CHAPTER THREE

COMMERCE TREATY OF 1870

British vis-a-vis the Sikhs and the Dogras

After Moorcraft's visit, Ladakh was no longer a 'terra incognita', and a number of European travellers such as Gerard,(1) Henderson,(2) Falconer and Vigne(3) explored Ladakh, Kashmir, Baltistan and the hill-states which border Kashmir and Ladakh. (4) The motivation behind all these ostentatious explorations was to find out the possibility of having a strong and friendly buffer zone between Russia and the possessions of the Company, because, by that time, the Russian activities in Central Asia were increasing menacingly. A buffer zone was considered indispensable to the protection of Company's territories, without inviting its actual interference.

Hence the Company deemed the Sikhs and the Dogras

(2) Dr. Henderson was botanist in the Company's service. He visited Ladakh in 1834 without the permission of the Company.
fit for forming a strong buffer zone and made them understand that Kashmir and Ladakh were beyond the limit of Company’s dominions. Obviously, the censure of Moorcraft and later on of Dr. Henderson can be attributed to such a policy.\(^{(5)}\) After signing the commercial agreement with the ruler of Ladakh in 1821, Moorcraft tried to enter into political negotiations also.\(^{(6)}\) But Ranjit Singh, who considered Ladakh as his own territory, complained to the Company’s authorities about these irregular activities of Moorcraft.\(^{(7)}\) The Company, though not explicit in its ultimate intentions, did not want to annoy Ranjit Singh. Consequently, Moorcraft was censured and disowned by the Company.\(^{(8)}\) Similarly the Company’s inaction towards the Dogras too was dictated by the same policy. The Company remained a silent spectator of the activities of the Dogras who were expanding their possessions in and around Kashmir on


\(^{(6)}\) Foreign Department Political Proceedings, 20 Sept., 1822, Nos. 60-72.

\(^{(7)}\) English Translation of Persian Letters Received from Jan. 1822 to June 1822, Register No. 70 Pt. I, Letter No. 131(6) A and B.

\(^{(8)}\) Foreign Department Political Proceedings, 20 Oct., 1821, No. 92; Also see English Translation of Persian Letters Issued, 1821 Register No. 71, letter No. 140.
behalf of the Sikhs. (9)

Moreover, from commercial point of view the Dogra adventures in this area were advantageous to the Company, because, due to the unsettled state of affairs in the vicinity of Ladakh during 1834-40, the shawl-wool of western Tibet was increasingly being smuggled into the British protected Rampur and Bashahr States. For instance, in 1837 the value of Tibetan shawl-wool sold at Rampur was Rs 35,630, and, in 1840, it was Rs 94,807. Similarly, the Bashahr imports from western Tibet rose from 1080 maunds in 1837 to 1548 maunds in 1840. (10) Naturally the Sikh Governor of Kashmir complained to Maharaja Ranjit Singh about the decreasing import of shawl-wool into Kashmir. (11)

Thus the disorder in and around Kashmir was advantageous to the British for the illegal acquisition of shawl-wool of that area. But in 1841, the Dogra advance towards western Tibet, the area of shawl-wool, caused anxiety among the Calcutta authorities. (12) The mere presence of the Dogra armies in Taklakot evaporated the commercial benefits resulting from the unrest and chaotic

(9) For copious details of the Dogra activities in this area see: C.L. Datta, op. cit., pp. 77-151.
(10) Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, 24 Jan. 1842, No. 20.
condition in that region. The year 1841 saw a rapid decrease in the import of shawl-wool into Bashahr and Rampur. The import of shawl-wool into Bashahr fell from 1548 maunds in 1840 to 169 maunds in 1841.\(^{13}\) Even an order was issued by Zorawar Singh, military Commandar of Gulab Singh, to prohibit the shawl-wool and borax from western Tibet to Bashahr.\(^{14}\)

Obviously, the company could not remain indifferent to the new situation created by Zorawar Singh regarding the shawl-wool trade. A request was made to Sher Singh, the ruler of Lahore, for the recall of Zorawar Singh from Tibet. Simultaneously, J. D. Cunningham was instructed to proceed to the frontiers to watch the events.\(^{16}\) But the death of Zorawar Singh on 14 Dec. 1841,\(^{17}\) and later, the defeat of the Tibetan army (led by Surkhang) by the Dogras, apparently without the participation of the British, further completed the issue.

