

CHAPTER IV

THE BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS, 1873-1886

IT was not till a century had elapsed since Warren Hastings had begun his attempts to form a friendship with the Tibetans that the Government in India again made any real effort to come into proper relationship with their neighbours. For a century they were content to let things take their course, in spite of their informality, and in spite of the fact that Indian subjects were having all the worst of the intercourse, for while Tibetans were allowed to come to India when and where and how they liked, to trade there without duty and without hindrance, to travel and to reside wherever they wished, on the other side, obstructions of every kind were placed in the way of Indians, and still more of British, trading, traveling, or residing in Tibet. But in the year 1873 the Indian Government began to stir, and take stock of the position, and to reflect whether this one-sided condition of affairs might not be changed to the advantage of Indians and Europeans without hurting the Tibetans.

In that year the Bengal Government addressed the Government of India a letter, a copy of which was sent to the Royal Geographical Society, in which they urged that the Chinese should be pressed "for an order of admittance to Tibet," and that "the authorities at Peking should allow a renewal of the friendly intercourse between India and Tibet which existed in the days of Bogle and Turner." The Bengal Government said that the Government of India and the Secretary of State had repeatedly expressed the great interest which they took in this subject, and the wish that no favourable opportunity should be neglected of promoting the development of