CHAPTER I
THE POLITICAL AGENCY

Sidkeong Namgyal was succeeded on his death in 1874 by his half brother Thothab Namgyal. John Claude White's first impression of the new ruler is accurate enough:

(He) was a man of about twenty-eight years of age, of medium height, typically Mongolian in appearance and much disfigured by a hare-lip. He was a man of indolent disposition, whose inclination was to live in retirement and aloof from the worries and troubles of the Government of his little state, of a very kindly disposition, and although weak and easily led, possessed also a good deal of common sense, he was entirely under the influence of the Maharani, his Second wife1

This was in 1888. There was nothing in the first six years of Thothab's rule to suggest the pro-Tibetan leanings he was to display later. The Tibetan faction in Sikkim had been

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1 J C White, Sikkim and Bhutan. Twenty One years on the North East Frontier, 1887 – 1908, London 1909, P. 22. Of the Maharani, White says: "This lady, the daughter of a Tibetan official in Lhasa, is a striking personality. Small and slight beautifully dressed in brocades, velvets and silks, with much jewellery of rough turquoise, coral and amber, her hair adorned with strings of seed pearls, which reached to the helm of her gown, and wearing the curious Tibetan head-dress adopted by the Maharaja of Sikkim, she was a most picturesque object, a harmony of gold and brilliant colours impossible to convey and which the photograph only gives a very inadequate representation.

She is extremely bright and intelligent and has been well educated, although she will not admit that she has knowledge of any language but Tibetan. She talks well on many subjects, which one would hardly have credited her with a knowledge of, and can write well.

His disposition is a masterful one and her bearing always dignified. She has a great opinion of her own importance, and is the possessor of a sweet musical voice, into which she can, when angry, introduce a sharp intonation. She is always interesting, whether to look at or to listen to, and had she been born within the sphere of European politics she would most certainly have made her mark, for there is no doubt she is a born intriguer and diplomat. Her energies were unfortunately, but naturally, owing to her Tibetan origin, misdirected for years... Her common sense and clear sightedness were only making occasions of the great assistance to me in my task of administering and developing Sikkim, and when I laid various schemes before her she was quick to see the material advantages to be obtained and gave her support accordingly." Pp 22 – 24.
suppressed. The only other claimant to the Sikkimese throne was another half brother of Sidkeong, Tinley Namgyal whose sister was married to the banished Dewan Donyer Namgyal. Even during Sidkeong’s life time the ex-Dewan had plotted to put his brother-in-law on the throne, but the refusal of the British to allow Donyer to return to Sikkim put an end to the intrigue. And in 1874 when Edgar in Darjeeling learnt of the death of Sidkeong Namgyal he acted swiftly and told the Darbar that the British would not recognize any successor which would lead to the restoration of the ex-Dewan’s influence, and so ensured Thothab’s succession. H. H. Risley thus comments on this episode:

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 her part to exercise a paramount influence in the affairs of the Sikkim State.2

Thinley Namgyal fled to the Chumbi from where he along with his brother-in-law kept up intrigues against Thothab Namgyal depicting him as a tool of the British.

Thothab Namgyal on his part cooperated with the British. He had met Sir Richard Temple very correctly the following year and during the Lieutenant Governor’s Tenure in Bengal (1874 -77) assisted the British in making roads in Sikkim – imperial projects that the two malcontents in Chumbi were quick to point out were proofs of British domination of the Himalayan kingdom. Temple would have liked to have Thothab at the Imperial Assembly in Delhi in early January 1877, which would give Tibetans the right signal on Sikkim’s relations with the Government of India. Additionally it would impress the Raja with a correct appreciation of the authority and power of the British in India. But there were problems in getting to the distant plains of India a hill chief who had never travelled beyond Darjeeling. In the event the Delhi Durbar was replicated in the Raja’s Capital where in an impressive assembly of his Government he was showered with marks of distinction.3

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FPBP December 1877, Nos. 145 - 47
3 Rao, *Sikkim. op cit*, P. 65
British prestige and influence was now high in the tiny kingdom, much to the uneasiness of the pro-Tibetan faction who were constantly in touch with Chumbi valley. Nor were the former idle. Their energies were soon directed towards exploiting an issue that was bound to strike a sympathetic cord in every Sikkimese heart. British influence in Sikkim marked a rise in the migration of Nepalese, against whom both the Bhutias and the Lepchas nursed a historical grievance. British policy actually encouraged this. In the first place this accretion to the sparse population of the country was expected to promote agriculture and development; secondly, a large Nepali population, encouraged and protected by the British would act as a counterpoise against the royal family and the aristocracy whose dependence on the British could not be taken for granted. The Nepalese, like immigrants elsewhere, had done well and their “industry and fecundity” displacing and outnumbering the local population in key situations. The fears of the Sikkimese that they would soon become minorities in their own land was thus not altogether unfounded. Thothab Namgyal took up the matter with Temple’s successor Sir Ashley Eden in 1878 and the solution they found was to restrict Nepali settlement to Southern Sikkim.\(^4\) This agreement was undone, it was generally believed, by the intrigues of the pro-Tibetan faction, in all probability instigated by the exiles in Chumbi. In early 1880 serious riots broke out between the Nepali settlers and the local inhabitants. The Superintendent of Darjeeling, A W Paul, whom Eden despatched to Sikkim succeeded in April in bringing about an understanding between the warring groups. With the issue amicably settled, the pro-Tibetan faction, whose hostility towards the British was becoming less disguised turned to intriguing with the Tibetans. What complicated the situation was a change in the attitude of Thothab Namgyal towards the British.

That year the Rani, the mother of Tchoda Namgyal and Thothab’s successor Sidkeong Namgyal, died. Thothab’s mother, who was Tibetan, and it is said the ex-Dewan too, induced him to marry a Tibetan lady from Lhasa, the same Rani on whom

\(^4\) Aitchison, Treaties, op cit, Vol XII, P. 54, also Rao, in ibid
John Claude White devotes several pages in his *Bhutan and Sikkim.* In 1883 the Raja took his family to Lhasa, in what was Thothab Namgyal and the Lhasa wife’s home coming. He was received in audience by the Dalai Lama, given a great reception and received attractive presents at the Potala. He came back much impressed with his treatment and what he saw there. From now on Thothab’s Tibetan proclivities became pronounced with a corresponding dislike for the grasping English. There is little in the official documents on how he reacted to the Macaulay mission; the British actually attempted to use him to communicate to the Phari Dzongpon its dispatch. It is only in the aftermath of that mission that he emerges as a disturbing factor in British relations with Tibet.