A treaty was signed between the Dogras and the Tibetan authorities in 1840. The second article of this

\(^{13}\) Foreign Department Secret Consultations, 24 Jan. 1842, No. 20; Also Foreign Department Secret Consultations, 22 June, 1842, No. 36.


\(^{15}\) Foreign Deptt. Secret Consultations, 8 Nov. 1841, No. 45.

\(^{16}\) Foreign Deptt. Secret Consultations, 8 Nov. 1841, No. 45.

\(^{17}\) Foreign Deptt. Secret Consultations, 13 Aug., 1842, No. 10.
bilateral treaty gave Gulab Singh the monopoly of shawl-wool and tea of western Tibet. Obviously, the British could not stomach the idea of this innovation for political as well as commercial reasons. Hence the inevitable war between the two parties resulted in a decisive victory of the British over the Sikhs and the Dogras. Treaties were formulated with both the parties, again keeping in view the policy of a strong buffer zone. With the treaty of Amritsar of 1846, Gulab Singh, a competent General, was declared the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, and, was expected to defend the states from the Russian onslaught from the north. But the Dogras, ambitious as they were, needed some check on their eastern and southern borders to protect the shawl-wool trade with western Tibet from their interception. Besides, the Company was apprehensive of the Dogra-Gurkha union on the periphery of Company's Indian possessions. It was probably due to this very reason that Sipiti, geographically a part of Ladakh, was incorporated into British dominions. Two boundary Commissions were therefore formed. 

(18) Foreign Department Secret Consultations, 24 May, 1843, Nos. 61-63; Dr Panikkar (op.cit, pp.84-89) has given the translation of the Persian copy of the treaty mentioned in Gulabnama of Kirna Ram (Jammu 1875), p. 264. 

(19) Foreign Department Political Proceedings, 20 Jan 1843, No.7. 


(21) Kangra District Gazetteer, 1883-84, p.93.
sent to delimit the eastern and southern boundaries of the Dogras and to stop their interference in that region. The first Commission was despatched in 1846 under Vans Agnew and Alexander Cunningham (22) and the second in 1847 under Henry Strachy, Thomas Thomson and Alexander Cunningham. (23) But both the Commissions failed to achieve their primary object, i.e. to delimit the boundary, and were only able to assess the trade prospects and make some geographical enquiries. (24)

The failure of these two Commissions was due entirely to the unco-operative and evasive attitude of the Dogras and the Tibetans. The Company even tried to exert pressure on China to instruct her representatives in Tibet to help the Commissions in delimiting the boundary between Ladakh and Tibet. But Gulab Singh wanted to avoid any boundary settlement with the Company due to commercial reasons. Because the new arrangement was definitely going to affect his monopoly of shawl-wool trade stipulated in the treaty of 1840. Hence he adopted the delaying tactics to thwart the

(22) Foreign Department Secret Consultations, 26 Dec. 1846, No. 1332.
(23) Foreign Department Secret Consultations, 30 Oct. 1847, No. 28.
(24) For the report of this enquiry see: Foreign Department Secret Consultations, 28 May, 1848, No. 58; Foreign Department Secret Consultations, 7 Oct. 1848, No. 3; and Foreign Department Political A, 29 Dec. 1849, No. 332.
British designs. (25)

The Tibetans also looked upon the Commission with 'deep suspicions', and considered it as 'spy mission' in preparation for a future invasion. They put all kinds of obstructions in the work. (26) The Chinese too wanted the Company to adhere to the old arrangement. (27)

Commerce Treaty of 1870

Failure of the Boundary Commissions had shown that political adventures were not successful to monopolise the Central Asian trade and to keep a watch on Russian activities in that region. Hence Dalhousie's Government (1848-56) adopted three alternate methods to overcome these difficulties. These were, the improved communications, favourable conditions for trade and to have friendly states on the borders. (28) The first preference was given to the improvement of communications connecting the frontier trade marts. The result was the Hindustan-Tibet (29) road which connected Simla with Panjub plains and, Simla to the Tibetan border through

