorkha Government to remove the Kotapa brothers from Illam towards the capital of Nepal, so as to prevent them from annoying the Sikkim subjects. The Tibetan Government and the Chinese Resident opened the negotiation but the Gurkha Government remained silent, as the latter was more inclined to their interest.²⁸ It was about this time that the boundary question was raised by the British. The British deputed one Adjutant officer to put up the boundary pillars. The boundaries had been laid from Singli La on the top along the range down to Jang Lama Yong La, down to Parpong and Siddhi Chu. But the Kotapa rebels obstructed the way

for any settlement. The rebels claimed Darjeeling as their patrimonial lands and wanted to hand over to Major Lloyed as a gift.²⁹ They wanted to secure sympathy from the British for their cause and interest. The *Raja* felt that the rebels wanted to injure the interest of the Sikkim state. The *Raja* for the second time wrote to the Chinese Resident and Tibetan Government about the developments. Thereafter these governments pressurized the Gurkha Government to hand over the rebels to Sikkim. Under pressure the Government of Nepal handed over the rebels to the Chinese and the Tibetan officers and these governments finally handed over the rebels to the *Raja* of Sikkim in 1830. The *Raja* protested that some of the rebels including their leader were sent back to Nepal but they never returned back. The rebellious activities of the Kotapas did not stop here. Again they reorganized their forces in Illam and very often-raided Sikkim territory. The Sikkim *Raja* had again to “submit reports and apply for help from the Chinese and Tibet Government, representing the misdeeds of the rebellious Kotapas.” The Tibetan officers this time threatened the Kotapas not to disturb the Sikkim *Raja*. Finally an agreement was signed and as per the agreement the Kotapas were asked not to come beyond Rammam River and repeat their raids in future.³⁰ Thus one of the major problems of the Sikkim *Raja* came to an end.

The Government of India deputed Captain Lloyed and Grant in 1828 to make an inquiry and settle the issue of boundary which was pending because of Kotapa raids. This was a golden opportunity for the British to enter into Sikkim and explore their interest in the region. Settlement of Sikkim's internal conflict was only a pretext, the main intention of the British was to find out a place through which trade between India and Tibet could be established as it had already lost its faith in Nepal and Bhutan. During the visit to Sikkim these officers noted the importance of a small hill village called *Dorjeling*. They felt that it was ideally located both for a sanatorium and for a military station. Their findings and observations were brought to the notice of the Governor General Lord William Bentinck. Immediately Bentinck deputed surveyor namely Captain Herbert along with Lloyed and Grant. Their observation suggested that the site would not only make an ideal health resort but also confer maximum political and commercial benefits to the British.³¹

In 1830, Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General proposed to his

council to send Lloyed to open negotiations with the Sikkim *Raja* for transfer of Darjeeling to the British Government “in return for the equivalent in land or money”.³² One of the members of the Governor General’s Council namely Sir Charles Metcalfe opposed the proposal. He felt that the efforts of the Government would rouse the suspicion of the *Raja* and the British, unnecessarily, had to face a dispute with him.

Secondly, Nepal also might consider this step of the Company as an effort to invade their country³³. As a result of this, the idea to acquire Darjeeling was suspended for sometime. Again the issue was revived in 1833 when the Lepcha refugees from Nepal (who left Sikkim in 1826) made incursion in the state. Bentinck desired to take the advantage of the situation. He wrote to the *Raja* that the object of possessing Darjeeling was not pecuniary but “solely on account of the climate”.³⁴ The *Raja* made three conditions to be fulfilled before the transfer of Darjeeling: (a) grant of Dabdong to Sikkim in lieu of Darjeeling. (b) arrest of one Rummo Pradhan against whom the *Raja* advanced claims for the revenues of the Morung for three years. (c) that the boundary of his kingdom might be extended upto Koshi. The conditions advanced by the *Raja* were considered impracticable by the Governor General. Regarding the first condition Lloyed replied that it was beyond his power. On the arrest of Rummo Pradhan, Lloyed did not comment anything. Lloyed assured the *Raja* that he would try to settle the dispute between the Lepchas and the latter. Lloyed only informed the *Raja* that the Governor General desired to acquire Darjeeling in exchange for lands in the plains or for a sum of money³⁵. Though the *Raja* was informed that the climate was the only reason for the transfer of Darjeeling, Lloyed wrote to the Secretary to the Government of India that the cession of Darjeeling should not consist of the spot alone, but should also include part of the mountains over which the road to Darjeeling could be developed with tea cultivation, settlement of Indian merchants and the construction of a native *Bazar*.³⁶

From the above account it is evident that the colonial agents wanted to kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand they informed the *Raja* that climate was the only factor for the cession of Darjeeling and on the other hand they concealed the main interest i.e development of Darjeeling as a trade route to Tibet. They wanted to acquire some specific spot to make their permanent stay and monopolise colonial interest from there. They did not hesitate to pursue by fair or foul means to realise their objectives.

After the prolonged discussion and communication the *Raja* was made to cede Darjeeling to the British. On 1 February 1835, the *Raja* affixed his red seal and the deed of grant of Darjeeling was handed over to the colonial authorities in India. Though Darjeeling was ceded to the colonial authority the Sikkim *Raja* did not do it conditionally. He wrote to the Supriintendent of Darjeeling, Dr.A. Campbell in 1839 as follows: "*Lloyd promised that whatever money I shall desire in return should be granted, that my territory should be extended west to the Tamber River; that Kummo Pradhan and his brother should be delivered over to me; and that the deficit in my revenue in their hands should be made good*".³⁷ But Campbell replied, "*I did not know that you desired more in return for it than the satisfaction of having not the wishes of my Government*".³⁸ Ultimately the British Government conveyed the *Raja* through Campbell that he would be granted Rs.1000 annually provided he agreed to free intercourse between Darjeeling and interior of Sikkim.³⁹ The *Raja* lost his faith on the British and their assurances.⁴⁰ Finally in September 1841 the British Government agreed to sanction Rs.3000 per annum as compensation for Darjeeling from the date of cession and regularly for the future.⁴¹ But the *Raja* had to wait till June 1847 to get the arrears of compensation since 1835.⁴²

Though the issue of Darjeeling was settled, yet the relations between the Sikkim *Raja* and the British Government remained unfriendly. This unfriendly environment was created because of a number of reasons. The *Raja* was never satisfied with the treatment of the British Government after the Darjeeling settlement. Sudden growth of Darjeeling's population was another cause of jealousy to the *Raja*. Last but not the least was that the presence of a British enclave in the midst of the Sikkim territory created much troubles. The question of surrender of the slaves from Sikkim who took refuse in Darjeeling as well as the criminals taking refuge in Sikkim from the British territory was another issue to embitter relations⁴³. The Sikkim *Raja* was also not happy with the loss of onto hill in 1839. The tract of land was handed over to Nepal by Campbell.⁴⁴

The relations between the Sikkim *Raja* and British Government further deteriorated soon. Campbell charged the *Raja* and addressed a letter with certain issues (1) causing "*vexatious delay's and exactions*" upon traders and labourers passing through Sikkim, to and from Darjeeling; (2) failing to comply with demand for surrendering criminals from India; (3)

non-co-operating with the British to settle the southern boundary of Darjeeling; (4) preventing his subjects from coming to Darjeeling for labour and trade; (5) prohibiting the people of Bhutan from coming and settling at Darjeeling; (6) preventing the British from using the lime deposits in his country; (7) demanding the surrender of slaves who had taken refuge in Darjeeling against whom there was no criminal charge; (8) causing "obstructions and vexatious exactions" on Tibetan Traders coming to Darjeeling.⁴⁵ Campbell warned the *Raja* that the Government would be compelled to annex Morung if he continued his "unfriendly course".⁴⁶ Campbell's bullying tactics paid dividends and in August 1846 the *Raja* deputed his *Dewan* Illam Singh to Darjeeling to settle the issue. Campbell received the message that the duties were levied on the Tibetan Traders "according to their means and after due enquiry"; but Illam Singh rejected all other charges.⁴⁷ The *Raja* also conceded to the British the use of lime deposits at Singmare in Sikkim.⁴⁸ In view of these developments the British Government decided to enhance the allowance of the *Raja* from Rs.3000/- to Rs. 6000/-.⁴⁹

However, the relations between the Government of India and Sikkim did not improve in any measure. The *Raja* requested the British for the replacement of Campbell. But the request of the *Raja* was turned down.⁵⁰ The relations further deteriorated with the succession of Tokhang Donyar Namgyal popularly known as Pagla Dewan as *Dewan* of Sikkim in 1847. Two important internal problems of Sikkim affected the India-Sikkim relations. The appointment of Pagla Dewan (who led the Bhutia faction in Sikkim) was not liked by Chebu Lama, who was pro-British. The enmity between the Bhutias and Lepchas was further aggravated 'because of the *Raja's* retirement to the religious life resulting in rivalry on the question of succession to the throne.⁵¹

In 1848 the relations between the British Government and Sikkim became more tense when the Government desired to send Dr. Hooker, an English naturalist for his research work in Sikkim. The Sikkim authority declined to give permission to Dr. Hooker to visit Sikkim on the ground that the foreigners were prohibited to travel in Sikkim.⁵² Campbell presumed that the refusal was due to the influence of Pagla Dewan who had monopoly of Sikkim's trade with Tibet.⁵³ During his short stay in Sikkim Campbell gained sufficient insight into its politics. He realised that the Sikkimese were

“woefully ignorant” and “misinformed” regarding the real nature of British power in India⁵⁴. After a prolonged wrangle Hooker was allowed to visit Sikkim.⁵⁵

The Sikkimese authorities were not happy with the attitude of the British Government. Dewan Namgay was waiting a suitable opportunity to punish the British. This occurred in 1849, when Sikkimese authority on the advice of *Dewan* Namgay, arrested Dr. Campbell and Dr. Hooker and made them prisoner. This action of Sikkim authority was to show its annoyance towards the policy of the British in Sikkim. However a British ultimatum forced the *Raja* of Sikkim to release Campbell and Hooker after six weeks of imprisonment.⁵⁶ The British decided to take revenge upon the Sikkim authority. In February 1850, an avenging force was sent to Sikkim. The Force crossed the Great Rangit, but after remaining on the northern bank for some weeks, they were recalled without any activities over there. The grant of Rs. 6000/- per annum which the *Raja* had received since 1846 was withdrawn, and the *Raja* was further punished by the annexation of the Sikkim *Tarai* (Morung), which he had originally received as a free gift from the British Government and which was the only lucrative and fertile estate he possessed. “The seizure was quietly effected by four policemen taking possession of the treasury which contained exactly six rupees, and by announcing, to the villages the confiscation of the territory to the British Government”. At the same time the British also annexed “the portion of Sikkim Hills bounded by the Ramman on the north, the Great Rangeet and the Teesta on the east and by the Nepal frontier on the west, a tract of county containing about 500 souls”. The result was to confine the *Raja* to the mountainous hinterland, and to cut off all access to the plains except through British territory. The change was welcomed by the inhabitants, for it only involved the payment of a small fixed tax in money to the treasury at Darjeeling, instead of a fluctuating one in kind with service to the *Raja* and liability to further annoyance from the *Dewan*. The new territory was placed under the management of the Superintendent of Darjeeling, under whose administration it soon became a valuable asset, owing to the increase of the population and its suitability for tea cultivation. The whole country thus annexed covered an area of 640 sq. mile, and its annexation was an important measure, for it made the British boundary march with Nepal on the west and with Bhutan on the east while it connected Darjeeling on the

south with the British district of Purnea and Jalpaiguri. Previously the district had been an enclave in Sikkim territory, and to reach it the British had to pass through a country acknowledging the rule of a foreign ruler, though dependent and potentate. At the same time the *Raja* was cut off from the access to the plains except through the British territory.⁵⁷

It is evident from the above account that the crisis of 1849 and the ambitious activities of Dewan Namgay resulted in the loss of nearly 640 sq. miles of fertile territory of Sikkim. Sikkim also lost the advantage of annual subsidy of Rs. 6000/-. This embittered the *Raja* Tsugphut Namgyal towards the British⁵⁸. The *Raja* was reduced to the state of extreme poverty as a result of the annexation of Morung and the stoppage of his yearly compensation for Darjeeling. He dismissed Dewan Namgay and sent a letter to the Government of India for the renewal and enhancement of his allowance. Realising the attitude of the Sikkim authorities, the Governor General Lord Dalhousie rejected the request and informed that it would place the Government of India in a very "*humiliating position*" with 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.⁵⁹

The above statement of the Governor General clearly shows that the Asians were always contemptuously held as savage and uncivilized human being by the colonial master. Their attitude towards the Indian people can be further confirmed from the minute of J. Farish in the Bombay Presidency: "*The natives must either be kept down by a sence of our power, or they must willingly submit from a conviction that we are more wise, more just, more human and more anxious to improve their condition than any other rulers they could possibly have*".⁶⁰

In spite of their superiority complex, the colonial Government still regarded the *Raja* of Sikkim as their ally in the second half of the 19th century. As a result, they granted Morung to the *Raja* as gift to match the situation. But within four decades of their relations the *Raja* was so reduced that he was considered as "*Hill Savage*". Sikkim was considerably reduced in size and importance. The Treaty of Titaliya marked the beginning of the end of Sikkim's independence. From 1817 to 1849 Sikkim had to loose its territory bit by bit. The cession of Darjeeling in 1835 was very important event in the history of Sikkim. The goodwill which was created in the

Titaliya Treaty of 1817 came to an end and its place was taken by a situation of war. The crisis of 1849 was very harmful on the part of the Sikkim *Raja* whereas it was beneficial to the colonial authorities. They got additional territory of about 640 sq. miles. The company could annex Sikkim permanently but it did not do so as because of political and strategic reasons.

For some years after the crisis of 1849, the relations between the British Government and Sikkim proceeded smoothly. The *Dewan* however, though ostensibly dismissed soon worked his way into power again through his wife, an illegitimate daughter of the *Raja* and the former outrages were deliberately removed. Constant raids were made upon British territory, property was plundered, British subjects were carried off and sold as slaves, or detained in Sikkim, and no redress could be obtained. The *Raja* of Sikkim, an old man of nearly 80 years had relinquished all cares of state and retired to Chumbi in Tibet, and the Government was entirely left in the hands of Chief Minister, *Dewan Namgay*.⁶¹

After the retirement of the *Raja* at Chumbi, *Dewan Namgay* handled the administration of the state at his own will. In March 1859, *Namgay* sent a deputation to the Government of Bengal, demanding the payment of enhanced annual allowance of Rs.12,000/-. *Namgay* argued that the said amount had been promised by Campbell to the Sikkim *Raja* annually for "throwing upon the whole country of Sikkim and making it completely available for trading and travelling, if the Government would give a gratuity of Rs.12,000/- per annum".⁶² The request of the *Dewan* was rejected by Campbell and he informed the Governor General that the *Raja* was in receipt of all arrear due to him. When the request of the '*Dewan*' was turned down by the Colonial Government *Namgay* decided to teach a lesson to the British. The British territory of Darjeeling was raided and the British Indian subjects were carried off as slaves or detained in Sikkim.⁶³ Situation worsened further due to the incident and Campbell decided to bring the situation under control. Therefore, Campbell requested the Bengal Government for help. He wanted that a strong force be sent to crush *Namgay's* activities in the State.⁶⁴

The Governor General accepted Campbell's request to send force in Sikkim. He, however, directed the Lieutenant Governor regarding the course of action to be taken up in Sikkim viz: "(a) the restoration of the kidnapped

materialised without any disturbance. The colonial interest was materialised by signing a treaty on 28 March 1861 at Tumlong. The *Raja* desired his son to be treated as the *Maharaja* because of his old age. *Maharaja's* son Sidkeong Namgyal represented Sikkim to conclude the treaty. With the conclusion of the treaty British relations with Sikkim were once more normalized.⁷⁴ The treaty consisted of 23 Articles. According to the provisions of the treaty of 1861, all the former treaties between the colonial Government and Sikkim were to be cancelled; Sikkim became de-facto protectorate of India.