**Thothab Namgyal and the Lingtu Affair**

Towards the middle of 1886 Darjeeling’s Superintendent received reports about the concentration of a large Tibetan force just across the Sikkim border in the Chumbi valley. Macaulay in Darjeeling took this to be a reception committee assembled there to welcome the mission. On 27 July the Tibetans advanced through the Jelepla, thirteen miles into Sikkim and fortified a small hill top called Lingtu, “actually in sight of Darjeeling” as White later put it.

Macaulay and his mission was still in Darjeeling with all the rumours of the past month that it would be stopped by the Tibetans on the frontier, Lord Dufferin persuaded himself that the massing of troops by the Tibetans was no more than a reaction to the proposed mission. Macaulay offer to proceed to the spot to discuss the problem with the Amban and Tibetan representatives was promptly negatived by the Viceroy, that it might lead to an “embarrassing collision and rebuff”. The truth is, Dufferin upset with Macaulay for selling the mission idea to Randolph Churchill over his head wanted none of him; “whatever is done in reference to the threatened aggression of the Tibetans should

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5 White, *op cit,* n.1, *supra,* P -
6 Lamb, *op cit,* P. 175.
7 FSEP September 1886: Nos. 413 – 475, See Keepwith No. 1.
not be done through Mr. Macaulay", the Viceroy had remarked. Macaulay was told to wind up his mission “completely and expeditiously”. 

The Tibetans did not withdraw even after they learned that the mission had been broken up, but rather proceeded to consolidate their position. Embarrassments quickly followed. Thothab Namgyal who was at this moment in the Chumbi valley, supported the Tibetan action declaring that Lingtu belonged to Tibet, and Sikkim was allowed to use it as a matter of grace. Tibet, he further said, was only asserting her rights and resumed the territory because the Sikkim people had exposed their country to the English like meat before a dog. It now transpired that Thothab Namgyal had just concluded a secret treaty with Tibet at a place called Galling in the Chumbi. Translated by Risley, the document which took the form of a petition to the Amban at Lhasa, thus reads:

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

Namgyal was reminded by Darjeeling’s Superintendent of his violation of the provisions of the Treaty of 1861. He was told to return to his Capital, but declined. What strengthened the Raja’s resolve was an outcome of a crisis in neighbouring Bhutan. Only about four years back the Amban had decisively intervened in a power struggle in that country. By this action, the Amban submitted to his Emperor, “the preying designs of grasping (British) people were put a stop to, so that it became possible to restore

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8 Ibid, Telegram, Government of India to Macaulay, 2 August.
9 FSEP September 1886: No. 473, See Oldham’s note on “Tibetan aggression in Sikkim”, 31 July 1886.
10 Risley, op cit, P. viii
11 Oldham’s note, Letter to Chogyal, 28 July.
tranquility and content upon the borderlands and to strengthen our frontier line."

Meanwhile the Government of India continued to wait upon events. Its Foreign Secretary, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, however, noted on 2 August, that:

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

The Bengal Government, for Sikkim was their direct responsibility, was inclined towards military action but failed to persuade the Government of India. The latter still preferred to wait and see whether "a delay of a few weeks or months may not end in their quiet retirement", and that it was "of far greater importance to prove that the terms of the Burma-Chinese Convention have been, and will scrupulously respected, than to get rid of troublesome handful of men at Lingtu." All that Bengal was allowed to do was to warn Thothab Namgyal, now referred to as Maharaja, of the "probable consequences of his practical abandonment of Sikkim".

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12 Quoted in Lamb, op cit, P. 178. In 1884 both the Tongsa and the Paro Pemlops had revolted against the Deb raja who in turn appealed to the Ambar. The latter promptly summoned the two to a conference at Paro and a Sino-Tibetan force was moved to the Bhutan border to back its summons. The Tongsa gave in but the Paro Pemlop continued his defiance; when surrounded by the Ambar's troops he committed suicide.
13 FSEP September 1886: Nos 413 - 75; Note by Durand, 2 August, See Keepwith No. 1.
14 FSEP October 1886: Nos. 543 - 553; Bengal to the Government of India, 13 September
15 Ibid, Government of India to Bengal, 9 October
16 FSEP February 1887: Nos 208 -300; Government of India to Bengal, 20 January 1887. The Government of India in fact preferred the British Legation in Peking to do the needful to ensure the Tibetans withdrew from Lingtu.
In March 1887 the new Lieutenant Governor Sir Steuart Colvin Bayley received the Government of India's approval to invite the Maharaja, who was still in the Chumbi valley, to a conference in Darjeeling. Sir Rivers Thompson during whose last months of office the proposal was made to the Government of India had clearly stated what he hoped to gain by the Conference:

The Maharaja was only a boy when he visited Darjeeling in 1873. The place has made a large advance in prosperity since that time, the railway has been opened and there is much that would appeal to the faculties of this half-educated personage, who has hitherto constantly been subjected to baneful and bigoted influences. It would moreover be an appropriate sequence to his prolonged visit to Choombi and his association there with the opponents of the policy of the British Government; and it would undoubtedly give confidence to the people of Sikkim that the Government were determined neither on one hand to set aside the present reigning family nor on the other to abandon the State to the Tibetan faction and their instigators across the frontier.

Thompson’s main objective was to prevail upon the Maharaja to enter into a new treaty with the British, rectifying some of the shortcomings of the treaty of 1861, in particular, the status of Sikkim and the provision for allowing the Maharaja to reside part of the year in Tibet. Thothab declined the invitation. In a second letter from the Lieutenant Governor in October the Maharaja was warned that in the event of his failure to present himself at Darjeeling appropriate measures would be taken to end the “complicated condition of affairs” in his kingdom. The Maharaja was also told that the Khangsa Dewan and his brother the Phodrang Lama would be carrying on the administration of Sikkim in his absence. To this Thothab Namgyal replied that he was under the orders of the Chinese and Tibetan authorities, to whom he was bound by the treaty of 1886 not to cross into British territory. The Maharaja at the same time protested against placing Sikkim in the hands of the two officials.

17 FSEP June 1887: Nos. 272 – 292; Bengal to Government of India 18 March, and Government of India to Bengal, 13 May
18 FSEP July 1887: No. 261; FSEP January 1888: Nos. 1 – 2, Maharaja of Sikkim to Bengal, Undated, received 5 September
The Maharaja’s continuous disregard of British orders to return to the capital or attend a conference at Darjeeling was viewed with much concern by Sir Steuart Bayley. Such open defiance and the occupation by a Tibetan force of Sikkim territory, Bayley told the Government of India, would force sooner or later, the pro-British people of the kingdom particularly the Lepchas, to submit to the Tibetans. That apart, British prestige and influence had sunk so low as a result of non action enjoined by the Government of India that it might soon become necessary to “reconquer” Sikkim from the pro-Tibetan faction. And, the Government of India was reminded:

The occupation of Lingtu is not an isolated measure of aggression taken by the local authorities on their own motion, but a part of the general policy adopted by Tibet of controlling the affairs of Sikkim in a spirit hostile to the British. 19

The Government of India’s handling of Sikkim and Tibetan aggression came in for considerable criticism in England as well as in India. In Parliament members never tired of asking questions about the Macaulay mission. The Manchester and Leeds Chambers of Commerce continued to submit memorials pointing out the importance of the Tibet trade and warned that if there was any delay in opening Tibet, the British might find itself forestalled by another country. 20 The Darjeeling merchants were said to be grumbling while the tea planters expressed alarm at Tibetan aggression so close to their plantations. 21 All this soon made it clear to Dufferin that action against the Tibetans could not be any further delayed. He finally decided upon a military expedition.