(25) Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, 31 Dec. 1847, No. 133.
(26) Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, 27 Nov. 1847, No. 22.
(27) Foreign Department, Secret Consultations, 31 Dec. 1847 No. 130.
(28) Political Despatch from Court of Directors, 4 June, 1851 No. 19.
Chini and Niti passes. Secondly, to create favourable conditions to encourage the trade, the transit duties were reduced in the British protected states, and totally abolished in Bashahr. The 'begar' or the compulsory porterage which was then in force, was discouraged. Besides, the crux of Company's Central Asian policy during the first half of the nineteenth century was to check Russian advance towards India. It necessitated the implementation of the third method i.e. the creation of friendly independent states on the frontiers of British empire. 'Creation of Kashmir can largely be interpreted in this light. But commercially this measure was not very satisfactory as the independent states could never resist the temptation to extort the utmost revenue from their transit trade. This happened particularly in the case of Jammu and Kashmir state and, there were constant complaints by the Company's merchants against the officials of Gulab Singh.

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(32) Mehta Basti Ram, the Kashmir agent, not only levied transit duties on goods passing in either direction but had for years oppressed the traders. He even confiscated the goods of the Yarkandi merchants in 1851: R.H., Davies, *op. cit*, pp. 36-37.
Consequently, the Directors appointed Major Macgregor, a British official, to stay at Kashmir to supervise the transit trade. Gulab Singh strongly opposed this appointment but he was assured that Macgregor's job was totally supervisory. However, this arrangement did not prove satisfactory as the prohibitive transit duties of Kashmir Durbar were great barriers for the smooth flow of trade beyond Kashmir. Secondly the Maharaja still considered the shawl-wool trade of Ladakh as the sole monopoly of Kashmir which diplomacy had failed to break.

Again, in 1855 the Company directed Gulab Singh to reduce the duties on borax, tobacco and other goods, as 99% duty on these articles was being levied by the Kashmir officials. The Maharaja assured the Company that he will do so. In the meantime, the John Company became busy during the eventful years of 1857-58. Hence, nothing substantial came out of Dogra assurances and the position of British commerce beyond Kashmir had gone from

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(33) However, this supervisory appointment of a British Officer in Kashmir marks the beginning of British interference in the internal affairs of Kashmir. Political Despatch from Court of Directors, 4 June, 1851, No.19.

(34) Foreign Department, Political A, 25 May, 1855, Nos. 94-95.

bad to worse.

However, in 1861, Robert Montgomery, the Lieutenant Governor of the Panjab, sent a printed questionnaire to the Panjab officials in field seeking information regarding the state of trade with the lands north of the Himalayas. (36) Also, during the second half of the nineteenth century the increasing influence of Russia in the power-vaccum of Central Asia, alarmed the British in India. (37) It was felt that 'some official vigil at Ladakh (may be in the guise of commerce) was essential to keep a watch beyond the Himalayas' (38) and there was a desirability of direct and free intercourse with Kashmir, because, from military point of view:

... Kashmir is undoubtedly the line of least resistance in India. (39).

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(37) Captain Valikhow, disguised as merchant, visited Kashgar in 1858; in 1860 Russia established her foothold on the Amu river; and later, in 1864 broke up the resistance of the Caucasian hill tribes.

(38) Foreign Department, Political A., 29 March, 1863, No.77.

(39) Foreign Department, Political A., May 1863, No.73.
Moreover, in their reports (40) all the Panjab officials impressed upon Montgomery the desirability of negotiations with Ranbir Singh (41), the new Maharaja of Kashmir, for the reduction of import and transit duties (42), because prohibitive import and transit duties at Leh were the two weapons in the hands of Kashmiri officials to discourage British products entering Kashmir. The state monopoly of certain articles of trade was an other big hindrance:

The Maharaja has personal interest in shawl-wool, tea, salt and sulphur. Hence, half the shawl-wool imported from Changthang, amounting to about 345 English maunds, is purchased and sold in Kashmir on account of the Maharaja. In the same way the tea imported from China by way of Lhasa is also monopoly of the state. (43).

Hence, Davies calculated that:

...under these circumstances it is not surprising that trade has been forced out of its natural

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(40) Mr. R.H. Davies, Secretary to the Panjab Government, after studying all these reports and other information available, produced a comprehensive report: Report on the Trade Resources of the Countries on North-Western Boundary of British India (2 Vols. Lahore, 1862). A part of this report and not the whole is available in the Panjab University Library, Chandigarh under the title of R.H. Davies, Report of the Trade of Central Asia 1862-70 (London 1864). This report, later on, became the basis for all the efforts to develop trade with Central Asia.