The British got the right to construct roads through Sikkim to the Tibetan border; the *Raja* of Sikkim was designated as the *Maharaja* of Sikkim; and Sikkim Government agreed not to allow *Dewan* Namgay or his blood relations to enter into Sikkim or hold any office under the *Maharaja* of Sikkim or his family either at Sikkim or in Chumbi. The *Maharaja* also agreed to allow all the British marchents to pursue their trade freely inside Sikkim on duty free basis. Further, the Government of Sikkim would not cede or lease any portion of its territory to any other state without the permission of the colonial Government.⁷⁵

The treaty of 1861 was very significant in the history of India-Sikkim relations. Sikkim lost all freedom of action and became a de-facto protectorate of the Government of India. All the demands of the British Government were realised. *Dewan* Namgay who was mainly responsible for the anti-British activities in Sikkim was banished from the State. The *Maharaja* was not permitted to live in Tibet for more than three months in a year and a *Vakeel* was to be accredited by the Government of Sikkim to reside permanently at Darjeeling. The British also secured valuable rights relating to trade and the rights to conduct geographical or topographical survey in Sikkim. The relations of Sikkim with her neighbours became the subject of the colonial control.⁷⁶ It is evident from the above account that the Government of India had reached to the extent that it could annex Sikkim at any time, but it did not do so as there was apprehension that it might lead to an involvement with Tibét, which had vague claim over Sikkim. Secondly, the existence of an independent state between India and Chinese territory was considered desirable. The British also feared that the annexation might antagonize China and this might hamper the prospect of trade with Tibet and the process of cultural transformation in the state.⁷⁷

As per the assurances given to the British, the *Maharaja* Tsugphud Namgyal abdicated in favour of his eldest son Sidkeong Namgyal in 1862. The rule of Sidkeong Namgyal was the happiest period in the history of British-Sikkim relations. Soon after Sidkeong Namgyal took over the charges, the Colonial Government enhanced the annual allowance from Rs.6,000/- (which was forfeited in 1850 because of Namgay's attitude towards the British) to Rs.9,000/-. Again the *Maharaja* requested the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal for further increase of the annual allowance. The request was considered favourably and it was raised to Rs.12,000/- in 1873 on the condition that the *Maharaja* should extend assistance to the Britishers whenever they visit Sikkim; the *Maharaja* should also help the colonial Government in respect of trade and he should also inform the British authorities of any unusual happening on the northern frontier.⁷⁸ The above account shows that the colonial Government was more interested to realize its aim than anything else. It wanted a king who could be utilised for trade prosperity in the region. If the king denied to comply with the British order the latter did not spare to punish and make him fit to realize their objectives. Thus after 1861 Colonialism in Sikkim entered into a new phase. It was seen in the foregoing pages that Ashley Eden's plan to Sikkim was a success. The *Maharaja* was forced to enter into a treaty and it was hoped that within few years a very considerable trade between Tibet and Darjeeling by the Sikkim route would develop. The optimistic tone of Eden's report and the stupendous development of the tea industry at Darjeeling increased in the interest of the Government of India in the Tibetan trade via Sikkim.⁷⁹

Maharaja Sidkeong Namgyal died in April 1874 and was succeeded by his half brother Thutob Namgyal the 10th consecrated king of Namgyal Dynasty of Sikkim. At the time of his succession the British Empire in Asia was paramount and Sikkim was already feeling the bitter test of colonial diplomacy. The year 1874 witnessed a striking assertion of British supremacy over Sikkim. The colonial Government succeeded in nominating its own candidate as the ruler of the state, on the death of the *Maharaja* Sidkeong Namgyal in April 1874. The late *Maharaja* had no issue but only two half brothers-Thutob Namgyal and Thinley Namgyal, one legitimate and the other illegitimate respectively. Ex-*Dewan* Namgay wanted to install Thinley Namgyal on the throne to gain firm foothold on the administration of Sikkim. But the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling John Ware Edgar

informed the Sikkim *Durbar* that the Government of India would not recognise and accept the restoration of Namgay's influence in Sikkim.

H.H.Risley, afterwards the Secretary to the Government of India commented on the episode thus: "*Not a whisper was heard on the frontier of the remonstrance against the vigorous piece of king making and Tibet acquiesced silently in an act which struck at the roots of any claim on that part to exercise a permanent influence in the affairs of the Sikkim state*".⁸⁰

In spite of the convincing views regarding the prospect of trade with Tibet through Sikkim furnished by Eden, the efforts to enter Tibet and to communicate with the Lhasa Government through the Sikkim *Maharaja* failed. The *Maharaja* could not be an instrument for colonial objectives. So, the colonial Government felt that some serious steps must be taken to achieve their trade goal. On the other hand, the colonial Government got pressure from the trading community of England to open a trade route to Tibet. In April 1873 the Mercantile Community of England under the name "Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce" placed a memorandum to the Secretary of State for India for improving trade through the Sikkim route.⁸¹ Moreover, Tibetan traders and officials also obstructed the roads in the Frontier. All these factors forced the Colonial Government to adopt some measures to settle the issue. As part of solution to the issue John Ware Edgar, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, was deputed to investigate the possibility of improving British trade with Tibet through Sikkim. 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 Tibet – the best line for the road to take and the advisability of opening "*friendly and commercial intercourse with Sikkim and the countries beyond*".⁸²

In October 1873, Edgar entered Sikkim and visited the passes into the Chumbi valley of Tibet and discussed with the Tibetan officials like the *Jongpen* of Phari and also *ex-Dewan* Namgay. As soon as Edgar reached the Tibetan Frontier of the Chumbi valley, messengers of *Ex-Dewan* Namgay came and enquired from the former whether he would like to receive the latter. Edgar decided to receive *ex-Dewan* Namgay even though he was prohibited from entering into Sikkim under Article Seven of the Treaty of 1861. Edgar felt that by meeting Namgay he would be able to find out the latter's "*exact position and influence as well as his present sentiments*

towards our Government".⁸³ Moreover, he felt that he would be able to obtain more information regarding Tibet from Namgay than from anyone else. Edgar was not disappointed in his hope of getting valuable information from Namgay. He infact obtained, more informations regarding Tibet from Ex-Dewan than from all other sources. He found Namgay to be a "*man of great mental and bodily activity and an unusually quick intelligence*".⁸⁴ Edgar felt that Namgay was very anxious to gain the favour of the colonial Government. After the interview with Namgay, Edgar informed the Dewan of Sikkim that he would meet the Maharaja of Sikkim in Chumbi. Namgay informed Edgar that there had been in Tibet a more in favour of abandoning the policy of isolation. He, however, cautioned Edgar that it would take a long time to witness a change of policy in Tibet and advised him to move to Peking to get "obstacles" removed.⁸⁵

The *Amban* asked the *Maharaja* of Sikkim not to allow the British to cross the frontier. In this connection the *Amban* sent a letter to the *Maharaja*. The content of the letter translated into English was as follows:

"You should explain all this to the Sahibs, and do all in your power to persuade them to return without entering Thibet. In case you should be successful, there will be no need of the Phari Jungpens going to meet them but should you fail to induce the Sahibs to return, then the Phari Jungpens should go to the frontier and explain to them that it would be contrary to custom for them to cross the frontier and that it is, as it were, a matter of life and death for us to uphold the existing arrangements".

"But they should do all this in such a manner as not to give offence, and should do nothing which could possibly give rise to complications in the future".

"You should report at once the result of the steps taken; and if on this, or any future occasion, the Sahibs should insist on crossing the frontier, immediate and frequent reports should be made to us through the Chechep Deepen of Giantzi".

"Your State of Sikkim borders on Thibet: 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 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". "In future you should fulfill your obligations and obey the orders of the Dalai Lama Rimpochey and the twelfth Emperor of China".⁸⁶

The above letter of *Amban* addressed to the Sikkim *Maharaja* clearly shows the change of the Tibetan policy towards Sikkim. Before 1861 the Tibetans did not bother much of the Sikkim affairs as it considered the suzerain power of Tibet. But with the establishment of British protectorate in Sikkim after 1861, Tibet realised the urgency to re-establish its suzerainty over Sikkim. Therefore, they wanted to re-assert their position and set the things right by threatening the *Maharaja*.

On hearing the contents of the *Amban's* letter, Edgar decided to drop the idea of entering into Tibet. However, Edgar wanted to clarify the British policy towards the Himalayan states, which he stated as one of the "*Encouragement of trade to the utmost of our power, and maintenance of strong friendly states along our frontier*".⁸⁷ Edgar after his return from Sikkim to Darjeeling in December 1873, made certain proposals to improve the relations of the British Government with Tibet *viz*; (a) British should obtain a declaration from the Chinese authorities that the exclusion of the British subjects in Tibet were not authorised by the Chinese Government. (b) British Indian officials should maintain friendly relations with the frontier officers in such a way that they should not feel that the British might annex any part of their country. (c) British should establish a trade mart on the Sikkim-Tibet frontier through Sikkim.⁸⁸ Bengal Government supported Edgar's proposals. Sir Richard Temple, the then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, believed that trade with Tibet could be developed simply by improving the communication between India and Tibet frontier through Sikkim. He therefore, endorsed Edgar's proposals for the construction of road to the Tibetan frontier through Sikkim and wanted that it should be completed within three to four years⁸⁹. But the Government of India did not approve the proposal for the construction of road and suggested to wait for the purpose, till all obstacles of China and Tibet were removed.⁹⁰

Though the proposals of Edgar were not considered by the Government of India, his efforts, however, did not go in vain. British relations with Sikkim, which deteriorated in the last three decades considerably improved. The *Maharaja* also supported Edgar's proposal for the establishment of a trade mart on the frontier. It is evident that the Government of India deputed Edgar to make the *Maharaja* as an instrument to improve Anglo-Tibetan Trade. It is also evident that if the British had to improve prospect of Tibetan trade it had to bring Sikkim under colonial

domination. The British could achieve one of the objectives i.e., bringing the *Maharaja* under their political domination. However, they failed to eliminate the Tibetan opposition for British entry into Tibet.⁹¹

Edgar's visit to Sikkim had increased the British influence to a higher degree. This influence of the British deepened when it could nominate its own candidate Thutob Namgyal as the ruler of Sikkim in 1874. The *Maharaja* was invited to attend the Imperial Assembly in Delhi in 1877. The Government of India presented the *Maharaja* with a banner, a medal and a ring. This was done with a view to further increasing the British influence in Sikkim.⁹² The British increased its influence in Sikkim to such an extent that it made the pro-Tibetan party and its leader Thinley Namgyal uneasy and the latter fled to Tibet in 1874. The British also encouraged the settlement of new Nepalese in large number for the economic growth of the State. This policy of the British annoyed the pro-Tibetan party in Sikkim.⁹³

An interview was arranged in October 1874 between the *Maharaja* and the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to strengthen the friendly relations between the Indian Government and Sikkim. The Lieutenant Governor expressed his intension to further improve the existing tract between Pheydong and Darjeeling and expected Sikkim's co-operation in this regard⁹⁴. The *Maharaja* pleaded for the enhancement of his allowance in 1881. But the Government of Bengal rejected the request. They argued that the *Maharaja* violated the Tumlong treaty of 1861; so the request could not be accepted.⁹⁵

In spite of all these developments, the relations between the Indian Government and the *Maharaja* remained friendly and cordial between the period 1874 and 1886. The British still could not achieve the final goal. Above this the Indian Government received some information that anti-British activities were in progress in Tibet. Therefore, the Government deputed Sarat Chandra Das, Headmaster of Bhutia School at Darjeeling (who could speak the Tibetan language perfectly) to collect correct information of Tibetan affairs and to establish contact, with the Panchan Lama. Sarat Chandra was sent to Tibet twice i.e. in 1879 and 1881 respectively. During both of his visits Sarat Chandra conducted geographical survey, prepared new maps of lake Yardok Yatso. The Tibetans suspected Sarat Chandra and ordered his arrest, but he managed to escape. These activities compelled the Government of India to stop India-Tibet trade for

sometime. The Government of India desired that an investigation of the stoppage of trade was necessary at that point of time. As a result, Colman Macaulay, Finance Secretary to the Government of India was deputed to visit Sikkim in October 1884. He was instructed to enquire into the incident of stoppage of trade; to visit the Lachen Valley and examine its prospect as trade route towards the province of Tsang in Tibet; and contact the Minister of Panchan Lama at Tashi Lumpo.⁹⁶

Macaulay felt that British influence in Sikkim was declining after the death of the *Maharaja* Sidkeong Namgyal and Tibetan influence was increasing since the new *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal was requested by the Tibetan faction including *Ex-Dewan* Namgay to marry a Tibetan girl. The *Maharaja* accepted the proposal of the pro-Tibetan party and accordingly proceeded to Tibet with the family members and got married with the Tibetan girl. The *Dalai Lama* and other Tibetan officials warmly welcomed the royal family. This certainly induced the *Maharaja* to be friendlier with the Tibetans than the British. In view of these developments Macaulay decided to proceed to Tibet.

Macaulay contacted the *Jongpen* of Khamba, the regional officer of Khamba region in the frontier. At the initial stage the *Jongpen* did not come forward. He wanted to be isolated from the British. But later on he was found cooperative and communicative. After a series of interviews Macaulay was convinced that the main obstacles in the way of colonial interest was China and not Tibet. Secondly, a small section of Tibetans mainly the monks that had monopoly of trade were afraid of losing their interest if the British enter into Tibetan trade.⁹⁷ Macaulay was further informed that the Tibetans favourably accepted British goods and there was good prospect of the India-Tibet trade. Friendly relations between the Colonial Government and Tibetan officials were materialized with the exchange of goodwill letters. Macaulay believed that his mission to Tibet was a great success.⁹⁸

It is evident from the above account that the mission of Macaulay to Tibet was a success. But this type of success was not new to the British. The Tibetan officials always put the blame on the Chinese for creating obstacles. Whenever the British delegates met the Tibetan officials they got the assurance of friendship and goodwill from the latter. But subsequently they deceived the British. Thus, the policy of Tibet towards British proved to be tricky.