A W Paul, the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling, such as the district officer was now styled, was sent to Gangtok, now the Capital of Sikkim, in November 1887 as a prelude to setting the British war machine in motion. He was directed to report on the state of affairs beyond the frontier and the general feeling of the population. He was also to attempt to induce the Maharaja to return to his capital. The real objective of Paul’s

20 Lamb, *op cit*, P. 182
21 Risley, *op cit*, pp. xv - xvi
deputation, it has been rightly remarked, was to boost the sagging morale of the pro-British faction which was under constant threat from the section hostile to the British.\footnote{Rao, \textit{Sikkim, op cit}, P. 92.}

Indeed, Paul found the Sikkim government vertically split into two rival factions. The Yangthang Kazi and the monks forming and supporting the Tibetan faction, while all the officers, though attached to the royal family, were favourable towards the British.\footnote{FSEP February 1888: No. 188; Bengal to government of India, 11 February.} Thus the Viceroy’s decision for a military intervention did not come a moment too soon.

\textbf{Graham’s Expedition}

In March 1888 General Graham moved up to Sikkim with a carefully picked 2000 strong column. Along with him went Paul as Political Officer to the expedition, and John Claude White, an Executive Engineer of the Bengal Service and soon to play a crucial role in Sikkim, as Assistant Political Officer.

On the 21\textsuperscript{st} Graham took Lingtu after a brief encounter with the wretchedly armed and poorly led Tibetan.\footnote{For details of the operations, \textit{Frontier and Overseas Expedition from India}, Chief of Staff Division, Army Headquarters, India, Simla 1907; Vol. IV, “North and North Eastern Tribes”.} Thereafter he occupied Gnatong in force. The Tibetans overcoming their initial shock of defeat at the hands of a well-armed modern military force made a sudden attack on the British position two months later on 21 May. Such was the intensity of the attack that the Tibetans almost broke through Graham’s defenses and nearly captured the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Steuart Bayley, who was touring Gnatong to see for himself the progress of the British force. The Tibetans were finally repulsed with considerable casualties. Thereafter there was a lull in the fighting for about three months. In September the Tibetans regrouped and concentrated a large force near Gnatong, only to be pushed back across the border. Graham followed this up by entering the Chumbi valley, and for a day on 26 September occupied Chumbi village. Meanwhile a small column had moved on to Gangtok. But it was a little late to prevent Thothab
Namgyal and the Mahrani from escaping to Chumbi, only to find that their house there was in occupation by British troops. They were promptly escorted back to Gangtok.

The occupation of the Maharaja’s capital, for political rather than military reasons, was not without its desired effect. A senior officer on Graham’s Staff thus commented:

> As a political move the marching of troops to the capital of Sikkim has had a beneficial effect; the cordiality with which we have everywhere been greeted, and the hospitality received show that the friendly relations have been established.

Evidently the pro-Tibetan faction had been suitably impressed by the success of British arms. They were now more submissive, and a pro-Tibetan Kazi even voluntarily submitted his dispute with the Ralong monastery to Paul’s mediation and decision. Yet the faction as a whole was still hesitant, as Paul explained, “they still fear to throw in their lot with us, as they are still doubtful whether they will get anything from us, and dread in default of our protection, the dread of the Tibetans”. But Paul considered the attitude of the Maharaja to be as yet “unsatisfactory”. The Deputy Commissioner was unhappy that he gave no information of the Tibetan attack upon Gnatong, which he most certainly knew as his half-brother Tinley Namgyal was fully aware of it. He had allowed, at this critical moment, the Maharani to visit her father in the Chumbi and on 27 April he also sent his three children there to live with her grandmother. A visible presence of the British force in the capital of Sikkim was therefore imperative. At the end of it the Government could report to the Secretary of State that “all along the northern border, not only in Sikkim and Tibet, but also in Bhutan and Nepal, the events of the last few years will have an excellent effect.”

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25 White, *Sikkim and Bhutan*, op cit, P. 22
26 Quoted in *Frontier and overseas Expedition*, op cit, P. 61
27 FSEP, August 1888: No. 156; Paul to Bengal, 9 July
28 *Ibid*
29 FSEP October 1888: No. 126; Government of India to Secretary of State, 8 October
The defeat of the Tibetans was looked upon by the Chinese with considerable alarm. Their fear was that if a settlement was not immediately arrived at the British might resort to measures that might lead to the loss of position and influence in Tibet itself. Late in December 1888, the Amban accordingly made his way from Lhasa to Gnatong to negotiate a settlement with the British. His appearance gave to what was essentially a local problem of Tibetan aggression a much wider dimension. British objectives, as the events from 1880 onwards indicate, was to establish a greater control over the administration of Sikkim but they were to achieve through these negotiations a general settlement of the frontier problem.

The Political Agency: John Claude White

In Gangtok, Thothab Namgyal, even as Graham was in full fury against the Tibetans, Graham persisted, inspite of repeated prohibition, in sending letters and supplies to Chumbi complicating British relations with the Amban and the Tibetans. Both he and his Maharani were promptly interned at Kalimpong. The management of Sikkim remained in the hands of the two brothers, the Khangsa Dewan and the Phodrang Lama who along with some others constituted a Council. Even while he was in his capital the Maharaja look no real interest or part in the administration of his kingdom. One of Paul’s first acts, during 1888 – 89, was to get the Council, though White who was in Gangtok, to compile revenue rolls and list of arrears, and collect current and arrear rents. There were numerous applications from the Paharias or Nepalese to settle in Sikkim, and the Kazis in whose lands the applicant wished to settle was made responsible for the settlement, the Council remaining the final authority in the matter.