(41) Ranbir Singh succeeded his father Gulab Singh after latter's death in 1857.

(42) Foreign Department, Political A. July, 1863, Nos. 73-75; Foreign Department, Political A. May, 1864, Nos. 9-12.

channels into even more hazardous routes to avoid Kashmir territory. (44)

Inter alia, it was pointed out that duties operated to the disadvantage of the industry of the Panjab. Moreover, Jammu and Kashmir formed natural markets for sugar produced in the Panjab, but heavy duties imposed by Kashmir authorities directly discouraged the cultivation of sugar-cane. (45) It was uncomprehensible that manufactures of British India should be subjected to excessive taxation by one of its own feudatories, especially, as in other parts of India such duties had been commuted. (46)

Montgomery, impressed by reports and enthusiasm of the Panjab officials, persuaded the reluctant Maharaja to sign a tariff agreement in 1864. By this agreement the customs duties on Kashmir imports were reduced and the method of collection was simplified. (47)

However, these commercial concessions were not sufficient for the British officers in India as they always feared the increasing Russian influence in

(44) Ibid. p. 36.
(45) Loc. cit.
(46) Ibid. p. 37.
(47) Foreign Department, Political A, May 1864, Nos. 9-12.
Central Asia. Besides, W. Kirke, Assistant Secretary of the Panjab Government, was sending alarming reports from Peshawar regarding the rapid advance of Russia towards Yarkand and Kashgar.\(^{(48)}\) In view of the disturbed political situation in Eastern Turkestan due to the rebellion of Yakub Beg,\(^{(49)}\) the threat of Russian advance was really grave in its implications. Hence, an authentic and reliable knowledge of the country and information about the progress of events in Central Asia was essential.\(^{(50)}\) But John Lawrance, the Governor General (1864–69), did not consider:

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\ldots\text{the information which English officers can obtain \ldots worth the risk of their deputation to such an uncivilised country\ldots. Where there is no security of life.}\(^{(51)}\).
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He tried his best to avoid any interference in the Central Asian politics, though Yakub Beg, the ruler of

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\(^{(48)}\) Russia took Tashkend in 1865 and the next target was Yarkand, \textit{Foreign Department Political A}, Jan. 1865, Nos. 75; Moreover, Russia was increasing her influence in the Court of Bokhara also and among the different clans of Turkestan by her 'liberality': \textit{Ibid}; Also see: \textit{Foreign Department Political Proceedings}, May 1865, No. 297.

\(^{(49)}\) Yakub Beg was a Kokandi soldier who ousted the Chinese from Sinkiang and established his kingdom at Kashgar in 1866. For a detailed history of his achievements see: D.C. Boulger, \textit{Life of Yakooch Beg} (London, 1878).

\(^{(50)}\) \textit{Foreign Department, Political A}, May, 1866, Nos. 262–63.

\(^{(51)}\) \textit{Ibid}, No. 64.
Kashgar, made tempting overtures to have close commercial ties with British India. In July 1866, Yakub Beg sent an envoy to the court of Lahore for establishing friendly relations and showed his willingness to discuss the security of Leh trade with the Indian authorities. He was ready to open up the roads and to give every facility to the merchants. Nevertheless, Lawrence resisted these endeavours because of their political implications. He feared that:

Yakub Beg may not remain content with our fostering trade.... led to look our aid and cooperation or at least for our influence in counteracting Russia. (53)

But the enthusiasm of the Panjab officials could no longer be curbed and the Government reciprocated the commercial overtures of Yakub Beg. However, it was found that bulk of the trade between Panjab and Kashgar had to pass through Kashmir where it was subjected to enormous extortions despite the tariff agreement of 1864. It was to investigate this state of affairs and to watch the events beyond the borders that in June 1867, Lawrence

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(52) *Foreign Department, Political A., Cct. 1866, Nos. 181-82.*

(53) *Foreign Department, Political Consultations, 8 Dec. 1866, No. 195.*

Later on a confidential envoy of Yakub Beg said, 'the fear of Russia solely occupies my master; when that evil averted, he will do all in his power for trade; *Foreign Department Political A., Nov. 1868, No. 1-4.*
reluctantly agreed to appoint Henry Cayley, a physician, as the British Commercial Agent at Leh. However, Ranbir Singh vigorously objected to this appointment but he was assured that Cayley's appointment was for one year only to ensure the proper implementation of 1864 tariff agreement as far the rates of duties were concerned.