Macaulay still believed in the *Jongpen* and his assurances and as a result, advocated that the Government of India should get due permission from the Chinese Government for the despatch of a mission to Tibet to facilitate the Indian traders to enter into Tibet through Sikkim-Darjeeling route.⁹⁹ Though the Government of Bengal supported Macaulay's proposals, the Government of India did not consider it necessary. However, Macaulay could convince Lord Randolph Churchill, the Secretary of State for India about the importance of the mission. It was about this time that the Chefoo Convention permitted the right to the British to send mission to Lhasa¹⁰⁰. The mission proceeded, towards Tibet under Macaulay in 1886. The Tibetans were suspicious about the mission and tried to resist it. The Government of Bengal wanted that the *Maharaja* of Sikkim were to be inducted as instrument to negotiate with the Tibetan. Macaulay sent letters through the *Maharaja* (who was at Chumbi then) to the Tibetan Government expressing peaceful motive of the proposed mission. But the Tibetan officials in the frontier region had doubts about the mission. The Colonial Government took it very seriously and the mission was to be withdrawn.¹⁰¹

To conclude, from the above facts it is evident that the mission failed because the Government of India did not support the mission wholeheartedly. The Government also did not fully understand the feelings of the Tibetans against the opening of their country to foreigners. Moreover, the Viceroy Lord Dufferin did not want to face further complications with China, as the Government of India was fully preoccupied with the affairs of Afghanistan and Burma at this point of time. It had no time to spare for the Tibetan affairs. So, the Government decided to suspend the opening of Tibet for sometime.¹⁰²

Very soon, after the withdrawal of the Macaulay's mission, the Tibetans advanced thirteen miles into Northern Sikkim across the Jelap Pass and occupied Lingtu on the Darjeeling road. The Tibetans tried to exploit the weaknesses of the Tumlong Treaty of 1861 namely (1) non-definition of *de-jure* status of Sikkim and (2) privilege granted to the *Maharaja* to stay for three months in a year at Chumbi in Tibet. The Tibetans rejected the view of the British that the former had no right on the lands below Jelep. The Tibetan even threatened to restore back the disputed lands transferred to Sikkim. The *Maharaja* fully sympathised with the Tibetans. He had also entered into a secret treaty with Tibet in 1886 agreeing Sikkim as tributary

of Tibet and China.¹⁰³ The *Maharaja* supported the Tibetan occupation of Lingtu and their claim in toto. 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."¹⁰⁴

The attitude of the *Maharaja* towards Tibet was not surprising as he himself was half-Tibetans, while his mother and wife were pure Tibetans. It has already been discussed that after the *Maharaja* married a Tibetan girl in 1880 the whole business of the Government was highly influenced by the Tibetans. Moreover, the reappointment of ex-*Dewan* Namgay as minister at Chumbi violating Article VII of the Tumlong Treaty 1861 further aggravated the situation. The Tibetan influence in Sikkim increased to a higher degree. All these development in Sikkim alarmed the British. Therefore, the British asked the *Maharaja* to return to Sikkim otherwise his allowance would be stopped. The *Maharaja* did not comply with the British order on the ground that the Tibetans would be annoyed in case of his return. On the other hand he informed the British that the Tibetans had constructed a fort at Lingtu and stopped trade.¹⁰⁵

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 severe damage to the British prestige in the Himalayan States. The attitude of the *Maharaja* was considered as challenge to the colonial authorities. So, the British decided to use force to expel the Tibetans from Sikkim. On the other hand, the Tibetans showed their intention to annex Lingtu permanently. The trade route between India and Tibet lay through Sikkim and the question of promoting commercial intercourse with Tibet therefore involved the Indian Government into complications. The British could not force a solution inspite of continuous efforts.¹⁰⁶

In March 1887, the Government of Bengal sent an invitation to the *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal asking him to visit Darjeeling. Meanwhile the Tibetans showed further indication of making their annexation of Lingtu a permanent affair. This made the situation further complicated. The Bengal Government sent a fresh invitation to the *Maharaja* to visit Darjeeling, but the latter declined to come to Darjeeling. The *Maharaja* informed the Government of Bengal that "*the season being far advanced, heat having set in, and on account of the ill health, His Highness had been compelled to delay*

the visit".¹⁰⁷ He also protested against the Bengal Government's order relegating the administration of his kingdom to the Khangsa Dewan and Phodung Lama during his absence. He further demanded the payment of his annual allowance, which the Government of India suspended in 1886. Finally he showed his unhappiness regarding the ill treatment by the British towards his close associates in Sikkim.¹⁰⁸

In view of the above accounts it can be said that the *Maharaja* was justified not to obey the British orders as the British stopped the annual allowance, which was due to the kingdom of Sikkim. Secondly, it was the colonial policy and in British interest that the *Maharaja* was to be brought back to Gangtok. They were least bothered about the welfare of the Sikkimese people and more interested to convert Sikkim as a permanent trade centre. Whatever suggestions and advices they made after their entry into Sikkim, it was diverted towards the commercial and economic benefit of the British. Therefore, the *Maharaja* was justified to take such a step to save his position.

The British had no other option but to throw the Tibetans by force from Lingtu. In November 1887, A.W. Paul, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling was deputed to visit Gangtok and make a general survey including the feelings of the people over there. The mission was 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 loose heart due to the prolonged absence of the *Maharaja* and repeated threats of the Tibetan party in Sikkim.¹⁰⁹

Under compulsion the *Maharaja* was forced to return to his kingdom in 1887. The pro-British party though welcomed the return of the *Maharaja*, yet they feared that the latter might take violent measures against them for supporting the British during his absence. As a security measure for the pro-British party a Reserve Police was stationed at Kalimpong. In December 1887 the Government of India informed the Tibetan Military officer at Lingtu that an invasion would be taken and occupy the place if it was not vacated by March 1888. The Chinese agency at London requested the British Foreign Secretary to postpone the date to next few months. But the British turned down the request.¹¹⁰ Thus, in March 1888, a British force under the command of General Graham attacked the Tibetans at Lingtu. The General was accompanied by A.W Paul and J.C.White. The Tibetans were badly

defeated in the hands of the disciplined and well-equipped British Army. But nevertheless Tibetans tried to make a surprise attack on the British Force at Gnatang in Sikkim after their expulsion from Lingtu. Here too, the Tibetan had to receive a heavy loss. Graham still wanted to advance across the Tibetan border, but the Government did not give him permission to proceed further.¹¹¹

This action of the British Force greatly alarmed the Chinese authority and they demanded the inquiry into the incident. The British in London replied that the British force had not attacked 'the Tibetans unless the latter attacked the former.'¹¹² The defeat of the Tibetans at Lingtu and Gnatong resulted in the change of their attitude. They became slightly submissive to the British. But the Tibetans were still waiting for a chance to recover their loss. They were still concentrating their army near Gnatong. General Graham, therefore, made another attack and pushed the Tibetans across the border. After the Tibetans were vacated from Gnatong, a British force entered Gangtok. The *Maharaja* could not bear this and he fled to Chumbi but the British army arrested him. He was asked to return to Gangtok. On his return he was instructed never to go to Chumbi in future. He was further asked to act according to the advice of Khangsa Dewan and Phodung Lama, leaders of the pro-British section in Sikkim. *Maharaja's* close associates were badly treated.¹¹³ However; his eldest son Choda Namgyal and his half-brother Thinley Namgyal were allowed to remain in Tibet.¹¹⁴

The attitude of the Tibetans to assert their hold in Sikkim alarmed the Indian Government. Therefore, the British decided to confirm their position in Sikkim, which had become critical by September 1888. The *Maharaja* on his return threw himself at the mercy of the British Government. He explained that his fight was caused by fear and bad advice of those around him. A.W. Paul advised him to go to Darjeeling and make personal submission to the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, but the later advised him to remain at Gangtok. It seemed that the Lieutenant Governor's decision not to receive the *Maharaja* was based on the fear that the Tibetans and the Chinese might suspect the *Maharaja* of being British prisoner. The Lieutenant Governor feared that it might lead to further complication.

The Chinese, after the defeat of the Tibetans at Gnatong felt that if they failed to settle the problem peacefully they might lose their influence in Tibet. They directed their *Amban* at Lhasa to proceed to Gnatong for

peaceful talk¹¹⁵. The Government of India also agreed for the negotiation. Thus, an environment of friendship for the settlement of trade route and other issues was created. Its foreign secretary, H.M Durand and A.W. Paul, the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, formed the Indian team. Durand was instructed that the main object of the negotiations would be the “*formal recognition of their exclusive supremacy in Sikkim and restoration of friendly relation with Tibet*”. He was cautioned not to enter into any discussion with the Chinese regarding Sikkim since it was a “*feudatory of the British Empire and its position as such defined by the treaty*”. He was also asked to make it clear that “*the Government of India can not recognize the existence of the foreign right or influence within the state of Sikkim and will not permit any influence with the affairs on the part of any foreign power*”. As to Sikkim-Tibet boundary, the Government of India felt that there was no need to define it, as that was already established.¹¹⁶

The negotiation between the British representatives and the Chinese *Amban* Shan Tai started floundering at the inception, the later felt Tibet as part of the Chinese Empire and the rights and interests of Tibet were the rights and interest of China. In case of 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 and pay homage to the *Amban* at Lasha.¹¹⁷ The Chinese conditions were not acceptable to Durand. Thus he recommended to the Government of India to refuse any proposal on the part of the *Maharaja* and Sikkim State as a whole. The *Maharaja* was not happy with the new developments. He wanted to show his subordination to the *Amban*. This caused considerable embarrassment to the Indian Government. Therefore, Durand suggested that the *Maharaja* might be removed to British territory, as it would have “good effect” upon both the *Maharaja* and the *Amban*.¹¹⁸ The colonial Government accepted the suggestions of Durand and removed the royal family to Kalimpong where they were kept under house arrest. After the removal of the *Maharaja* to Kalingpong, J.C.White was appointed as Political Officer for Sikkim and was 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.¹¹⁹

The above account shows that the British Government failed to achieve their objectives in spite of the efforts made at different levels. The

Chinese on the other hand were not in a position to accept the British proposals. Tibet became a bone of contention between the British and the Chinese. The attitude of the *Maharaja* of Sikkim was another obstacle for the Indian Government on the way of their objective. Therefore, the British Government decided to keep the *Maharaja* aside from the administrative work and a Political Officer was appointed for the same work. It was because of pro-Tibetan attitude of the *Maharaja* that the British decided to take such a step. He could not be a British puppet as his interests were different from the British.

Again, in April 1889, the unresolved talks between the Government of India and China were reopened. A.W. Paul represented the British interest and James Hart represented the Chinese. The initial discussions could not bring any solution since both the parties remained reluctant to consider each other's suggestions. At last after several deliberations, in November 1889 the "Chinese representative Hart submitted to Paul the revised Chinese proposals which tried to meet the Government of India's objections". The revised proposals offered to recognise India's sole protectorate over Sikkim. In December 1889, the Government of India submitted draft proposals to Hart and *Amban*. They accepted the proposals with slight modifications and on 17 March 1890, Lord Lansdowne, the viceroy of India and *Amban* Shen Tai, signed the Sikkim-Tibet convention at Calcutta.¹²⁰

According to the provisions of the convention it was laid down that the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet was placed at the watershed of the Teesta River. It recognised the status of Sikkim as a British protectorate and the right of the Indian Government to have direct and exclusive over the internal administration and foreign relations of the state.

The convention settled once for all the status of Sikkim, which for all practical purposes became part and parcel of the Government of India and lost its separate identity and the Britishers began to exercise paramount political control over Sikkim. Peking gave up the Sino-Tibetan claims to suzerainty over Sikkim.¹²¹

After the conclusion of the Convention of 1890, the Government of India suggested to the Chinese Government for the solution of unsettled matters relating to pasturage, communications and trade. On 5 December 1893, Regulation regarding Trade, Communications and Pasturage, generally known as the Trade Regulations of 1893 were signed at Darjeeling

by A.W. Paul on behalf of the British Government and James Hart and H.O. Chung Jung for China.¹²² After a prolonged negotiations Yatung was declared as trade mart temporarily and it was agreed that after five years of the signing of the trade agreement Indian tea might be imported into Tibet at the same rate of duty which was imposed on the Chinese tea into England. The British subjects were also granted the freedom to travel between Sikkim-Tibet frontier and Yatung.¹²³

The Trade Convention suffered from some major defects. Though the convention was mainly related to Tibet it was never made a party in the negotiations and its consent was never taken into account. So, most of the troubles between the Government of India and Tibet were not solved. The British made *Amban* a party to solve Tibetan problem and this produce a reaction from the Tibetan Government. The question of Indian tea to be imported to Tibet was not clearly decided and this caused troubles in the days to come. Thus it can be said that inspite of the defects, the convention of 1890 certainly decided the stauts of Sikkim as the Protectorate of the Government of India. It had also removed the main defects of the Tumlong Treaty of 1861. China had to give up Sino-Tibetan claims to the Suzerainty over Sikkim.

To conclude, it can be said that the Government of India had entered into Sikkim after the conclusion of the Treaty of Titaliya in 1817. From 1817 to 1861 the Government remained outside the internal affairs of the Sikkim State. However, it remained busy to acquire a place from where it could serve trading interest. The cession of Darjeeling in 1835 could fulfill colonial objective of establishing a suitable palce through which it could enhance trade prosperity. Still efforts were made to colonise the whole state. By the year 1861 Sikkim became a protectorate of the Government of India. After 1861 the Indian Government tried to achieve their goal without disturbing the internal affairs of the state. Between 1861 and 1888 the policy of the Government rested on wooing the Sikkim *Maharaja* on the one hand and to follow divide and rule policy on the other. They became successful to create pro-British Lepcha faction in the state. This policy of the British naturally annoyed the pro-Tibetan faction in the state. This gave due dividnt to the British. During this phase of Colonialism the British also tried not to antagonize the Tibetan officials in the frontiers. However, the British could not be successful in this regard. By the end of this stage when the British

learnt that the *Maharaja* in spite of their efforts could not be an amiable king they decided to keep him aside and bring Sikkim under British administrative control. This arrangement was effected by 1889 and therefore Sikkim was fully utilized according to British needs and requirements in spite of the *Maharaja's* denial in many cases.

II

Creation of the post of the British Political Officer and the coming of its existence

The year 1861 is a landmark in the history of British influence in Sikkim. The developments between 1817 and 1861 clearly indicate that the British were prepared to convert Sikkim into a proto-type British colony. When they found that the situation was not favourable to their requirements they had decided to bring the *Maharaja* to Sikkim. As has been discussed earlier the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling had supervised Sikkim's affairs after the Tumlung Treaty of 1861. This arrangement of supervision continued till 1889. During these years the British experienced a bitter taste regarding the trade. The Tibetan claim of suzerainty over Sikkim and the efforts of the *Majharaja* to balance between the Tibetans and the British were considered by the British very seriously. The affair of Sikkim could not be properly tackled from Darjeeling. Therefore, after a thorough investigation, the British decided to handle the administration of Sikkim through a British representative from Sikkim.

Edgar's proposal clearly indicates that the Indian Government would fail to realize its objectives unless the administration of Sikkim state was handled at least for sometime by the colonial agents directly from Sikkim. Thus in January 1889, Edgar sent a telegram to the Government of Bengal from Gnatong. The telegram says "*After some communication with Tibetans, Ampa has evidently made up his mind to refuse any terms which do not comprise maintenance of unchanged official relations between Tibet and Sikkim. This includes presents and caused in humble language of chief civil authorities at Lasha in other words it means homage to Tibet.... I think that it is necessary, if we are to avoid complete relapse, that state should for the present be administered by British officer with the help of Deputy Commissioner. He should be paid from suspended subsidy. If Lieutenant*

Governor agrees, I would get sanction to retain White, who has very special qualifications and would settle whole thing on way down. Raja was at Pedong and should I think be kept out of Sikkim for some time". ¹²⁴

The Government of Bengal considered the proposal of Edgar and recommended it in a very positive way. A proposal in this regard was subsequently sent to the Government of India and approving it the same was again sent to the Secretary of State for India. After going through the proposal, the Secretary of the State for India wrote to the Government of India. The letter says: "*you support the recommendation of the Government of Bengal that for some time to come a Political Officer should remain at Gangtok, the Raja's residence to advise the Raja and his Council, and then in restoring an orderly administration. Mr. J.C. White, C.E, Public Works Department, who during the Campaign acted as Assistant Political Officer, and is mentioned as having rendered extremely good service, is named for the appointment, and is suggested that his pay, which will be met from the Sikkim subsidy, should be fixed at Rs.1, 000 a month, and that he be allowed one Clerk on a salary of Rs. 50 a month. The grounds on which these proposals are based appear to me to be well founded, and I accordingly sanction your recommendations. I observed that the expenditure involved by the adoption of these measures will be almost completely covered by the Sikkim subsidy of Rs.12000 a year. I also accord my sanction to the proposal that Mr. Paul, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, who was on special duty with the Sikkim Field Force, may retain, after reversion to his appointment, temporarily, in view to the possibility of his services being still required in connection with the duties on which he was engaged".* ¹²⁵

The above letter of the Secretary of State for India addressed to the Government of India clearly sanctioned the creation of a new post of Political Officer in Sikkim state in addition to the supervision of Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling to control the Sikkim's internal as well as external affairs. Consequently, the Government of India informed the Government of Bengal that the post of Political Officer had been created. In June 1889, John Edgar, chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal sent a letter to A.W.Paul, the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling. According to the letter, Deputy Commissioner had been advised to consult J.C. White, the Political Officer, who had been instructed to reside in Sikkim to assist the Raja in Council to administer the state effectively.