In so far as the future administration was concerned Paul was convinced that it would be useless to expect the Maharaja if left to himself “to throw in his lot with us and throw off the Tibetan connection”. Thothab had refused to see the two brothers, and it

30 White, op cit, P. 26. White thus records the royal couple’s reaction to the order of internment: “The Maharaja remained silent, but the Maharani abused me roundly, called me every name she could think of, and losing her temper entirely, got up, stamped in the floor and finally turned her back on me.”
31 FSEP April 1889: Nos. 127 – 139; Report by Paul.
was highly likely that he would oppose all their efforts at good government if not actually oppose them. There was no one of sufficient standing in Sikkim who could be trusted with the administration without some on the spot to supervise them. Paul therefore suggested that for the next four or five years a European officer of some standing should be left at Gangtok as Assistant Political Officer subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling who should be Political Officer for Sikkim. “In this way alone”, he said, “do I think we should be able to restore quiet on these frontiers”. The man he recommended for the post was John Claude White.

(who) would make an excellent officer for the work. He has already obtained full insight into the intrigues carried on in Sikkim, and thoroughly understands the relations in which the various Sikkimese and Tibetan officers stand to one another, and has inspected a considerable part of Sikkim, while his experience as a road-maker in the hills cannot fail to produce most satisfactory results. He is already known to and trusted by many of the most influential Kazis and has made very fair progress in colloquial Tibetan.

The Bengal Government accepted Paul’s recommendation and accordingly moved the Government of India. The Foreign Department discussed them in detail. The Secretary Sir Henry Mortimer Durand who had known White also felt that he “was the best man to choose.” He knew the country well, was a man of conciliatory nature, patient, and got along well with the Maharaja and officials. His energies in road making could be of special value. Since he knew that White did not wish for any definite powers as the Maharaja and the Council would follow his advice. Durand felt he should be appointed Political Agent and the Maharaja told that no important measures ought to be taken by him without first consulting White. Durand also understood the importance of standing by the two brothers Khangsa Dewan and the Phodrang Lama, two “old men” who were “leaders of the anti Tibetan party and (who) are thoroughly in our interest”. He

32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid. Note by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, 16 February
too would encourage Nepali migration into Sikkim. “In any case the Agency is necessary”, Durand wrote, and “the want of control of late years has done much harm, and if the Raja is left to himself now he will at once return to his former courses.”

Bengal’s recommendation were approved by the Government of India Whites salary was fixed at Rs. 1,000 a month with other allowances, the cost of the Political Agency was to be met from the subsidy to the Maharaja, of Rs. 18,000, raised from Rs. 12,000, but not paid on account of Thothab’s misdemeanours. An amount of Rs. 10,000 was sanctioned for a house and furniture for the Political Officer. In seeking the sanction of the Secretary of State to the establishment of the Sikkim Political Agency, the Government of India said, “we are convinced that the proposal is a good one.” Two paragraphs in their letter stand out and deserve to be quoted in extenso. The first summarises to correspondence with Bengal as it makes out a case for the Political Agency:

The administration of Sikkim is completely disorganised. The Raja is a man of weak character and completely under the influence of his Tibetan wife, and, unless an English officer remains in Sikkim for a time to guide and control him, the old state of affairs will inevitably recur. A it is, the Raja’s children still remain in Chumbi. The internal administration will also suffer. The only man of any mark in the state are the two brothers known as the Phodrang lama and Khangsa Dewan. These men have some idea of administration, and much goodwill; but they belong to the patriotic and anti-Tibetan party, and are consequently in disfavor with the Raja. If left to themselves they would be at once excluded from all share of administration; and there is no one to take their place.

That the Government of India, like Bengal and the local officers was keen to promote Nepali migration is borne out in the other paragraph:

35 Ibid. “In a few years” Wrote Durand, “the population and revenues of the State ought to be largely increased and cultivation extended. In British Sikkim the advance made in the last few years is surprising. Numbers of Nepalese are ready to settle in the country and they make very good settlers. They are also brave and confident race, and would effectively prevent any Tibetan aggression in the future specially if we give them some arms”.

36 Ibid. Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, to Secretary of State, 2 April

37 Ibid.
There is in Sikkim much cultivable land, and there are many settlers willing to take up if they could be assured of any fixity of tenure. Similar land in British Sikkim (Darjeeling district) is well cultivated, and yields a considerable revenue. If land is now given by the state on favourable terms it will be taken up, chiefly by Nepalese and large pieces of country now covered with forest will be converted, as across the British frontier, into revenue paying fields.\(^{38}\)

Shortly afterwards John White assumed charge as Assistant Political Officer\(^*\) at Gangtok. In June 1889 the Bengal Government issued directives to him on the conduct of the administration of Sikkim.\(^{39}\) All affairs were to be conducted by a Council of leading monks and layman and presided over by the Maharaja when present. When he was not present all decisions of the Council were to be submitted to him. If the Maharaja differed on any point from the Council, the matter should be referred to the Political Officer, and if he agreed with the Maharaja, the Council would be bound to yield. In all cases the decision of the Council should be carried out in the joint names of the Maharaja and that body until such a time as may be expedient to allow the Maharaja to resume individual authority. Until then the revenue should be collected by the Council, and it would be the duty of White to ascertain the minimum amount absolutely required for good administrative purposes; of what remained of the balance should be made over to the Maharaja. The Council was to consist of the existing members with such additions as might be necessary in the future. It should ordinarily meet at Gangtok and should conduct all the civil, criminal and revenue administration subject to the conditions indicated about its relations with the Maharaja.

White’s attention was drawn to what the Lieutenant Governor considered the most important questions of internal administration. The directions he issued needs elaboration as they reflect the conditions obtaining in Sikkim at the time. The following were listed as requiring immediate action:

\(^{38}\) Ibid.

\(^*\) Though White’s appointment was of Assistant Political Officer he is always referred to even in official correspondence as Political Officer, Sikkim.

\(^{39}\) FSEP July 1889: Nos. 156 – 161; Edgar to Paul, 12 June
(i) The definition and record of the holdings actually possessed by all classes of Sikkimese, and arrangements required for the collection of the revenue from various sources.

(ii) Settlement of unoccupied wastelands now under valuable forests and closely connected with this, measures to be taken to protect Lepcha and Bhutia nobility of the country from the encroachments of Nepalese settlements.

(iii) Measures to be taken for the preservation and utilization of valuable forests and clumps of good trees situated among the cultivated lands or in the midst of forests of less value.