At Leh, Cayley found that though there were some external disturbances which affected the British trade beyond the Himalayas, yet 'the abuses of enormous extortions' which impeded the free flow of transit trade at Leh, had not been exaggerated. Consequently, despite all local opposition, Cayley acted vigorously or rather tactlessly to weed out such abuses and to break Kashmir's monopoly of shawl-wool trade. He invariably complained to the British authorities in Panjab against the Maharaja, sometimes without informing the latter.

(54) It was Lawrence's suggestion that 'a British medical man would be an easier pill to swallow than a purely political officer': Foreign Department Political A. Nov. 1868, Nos. 1-4.

(55) Foreign Department Political A., Sept. 1867, No. 71-72.

(56) Foreign Department, Political A., Sept. 1867, Nos. 17-18.

(57) Foreign Department Political A., Sept. 1867, Nos. 71-72.

(58) Foreign Department Political Proceedings Genl., March 1868, Nos. 1-5.
Hence, the Maharaja had to send his own representative to assure T.H. Thornton, Secretary to the Government of Panjab, that he had:

... already made large reductions in the rates of duty on goods coming from Kulu and had entirely remitted the brokerage duty (59).

Secondly, he resented the existence of the Commercial Agent at Leh since:

...his presence at Leh would be deemed by my subjects as my incapability of carrying the administration of the Country. (60)

and requested that the tenure of the Agency may not be renewed. But in utter disregard of Maharaja's request (61) the appointment of Cayley had already been renewed (62) with the instructions that he:

... is in foreign territory ... refrain from dictatorial language .... Be tactful and not to give offence to the rulers of those countries ... (63)

Though not appreciated by the members of the council

(60) Ibid., No. 356.
(61) Although, to remove the erroneous notion among the population of Kashmir a proclamation was issued on 8th July, 1868. By this proclamation the position of the Commercial Agent and the authority of the Maharaja was made clear: Memorandum in reply to the Representation of Dewan Kirpa Ram: Foreign Department, Political A., Jan. 1869, No. 358.
(62) Foreign Department, Political A., March 1868, No.7.
(63) Foreign Department, Political A., March 1868, No.144.
yet the retention of the Agency at Leh had commercial as well as political advantages. Commercially, the presence of a British Agent at Leh 'had marvellous affect in checking irregularities and inspiring confidence among the traders'. (65) A fair was arranged at Palampore, in Kangra district. (66) Though an experiment, it was all success (67) and certainly seemed to confirm all the forecasts of enthusiasts like R.H. Davies and T.D. Forsyth. (68) A wave of optimism was visible among the traders (69) and the exponents of the fairs. (70)

(64) Citation, G.J. Alder, op. cit., fn. 61 of p.29.

(65) Foreign Department, Political Proceedings, Genl. A, March 1868, Nos. 1-5.

(66) This particular place was selected because it 'is not too far removed from the upper hills to render it objectionable on the score of heat to the mountaineer merchants who dreaded the heat of plains; has ample ground, good water and abundance of supplies; and the headquarter of the British colony in the Panjab; and abounds in various valuable products'. Ibid.

(67) Almost 30,000 persons attended the fair and the goods worth two lakhs of rupees changed hands: Ibid.

(68) According to Forsyth total gross value of the export and import trade of Leh in 1867 was Rs 5,54,954. Whereas in 1868 it rose to Rs 10,38,401: Citation G.J. Alder, op. cit Appendix I, p. 318.

(69) The appearance of Turfan wool at the fair was held as something little short of a miracle by the shawl-wool merchants who exclaimed that 'it was the first time it had been seen in the Panjab for 30 years... Foreign Department, Political Proceedings, Genl. A, March 68, No. 1-5.