Mr. White, who had been selected for the post of Political Officer, was

instructed to act under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling. A sum of Rs. 10,000/- had been sanctioned by the Government of India for the house and furniture for the Political Officer. It was instructed that the house be constructed in the neighborhood of Gangtok.¹²⁶

J.C.White as a rule was not entitled to act as Political Officer because he held from the Engineering service. Therefore, the question of the placement of White as a Political Officer was raised by his parent department (Public Works Department) .The Secretary to the Foreign Department replied to the Public Works Department in the following language "*The appointment of Political Agent in Sikkim is only a temporary one, and possibly we may be ready to return Mr. White to his own Department before five years are past. But it would be much better; I think not to lay down any hard and fast time for his tenure of the office. He is not eligible under rules for the Political Department, and his appointment in Sikkim was only sanctioned as a special case, so that we could not provide for him elsewhere if he was struck off the Public Works Department list in five years, and the Sikkim Agency was subsequently abolished, nor do I suppose Mr. White would care to stay there all his life on Rs. 1000 per mensem. If Public Works Department agree, the most convenient course to us would be to let Mr. White have his regular promotion for five years certain, if he is in Political Department so long, and that then the case should be submitted for orders. In five years time we may be in a position to speak with certainty as to whether Mr. White should be retained in this Department or not*".¹²⁷ After the Public Works Department received the above reply from the Secretary Foreign Department, the Secretary to the Government of Bengal Public Works Department sent a letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department: "*.....regarding the question of the departmental promotion to Mr.J.C.White, Executive Engineer while he is in political duties but, and to recommend that, with the permission of the Government of India, his eligibility for permanent promotion may continue for five years from the present time, and that, if he does not return to the Public Works Department, then his name may be removed from the list of the Public Works Department, as, after such a long interval, his usefulness as an Engineer will have become seriously impaired*".¹²⁸

The above letters and the communications clearly indicate that the creation of the post of Political Officer in Sikkim was a political requirement

on the part of the Colonial Government. The affairs of Sikkim could not be properly handled from Darjeeling under Deputy Commissioner's supervision. During the period between 1861 and 1888, the relation between the *Maharaja* and the Government of India deteriorated to such an extent that the former had appeared to the British to have completely surrendered to the Tibetans.

As per the British version the policy of the Sikkim *Maharaja* was the major obstacle to the British for their prosperity in the region. Therefore, they decided to bring the *Maharaja* to Sikkim and put the administration of the state under their direct control. This policy was materialised by the end of 1888. The *Maharaja* was brought to Sikkim and the post of the Political Officer was created.

According to the British, the main objective to create the post of a Political Officer in Sikkim was to advise the *Maharaja* and his Council, and to aid him in restoring orderly administration. For the post of Political Officer J.C. White, A Civil Engineer of the Public Works Department was selected because he had been for sometime in Sikkim and acted as Assistant Political Officer during campaign to Sikkim. He was placed under the orders of Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling. His salary and traveling allowance was to be paid temporarily from the suspended Sikkim subsidy.¹²⁹

As per the letter submitted by the Government of Bengal to the Government of India it is evident that the appointment of J.C.White was the need of the situation. The letter states: "... *this is the proper course and Mr. White is the best man to choose. He knows the country well, and his energy in road making and the like will be of special value. He is a man of conciliatory manners and patient disposition and gets on well with the Raja and Officials*". The letter further indicates that White did not ask any definite powers as the *Raja* and council would follow his advice. The *Raja* was informed not to take any important measures without consulting the Political Officer.¹³⁰

The Government of India seems to have felt that the administration of Sikkim was completely disorganised. The *Raja* was considered a man of weak character and completely under the influence of his Tibetan wife, and unless an English Officer was posted in Sikkim for a time to guide him, the old state of affairs would inevitably recur. If the royal family remained in the Chumbi the internal administration would still suffer. The only men of any mark in the state were two brothers, Phodung Lama and Khangsa Dewan.

According to the Government of India's view these men possessed some ideas of administration. Moreover, they belonged to the anti-Tibetan party and disfavoured the *Raja*. If they were not given the charge of administration, the administration would further deteriorate and no one would take their place.

The Government of India further felt that J.C.White was the fittest person to tackle the situation and should be selected as the Political Officer. He had acquired a thorough knowledge of the Sikkim state and the inhabitants, and his professional services as an Engineer, had been, and would be, of special value in the country of the hills and forest, where one of the main objects to be aimed at was the opening up of communications. Though, not eligible for the post of Political Service proper, the Government thought that in his special post there would be no objection to Mr. White's continued employment. The expenditure would be made from the Sikkim subsidy of Rs.12000 a year and if it was not adequate the Government had already decided to raise the subsidy to Rs.18000. So, the Government need not take any extra grant from the imperial revenue. The Government further felt that the appointment of a Political Officer became necessary because of the misconduct of the *Maharaja* and evidently it would be a benefit for him and the state as a whole. Therefore, the appointment was to be made.¹³¹

Another reason for the creation of the post of Political Officer and appointment of J.C.White to the post was that there was much cultivable land and there were many settlers willing to take it up if they could be any fixity of tenure. It was felt that a large tract of land covered with forest could be brought into cultivation and nearly Rs.10, 000 a year would be earned by the state.¹³²

On the basis of the above facts the post of the Political Officer was created. Realising the services rendered by A.W.Paul throughout the military operations, and in the course of the negotiations at Gnatong, he was allowed to retain for the present his special allowance of Rs.300 a month. The Government of India felt that its relations with Bhutan and Sikkim should be controlled by one authority from Sikkim agency and the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was instructed to formulate the whole policy accordingly. The services of J.C.White and *Raja* Tendook Pulgar during the course of expedition to Sikkim were highly appreciated. *Raja* Tendook was given an allowance of Rs.100 per month. The Government sanctioned an amount of

Rs 10,000 for the construction of a residence for Political Officer and his establishment. The post of clerk and an interpreter were also simultaneously created. Nimsering was appointed as an interpreter.¹³³ He was given Rs. 20 per month in addition to his pay. Arrangements were made to build quarters for the Political Agency at Gangtok. The house originally built for the *Raja*, which was then occupied by the *sepoys* was ordered to be vacated and was made available for the *Raja's* occupation.¹³⁴

The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal instructed the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, A.W.Paul to encourage the *Maharaja* to stay at Gangtok and take active part in the administration. Till the *Maharaja* assumed his responsibility a council was to be constituted consisting of leading *Lamas* and common leaders of Sikkim and the *Maharaja* was to preside over the council whenever he was present at Gangtok. The council was to refer the disputed opinion between the members of the council and the *Maharaja* to the Political Officer. The judgment of the Political Officer was to be obligatory to the *Maharaja* in council. The council was authorized to collect the revenue till the restoration of the *Maharaja* to power. The decision to ascertain the expenditure required for administration including *Maharaj's* expenditure was also left in the hands of the Political Officer.¹³⁵ The Governor General approved the instruction given by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to the Deputy Commissioner, A.W. Paul. The *Maharaja* still continued his Tibetan affiliation and wanted to check British influence in Sikkim. Therefore, the British still could not bring the *Maharaja* under their fold.¹³⁶

An interview of the Lieutenant Governor with Khangsa Dewan and Phodung Lama was arranged on 10 November 1889 at Gangtok to solve the problem of the *Maharaja's* attitude towards the British. The two pro-British leaders requested to separate the *Maharaja* from the influence of Living *Kazi* and the *Tenum Dewan* because they had close link with the late Dewan Namgay group. They also requested the Lieutenant Governor not to allow the *Maharaja* to visit Lachen and Lachung, as it would facilitate the *Maharaja* to be influenced by the Tibetans. The pro-British faction also informed the British that the Tibetans were collecting weapons to throw off the British from Sikkim.¹³⁷

In view of these developments, the Political Officer instructed to appoint a Council considering colonial interest in the region. To manage the

affairs of Sikkim the Political Officer appointed a council consisting of the *Raja*, Phodung Lama, Dorjee Lachen (to represent the Lamas) the *Khangsa Dewan*, Phurbo *Dewan*, Gangtok *Kazi*, Tashiding *Kazi*, (to represent the lay interest), Sheu *Dewan* (as the writer) and J.C. White. The Council was authorised to collect revenue, listen to appeals and to manage the ordinary affairs of the state.¹³⁸

From the above accounts it is evident that the Government of India, whose interest was disturbed despite repeated efforts, could be rectified. But still the main objectives could not be realized. An exercise to bring the state of Sikkim under colonial control began after the Tumlong Treaty of 1861 and the first step in the direction was the handling of Sikkim affairs from Darjeeling. When this was found ineffective, the Government decided to bring the affairs of the state under its direct control from Sikkim. The situation and the circumstances forced the Government of India to create a post of Political Officer at Gangtok. Thus the long awaited desire of the British was realized. But this also could not fulfill the aspiration of the colonizer. The *Maharaja* could not be fitted as per their liking. Therefore, they had to wait for sometime more to achieve all these.

III

Contribution of the Political Officers in terms of politics between 1889-1947

The year 1889 is a turning point in the history of Sikkim. This year a British residency was established at Gangtok. Between 1889 and 1947 about half a dozen Political Officers administered the state. J.C. White was the first Political Officer to guide the state. He was entrusted with the charge of Bhutan and Sikkim along with the additional charge of Tibetan trade, however under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling. During his stay in Sikkim between 1889 and 1908 he had to deal with the *Maharaja* and establish a new system of administration in the State.¹³⁹

Charles Bell succeeded J.C.White in 1908 and remained in the office of Political Officer till 1918. He began his career as an ICS Officer. He took a great deal of interest in the study of Buddhism and Tibetan language. He wrote *Tibetan English Grammar* and *Tibet Past and Present*. It was also the brainchild of Charles Bell to institute a judicial Court known as the chief

court of Sikkim.¹⁴⁰ Charles Bell felt that it was equally necessary to learn Nepali language along with Tibetan. Therefore he made a request to the Government of India for a permission to learn *Khas Kura* (Nepali language). The Government approved his request. Accordingly he went to Darjeeling to study Nepali language and within a few months he could communicate in Nepali also¹⁴¹. F.M. Bailey succeeded Charles Bell in 1918. He began his carrier as Political Officer in 1918 and continued in his office till 1828. Most of the reformative measures in the Education Department were undertaken during his period. He also took interest in the study of Buddhism and Tibetan culture.¹⁴² J.L.R.Weir succeeded Bailey in 1928. He also began his carrier as a Military Officer and ultimately joined as Political Officer in 1928 and continued in his office till 1933. He could not throw much light on the administration but continued the policy and programme of his predecessors. He was much interested in the study of Buddhism and Tibetan culture.¹⁴³ Weir was succeeded by Derrick in 1933 and continued till 1935. He had also followed the policy initiated by his predecessors.¹⁴⁴ Sir Basil Gould succeeded Derrick in 1935. He remained in the office of the Political Officer between 1935 and 1946. He began his carrier as a civilian officer and finally joined the office of Political Officer in 1935. During his tenure of office, democratic movement took a serious turn under the influence of the Congress movement in India. People revolted against feudalism and landlordism.¹⁴⁵ Hopkinson was the last political officer and remained in office between 1946-47. With the achievement of Indian independence the office of the Political Officer was handed over to the Government of free India.

Out of all these Political Officers, J.C. White, the first Political Officer had to work hard. The post of Political Officer was created mainly to assist the *Raja* in Council. The former was to advice the council to set the administration in the state, however, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling. In addition to this the Political Officer was also to maintain the relations of the Government of India with Sikkim and Bhutan.¹⁴⁶ The Political Officer was also expected to perform all sorts of miscellaneous duties, from watching the front to supplementing the transport and commissariat.¹⁴⁷

Tibetan action in the frontier region compelled the Government of India to expel the Tibetans from Lingtu. But in fact, British interest in Sikkim was mainly due to the animosity towards Tibet and China. This was

fortified by Lord Curzon's policy of curtaining "Russian influence"¹⁴⁸ in Tibet, which was slowly increasing there. Hence the British wanted to bring Sikkim under its influence to keep an observer there to assess the situation on the Tibetan frontier. To do this, it was necessary for the British to have an amiable king in Sikkim. The economic factor which prompted the British to bring Sikkim under its fold was due to the necessity for a headquarter that could be used as trade route to Tibet. Unable to find a king of their liking in Sikkim in Thutob Namgyal, the Political Officer J.C. White followed a coercive policy. He was kept under house arrest at Kalimpong, and in 1891 he was allowed to return to his kingdom but his freedom of movement was restricted. The *Maharaja* himself, under these circumstances chose to remain at Rabdenchi instead of Gangtok because he wanted to remain far from Political Officer with whom his relations were unfriendly.¹⁴⁹

The Political Officer supplemented his coercive action by the creation of a council consisted of men who were pro- British. The council was to advice the *Maharaja* on the administration of the state. In spite of all these the colonial authorities was still worried about the perception of the foreign powers regarding their activities in Sikkim. To avoid criticism from the Global Political Actors, they were therefore, keen on bringing the *Maharaja* back to Sikkim. Efforts in this direction were many. The Political Officer requested the *Maharaja* to return to Gangtok. But the *Maharaja* refused the request. At last the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal himself ordered the *Maharaja* to return to Gangtok. He was also asked to bring his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal to Sikkim from Tibet.¹⁵⁰ The *Maharaja* did not give any importance to this order.

Then Sir Stewart Baley, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal directed J.C.White, the Political Officer to visit Rabdentse and to explain the importance of obeying the order of the Government to the *Maharaja*. White acted accordingly. Thus under such coercion the *Maharaja* partly followed the direction of J.C. White; he agreed to come to the capital but did not call his eldest son Tchoda Namgyal back to Sikkim from Tibet. The Political Officer and also the Indian Government wanted Tchoda Namgyal to be the successor designate to make an effective king to serve the colonial interest in the state. However, the royal couple did not succumb to the British pressure. Even the *Maharani*, who was present at the time of the interview with Political Officer, showed her unhappiness about the treatment of the colonial authority towards the royal family of Sikkim.

White did not make any reply to the *Maharani's* complaints, but made it clear that the *Maharaja* should return to Gangtok. On his return to Gangtok, White suggested to the Government of India that the subsidy might be stopped and his second son, Sidkeong Tulku be brought to Darjeeling for education¹⁵¹. But all these efforts failed- Tchoda Namgyal declined; he did not come to Sikkim; the *Maharaja* proceeded in a religious journey to Tibet via Nepal only to be arrested by the Nepalese. The *Maharaja* was suspected for his flight to Tibet¹⁵². It seems that the real reason for the *Maharaja's* flight to Tibet was his bad relations with White and his maltreatment towards them. The relations between J.C.White and the *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal were not at all cordial. As a result, the *Maharaja* refused to speak to White. When the captured *Maharaja* was handed over to the British, he was kept in a monastery in Darjeeling probably to punish him for disobeying the colonial order.¹⁵³ Thus the policy of the Indian Government at the initial phase of its administrative control in Sikkim was mainly political and economic. To implement them the Political Officer followed sometime coercive and at times punitive measures.