(iv) Arrangements for the settlement of disputes, the punishment of crime and the protection of life and property generally, and

(v) The construction of roads and other works.\textsuperscript{40}

With regard to the first three set of questions which were closely interdependent, the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Steuart Bayley, considered that it would only be necessary to lay down a few general principles which should be adhered to. “Few things could be of greater benefit to the people of Sikkim generally than a definition of their holdings, with a limitation of the demands, whether in money, kind or labour, which the officers of the State are entitled to make on them,”\textsuperscript{41} the Lieutenant Governor pointed out. Under existing conditions these demands could hardly be said to be fixed, and the only limit on the executions made on the people living within easy reach of the Maharaja’s residence was their inability to pay. Those who lived at a greater distance were better off, but all were liable to arbitrary demands from time to time; and very frequently not for the benefit of the Maharaja or even of his immediate family and dependants. It was necessary, the Lieutenant Governor said, to undertake a rough survey and settlement similar to that made in Kalimpong by which everyone knew what he had to pay in money or contribute in produce or in labour to the State. The demand fixed should be

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid
realized by the old and recognized territorial officials who should be paid a percentage for their share and be entitled to no more demands. None but these officials should be entitled to demand anything.\textsuperscript{42}

The Lieutenant Governor directed that in the progress of the settlement all claims in rent-free lands on account of service or being the property of monasteries should be carefully enquired into and fully allowed if proved. In other aspects the settlement should be very summary, low rates should be fixed, and the officers should follow as closely as possible the ideas and customs of the people. Utmost care was enjoined to avoid the introduction of new or foreign nations. In settling fresh lands, especially with the Nepalese, great pains should be taken to ascertain that there were no ancient claims to them of any sort, that the settlement of the strangers should not be objected to on reasonable grounds by any neighbouring holders of old date, and that the settlement did not in any way interfere with the vested rights of any monastery.\textsuperscript{43}

The Lieutenant Governor next dwelt on the preservation of forests, a subject inconclusively discussed with the Maharaja some thirteen or fourteen years ago. Since that time the damage done to the forests and the loss to the Sikkim State had been great, and, therefore, no time ought to be lost in checking the evil. It would be necessary to adopt a very loose and rough system confining regular operations to the valuable forests near the Rungeet and Tista rivers, and good trees scattered through the outer parts of the state, carefully enquiring into and fully protecting all existing rights, and carrying the people of the country by liberal and considerate dealings instead of “arraying them against us by petty annoyances and unnecessary restrictions”. The Lieutenant Governor also recognized the necessity of protecting the forests and for obtaining for the Maharaja an adequate price for the valuable timber still contained in them. At the same it would be necessary to avoid cutting off the supply both of charcoal and timber on which the tea-planters and Darjeeling contractors were so greatly depended upon. He further suggested

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid
this forest policy could be implemented with the help of Bengal’s Forest Department, and that the forest reserves in British territory, that is Darjeeling district, could be opened up in proportion as those in Sikkim are closed.44

These matters had already been considered by Paul and White and they had in fact discussed them with the Lieutenant Governor in April last. The several points in the note prepared by White on the subject were now turned into a set of rules for guidance with matters connected with in Sikkim.45 Sir Steuart Bayley further suggested that the existing system of collecting rents through the territorial headmen should be tried, subject of course to a real endeavour to avoid mixed villages as far as was possible; that is, Paharia or Nepalese should be settled in exclusively Paharia villages under Paharia mandals while Lepchas and Bhotias should be kept as far as possible in Lepcha and Bhotia villages under Lepcha and Bhotia mandals.46

The Lieutenant Governor approved of the attempt, as described in White’s note, to regulate and limit the extraction of unpaid labour to the maximum amount of seven days in each year. The idea that everyone holding land was bound to work without payment for the State underlay all the political conceptions of the people of Sikkim, and by so regulating the amount which each had to give, instead of leaving the amount uncontrolled, an “immense boon” would be conferred upon the people. “It would be useless to try to prohibit the customs altogether”, said Sir Steuart:

and if no attempt is made to regulate it, all the efforts made to improve the condition of the people in other respects will be neutralized by excessive and capricious demands for labour being made on them. If we fix the limit of the demand now, it may be possible in the course of time to induce the Raja to allow those liable to commute it for equivalent money payments.47

44 Ibid
45 Ibid. See Appendix C for White’s detailed Note.
46 Ibid
47 Ibid.
There had been some consensus among persons in Sikkim who had been consulted that all serious offences and heavy cases of a civil character should be enquired into at Gangtok, sometimes by the Council and sometimes by the Maharaja, if the latter should be induced to take the trouble of trying them. Petty disputes and offences could be dealt with by local officers or by panchayats. This seemed to Sir Steuart Bayley the right principle to adopt and he instructed that the Political Officer should confine his efforts to get the system that prevailed in old times reintroduced instead of attempting to import into Sikkim any of the intricate and difficult legal administration in British territories.  

Revenue Reforms

By early May 1889 White had established himself as Political Officer at Gangtok. The Maharaja and the Maharani had been interned at Kalimpong and, as he put "the task of reorganizing began in earnest." What he found in Sikkim is best described by himself:

Chaos reigned everywhere, there was no revenue system, the Maharaja taking what he required as he wanted it from the people, those nearest the capital having to contribute the larger share, while those more remote had toll taken from them by the local officials in the name of the Raja, though little found its way to him; no courts of justice, no police, no public works, no education for the younger generation.

In his autobiographical Sikhim and Bhutan, from which the above quotation is taken, John White describes the measures he took to put the new administrative policies into operation. The first step was to appoint a Council, a measure which had been delayed by the behavior of the Maharaja. The men he appointed were the two brothers, the Kangsa Dewan and the Phodrang Lama, Sikkim's chief priest, Poorbu Dewan, more commonly known called the Shoe dewan, Lari Perna, a senior Lama from the important monastery of Pemiongtchi, and four leading kazis. This done the state finances had to be attended to: "The coffers were empty and the first thing to be done was to devise some means by which we could raise a revenue".

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48 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
It began, as directed by the Lieutenant Governor, by roughly surveying the different areas and assessing them at so much per acre, taking into account the nature of the soil and so on. It turned out to be an arduous task in a mountainous country covered with dense undergrowth which made the survey work extremely difficult and necessitated cutting lines in every direction. The survey did not begin largely for the want of surveyors, before November 1889. It was not a connected survey but each Kazis land was divided and plotted into ten mandals division. As regards the actual settlement White gave the first preference to the original inhabitants the remainder being divided among the other applicants. To avoid disputes between Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese the whole of the wastelands between the Ruhii, the Tuksamchu and the Rungpo rivers were reclaimed to the new settlers. The maximum rate charged to the new settlers for the first five years was eight annas per acre. After the completion of the survey, the whole being completed not before another five years, the settlers were given patta stating the approximate acreage and the rent they were to pay. Regarding the monastery lands some caution was necessary:

The monasteries and the Lamas were a great power in the land, but in their case also certain settlements and arrangements had to be made with the assistance of the Phodong Lama, Chief Priest in Sikkim, and Lari Pema of the Pemiongtschi monastery. Many of the head Lamas were men to be liked, and although they were not given entirely their own way, their just rights were carefully observed.\(^{51}\)

The monastery lands were given rent free, yet they still demanded seven days free labour as given to the State by all ryots in Sikkim.