(70) Forsyth advocated that similar fairs should be held at Peshawar and Karachi also: Ibid. No.5.
Politically too the Agency was advantageous to the British interests. In view of the menacing expansion of Russia in Central Asia, (71) Kashmir was exposed to all temptations. (72) Hence Forsyth stressed that 'we never can relax our vigilance and precautions' so far as the strategy of Kashmir and Ladakh was concerned. Thus, the Commercial Agency at Leh was the 'much wanted nail' (73) to curb the Russian expansion towards these two States. (74)

However, in sharp contrast to Forsyth, Lawrence was reluctant to interfere in the affairs of Ladakh and Kashmir and thus annoy the Maharaja. He earnestly desired to have 'in the space between British India and Central Asia, at least one friendly State', and, in the ruler of Kashmir, 'a cordial supporter instead of a

(71) Russia took Samarkand and Bokhara in 1868 and possessed two of the six forts of Yakub Beg, constructed by the latter on the Naryan river: Foreign Department Political A., Oct. 1868, Nos. 182-83 and 199-200.

(72) Forsyth's report on trade of Central Asia, Foreign Department Political A., Nov. 1868, Nos. 1-4.

(73) He quoted a Turkish proverb that 'one nail can save a horse-shoe, one horse-shoe a horse, one horse a man, and one man a Government': Ibid. No. 3

(74) Ibid. No. 3.
lukewarm friend. But the united opposition of the Panjab officers and enthusiasm of Kangra traders was too much for him to resist for long. Reluctantly, he sanctioned Cayley's appointment for the third time in early 1869. Naturally with the speedy increase of commerce, the zeal for geographical knowledge also increased and the British Officials and private individuals started exploring the area beyond the Himalayas. The net result of these explorations was that Cayley collected information about various routes to Turkestan and recommended the opening of

(75) Foreign Department, Political A., Nov. 1868, No. 82.

(76) The transit trade of Leh was gradually increasing. In 1868 the total value of the import and export of Leh trade was Rs 10,38,401, while in 1869 it reached upto Rs 12,91,537: G.J. Alder, op. cit., Appendix I, p. 318.

(77) There was a demand to plant a commercial Agent at Kashgar also. But Lawrence was reluctant to send British officials to an area where British arms could not reach, as in doing so 'we send them to certain destruction': Foreign Department, Political Proceedings A, Feb. 1868, Nos. 234-237.

(78) W.H. Johnson, one of the officers engaged in Kashmir survey visited Khotan area, no doubt at the invitation of the ruler, yet without the prior permission of the Indian Government. Consequently, he was censured and compelled to resign: Neville Maxwell, India's China War (Bombay, 1970), pp. 26-27.
Changchenmo route.\(^{(79)}\) Robert Shaw,\(^{(80)}\) a tea-planter, also urged the Government to negotiate with the Maharaja of Kashmir for the opening of Changchenmo route.\(^{(81)}\) Another traveller, William Hayward, also visited this area privately and in his Memorandum confirmed the earlier conclusions.\(^{(82)}\)

Obviously, it was the enthusiasm of the Panjab officials and private individuals like Cayley, Forsyth, Hayward, Johnson and particularly that of Shaw, 'the hero of the hour',\(^{(83)}\) which culminated in the forward frontier policy during the Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo (1869–72)\(^{(84)}\). The recommendations of these individuals with regard to Changchenmo route,\(^{(85)}\) made positive

\(^{(79)}\) Cayley's Report, 13 Jan. 1868, Foreign Department Political A., March, 1869, No. 7.

\(^{(80)}\) Robert Shaw's Memorandum, 18 Sept., 1869, Foreign Department Political A., July 1870, No. 73.

For his report also see JRGS, Vol. XL (1870), pp. 33-166; Also proceedings of RGS, Vol. XIV (1869-70), pp. 41-124; For further studies see R.B. Shaw, Visit to High Tartary, Yarkand and Kashgar (London, 1871).

\(^{(81)}\) Foreign Department, Political A., July 1870, No. 73.

\(^{(82)}\) William Hayward's Memorandum, 11 Oct. 1869, Foreign Department, Political A., Feb. 1870, No. 296.


\(^{(84)}\) According to Lord Mayo to allow Kashmir officials to hinder British trade for so long was unwise and a 'mistaken policy'.