When the government of Bengal was not satisfied with the attitude of the royal couple, it decided to give additional help to the Political Officer to set the things right. The Government further wanted to bring Tchoda Namgyal to Sikkim on the ground that the relations of India with Tibet were not at all cordial. The Bengal Government made special arrangement for the education of the *Maharaja's* second son Sidkeong Tulkul, and consequently Nolan, the Commissioner of Rajshahi Division was sent to interview the *Maharaja* and induce him to bring back Choda Namgyal from Tibet. As per English version the *Maharaja* declined to bring back Choda Namgyal from Tibet, and Nolan suggested the Government of India that the *Maharaja* should be deposed temporarily and kept under house arrest, as the later had refused to bring back his eldest son from Tibet to Sikkim.¹⁵⁴ But the *Maharaja's* version is different. He says that during the course of interview His Highness showed his willingness to help the British. On the question of *Kumar's* return to Gangtok, the *Maharaja* replied that he would send the letter of the British to *Kumar* and next day a letter in this regard was dispatched to Tchoda Namgyal. The letter ran thus: "*The British Government have again and again requested me to bring you down to Sikkim. And now the Commissioner Mr. Nolan, as representative of the Government, has assured*

me with the promise of the Government restoring us back to our own land and people with our former power. Therefore, you my son Tsodak Namgyal must come to Sikkim as soon as possible". The Maharaja further said that the misunderstanding caused in the past was because of the lack of understanding of English language on his part. He requested Nolan to restore his full administrative powers. Nolan assured the Maharaja that he would communicate the letter as soon as he received the reply from the Government. Nolan further told His Highness that the later might return to Gangtok and preside at the council meeting and carry on the state's administrative duties e.g., realizing taxes, and trying cases etc. and after two or three years he might be restored to full powers. If His Highness succeeded in getting the Tibetans to have friendly intercourse of commerce that would be one of the chief steps to entitle His Highness to be restored to full powers¹⁵⁵ In spite of the efforts of the Maharaja to bring back his eldest son, the Government of India decided to depose him for a brief period. The British must have taken such steps to pressurise the Maharaja to get his eldest son back as early as possible as the presence of the Kumar in Tibet was not appreciated by the British on the ground that it might enhance anti-British feeling in Tibet.

In view of the above facts Sir Charles Elliot advised the Government of India to depose the Maharaja for three years and during these years the affairs of the state would be managed by the Political Officer and the Council as it was done before. But the Government of Bengal reserved to decide whether to restore Thutob Namgyal to the throne or to install Sidkeong Tulku after the expiry of three years¹⁵⁶. Finally Sir Elliot's proposal was accepted by the Government of India and the Maharaja Thutob Namgyal was deposed for three years from July 1892.¹⁵⁷

From the above account it is evident that the main obstacle to implement colonial policy in the state was the attitude of the Maharaja Thutob Namgyal. It can be said that the objections raised by the Maharaja were justified to some extent. The efforts of the British more particularly the Political Officer J.C.White, to bring Tchoda Namgyal from Tibet to Sikkim were not suggested by any British concern about the prosperity of the State. They feared that if the Prince continued to stay in Tibet he would be much influenced by Tibetan ideas and he would not become a king of their liking. In such a situation they would fail to achieve their commercial and economic

benefit and cultural transformation in the state. They had already created a situation under which Sikkimese society mainly administrative class had been divided into two different groups .i.e pro-British and anti-British. In spite of *Maharaja's* reply that Tchoda Namgyal was an 'Avatar' and could not be a suitable ruler, the British pressurised him to bring back the prince to Sikkim. When the British could not achieve this, they decided to depose the *Maharaja* for three years. It indicates that the British wanted to sow the seed of cultural transformation of the State during the *Maharaja's* absence through various administrative measures.

When the *Maharaja* found himself punished he decided to change his policy towards the British. In early 1895 the *Maharaja* informed the Government of India that he was ready to obey the orders and requested that his throne might be restored to him. Sir Charles Elliott visited Gangtok in April 1895 and informed the Sikkim council of the *Maharaja's* decision. But the council opposed the decision of the *Maharaja* and suggested that the *Maharaja* be permanently deposed and his second son Sidkeong Tulku be made the *Maharaja* of Sikkim.¹⁵⁸ Nolan the Commissioner of Rajshahi Division rejected the proposal of the council and argued that the council was fully influenced by White.¹⁵⁹ Ultimately Sir Charles Elliott, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal concurred with the opinion of Nolan for the restoration of the *Maharaja*. He proposed the Government of India that the *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal might be restored to his position on the following condition: (a) that the *Maharaja* should bring back his eldest son to Sikkim and (b) he should accept the new constitution. The *Maharaja* accepted all the conditions laid down by the Government of India and in November 1895 he was restored to the throne. The *Maharaja* showed his gratitude to Nolan for his generous feeling and great wisdom.¹⁶⁰

The proposal of J.C. White regarding the succession to the Sikkim throne was not concurred by Sir Charles Elliott, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. But White still argued that all sections of Sikkim population would welcome the succession of the *Maharaja's* second son Sidkeong Tulku as a possible successor.¹⁶¹ Sir Charles Elliott advised the Government of India to reject White's proposal and make proper arrangements for the education of Sidkeong Tulku. The Government of India accepted the proposal of the Lieutenant Governor and placed Sidkeong Tulku under the charge of Sarat Chandra Das at Darjeeling. He was taught English, Hindi and Tibetan.¹⁶²

But the *Maharaja* objected to the education of his second son in English as he was an incarnation of the *Lama* of Pemionchi.¹⁶² The *Maharaja* was informed that his request would only be considered when the eldest son would be brought to Darjeeling.¹⁶³

In 1899, the question of the succession to the throne of Sikkim was reviewed. The eldest son of the *Maharaja* was asked to come back several times and his refusal to return to Sikkim aroused a controversy in the state. The Political Officer J.C. White became worried to keep question of succession in suspense any more. If the second prince was not to be installed. White wanted that he should proceed sincerely in monastic studies to be the head of the Phodang monastery. With the question of succession White added the question of marriage of the second prince. White felt that the problem of the selection of a bride should be decided immediately. As a rule the Sikkim princes were to marry Tibetan girls. The *Maharaja* disliked his son's marriage with the daughter of any *Kazi* in Sikkim. White further felt that the practice of marrying Tibetan girl should be discontinued because the present *Maharani* who hailed from Tibet caused much trouble. Therefore, White was totally opposed to marrying any girl of Tibetan origin to the prince and suggested to look for a girl in Bhutan. In support of a Bhutanese girl White contended that there had been a precedent to marry from Bhutan also as *Raja* Tensung Namgyal got married in Bhutan in 1670. White wanted to settle the question of marriage quickly because the prince was already getting mixed up with the women in the palace and only the *Maharani* could check the prince from his involvement.¹⁶⁴

J.C.White and Nolan had the same view regarding the succession question. Both of them wanted that *Maharaja's* second son Sidkeong Namgyal who had attained the age of 19 be declared as the successor to the throne. They opined that as Tchoda Namgyal failed to return to Sikkim his claim to the throne would cease and Sidkeong Namgyal would be nominated as future successor. The second prince had already qualified himself to be "a good *Raja* but a bad monk." On the other hand the eldest prince was considered unfit as he had spent most of his life in Tibet and was practically unaware of the new administrative measure.¹⁶⁵

In view of these developments the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal felt it to high time to take a concrete decision regarding the succession question. The new Lieutenant Governor of Bengal Sir Alexander Mackenzie discussed the question of succession with Nolan and White in detail. He, however, felt

that some more time be given to Tchoda Namgyal for his return, and his suggestion was placed before the Government of India for approval.¹⁶⁶

Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, did not favour the suggestion and the proposal of Sir Alexander Mackenzie on the ground that Tchoda Namgyal had already surrendered his claim to the succession and in his place Sidkeong Tulku was recognized as the successor designate to the throne of Sikkim and Tchoda Namgyal was prohibited from entering into Sikkim.¹⁶⁷ The Government of India further felt that the proposal of Bengal Government would be injurious to the “*dignity and self respect of the government*” as the case had already been decided. Tchoda Namgyal had already lost his claim to the throne and it was not politically expedient to make such an offer. Thus, on 21 February 1899, the Governor General in council decided that Sidkeong Tulku should be declared as successor designate and Tchoda Namgyal was prohibited from entering into Sikkim.¹⁶⁸

The *Maharaja* and *Maharani* became worried to learn the decision of the British Government. The *Maharaja* informed the Political Officer through a letter that his eldest son refused to come to Sikkim because of the orders of the Indian Government and not because of his personal unwillingness. The *Maharaja* further stated that his second son could not be a king because of the usage and custom of Sikkim and if the Political Officer approved the request the second son Sidkeong Namgyal (who was an *Avtar*) might be sent to Tibet and in his place Tchoda Namgyal be placed to succeed the *Guddi*. They further clarified that the present request would be acceptable to all the people of Sikkim. The royal couple also made personal representation to the Political Officer.¹⁶⁹

At last the *Maharaja* reconciled with the order of the Government of India but the *Maharani* took some more time to reconcile herself. The Political Officer felt that it was necessary to disconnect Sidkeong Tulku from *Lamaistic* tradition to which the later was affiliated for a long time. Therefore, he proposed to remove Sidkeong Namgyal to Darjeeling for sometime. Thus, the British with special efforts of the Political Officer managed to bring a solution to the succession question. Sidkeong Namgyal was made the successor-designate to the Sikkim throne and the claim of Tchoda Namgyal was turned down forever.¹⁷⁰

The role of Political Officer to maintain internal as well as external affairs was very significant during the period of British domination in Sikkim. In March 1899, when the *Maharaja* had already been restored to

power, he requested the colonial Government that he might be given more powers to control the finances of his kingdom. The Political Officer J.C.White straightway rejected the request and advised the Government of India not to consider the request. He felt that "*it would not be advantage of either himself or the state*".¹⁷¹ The Government of India accepted White's advice and rejected the *Maharaja's* request for additional powers.¹⁷²

Secondly, in April 1906 Tchoda Namgyal and Thinley Namgyal respectively, the eldest son and half brother of *Maharaja*, Thutob Namgyal made a joint petition of request to allow them to visit Sikkim and reside over there. White argued that their visit might create more trouble inside Sikkim and therefore, advised the Government of India to reject their request to visit Sikkim. The Indian Government took the advice of White and rejected the request of Namgyals.¹⁷³

From the above account it is evident that the decision of the Political Officer and the Indian Government as a whole had become final not only in the field of administration but also in making kings in Sikkim. The Viceroy gave much importance to the proposal of the Political Officer than the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. In 1899, it was J.C.White the Political Officer who had decided the selection of Sidkeong Tulku as the successor designates to the throne of Sikkim. Secondly the Government of India paid due consideration and approval to the proposal of the Political Officer for the rejection of the request made by the *Maharaja* for more powers to control the finances of his kingdom (discussed earlier). In this connection it also can be said that the Government of India paid special weightage to the proposal of Political Officer for the rejection of the petitions made by Tchoda Namgyal and Thinley Namgyal to visit Sikkim in 1906.

Though some of the proposals of Political Officer could not get much weightage and were eventually rejected yet he played a very important role so far the colonial interest in the region is concerned. The proposals made by Political Officer and not considered by the Colonial Government will be discussed in the foregoing pages. Sidkeong Tulku desired to visit Tibet to see his elder brother Tchoda Namgyal as the later was not permitted to enter into Sikkim by the Government of India. White also showed his interest to accompany the *Kumar* and proposed that there was no danger to the proposed visit. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India rejected the offer of the Political Officer; and remarked that White "*is too much fond of leading the*

Kumar hither and thither"¹⁷⁴ When the nomination of the *Kumar* Sidkeong Namgyal was finally recognised he was sent to St. Paul School, Darjeeling to improve his English education. Again in 1900-01 White accompanied the *Maharaj Kumar* to Calcutta, Rangoon, Mandalay, Colombo and other places. The *Kumar* rendered valuable help to the Government of India in course of Younghusband's expedition to Tibet. White was perfectly satisfied with the work of the *Kumar*. Therefore he recommended to the Government of India that the *Kumar* be awarded with the *Kaisar-i-Hind* Gold Medal.¹⁷⁵ Lord Curzon rejected the suggestion of the Political Officer. He felt that in lieu of *Kaisar-i-Hind* Gold Medal, the *Kumar* be awarded with "thanks" and the "appreciation" of the Government of India.¹⁷⁶

Since the Political Officer could not find any 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 leading *Kazis*) be allowed to complete education in England.¹⁷⁷ The proposal of White to send the *Kumar* to England for higher Education was objected to by some of the British Officials but the proposal was supported by L.W.Dane, Secretary to the Government of India. Lord Minto the next Governor General of India concurred with the proposal. Accordingly the *Kumar* accompanied by White left for England for higher education in September 1906. On their arrival in England he was placed in charge of a tutor who devoted all his time to him. He was educated at Oxford. During the vacation he made a tour through the country to cities and places of interest.¹⁷⁸ The main objectives of sending *Kumar* to England for higher studies was to familiarize him with the western culture so that he would be in a position to handle the situation of the state as per colonial directives. White also proposed to create the office of the post of Chief *Dewan* for him to carry a definite share in the administration of the state. He intended that in due course the whole administrative work would be handed over to the *Maharaj Kumar*. White further wanted to engage the *Kumar* in congenial occupation, so that he would remain contented and happy and not become discontented with his lot and anxious to get away as so many Indian Princes did on their return to India.¹⁷⁹ The *Maharaj Kumar* returned to Sikkim after a year and become the *Maharaja* after the death of his father Thutob Namgyal on 11 February 1914. But he could not rule for a long time. He died in December 1914.

From the above account it is evident that the colonial authorities wanted to create a situation under which British hidden interest i.e., the cultural transformation could be materialized. Question may be raised-why only prince and the sons of *Kazis* were selected for English studies? To answer this it can be said that after the Indian Government had achieved their trade goal they had diverted their attention towards the cultural transformation of the state. By educating royal princess and upper class feudal lords it would be easy to influence the common people for spreading the message of the western culture in the state. Apparently, they argued that *Kumar* was sent to England for English studies so that he could be made into good administrator. During *Kumar's* stay in England he was not confined with the narrow frame of English studies only he was given good grounding in the liberal culture of England. This indicates that through *Kumar* and the sons of the *Kazis* the British wanted to impose a cultural juxtaposition, through the *kumar* and the sons of the *kazis*

Thus the later part of J.C.White's activities were geared to groom a puppet ruler in Sikkim. To some extent he was successful except for the fact that the *Kumar* on whom he had full faith did not live long to fulfill White's dream. He ruled nearly for a year. After the demise of Sidkeong Namgyal in December 1914, Tashi Namgyal, the half brother of Sidkeong Namgyal was enthroned.

