

little was needed, if the Indian traders chose to present themselves at a known spot in a desert and take chances of selling their goods. That those who do not want to buy your goods shall be forced to build your storehouses and your temporary dwelling-places and establish means of supplying you with food—that is hard. Among people of nearly equal strength it would be called outrageous.

The Tibetans were opposed to contact of any sort, as it is probable that through Chinese channels they already knew of the success of various disguised surveyors, in the service of Calcutta, who had penetrated their country in many directions, even to Lhasa's self, and had carefully mapped its roads, mountains, and towns and rivers. Such maps are precious to the scientific geographer and to the thoughtful warrior. The difficulty of protecting themselves even by theoretical non-intercourse is great: they might well consider the task hopeless if various traders were to be admitted. Some of them would certainly be spies. The Chinese had as much reason to hesitate, in this special case, as the Tibetans. Loss of their suzerainty was to be contemplated as probable, and also loss of their tea-trade. A period of five years was fixed for the non-importation of tea from India, and other wording showed plainly enough that the day would come when the Tibetan market would be forced open.¹ This you may say is righteous; monopolies are generally bad. Free trade is good. That, too, is my belief. But there is something better than free

¹ See Appendix, G.