The entire revenue settlement was made by the Council under the guidance of the Political Officer as the Lieutenant Governor had directed. The introduction of excise, the establishment of direct control of the forests was taken up by the Council on White’s direction. So was the decision to collect revenue accruing from timber and charcoal.\(^ {52}\)

By the close of the year 1890 there was substantial progress in revenue collection. The whole valley of the Rungpo had been surveyed and patta issued for most of the plots, the rent being calculated, on an average of four annas per acre. The left bank of the

\(^{51}\) White, *Sikkim and Bhutan*

\(^{52}\) Jha, *Sikkim, op cit*, pp 75 -76
Rongli and the greater part of Sadom and Namthang had also been surveyed. The settlement of monastery lands, with the Pemiongtchi monastery was completed on the lines of White’s Note. Nearly the whole of the revenue of Sikkim, except the tax on graziers, was paid in cash. Income from Excise duty and forests and the land revenue more than doubled in 1890 from that collected in 1889. In “about ten years” White later wrote, “the revenue was revised from Rs. 8000, or a little over £ 500 per annum, to Rs. 2,200,000, or about £ 150,000.”

The revenue work itself involved constant travel, and during this period “I visited every corner of Sikkim, even the most remote.” And while he was thus engaged in the revenue settlement and tracing out roads, important development were taking place in the negotiations after the expulsion of the Tibetans from Lingtu.

The Sikkim – Tibet Convention, 1890

With the arrival of the Amban at Gnatong negotiation began for the settlement of the outstanding issues relating to Tibet and Sikkim. The Government of India had declared that it was entering into discussions with the Amban because “the Chinese Government had shown a very conciliatory spirit towards England throughout the course of the Tibetan difficulty.” India was represented by A. W. Paul but after the Foreign Secretary, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, arrived, the negotiations were conducted by him.

Durand came with a set of instructions from the Viceroy Lord Dufferin on the object of the negotiations. He was to ensure the “formal recognition of their (the Britain’s) exclusive supremacy in Sikkim and the restoration of friendly relations with Tibet.” He was not to enter into any discussion with the Amban regarding Sikkim as it

53 Ibid.
54 White, op cit, P. 27
55 Ibid. White thus continues, “(I) became acquainted with every headman and I might also say with every villager. I never refused an interview to anyone, and the people soon realized that they could freely bring before me any grievance they wished to ventilate or case that required settlement. I took up the cases.
56 Other members of the group, apart from Paul, included the expert on Central Asia, Ney Elias, and the French missionary, Father Desgodins, who acted as interpreter and adviser on Tibetan affairs.
was a “feudatory of the British Empire and its position as such was defined by treaty”; he was also to make it clear to that officer that “the Government of India cannot recognize the existence of any foreign rights or influence within the state and will not permit any interference with its affairs on the part of any foreign power.” The Sikkim-Tibet border was already established and Durand was told that there should be no necessity to attempt to define it. A formal trade agreement was not to be insisted on but Durand should do his best “to secure an opening in this quarter for our commercial enterprise.” The Chinese Amban, Shen Tai, apparently had his own set of instructions. Though the talks arose out of Tibetan aggression upon Sikkim, he refused to allow Tibetan participation declaring that Tibet was a part of the Chinese Empire and so its rights and interests were the rights and interests of the Chinese. He ensured that there would be no direct dealings between the Tibetans and the British. While, therefore, he undertook to obtain the formal assent of Lhasa to any agreement that may be arrived at with the British, he made it clear that the Tibetan Councillors then in Chumbi were not competent to sign any such agreement. The Chinese position was clear; they would insist upon their control in Tibet and would never allow a position to develop in which that control would be put to a test.

The Chinese were willing to accept the *de facto* position of the British in Sikkim but insisted on the show of the latter’s dependency upon Tibet and China. Thus they wanted that the Maharaja must continue to pay his traditional homage to the Amban and be permitted to wear the rank and insignia of dependence, as the Amban saw it, of Sikkim upon Tibet and China.

This was not what Durand understood to be in line with the objectives he was directed to seek by Viceroy Dufferin. The Foreign Secretary felt that this insistence on

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57 FSEP May 1889: Nos. 325 – 382; Memorandum of Institutions issued to Durand by Lord Dufferin, 16 November 1888
58 Ibid. Memorandum on Negotiations with the Amban, By Durand, 1 January 1889.
59 For details see Lamb, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia*, op cit, pp. 188ff. This homage, which took the form of “letters and presents” were: the Maharaja must wear the hat and button of Chinese official rank given by the Emperor; he was to send complimentary letters and presents to the Amban on his arrival at his post and at the New year; he was to send similar letters and presents to the Dalai and Panchen lamas; and he was to pay his respects to a number of lay and monastic functionaries.
homage was not a mere issue of ceremony but one that was intended to undermine British position not only in Sikkim but also in the Himalayan region generally. He thus noted:

If we give away in respect to Sikkim, we must be prepared to do so, at some future time, not only with regard to Bhutan and Nepal, but with regard to Kashmir and her feudatories, such as Hunza and Nagar, and with regard to any of the smaller Himalayan states which may have committed themselves. We might even have China claiming suzerain rights over Darjeeling and the Bhutan Doars which we acquired from her so-called feudatories. 60

Durand, therefore insisted that India refuse to recognize “any transaction on the part of the Raja of Sikkim which can be regarded in the light of a homage to a foreign power.” Thus while he was prepared to allow the Maharaja to send annual complimentary letters to the Amban or to the Dalai Lama, he made it clear that these should “not be couched in the language of an inferior addressing a superior or be regarded in the light of an homage.” 61

These tortuous negotiations continued with both the British and Chinese representatives holding on to their respective positions. 62 Inevitably, the talks broke down, and Durand, angered by Chinese intransigence even recommended to the Government of India the military occupation of Phari. If this were done,

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

60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid. At one stage the Amban had assumed an aggressive position stating that if the talks failed there would be war between Britain and China. To this Durand replied that he had no doubt as to its outcome, adding that it would be decided not in Sikkim but in China. The Amban then “shut up like a telescope” imploring Durand not to take his words seriously as it was meant to be a “joke”. Percy Sykes, Sir Mortimer Durand, London 1926, cited in Rao, India and Sikkim, op cit, P. 99.
When talks resumed in April 1889, James Hart, the brother of Sir Robert Hart, the Inspector General of the Chinese Maritime Customs, who now represented the Chinese produced a draft agreement as the basis for the talks. It read:

Sikkim and Tibet boundary to remain as before, the British to act on Sikkim side in accordance with the Treaty with Raja, and Raja to send presents and letters as usual. China to engage that Tibetan troops shall neither cross nor disturb Sikkim frontier, and England to engage that British troops shall similarly respect Tibetan frontier. 63