The role of Political Officers did not remain confined to the internal matters only. It was seen in the previous section that the Political Officer acted as Chief mediator to convince the Government of India and persuaded them to implement his proposals. Western writers maintain the view that the main obstacle to achieve Colonial interest in the region was the attitude of the *Maharaja* and the border dispute caused by the policy of the Tibetan Officials in the frontier region, but the regional version do not agree to this. According to regional version the effort of the *Maharaja*, in fact, was to maintain a balance between the British and the Tibetans. The *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal says, "*ours is a small state, and all that we can do in case of a rupture between two such powerful governments, we can only pray that we may be allowed to preserve neutrality. But if the prayer be fruitless then we must for the present, join the leader who proves himself the most powerful although we must not at heart prove disloyal to the Tibet which is the mother church of our Buddhist faith*".¹⁸⁰

From the above account it is evident that the position of the *Maharaja* was in a critical stage. Two great powers namely the British and Tibet were trying hard to subvert the identity of Sikkim and in such awkward situation he found it to be a very difficult task to maintain the balance. With the restoration of the *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal to the throne in 1895 the situation became slightly easier for the British. The Political Officer still continued to act as an instrument to settle the border dispute in the frontier region. The border dispute become afresh when J.C.White visited Yatung in Tibet in May in 1894. Under the terms of the Trade Regulation of 1893 a settlement of the issue was finalised. After the visit White became dissatisfied with the selection of the spot and wanted to shift the place near Rinchinpong.¹⁸¹ White informed the Government of India that the Tibetans had occupied "*certain places*". He asked the Government that he should be authorized to settle the matter.¹⁸² The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal supported Political Officer's proposal on the ground that it might create further complication in the region. They wanted to settle the boundary issue with the officials of both India and China.¹⁸³

The *Amban* informed the Government of India that the Tibetan Government would object to the entry of Indian Officials inside Tibet but would send officials in the frontier "*to inspect the border*" between Sikkim and Tibet on the basis of the convention of 1890 and to make a careful examination in order that "*the boundary pillars may be erected which shall forever be respected by either side*".¹⁸⁴

In view of the assurances received from the Chinese *Amban* White was sent to Penaringo Pass on 7 May 1895 and he met the Chinese delegates Major Tu-His-hsun on 18 May 1895. Next day White fixed a boundary Pillar at the Jclap Pass. Both the Officials agreed to meet again on June 1st on Doka Pass and that in the mean time White should erect a Pillar at the Donchuk Pass, which the Chinese would examine afterwards. Later on White received a letter from the Chinese representative that the demarcation work might be postponed for sometime because the later was pressurized by the Tibetan *Lama* not to allow the British to erect the Pillars.¹⁸⁵ White replied to the Chinese delegates that the work of erection has already begun and he was against any postponement.¹⁸⁶

Within no time the Tibetans demolished the boundary pillars erected at the Jclap Pass. This was informed by White to the Government of Bengal .¹⁸⁷The Government of India took it very easily and contended that the work

of demolition might be the work of the "ignorant common people".¹⁸⁸ Sir Charles Elliott supported White and wanted to follow a peaceful policy because China in those days was friendly to India.¹⁸⁹

The above account shows that the Political Officer wanted to act too fast to achieve his goal whereas the Government of India was passive in its attitude towards China and Tibet. The Government of India wanted to be compromising because the little tension on the border might create greater criticism on their part. Therefore they rejected White's overenthusiastic proposal.

The situation of the frontier issue changed after the year 1899. This year is very significant in the history of colonial domination in Sikkim. Lord Curzon became the Governor General of India. He disapproved the policy followed by his predecessors. He was a man of unbounded energy and wanted to settle all the matters kept pending by his predecessors without delay. He was more concerned in the foreign affairs than the internal reforms. Foreign affairs were his chief interest. He was determined that powers bordering on India should not gain upper hands. The rapid advancements of Russia towards the Central Asia and the possibility of its influence in Tibet caused him uneasy. Therefore, after his arrival he decided to act on the proposals made by Political Officer. He decided to take strong measures against Tibet.¹⁹⁰

In this connection it would be better to reiterate the proposal forwarded by J.C.White to the Government of India on the Tibetan question. White wanted to shift the trade mart from Yathung to Phari where no restriction would be imposed on the functioning of the Mart. This was to be done, according to White, by the transfer of Giaogong to Tibet.¹⁹¹ However, it was found that Tibet was not interested in such barter. White's proposal of the type as recounted above was conditioned by two important developments: (a) the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had assumed power in 1895, he was therefore, exercising real power and authority; earlier Dalai Lama from 1804 onwards were unable to do so because of their early deaths. It was during such phase that China had consolidated its position in Tibet. But after the coming of Thirteenth *Dalai Lama* the situation had changed (b) the Dalai Lama was in power and China was defeated by Japan in 1895. These factors changed the perception of Dalai Lama. He wanted to be free from Chinese rule and keep it away from the expansion of the British.¹⁹²As a

diplomatic measure he seemed to have been leaning towards Russia. This leaning was not palatable to the Government of India. So, they wanted to be there before the advent of the Russians. The fear that Russia might replace China in Tibet prompted the Government of India to demand shifting of trade mart to Phari so that it could make its influence felt at Lasha.¹⁹³

Lord Curzon on receiving this proposal moved fast and effectively. He took various measures one after the other. Firstly he tried to contact Dalai Lama through the Chinese *Amban* in Tibet, and then he sent Ugen Kazi to Dalai Lama in November 1898 with the same proposals. But both these proposals fizzled out. This was followed by Lord Curzon's letter to Dalai Lama, which were called the first letter and the second letter. However, even these letters failed to evoke Tibetan response. These failures led to the suggestion of alternative measures. White made two suggestions either to occupy Chumbi Valley or to stop all trade between India and Tibet. But the Government of India rejected both the proposals. Then Lord Curzon informed Lord Hamilton, the Secretary of State for India that White should be sent to Giaogong to evict the Tibetan from there or to exact small tax from them.

This proposal was accepted and the expulsion was carried on 20 June 1902 but it was of no significance. Presumably, Curzon submitted his dispatch to Hamilton on 8 January 1903 asking for drastic action on Tibet. In this dispatch he pointed out that all earlier attempts to open direct communications with the Dalai Lama had failed due to the intervention of the Chinese. Hence, the mission to Lasha should be sent under a *qualified Tibetan representative to talk to the Dalai Lama "who is neither an infant nor a puppet"*.¹⁹⁴ Lord Curzon's intention in sending the mission was to discuss the question of Sikkim frontier and the entire question of British relations with Tibet. However, main intention of Curzon to enter into an agreement with Tibet was to clarify once and for all the status of Sikkim as the protectorate of the Government of India. The other was to force Tibet to look to the Government of India for protection and support in future.

In June 1903, Lord Curzon after obtaining the consent of the British Government dispatched 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-à-vis* Tibet and the task of 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".¹⁹⁵ This mission was thus an attempt to remove the flaws of 1890 Anglo-Chinese Convention and to secure international sanction for its protectorate over Sikkim.¹⁹⁶

The above account clearly shows that J.C.White was instrumental in influencing the British Government and its Viceroy Lord Curzon in charting out the policies towards Tibet. The mission was a success in view of the fact that the Lasha Convention of 7 September 1904 forced the Tibetans to recognize the protectorate status of Sikkim. This change of Sikkim's status was therefore the brainchild of J.C.White.

The Lasha Convention was not the final settlement so far as Sikkim-Tibet relation was concerned. This was confirmed by the signing of Peking Convention between China and Great Britain in 1906. This convention finally decided the protectorate status of Sikkim. China also agreed not to allow other powers to interfere in the internal affairs of Tibet and Great Britain agreed not to annex Tibet. Britain got the right to connect the trade mart with India by telegraph lines.¹⁹⁷

The history of Sikkim from 1905 onwards turned towards a happy period. The relations between the *Maharaja* and the British became very cordial. The transfer of political control of Sikkim affairs to Delhi in 1906 had also lessened the troubles of the Political Officers to maintain the affairs of the Sikkim state. The British appreciated the efforts of the *Maharaja* during the Tibet Mission. The Government of India invited the *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal and his family to visit Calcutta in November 1905 on the happy occasion of the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales. This was done with a view to appreciating the *Maharaja* for his efforts in the Tibet Mission. The *Maharaja* accepted the proposal.¹⁹⁸ Realising the invitation as an excellent opportunity the *Maharaja* requested the Viceroy of India through J.C.White that " *His Highness the Maharaja might be allowed to carry on the administrative work on Sikkim by himself, of course taking the help of the Political Officer*".¹⁹⁹ The *Maharaja* also requested that since the

cordial relations between Tibet and British India had been established, "he might be permitted to see the members of the Raj family who were living in Tibet"²⁰⁰, and with whom they had been separated for a quite long time. The Maharani also used her power of persuasion on Sir Louis Dane, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India. She proposed that Maharaja should be granted his traditional rights to exercise full powers in Sikkim affairs. The Maharani had another interview with Sir Louis Dane and Lady Dane. During the interview the Maharani discussed their troubles to how Nolan, the Commissioner of Rajshahi had restored them to Sikkim and "given them certain powers"²⁰¹ which however they had never enjoyed in reality.

The History of Sikkim relates that after the Maharaja and Maharani had been received by the Prince of Wales, White's attitude towards them underwent a complete change. From that time onwards cordial feeling of sympathy was established between their Highness and Political Officer.²⁰² The change in attitude of the Political Officer was also suggested by the possibility of Sidkeong namgyals's coming to power whom he had already trained in the British line and the present Maharaja was no longer a force to be accounted within Sikkim affairs. J.C. White retired from the post of Political Officer in October 1908. Thus ended his twenty years connection with the reformatory measures of Sikkim's administration. He was succeeded by Charles Bell of Winchester, new College and the Indian Civil Service.²⁰³ When the Royal couple learnt about the retirement of Claude White they expressed their thanks and appreciation to the outgoing Political Officer in an interview with Lady Minto. The Maharani says, "Mr. White, Political Officer in Sikkim taught us how to collect rents, and taxes, to administer justice and in everyway improved the condition of Sikkim and shed the light of knowledge in the little state for all this kindness we fell ourselves deeply bound in gratitude to the Government".²⁰⁴ "The Maharaja of Sikkim has unfortunately been misrepresented to the Government by a few selfish evil persons amongst our own subjects". The Maharani even requested to extend the service of White in Sikkim. She says, "Mr. White who has been Political Officer all along and who is acquainted with all the ins and outs of Sikkim appears to be indispensable, therefore it was that their Highness were pra so earnestly for extension of Mr. White's service, at least for one year more"²⁰⁵. But then for Mr. White, his term of service being completed could not be extended any more. Charles Bell succeeded him in 1908.

On his joining the duty of a Political Officer of Sikkim, Charles Bell found the *Kumar* holding the post of Vice-President of the state council. He was in charge of the Departments of Education and Forest in addition to being given the religious control of monasteries. Tchoda Namgyal, eldest son who had been disinherited by the Government of India eight years earlier, made a request to both the *Maharaja* and *Kumar* for his visit to Sikkim. But the Government turned it down. Bell also found the *Maharaja* participating in the proceedings of the council.²⁰⁶ Since all the issues with Tibet had been settled during White's tenure, Charles did not have much problems in the frontier, he therefore diverted attention much towards the internal administration. In addition he kept British relations with Tibet and Bhutan satisfactory. He concluded a treaty with Bhutan on 8 January 1910. The *Maharaja* of Bhutan was asked not to enter into any agreement with the authorities of foreign states without the assent of the British Government, and not permit agents or representatives of foreign power to reside in Bhutan. These conditions were accepted by the *Maharaja* of Bhutan in the entirety. The treaty was signed with *Dharmaraja's* seal. This treaty was a success so far as British relations with Bhutan were concerned. Bhutan was impressed with the reformative ideas of the British²⁰⁷. In 1911 the king made nineteen day visit to Delhi to pay homage to the king Emperor, at the Delhi *Durbar* and returned with full ideas of Bhutan's development as a result of what he had seen in India.²⁰⁸ The restoration of Anglo-Bhutanese relations in a very cordial manner was a great achievement of Charles Bell.

As soon as Charles Bell took over the charge of Political Officer, the *Maharaja* and the Sikkim Council requested the Government of India to appoint him as a legal expert to defend case on behalf of Sikkim state. The Government accepted the request and accordingly he was appointed to prosecute or defend cases on behalf of Sikkim and outside lawyers were forbidden to plead in any Sikkim court.²⁰⁹

In 1908 the Sikkim *Durbar* issued a notification that the *Marwaris* should not be permitted to settle in Sikkim except in the three important bazars namely Gangtok, Rhenok and Rangpo. In this matter the Political Officers permission was to be obtained. The council discussed whether the *Marwaris* would be allowed to settle in these markets permanently. Bell had a bitter experience of the exploitative policy of the *Marwaris* against the cultivators in Darjeeling. The resolution of the council was brought forward largely under the influence of Bell. He thought that the situation of

Darjeeling should not be repeated in Sikkim. Therefore he avoided the settlement of *Marwaris* in other markets of Sikkim.²¹⁰ Bell was also to deal with extradition question. In August 1908 an incident occurred when two Tibetans were arrested on Charge of Murder at Gangtok and the Chinese claimed their extradition under article XV. Burma-China Frontier and Trade Convention 1894. The Government of India refused the request on the ground that the convention did not apply and that no right to demand extradition had been established ²¹¹.

With the coming of Charles Bell as Political Officer, the policy of the Government of India towards Sikkim underwent a change. On his arrival Bell found that he was put in the position of marriage broker on behalf of the young *Maharaj Kumar*. The *Maharaj Kumar Sidkeong Tulku* returned to Sikkim in July 1909 via America, Japan and China. Major W.F.O.Conner, C.I.E, accompanied him and after an interesting tour through these countries he acquired a better knowledge and understanding. Charles Bell pleaded the case in favour of *Kumar* for the marriage but the *Maharaja* was adamant to give permission to his son to marry ²¹². He argued that the *Kumar* being an incarnate *Lama* should continue his life as *Lama*. Bell was of the opinion that the *Maharaja's* argument could not be conceded as *Kumar's* nomination as future ruler had already been accepted by the Government of India and the Sikkim *Durbar* as a whole. Bell realised that the objection on the issue was raised by the *Maharani* who desired to put her own son on the throne. She was also the guiding spirit of the royal family.²¹³ However in 1913, the *Kumar* agreed to make a compromise, though reluctantly since his first choice was a Japanese lady of the noble birth. The *Maharaja* still continued to oppose any marriage alliance for his son and at the end his views were to prevail.²¹⁴

Thereafter, Bell diverted his attention towards the reformatory scheme of the state. Charles Bell, an expert in land administration did not favour the extension of land reforms in the northern areas of the state.²¹⁵ However, he tried to bring reforms in other areas of the state. In the initial phase of his administrative control a number of changes were brought to the system of revenue collection. The *Maharaja* in Council with the brainchild of Bell confirmed the classification of the whole state into different *Illakas*. This was done with a view to collecting the revenues systematically and in time ²¹⁶. Similarly reforms initiated by J.C. White in other Departments were further enriched by Bell.

British administration in Sikkim under Charles Bell encouraged the growth of both inland and external trade. Judicial Courts were established to give justice to the people. For the expansion of the education more schools were established in the rural areas also.²¹⁷ The process of establishment of English school had been initiated in 1906. That year only two schools namely Bhutia Boarding School and Nepali Boarding School were established at Gangtok with 74 students in the former and 63 students in the later respectively.²¹⁸ But the number of students could not be increased. The statistics shows that by the year 1911 there were only 42 students in the Bhutia Boarding School and 55 in Nepali Boarding School. By the year 1911 the Church of Scotland mission maintained 12 day Schools and 12 night Schools in the rural areas with the total number of 350 boys and 45 girls.²¹⁹ By the year 1918, the number of missionary schools raised to 13, out of which 11 belonged to the Scottish Mission. They were located at Temi, Pakyong, Rhenock, Kamlet, Chidam, Vok, Chakhung, Soreng, Samdong and Dentam including a lace school at Vok. The remaining schools belonged to the Scandinavian Mission. Moreover, landlords were also encouraged to open schools in their respective *Illakas*. Till the year 1918 landlords established three schools at Pathing, Duga, and Pendam.²²⁰

Along with the internal affairs Charles Bell had also to see the developments in the frontier region. Charles Bell felt that the Chinese should have no direct contact with the *Maharaja* of Sikkim, who had in the past declared his subservience to the Chinese Emperor. He did not consider that there was an immediate possibility of the Maharaja making an overture to China, the administration being largely in the hands of the *Maharaj Kumar* since his return from England in 1908. In 1914, Sidkeong Namgyal, without any sign of dispute emanating from his elder brother Tchoda Namgyal at Tromo. Sidkeong Tulku was educated in England and had a sound modern education.²²¹

Immediately after his return, he had been given the charge of some departments in the administration. He had undertaken certain land reforms as a part of his plan to modernise the state. During the last stage of Thutob's reign, Sidkeong Namgyal had already been influencing many of his father's decisions. His modern education had thoroughly changed his outlook. He felt that the revenue of Sikkim was wholly inadequate to meet the needs of the state due to monopoly on trade and land exercised by the

feudal landlords and monasteries. He was determined to bring a drastic change in the system. Both sections of landholding hierarchy namely the *Kazis* and the monks were opposed to Sidkeong Namgyal's modern reformative ideas. This radical heterodoxy, which neither the *Kazis* nor the monks had ever thought to hear from their *Maharaja*, disaffected many of them.