\(^{(85)}\) Foreign Department Political Proceedings A., Aug., 1869, Nos. 140-47; also Foreign Department, Political Proceedings, Nos. 202-206; and Foreign Department, Political A., Feb. 1870, No. 296.
impact on Mayo's mind. Inter alia, the warning of Forsyth that:

Kashmir is ... quite on external frontier... exposed to all kinds of temptations. (86)

prompted Mayo to embark upon a forward policy with regard to Ladakh and Kashmir. Besides, though the commercial potentialities of Central Asia were 'too remote' for Lawrence, Mayo's Government declared that:

tea from China could not compete with Kangra products in the markets of Turkestan. (87)

Contrary to Lawrence who curbed such commercial expansion for political implications, Mayo encouraged commerce for political reasons. (88) His policy was that British could check Russia in Central Asia by pushing her commerce northwards and the first target was the Maharaja of Kashmir. In 1869, the Maharaja was approached to open up the Changchenmo route to Kashgar. (89) Realising the futility of resistance, the latter immediately agreed to the proposal. (90) Even he agreed to reduce the duty on goods passing through both the routes i.e. Leh-Yarkand route

(86) Foreign Department. Political A., Nov. 1868, Nos. 1-6.
(87) Citation Alder, op. cit., p. 40.
(88) Ibid.
(89) For this route see infra, pp. 77-81.
(90) Foreign Department. Political A., Aug. 1869, Nos. 140-47.
through Karrakoram and through the valley of Changchenmo river. (91)

Hence, encouraged by the leniency of the Maharaja, Mayo wanted to have a commercial treaty and for the purpose Captain Grey was sent to the Maharaja with a ten-article treaty. After some negotiations 'Maharaja agreed to all that Mayo had demanded', (92) the treaty was ratified by Mayo in May 1870. (93) The Changchenmo route was designated as a free highway for travellers, traders and the surveyors (94) and Henry Cayley was appointed as the first Joint Commissioner of the valley of Changchenmo. (95)

While agreeing to all the proposals, the Maharaja requested that he should be given a 'sanad'

(91) He further sanctioned Rs 5,000/- for the repair of the road and renovations of the rest-houses on the route; Ibid. No.145.

Moreover, to encourage the trade the Maharaja instituted a present of Rs 30/- to a 'kafila' (caravan) using the Changchenmo route; Foreign Department, Political A., March 1870, Nos. 45-47.

(92) Foreign Department, Political A., July 1870, No. 90.

(93) Ibid, No. 115.

For full text of the treaty see infra, Appendix A, pp. 258-61.

(94) Foreign Department, Political A., July 1870, No. 74.

(95) Ibid.
to the effect that:

the settlement now made is final and will hold good for ever ... the loss suffered by me in removing the transit duties would be compensated by British Government; from now onwards there would be no Commercial Agent at Leh as one British officer would be in the Changchenmo valley as a Joint Commissioner (96).

But Mayo did not commit that the settlement would be final, although, he assured the Maharaja that:

the British Government will always respect the Maharaja's honour by a sincere desire to exalt His Highness's dignity in the eyes of his subjects (97)

Regarding the presence of a British Commercial Officer at Leh, the Maharaja was assured that in case the appointment of Joint Commissioners should render the trade agency at Leh redundant, it would be withdrawn. (98)

At the end of the first season Cayley expressed his satisfaction with the dual system of

(96) Ranbir Singh to Mayo, Feb. 1870, Foreign Department, Political A., July 1870, No. 91.
(97) Mayo to Ranbir Singh, Feb. 1870, Foreign Department, Political A., July 1870, No. 97.
(98) Ibid.
(99) From Kashmir side Pandit Bakshi Ram was the Joint Commissioner of Changchenmo valley and he worked well with Cayley, the British Joint Commissioner. Foreign Department, Political A., Jan. 1871, Nos. 560-97.
The arrangement was a success for trade too. Though the year 1870 was exceptionally unfavourable to trade due to political and climatic reasons, yet Cayley was very much satisfied with the steady increase in the transit trade of Ladakh.

Thus, the British Government, after a long struggle (from 1772 to 1870) was successful in obtaining an easy access to Tibet. However, the success was short-lived one, because, the kingdom of Yakub Beg collapsed in 1877-78 and with that the hope of British Government to reach China through her back-door.

(100) Rules and suggestions to guide the Commissioners were stipulated in a separate paper: Foreign Department, Political A., July 1870, Nos. 110-111; Also C.U. Aitchison, Treaties, Vol. IX, pp. 362-65.

(101) There were disturbances in Yarkand which prevented the caravans to leave the country: Foreign Department, Political A., June 1871, Nos. 560-97.

(102) The season was unusually severe and the heavy falls of snows closed the passes much before their usual time: Ibid.