Further clarifications came when Hart assured Paul that the Government of India could have “a perfectly free hand in Sikkim” and that China would guarantee that Tibetan influence would not be used directly or indirectly “so as to disturb Indian Government’s relations with that state”. 64 Dufferin’s successor as Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, refused to budge from the letters and present questions. He told the Secretary of State that such an agreement:

would have remained on record as formal evidence of the success of the Chinese whose reputation, already inconveniently great among our ignorant feudatories, we could not have afforded to increase in this way at our expense. From one end of the Himalaya to the other we should have weakened our influence. In India it is essential to the stability of our rule that we should permit no attempt at interference by any foreign powers with any portion of the Empire. 65

The question was settled when the Chinese Government assured the British Legation at Peking that “the external relations of the protected state will be solely conducted by India and consequently the practice of presents and letters to the Tibetan Government would virtually cease.” 66

Lansdowne accepted this assurance, and in Calcutta on 17 March 1890 he and Amban Shen Tai signed the Sikkim – Tibet Convention. By it the Government of

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63 FSEP May 1889: Nos. 617 – 655; Hart to Paul, 29 April
64 FSEP June 1889: Nos. 101 – 111; Hart to Paul, 19 June, also FSEP September 1889: No 13
65 FSEP August 1889: No 54, Lansdowne to Secretary of State, Lord Cross, 23 August.
66 FSEP November 1889: No 80; Walsham to Lansdowne, 15 November
India's control over the internal and external affairs of Sikkim was fully recognized; the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet was defined and a joint Anglo-Chinese guarantee of that border was provided for. The old question of trade, pasturage and the method of communication between the Government of India and the Tibetan Government was reserved for further discussion and agreement. It was further stipulated that within six months of the ratification of the Convention a joint Anglo-Chinese Commission would be set up for the purpose.\(^67\)

Despite its obvious shortcomings – the fact that Tibet was not a party to it and never accepted it being the most significant – the Convention finally laid to rest the vexed problem of the status of Sikkim. With the Government of India controlling her external relations and internal administration Sikkim was reduced virtually to the position of an Indian princely state, and the Political Agency hardly any different from the Residencies in the capitals of those states. Nonetheless Sikkim was a frontier state and this fact was to modify if not totally transform the functions of the Political Officer but that was not to come before another decade. Meanwhile, with a free hand in Sikkim, its Political Officer, John Claude White could with ease turn to sorting out those problems that bedevilled the Government of India relations with the tiny Himalayan State.

\(^67\) For details see Appendix D
Appendix C

Excerpts (paragraphs 1 to 31) of Note by J.C. White, on Sikkim Affairs

1. As has been reported more than once, the curse of the country has been the uncertainty of the demands by the Sikkim State for money and produce, and particularly for forced service by the Raja and others under him: under this want of system the ryots have long groaned.

2. It is proposed to stop this by fixing the rate at so much per acre, and by allowing the State to require a fixed amount of forced labour: this has been set down at a very liberal rate.

3. To carry out the above it will be necessary to roughly survey all existing holdings so as to secure the original inhabitants in full possession and employment of their ancestral rights.

4. Such a survey, however rough, will be a work of time, and without a more careful examination of the country it is impossible to estimate the establishments required and the cost thereof, as my knowledge of Sikkim does not extend to the west-Teesta or north-Teesta tracts, time not having permitted my making extensive tours.

5. But this need not delay the settlement of new comers, for there are large tracts of culturable land at present unutilised even for grazing. I propose to allow on these settlements of new-comers, whether Pahariyas or other hillmen, under conditions somewhat similar to those that have proved so successful in Kalimpong. That Pahariyas can be settled in Independent Sikkim with advantage to the country, its Raja and minor Chiefs, is patent from the vast improvement that has taken place in the Rhenock and Pachekhana tracts. The substantial appearance of these holdings sufficiently disproves the assertion that Pahariyas only cut down trees for jhooming and for permanent cultivation. If fixed principles are adopted for future settlements, so as not to circumscribe or injure the original Tibetan settlers and the Lepchas, there will be no danger in extending settlement by Pahariyas.

6. At present the Durbar Council have allowed new-comers to settle on waste lands under their own mundals only with the consent of the original kazi within whose jurisdiction the land applied for lies, and after local enquiry that the land is really waste, all comers will be required to carefully demarcate their grants.

7. To go into details – From the beginning of February up to date the amount received as earnest-money with petitions asking for land for cultivation has been Rs. 6,177. Land has only been actually given out in the vicinity of Pakhyong and Patheng after personal inspection and the approval of the Kazi concerned. The remaining petitioners have been told they will receive land if available, where they required it, only after personal inspection.
8. The conditions of the leases as corrected and approved by the Council have been accepted by the settlers.

9. To survey these new grants so as to obtain *at once* full revenue from them, it will be sufficient to adopt a somewhat more liberal principle than that current in Kalimpong, where each ryot's holding has been roughly surveyed by plane-table, and all-round rate per acre, irrespective of the actual quality of the soil, has been fixed for a whole hill-side of several square miles in extent.

10. I would even go further than this, and only survey, to begin with, the mundal's block, notifying to him what the revenue for the block is, and leaving *him* to divide it among the several ryots in the block. It will be easy hereafter, as the country settles down and improves, to survey the plots within any required mundalships or to survey any particular ryot's holding wherein injustice is complained of; or, where necessity arises, a survey of any particular old holding in a new mundal's block can be surveyed as the survey of the main block progresses.

11. Before commencing the survey, I propose during the rains to visit the lower part of Sikkim and to demarcate the boundary of the kaziships and the estates belonging to the monasteries. This will be done by building substantial stone-pillars at salient points along the boundary. These will be subsequently available for the survey which is to follow.

12. In the cold-weather I should be employed in fixing a network of subsidiary points, founded on those trigonometrical stations determined by the Survey Department some years ago, on which I would build up my cadastral survey.

13. Thus next cold-weather a couple of native surveyors only could be usefully employed, who should be natives of Sikkim. These, under my supervision, could do all that is required.

14. In assigning blocks, care must be taken to preserve sufficient blocks of forest, clumps of large bamboos and cane, to provide for wood and grazing, and to preserve the springs.

15. So much for the general principles: but the interests of the original settlers must be safeguarded. It is proposed to do this by allowing them to mark off what land they have formerly cultivated, and as much more for extension as they think they can pay for under the above principles, which, however, would in their case be still further relaxed by requiring from old settlers a lower rate than that demanded from new-comers. In addition it might be enacted that no new settler could obtain by purchase even the fields of old Lepcha and Bhutia cultivators. If possible, all ryots, whether old or new, should be required to pay his rents through the territorial mundal.