Kumar Sidkeong Namgyal fully influenced by the western ideas tried to reform land revenue system and education. He felt the necessity to supervise the administration of schools. Therefore, he personally supervised day – today functioning of the schools. He realised that the benefits of the schools had been increasingly utilised by the *Kazis* and Nepali *Thikadars* only. Therefore, he encouraged the children of the common people to attend the schools. The *Kumar* also opened vernacular schools at Namchi, Rhenok and Pathing under his personal supervision. In 1912, the *Maharaj Kumar* instructed the landlords to send all their children of school age for English education to schools. When the *Kazis* denied to send their children to common schools, the *Kumar* opened a separate school for their daughters in 1912 at Gangtok.²²² The *Kumar* also arranged to send meritorious boys to Darjeeling for higher education.

Similarly, *Kumar* took interest in Printing and Publicity Department. Accordingly a press was opened in 1914. The *Kumar* also updated the administration of the monasteries. The unruly and negligent *Lamas* were dismissed from their posts. A strict supervision had been maintained over the conduct of the *Lamas*.²²³ He further supervised the industrial Schools and within a short time the School produced a number of items for day – today use in Sikkim.²²⁴ Sikkim debt law was passed in 1910. *Kumar* showed his interest in this respect also. He tried to give justice to the people by ratifying a number of things in the debt law. He took personal interest of the debt procedure and careful inquiries had been conducted. At a council meeting held in August 1912, *Kumar* proposed (1) that “polygamy shall be abolished in Sikkim and that marriage expenses should be reduced to some extent (2) that salutation by prostration before *Kazis* and ordinary *Lamas* should be abolished”.²²⁵ Thus, the *Kumar* interfered in social practices also and drastic changes were brought in the direction.

The *Kumar* also brought a number of reforms in the administration of land. He found that the *Kazis* and *Thikadars* had been realizing taxes

heavily from the *raiyats*. Therefore, he proposed that the assessment should be on the pathi (approx. four kilograms) of seed sown and not the produce. Accordingly the council was directed to reduce the amount of rent considerably.²²⁶ He had also encouraged to open hospitals and dispensaries. Thus, within few years the *Kumar* tightened the administration in the British line. As a result, the traditional feudal lords who had been enjoying rights for generations disliked him.

Unfortunately in December 1914, Sidkeong Namgyal was taken ill and “a British physician who was treating him administered a heavy transfusion of brandy and put him under a number of blankets at the same time a fire was kept beneath the bed. Death came in the hour. Thus, ended prematurely a promising career in most suspicious circumstances. With him went his reforming zeal and revolutionary ideas, well before any of them had time to effect the privileges of the traditionalists. Sidkeong Namgyal, by his reformist zeal, had displeased not only the feudal landlords but also the Political Officer Charles Bell. His death was as much relief to the Political Officer as it was to the Kazis and monks”.²²⁷

Sidkeong Namgyal was succeeded by his half-brother, Tashi Namgyal in December 1914 at a very young age of 21 years. He has been among the first of students at Sikkim’s first School. He had also studied at Darjeeling and Mayo College, Ajmer. The young *Maharaja* was not considered fit, due to his extreme youth and lack of experience to exercise full ruling power. It was therefore decided to place him under the tutelage of Charles Bell. In the initial stage he was given the charge of departments of education, monasteries and forests, however, under the supervision of the Political Officer. A year later the departments of excise, income tax, police and jails were also given to the young *Maharaja*. In 1918, under Charles Bell’s recommendation, Tashi Namgyal was invested with full ruling authority and he became entitled to the formal title of the *Maharaja*.²²⁸

According to the British version, this was done in view of the fact that “this step will appeal most strongly to the Tibetan Government and the Bhutan Durbar and will therefore be of lasting political advantage in our relations with those countries, both of which by race or religion, are in close affinity with the smaller state of Sikkim”.²²⁹ The Government of India also accepted the recommendation of Bell and thought it politically desirable to grant the *Maharaja* the subsidy of Rs. 12,000.00 which had been paid to his

predecessors.²³⁰ Tashi Namgyal after assuming full administrative responsibility initiated a number of social and economic reforms. In 1916, a judicial court was set up, the first in Sikkim's history, under an independent and qualified Judge. The lower Court of the landlords came under the supervision of the new Court, called the Chief Court at Gangtok. This was an important landmark in the history of Sikkim. This measure of the Government put an end to the old practice of combining executive and judicial powers in the hands of *Kazis* and *Thikadar*, who for centuries had acted landlords and judiciary in their separate districts.²³¹

After 1918 it was under the influence of Charles Bell, Tashi Namgyal took measures to eradicate social evils. Public gambling was made illegal in 1921, and in 1924 the use of unpaid labour was prohibited. The use of *Jharlangi* (a form of paid conscripted labour of Government work) was curtailed in 1945 and in 1946 the landlords were forbidden the use of *Jharlangi* from the peasants. Another form of obliged labour known as *Kurwa* was abolished in 1947. At the end of Second World War land reforms were taken in hand. The period of lessee landlordism expired in 1940 and it was decided to terminate it when the war was over. But the landlords were not forthcoming in relinquishing their estates and therefore the *Chogyal* started clipping their powers and functions. The landlord's courts and their powers of registration of lands and deeds were abolished in 1948. The lessee system was dropped and the people were given the right to pay tax direct to the state.²³² And more scientific survey of all lands were conducted and land rent began to be assessed on the basis of the new survey. The ruler considered all round development of the state and as a result, development plan was drawn up in 1945. Tashi Namgyal's reign is considered as the brightest period in the history of Sikkim.²³³

The prime consideration behind Tashi Namgyal's choice as a ruler of Sikkim was due to the fact that he was under the tutelage of Charles Bell. As has been discussed earlier that Sikkim witnessed slow but definite transfer of administrative power from the Political Officer to the *Maharaja*. The reason behind the transfer were (a) the normalisation of the British relations with Tibet after the signing of Lasha Convention in 1904. This Convention demolished thoroughly the adamant attitude of the Tibetans. They gave up their policy of frequent attack against Sikkim. Once this was ensured there was no necessity for the British to be cautious about the possibility of the

increase of Tibetan influences in Sikkim (b) this fact was due to the pliable nature of the *Maharaja* in Council. Already Thutob Namgyal had become an amiable king. Even in Sidkeong Namgyal the British would have found a likeable personality. Though he died within a year of his succession, the British were fortunate enough to have Tashi Namgyal as the ruler of Sikkim. So external as well as internal conditions were conducive for the transfer of administrative power to the *Maharaja* in Council in Sikkim. (c) Lastly, the same ruler i.e. Tashi Namgyal ruled Sikkim for a period of fifty years which coincides with the period of subsequent Political Officers such as F.M. Baily (1920-1928), J.L. Weir (1928-1933), Derrick (1933-1935), Basil Gould (1935-1946), and A.J. Hopkenson (1946-1947). Hence no situation that was potent enough to arouse suspicion in the minds of the Political Officers ever emerged. The period was a period of happy symbiosis between the *Maharaja* of Sikkim and the British Government in India. So, the political power structure that was created in 1918 lasted till the withdrawal of the British in 1947. The study reveals that after J.C. White none of the Political Officers had to face any grim political situation in Sikkim. So, their activities were just a continuation of the work of J.C. White. It appears that it was due to this reason that the various works on Sikkim have not thrown light on the tasks carried on by other Political Officers.

But in 1935, it was because of the constitutional changes in India the *Maharaja* found it a difficult situation with regard to his relations with the Government of India. The Government of India Act of 1935 bound Sikkim to the constitution of India as an Indian state. However, the status of Sikkim was not similar to other princely states of India in the past. An Indian state under the Act of 1935 was defined as "any territory not being part of British India, which His Majesty recognise as being such as state, whether described as a state, an estate, a *jagir* or otherwise. According to international law, any Indian state whose external relations was conducted by the Government of India, it would be considered as a state of the Union Government.²³⁴ The external relations of Sikkim was also conducted by the Government of India in the broader sense. However, the Political Officer was in charge of Sikkim's external relations with the Government of India at the top. The *Maharaja* found it very difficult to cope up with the situation. Therefore, before the act came into existence *Maharaj Kumar Thondup Namgyal* was deputed to lead a delegation to Delhi to discuss with the

Chamber of Princes. Fortunately, in view of the strategic position of Sikkim, the Government of India decided to consider Sikkim as a special case and the Political Officer was permitted to continue to conduct Sikkim's external relations in the same manner as was done earlier.²³⁵

In spite of the provisions of the Government of India Act 1935, defining Sikkim as a princely state, the Tibetan Officials claimed the extension of their boundary upto Giaogong, approximately five or six miles to the south of the Donkhya-La Pass. Tibetans Officials of Khampa reached upto Giaogong to prove their claim. The Sikkim *Durbar* was alarmed at the Tibetan action. Therefore, they requested the Political Officer Williamson to settle the issue. On the request of the *Durbar*, the Political Officer instructed Rai Bahadur, Norbu Dhondup, the Political Assistant at Lasha to initiate discussion with the Tibetan authorities on this issue.²³⁶ The Tibetans believed that there should be a range of snowy hill tops or rivers as boundary and not a flat ground. Norbu Dhondup replied to the Tibetans that whatever might have been the case in the past, the boundary should be drawn according to the Article 1 of Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 and the confirmation of the article by the Lhasa Convention of 1904. The Tibetan ultimately agreed to Norbu's interpretation and returned from Giaogong. Thus the anxiety of Tibetan incursion was relieved.²³⁷

Again in 1941, when the reorganisation of the old Political Department of the Government of India took place it was decided to leave Sikkim affairs in the hands of the Political Department. In 1945, the question came up as to whether it was more appropriate for the External Department to deal with Sikkim. In view of this development, the *Maharaja* Tashi Namgyal wrote to Lord Pethick Lawrence, Secretary of state for India who had brought the Cabinet Mission to Delhi to discuss the constitutional problem. The Maharaja argued that Sikkim was an Indian state under the act of 1935, but in reality it was not an Indian state, except politically, socially and religiously Sikkim had ties with Tibet, and the people of Sikkim recognised the Dalai Lama as the Spiritual Head of the state.²³⁸

Reacting to the assurances of the Cabinet delegation, the Political Officer A.J.Hopkinson commented that the paramountcy memorandum itself did not touch on the most important aspect of Sikkim's case. He argued that Sikkim was surrounded on three sides by foreign territory and in view of this it would require special attention.²³⁹

For sometime the *Maharaja* waited for a clear-cut assurance from the Government of India. On the delay of the Government, again the *Maharaja* submitted the memorandum to Lord Mountbatten on the question of future relation of Sikkim with India. The *Maharaja* pointed out to the cession of Darjeeling and Morung *Tarai*. He hoped that the Government of India would sympathetically recognise the historical importance and settle the issue. The *Maharaja* further argued that the British Government enjoyed the rights to exercise power in Darjeeling not because of the deed of agreement but because of being the paramount power in India. According to him these powers and rights might be restored to him with the lapse of paramountcy.²⁴⁰

The India Office did not consider the request of the *Maharaja* though the Secretary of the state for India considered the same. However in the resolution of 22 January 1947, the special position of Sikkim was accorded²⁴¹. The executive Council of the Viceroy decided that a separate meeting would be convened with the representatives of Sikkim and Bhutan to discuss their problem. Accordingly a meeting was arranged on 16 July 1947. Sikkim was represented by *Maharaj kumar* Palden Thondup Namgyal, Rai Bahadur Tashi Dahdul Densapa and Rup Narayan. The discussion continued for sometime. Prominent members of the Executive Council included V.P. Menon, Sir Humphery Trevelyan and Harishwar Dayal.²⁴²Rup Narayan argued that Sikkim's geographical location and cultural affinities called for parity with Bhutan. To, this Menon admitted that the *Maharaja's* position was different from that of any other Indian ruler. He hoped that the *Durbar* would see its way to entering into an agreement regarding defence, external affairs and communications, although he accepted that there was no obligation on the ruler's part to join the Indian Union.²⁴³ Lord Mountbatten had also a meeting on 25 July 1947 with the princes of India. The meeting authorised Hopkinson, the Political Officer to inform the *Maharaja* that the existing post of Political Officer would continue under the control and supervision of the External Affairs Department of the Government of India. It was also pointed out that the presence of a political representative at Gangtok, responsible for the relations with Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet was the best guarantee for the kingdom's special position. The intention of the Government was to station the post permanently. The *Maharaja* was asked whether he had any objection to the Indian Government retaining the Gangtok residency.²⁴⁴

The *Maharaja* did not reply and was waiting a positive response from the Independent Government of India. When the *Maharaja* received Menon's clarification that India did not seek to claim sovereign rights in Sikkim, he decided to enter into a standstill Agreements on 27 February 1948. The agreement stated that all agreements, relations and administrative arrangements as to matters of common concern existing between the Crown and the Sikkim state on 14 August 1947, would continue, pending the conclusion of a new agreement of treaty. On 1 April 1948, the Sikkim *Durbar* accepted that a representative of the External Affairs Ministry would be responsible for the conduct of relations with Sikkim and Bhutan as well as for relations with Tibet.²⁴⁵ Harishwar Dayal was appointed to the post of Political Officer.

From the above account it is evident that the Government of India could firmly establish itself in Sikkim by the year 1906. The smooth relation was further established with the succession of Tashi Namgyal as the *Maharaja* in 1914. Thereafter the relations between the British and Sikkim remained very friendly. The Political Officers fully relied on the efficiency of the *Maharaja*. The *Maharaja* with the advice of Political Officers had undertaken a number of socio-economic reforms. Minor differences were tackled amicably. With the lapse of British paramountcy the Political Office of Gangtok was handed over to the free Government of India, in 1947.

Notes and References

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3. Cammann Schuyler, *Trade Through Himalayas, the Early British Attempts to Open Tibet*, Princeton, 1951, p.26.
4. *Ibid*, pp.48-49.
5. *Ibid*, p.82.
6. *Ibid*, p.85.
7. *Ibid*, p.88.
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9. *Ibid*, pp.94-95.
10. *Ibid*, p.97.
11. *Ibid*, p.98.
12. *Ibid*, pp.100-101.
13. *Ibid*, p.111.
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16. *Papers relating to Nepal War* (London, 1824), p.268.
17. *Ibid*, p.259.
18. C.U.Aitchison (Comp.) *A Collection of Treaties Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Calcutta, 1909, Volume 2, p.94.
19. *Ibid*.p.94.
20. *Papers Relating to Nepal War*, London, 1824, p.258.
21. The Marchioness of Bute (ed). *The Private Journals of Marquis of Hastings*, 2 vols. Vol 1 (London 1885), p.146.
22. *Ibid*.p.146.
23. Prinsep H.T, *History of the Political and Military Transactions during the Administration of Marquis of Hastings (1813-1823)*, 2 volumes, London, 1825, Volume 1, p.207.

