This dissertation, "Indo-Nepalese Relations, 1837-1877", is a modest attempt at understanding the various forces and factors which shaped the political relations of the British Government of India and the Government of Nepal between 1837 and 1877. It is an analytical study of the interaction of the diplomacy of the Nepalese and the British in India, of their policies and interests, aims and ambitions, clashes and conflicts, strifes and strains, successes and failures, rapprochements and resolutions, leading, finally, to mutual understanding, stability and peace.

Through this runs another thread - a scarlet thread - the internal history of Nepal. The political history of Nepal in the 19th century is a panorama of events, kaleidoscopic in nature and of absorbing interest. It has the intricacy and pathos of a Greek tragedy, the pattern and suspense of a Shakespearean drama, the cold realism of a Shavian act, the thrills of a modern screen-play. It is intense; it appeals, enthrals and, at times, moves us. In this study, however, the internal history of Nepal, with its ebb and flow, is treated only as it influences and, at times, dominates the course of Indo-Nepalese relations.

The subject is historical; its form is narrative, its style elucidatory and analytical. It has a four-fold
purpose; exploration, explanation, examination and exposition. It explores a great variety of source materials to construct, understand and interpret the history of the Indo-Nepalese *political* relations during 1837-1877. It explains the British policy in Nepal, and the factors influencing it. It examines a variety of phenomena; the interrelation of the British policy in Nepal and the internal politics of Nepal, their impact and interactions; the personal role of the British Residents at Kathmandu, and of the Nepalese ministers in shaping the relations of the two governments; the motives of Jang Bahadur Rana in helping the British in the 'Mutiny'; the origin, development and justifiability of the Nepalese policy of self-insulation, and non-intercourse with British India; the position of Nepal in India's northern border, and the like. It seeks to expose the events which transformed Nepal from a menace to the British government in India to their good neighbour, peaceful, innocuous, friendly and reliable.

So far as historical research is concerned, Nepal is not a wholly uncultivated field. Yet the published materials on Nepal fall far short both of adequacy and reliability. There are Nepali *Vamsevalis* or genealogical chronicles, a happy amalgam of fable, fiction and fact. There are Nepali inscriptions and epigraphs with an overtone of hyperbolic panegyrics and literary pomposity, couched in a language
which today seems very difficult to comprehend. The works of British authors, some contemporary, and some by and large reliable, reveal only one side of the shield; besides, they deal more with the internal history of Nepal than her relations with the British.

The present study is based almost solely on original unpublished records available in various archives in India. Records of the India Office Library, London, British Museum, London, Bodleian Library, Oxford, and Cleveland Public Library, Ohio, U.S.A., available in microfilms in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, and in the library of the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, have been consulted. Private papers of Lord Auckland, John Hobhouse and B.H. Hodgson have also been used. Besides, published materials, and contemporary state papers, records and such other materials, written in Nepali, have been utilised at Kathmandu.

The absence of an archives at Kathmandu, run on modern scientific lines, was keenly felt by me while exploring the government offices for relevant materials. These materials lie scattered in various offices, unindexed, uncatalogued, unprocessed, and unnumbered. To sift these confused heaps of materials and cull odd bits of relevant facts from them have been to me quite an experience, formidable and forbidding. They are invaluable for the reconstruction of the history of Nepal, and it is a matter of gratification that the
Government of Nepal is taking immediate steps to set up an archives.

The dissertation is divided into eleven chapters of varying length, each dealing with an important phase in the Indo-Nepalese relations. The first chapter is a short survey of Nepal’s relation with British India in its early phase. Chapter Two deals with the policy of Nepal’s great Minister Bhim Sen Thapa, towards the British, and its effect on Indo-Nepalese relations. Since Bhim Sen was the architect of stability in these relations between 1816 and 1837, his fall - even its premonition - was certain to have far-reaching effects on the future course of these relations.

The fall of Bhim Sen occurred in 1837, but the factors leading to it had become palpable since 1832. The circumstances, course and significance of the fall of Bhim Sen are analysed in chapter Three, with particular reference to the role of B.H. Hodgson, the British Resident at Kathmandu, in this event. From this chapter the thesis starts, the earlier ones serving as backdrops.

Years of tumult and upheaval, strife and strains, followed in the wake of Bhim Sen’s fall. Party squabbles, wrangles for power, bloody feuds were common occurrences; the relations with the British were on the verge of violent breach. Such a situation lasted for nearly a decade, till with the emergence of Jang Bahadur Rana in 1846 order was
restored in the state and stability in the relations with British India. Chapters Four, Five and Six deal with this story, the story of the challenge of the Nepalese policy and the British response to it.

A decade of peace, goodwill, mutual understanding and cooperation followed Jang Bahadur's ascent to power. This forms the theme of chapter Seven.

This nascent amity in Indo-Nepalese relations was put to a severe test in 1857-59, the years of the 'Mutiny'. Chapter Eight critically analyses the role of Nepal in this great event, the motives behind Jang Bahadur's cooperation, its extent and significance. Details of the campaigns in which the Nepalese troops participated have been deliberately omitted, they being a part of the general history of the 'Mutiny'.

The various issues influencing Nepal's relations with British India during the rule of Jang Bahadur have been studied in Chapter Nine, the main purpose here being to analyse the origin and the progressive evolution of the policy of restricted intercourse and friendly isolation which was the dominant strand in Nepal's attitude to the British Government in India in the second half of the 19th century and after.

The recruitment of the Gurkhas in the British Indian army was an important issue between the governments of Nepal
and British India during this period. This is discussed in Chapter Ten.

In Chapter Eleven an attempt has been made to see Nepal as a member of the family of Himalayan states on the northern border of India, and to interpret the British policy in Nepal in the wider context of their policy in this border. The main idea here is to show how Nepal's complex relations with China, Tibet, Bhutan and Sikkim affected British relations with her. More than else where the treatment here is analytical, for my purpose in this chapter is rather to explain and examine some issues in the light of some political events in the Himalayan region than to narrate chronologically the events themselves.

In drafting the dissertation I have made efforts to make it as interesting and readable as possible, for, I am aware that a work based on archival materials as this generally tends to be a drab, dull-reading narrative. Excerpts from contemporary records have been fitted into appropriate places to explain, correlate and sustain the general arguments; the justification of these quotations lies in that "a phrase struck out at the time is worth many coined afterwards," to borrow Sir Winston Churchill's famous words.

I have tried my best to adhere to the principles of objectivity and detachment - they being the ideals for historical research. There are some British sources which
exaggerate the follies of the Nepalese and extol the British policy beyond measure; there are Nepali works which magnify the lapses of the British, overlooking the omissions and commissions of the Nepalese statesmen. Both these sources have been critically examined, and conclusions have been drawn strictly on available documentary evidences.

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