16. It might also be provided that no new settlers except Buddhists be allowed to enter lands north of the Bokchachu, Dekchu, and Ronghphopchu affluents of the Teesta.
No such restrictions need to be taken in the Greta Rungeet drainage area for reasons below.

17. Over the mundals would come the kazis as at present. Shengnas to be considered as kazis. These I make out to be 23. Both these and the mundals may be given their farms rent-free, and in consideration of their being responsible for their respective revenues, and for order within their charges, 15 and 5 per cent. Of the revenues collected.

18. Thus the Durbar would receive 80 per cent of the gross revenues payable for land by the cultivators.

19. In addition the Durbar will be able to call upon the adult male and female inhabitants for seven days’ free labour in the year; this can be utilized in road-making, State tours, &c.

20. I would, however, make an exception in the case of monasteries, who should be given rent-free large estates round the gompas. If this is done, there will be no need to restrict Pahariya settlement in the Great Rungeet tract, as the monasteries will have full power to protect themselves. If the monasteries own detached fields, they should be persuaded to give them up for others nearer their gompas, while for large detached estates they should be treated like ordinary mundals or ryots, and pay rent through the territorial kazi. If the sole exclusive authority of the kazi within his charge is not recognize, there will inevitably be confusion.

21. Other sources of revenue to the State can be derived from royalties on timber and mines.

22. The present revenue of Sikkim as taken from the Raja’s books, and not including fines, nuzzurs, &c., amounts to Rs. 8,444, made up thus –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rents paid in cash</td>
<td>5,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto in kind</td>
<td>2,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto on copper mines</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto on lime quarries</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditto on timber</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,444</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. The indiscriminate and wanton destruction and waste of valuable timber in the Rungeet forests was noticed by Mr. Edgar as long ago as 1876, and the waste has been going on ever since, with very little gain to the State. In this cold-weather alone 20,000 maunds of charcoal, 20,000 cubic feet of sal, and a very large amount of toon and champ (magnolia) planking have been taken to Darjeeling, having an
approximate money value of Rs. 60,000 at least, though the Durbar has benefitted only by Rs. 200 and some labour expended on the Gangtok Palace. On the other hand, the contractors themselves never know when they may have to pay some blackmail to would-be owners of the trees, so that their anxiety is to extract as quickly as possible what timber they require, without consideration of what they actually waste in the forest, still less of what by management they could have saved.

24. Since the beginning of March I have realized for the Durbar Rs. 664 irrespective of what may accrue from the sums of two annas per cubic foot which the large contractors have promised to pay for timber delivered, after examination of their employer's books.

25. In consideration of the loss and difficulties that would be caused to the tea-planters and the builders in Darjeeling by the sudden stoppage of their expected supplies, no restriction on the contractors has been put this year; but I would strongly urge that the Durbar be encouraged to send a notice to all parties concerned that, after a certain (near) date, no timber will be allowed to be exported except with the permission of the Durbar and under such conditions as may be decided hereafter.

26. For the future the Durbar should claim the complete control of all the forest tracts near the Rungeet and for a little way up the Teesta, which contain sal, toon and other valuable trees, and that in future only trees that shall be marked by competent officers shall be cut down, and that after the payment of suitable fees.

27. In practice it may be found that the Pemionchi Lamas and other old grantees claim rights in certain forests. Such grantees as succeed in substantiating a valid claim might be granted a portion (say one-half) of the fees realized from their forests, and also timber for their own use free of charge; but the direct control and management of the forests should remain in the Durbar.

28. In this way all parties would really gain, and a useful reserve of timber be preserved for the station of Darjeeling and the more adjacent tea-gardens.

29. With the same object in view, new cultivation in these tracts should be carefully controlled.

30. Sikim is very rich in minerals, which, owing to a low Tibetan superstition, have been very sparsely exploited. People should be encouraged to open out mines, which in a very short time would bring in a considerable amount of revenue to the State.

31. All the Sikkim people drink both the wholesome murwa and the baneful Rukshi. With the former I should not interfere, but on the latter I would put a heavy restrictive duty, and also subject its consumption to control by allowing its sale only at fixed places subject to an upset monthly fee to be determined by public auction. Hitherto everyone has been free to manufacture and sell at will, but lately the Durbar have been raising small amounts by licensing pre-existing shops at Rhenock and the Rungeet bridge and other places. This practice might now be extended.
APPENDIX D

Convention between Great Britain and China relating to Sikkim and Tibet - 1890

Whereas Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and his Majesty the Emperor of China, are sincerely desirous to maintain and perpetuate the relations of friendship and good understanding which now exist between their respective Empires; and whereas recent occurrences have tended towards a disturbance of the said relations, and it is desirable to clearly define and permanently settle certain matters connected with the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet, Her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the Emperor of China have resolved to conclude a Convention on this subject, and have, for this purpose, named Plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, His Excellency the Most Honourable Henry Charles Keith Petty Fitzmaurice, G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.I.E., Marquess of Lansdowne, Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

And his Majesty the Emperor of China, His Excellency Sheng Tai, Imperial Associate Resident in Tibet, Military Deputy Lieutenant-Governor;

Who, having met and communicated to each other their full powers, and finding these to be in proper form, have agreed upon the following Convention in eight Articles:

Article I.

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

Article II.

It is admitted that the British Government, whose Protectorate over the Sikkim State is hereby recognized, has direct and exclusive control over the internal administration and foreign relations of that State, and except through and with the permission of the British Government, neither the ruler of the State nor any of its officers shall have official relations of any kind, formal or informal, with any other country.

Article III.

The Government of Great Britain and Ireland and the Government of China engage reciprocally to respect the boundary as defined in Article I, and to prevent acts of aggression from their respective sides of the frontier.

Article IV.

The question of providing increased facilities for trade across the Sikkim-Tibet frontier will hereafter be discussed with a view to a mutually satisfactory arrangement by the High Contracting Powers.
Article V.

The question of pasturage on the Sikkim side of the frontier is reserved for further examination and future adjustment.

Article VI.

The High Contracting Powers reserve for discussion and arrangements the methods in which official communications between the British authorities in India and the authorities in Tibet shall be conducted.

Article VII.

Two Joint Commissioners shall, within six months from the ratification of this Convention, be appointed, one by the British Government of India, the other by the Chinese resident in Tibet. The said commissioners shall meet and discuss the questions which, by the last three preceding Articles, have been reserved.

Article VIII.

The present Convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications shall be exchanged in London as soon as possible after the date of the signature thereof.

In witness whereof the respective negotiators have signed the same, and affixed thereto the seals of their arms.

Done in quadruplicate at Calcutta, this 17th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1890, corresponding with the Chinese date, the 27th day of the second moon of this 16th year of Kuang Hsi.