24. Aitchison C.U, *op cit*, Volume XII, pp.58-59.
25. Letter of Barre Letter to the Secretary, Government of India dated 23 March 1816, Quoted in *Melville's memo no.4*.
26. Aitchison C.U, *op cit*, volume XII, p.60.
27. Namgyal Thutob, *op cit*, pp.84-86.
28. *Ibid*, p.86-87
29. *Ibid*, p.87.
30. *Ibid*, p.88.
31. Dash A.J., *Bengal District Gazetteers*, Darjeeling, Alipore 1947, p.37.
32. Quoted in Bentinck's Minute of 8 January 1835, *F.P.C. 23 January 1835*, No.1.
33. *Melville's memo no.4*.
34. *Letter of the Governor General to the Raja of Sikkim*, dated 11 February 1835, *F.P.C. 11 Feb 1835*, No.111
35. *Letter of Lloyd to the Government of India*, 9th March 1835 *F.P.C.*, 6 April 1835, No.100.
36. *Ibid*.No.100.
37. *Letter of the Raja of Sikkim to Campbell*, November 1839, *F.P.C.*, 12 February 1840, No.102.
38. *Letter of Campbell to the Raja of Sikkim* 19 December 1839, *F.P.C.*, 12 February 1840, No.104.
39. *Letter of Government of India to Campbell* 2 March 1840, *F.P.C.*, 2 March 1840, No.101.
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41. *Letter of Raja to Campbell*, dated 9 Sept 1841 *F.P.P.*, 27 September 1841, No.101.
42. *F.P.C.*, 26 June 1847, No.102.
43. Temple Richard, *Journals kept in Hyderabad, Cashmir, Sikkim and Nepal*, Vol I, London, 1887, p.168.
44. *F.P.C.*, 3 March 1847, No.87

In 1827, a dispute occurred between Sikkim and Nepal regarding a piece of hill tract on the eastern side of Mechi river. The dispute is commonly referred as the Ontoo Hill dispute. The Raja referred to the arbitration of the colonial Government since he was obliged under Article three of the Treaty of Titaliya to refer all his disputes with Nepal and other states to the arbitration of the Government of India and to abide by its decisions. The Government of

India sent Lloyd to examine the issue. After Lloyd's report the Government of India gave the verdict in favour of Sikkim. Again, Nepal finding the verdict unacceptable requested the British to rethink on the issue. The Government of India finally admitting the appeal of Nepal sent Campbell in 1838 to reexamine the issue. Campbell after re-examining the case submitted a report. On the basis of the report the colonial Government decided the case in favour of Nepal.

45. *Letter of Campbell to the Raja of Sikkim*, 8 June 1846, F.P.C., 22 August 1846, No.21.
46. *Ibid.* No.21.
47. F.P.C, 21 November 1846, No 320.
48. *Ibid.*No.320.
49. F.P.C, 23 October 1847, No.24.
50. F.P.C, 20 March 1847, No.93
51. *Ibid*, 15 December 1849, No.140.
52. *Ibid*, 15 December 1849, No.139.
53. *Ibid*, No.138.
54. Campbell, *Journal of trip to Sikkim in 1846*, No.68.
55. F.P.C, 29 December 1849, No.197.
56. The Imperial Gazetteers of India, Volume XII, Oxford, 1908, p.368.

The *Maharaja* Thutob Namgyal states that Doctor Campbell and Hooker visited Sikkim in 1849 and were touring towards the Tsola side. The Government of Tibet objected the visit of the foreigners beyond the boundary. They also opposed the Darjeeling lease agreement. The Sikkim *Durbar* was very afraid of incurring the displeasure of the Tibet and the Chinese Government. The *Maharaja* of Sikkim was an old man and as a result the administration of Sikkim was practically handled by Donyar Namgyal (popularly known as Pagla Dewan or Dewan Namgay). Donyar and other ministers of Sikkim asked the two English Officers not to go beyond Tsola Range. Disobeying the Sikkim administration these English Officers penetrated inside. The Sikkimese authorities without foreseeing the future consequences, detained the English Officers for sometime. They were released after the Government of India dispatched a letter to Sikkim Government. After this incident the Government of India asked Sikkim *Raja* to appoint an agent or *Vakeel* as an interpreter between the British and Sikkim at Darjeeling. As a result, Tseep Adam

who possessed sound Knowledge of English was appointed as *Vakeel* and posted at Darjeeling, Namgyal Thutob, *op cit*, pp.95-96.

57. O. Malley, LSS, *Bengal District Gazetters*, Darjeeling, New Delhi, 1907, pp.24-25.

58. Dash A.J. *Bengal District Gazetters*, *op cit*, p.40.

59. F.P.C., 16 August 1850, No.149.

60. Minute of J.Farish, Dated 28 August 1838, Quoted in B.K.Boman Behram. *Educational Controversies of India*, p.239.

61. O.Malley, *op cit*, p.25.

62. F.P.C., 27 May 1859, No.51.

63. Dash.A.J, *op cit*, p.40.

64. *L.G.P.P (G) A*, July 1860, No.47.

65. *Ibid*, September 1860, No.11.

66. *Ibid*, October 1860, No.20.

67. *Ibid*, November 1860, No.21.

68. Namgyal Thutob. *op cit*, p.133

69. *L.G.P.P. (G) A*, December 1860, No.100.

70. *Ibid*, December 1860, No 45.

71. *Ibid*, December 1860, No 167.

72. *Ibid*, February 1861, No. 5.

73. Sen S.P. (ed), *The Sino-Indian Border Question*, A Historical Rivew, Calcutta, 1971, p.45,

74. *L.G.P.P. (G) A*, March 1861, No. 88 and 111,

75. *Article 7, 19 and 22 of the Treaty of 1861.*

76. *Letter of Eden to Government of Bengal*, 29 March 1861, F.D.P.P., May 1861, No. 270-86.

77. *L.G.P.P. (G) A*, January 1861, No.45.

78. *F.D.P.P.*, October 1873, p.491.

79. Dash J.A., *op cit*, p.133.

80. Riseley H.H.(ed) *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*, Calcutta, 1894, p.6.

81. *F.D.P.A.A.*, October 1873, No.134.

82. Edger J.Ware, *Report on a visit to Sikkim and Tibetan Frontier*, Calcutta, 1874, p.7.

83. *Ibid*.p.7

84. *Ibid*.p.7

85. *Ibid*, pp. 13-14.

86. *Ibid*, pp. 16-17.
87. *Ibid*, p.19.
88. *Ibid*, p.37.
89. *F.D.P (A)*, January 1875, No.31.
90. *Ibid*, February 1875, No. 24-37
91. *Ibid*, January 1875, No.31.
92. *F.D.P. (B)*, December 1877, pp.145-146.
93. Aitchisan C.U, *op cit*, Volume 12, p.54.
94. *L.G.P.P. (J) A*, November 1875, No.32,
95. *Ibid*, July 1882, No. 27.
96. Macaulay's Memorandum to the Government of India on "*British Relations with Sikkim*", F.D.P.O.S.E., May 1885, No.752.
97. *Ibid*, May 1885, No.752.
98. *Ibid*, Memo No. 10.
99. *Ibid*.No.10.
100. Lamb A, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia*, London 1960, pp.145-147.

The Chefoo Convention was signed between Great Britain and China on 13 September 1876 and ratified in its entirety in 1886. This convention allowed the British to enter into Tibet from China as well as from India.

101. Namgyal Thutob, *op cit*, p.171-175.
102. Lamb A, *op cit*, p.171-173.
103. Risley H.H., *op cit*, p. VIII.

Risley's version about the conclusion of a treaty with Tibet in 1886 has not been confirmed by the Sikkim's version. The Maharaja Thutob Namgyal in his book states "*it can not be denied that since the time of the 5th Dalai Lama there have been nine generations of Maharaja beginning with Phuntso Namgyal who have all owned the suzerainty of His Imperial Majesty of China, and the Sikkim land has been considered as being included within Chinese territory. Specially with regard to Rhenock too, it is true fact that it was given by Tibet*". The Maharaja of Sikkim shows his allegiance to the Tibet and says, "*that the Tibetan Government has been very kind to us hitherto is an undeniable fact*". Thutob Namgyal, *op cit*, p.130. Contrary to the English version about the conclusion of any treaty with China the

Maharaja says, "When the Chinese Phopan came down, I had not gone to pay him respects in person but had sent a representative (which was regarded as a failure in my duty) and therefore required my immediate presence". *Ibid*, p.132.

So, the two versions are not compromising with each other about the conclusion of the treaty. However, the Maharaja himself admitted about his allegiance to Tibet and China.

104. Quoted in the note on "Tibetan Aggression in Sikkim" by W. Oldham, Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling 31st July 1886, F.D.P.(S) E, September 1886, No.473.
105. Namgyal Thutob, *op cit*, p.184.
106. Letter of the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 13 September 1886, F.D.P. (S) E, October 1886, No.543.
107. Namgyal Thutob, *op cit*, p.137.
108. F.D.P. (S) E, January 1888, No.2.
109. Letter of the Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 10 February 1888, F.D.P.(S) E, February 1888, No. 188.
110. F.D.P. (S) E, February 1888, 188 B.
111. *Frontier and overseas Expeditions*, *op cit*, p.55.
112. *Telegraph of viceroy to Secretary State*, 28 March 1888, F.D.P. (S) E, June 1888, No 305.
113. Namgyal Thutob, *op cit*, pp.144-145.
114. *Frontier and overseas Expeditions*, *op cit*, p.61.
115. *Ibid*, p.61.
116. *Memorandum of Instructions given by Dufferin to Durand*, 16 November 1888, F.D.P.P (S) E, May 1889, No.327.
117. *Durand's Memorandum on the Negotiations with Amban*, dated 1 January 1889, F.D.P.P. (S) E, May 1889, No.325.
118. *Letter of Durand to Mackenzie Wallace, Private Secretary to Viceroy*, 3 January 1889, F.D.P.P (S) E, May 1889 No.259-261.
119. Buckland C.E, *Bengal Under the Lieutenant Governors*, Calcutta, 1901, Volume II, p.853.
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122. Alexandrowiez C.H., *India's Himalayan Dependencies; The Year Book and World Affairs*, London, 1956, p.130.

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125. *Letter from the Secretary of the State to the Government of India, dated 16 May 1889*, F.D.P (S) July 1889, No.156.
126. *Letter from John Edgar Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal to A.W. Paul the Deputy Commissioner Darjeeling, and Political Officer, Sikkim, dated 12 June 1889*, F.D.P. (S) July 1889, No.159.
127. *F.D.P (E) A December 1889* (K.W) No.253-257.
128. *Ibid*, No. 255.
129. *Letter from the Secretary of the State to the Government of India, 16May 1889*, op cit, No.156.
130. *Letter of J.W. Edgar Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Secretary, Government of India, dated 2 February 1889*, F.D.P (S) E, June 1889 No.130.
131. *Letter from the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce to the Secretary of State for India, dated 2 April 1889*, F.D.P (S) E, June 1889 No.132.
132. *Ibid*.No.132.
133. *Ibid*.No.132.
134. *Letter from John Edgar Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal to A.W.Paul, Deputy Commissioner Darjeeling, dated 12 June 1889*,F.D.P (S), No. 27 P-D.
135. *Ibid*.No.27 P-D.
136. *Letter from the Government of India to the Secretary of the State for India, dated 23 August 1889*, F.D.P (S) E, No.54.
137. *G.B.P.C.F.5 of 1890*,No.1 (Notes and orders) p.1.
138. *Ibid*, p.1.
139. White J.C, *Sikkim and Bhutan, Twenty Years on the North East Frontier* (1889-1908), London 1909, P.8.
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141. *Letter from Political Officer, Sikkim, to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department dated 15 February 1911*, F.D.P (G) B, February, 1911 No. 171.
142. *Administration Report of the Sikkim State for the Year 1927*, p.1.

143. *Ibid*, 1930, pp.1-2.
144. *Ibid*, 1935, p.2.
145. *Ibid*, 1938, p.1.
146. *Letter from Secretary of State for India to the Government of India*, dated 16 May 1889 *op cit*, No. 156.
147. *Ibid*.No.159.
148. *Letter from John Edgar to A.W.Paul, dated 12 July 1889*, F.D.P (S) E, July 1889, No. 159.
149. *Report on State of Sikkim for 1891*, F.D.P (S) E, February 1892, No.241-45.
150. *Letter of J.C.White to the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling*, 24 January 1894, F.D.P (S) E, No. 149.
151. *Ibid*, No.149.

The author of regional history, Thutob Namgyal argues that the Political Officer J.C.White informed the *Maharaja* that the later would be granted only Rs. 500 as household expenditure. The *Maharaja* replied that His Highness was not very well off and with Rs.500 per month he would not be able to meet his expenditure. White simply said that His Highness must be satisfied with that at present, but later on the same might be increased. Namgyal Thutob *op cit* p. 150.

J.C.White went to Geyzing and encamped over there. He asked the *Maharaja* to pay him a visit there, which His Highness did, and then he paid his visit to His Highness at Rabdentse. In the interview White asked the *Maharaja* to go back to Gangtok and bring his eldest son Tshoda Namgyal to Sikkim. The *Maharaja* replied that he has no concern with the administration duties and therefore there was no need on his part to go to Gangtok. He further informed White that the Lieutenant Governor told him not to go to Chumbi and Lachen-Lachung till the Anglo-Tibetan question were finalised but he was permitted to stay in any of the three places of Sikkim. Regarding *Kumar's* return His Highness said that he was permitted by Mr. Paul to go to Tibet for Tibetan study and he will be returned to Sikkim after the completion of his studies. *Ibid*, p.159.

152. *Letter of Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling to the Commissioner of Rajshahi Division*, 24 March 1892, F.D.P (S) E, June 1892, No. 158.

153. *Letter of C.A.Elliott, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to Lord Landsdowne, Viceroy of India, 7 June 1892, F.D.P (S) E, August 1892 No, 54-72(KW²).*
154. *Ibid.No.54-72 (KW²).*
155. Namgyal Thutob, *op cit* pp175-76.
156. *Letter of Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 1 July 1892, F.D.P (S) E, August 1892, No. 64.*
157. *Letter of the Government of India to the Government of Bengal, 19 July 1892, F.D.P (S) E, August 1892, No.70.*
158. Namgyal Thutob, *op cit*, pp.178-79.
159. *Ibid*, pp.178-79.
160. *Ibid*, pp.178-79.
161. *Letter of Government of Bengal to Government of India, 2 August 1895, F.D.P (S) E, October 1895, No.462.*
162. Risley H.H, *op cit*, p.259.
163. *Division Letter of J.C.White to the Commissioner, Rajshahi, 1 April 1896, G.B.P.F, August 1896, No.1-14.*
164. *Administration Report of the Sikkim State for the year 1997-98. pp. 2-3.*
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168. *Letter of Government of Bengal to the Government of India, 28 February 1899, F.D.P (E) A, March 1899, No.115.*
169. *Ibid*, No.116.
170. *Ibid*, No.120.
171. *Letter of J.C.White to the Government of India, 1 April 1906, F.D.P (E) A, May 1906, No.139.*
172. *Letter of Government of India to J.C.White, 7 May 1906, F.D.P (S) E, May 1906, No.140.*
173. *Letter of J.C.White to Government of India, 12 April 1906, F.D.P (S) E June 1906, No. 5.*
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175. *Letter of White to Government of India*, 29 March 1905, F.D.P (E) A, June 1905, No 68.
176. *Letter of Government of India to White* 2 June 1905, F.D.P (E) A, June 1905, No 69.
177. *Official notes of L.Russel*, 18 May 1906, F.D.P (E) A, June 1906, Nos 30-42.
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