

commercial intercourse between British India and those trans-Himalayan countries which were then practically closed to us. If only the Chinese and Tibetans would remove the embargo at present imposed upon the entry of our trade, there were, by routes under our own control, no serious difficulties or dangers of any kind to overcome, and none of the risks of collision which existed elsewhere.

Tibet, the Bengal Government said, was a well-regulated country with which our Hillmen were in constant communication. When Europeans went to the frontier and tried to cross it, there was no display of violence or disturbance. They were civilly turned back, with an intimation that there were orders not to admit them. All the inquiries of the Lieutenant-Governor led to the belief that the Tibetans themselves had no objections to intercourse with us. The experiences of the great botanist, Sir Joseph Hooker, who in 1849 had travelled to the Tibetan border, and Blanford among the recent travellers, and of Bogle and Turner in the past, were singularly at one upon this point. The Commandant of Khamba Jong, who had met Mr. Blanford on the frontier in 1870, assured him that the Tibetans had no ill-will to foreigners, and would, if allowed, gladly receive Europeans. The fact appeared to be, the Lieutenant-Governor said, that "the prohibition to intercourse with Tibet is part of the Chinese policy of exclusion imposed on the Tibetans by Chinese officials and enforced by Chinese troops stationed in Tibet." He fully sympathized with the Chinese desire to keep out foreigners in China. "But," he said, "in Tibet there is not wealth enough to attract many adventurers; there is room only for a moderate and legitimate commerce;" and among a people so good and well regulated as the Tibetans there would be no such difficulties as existed in China. If the road were opened, it would be used only by fair traders and by responsible Government servants or travellers under the control of Government.

In seeking to press the Chinese for admittance to Tibet, he said, the most emphatic declaration might be made that, having our natural and best boundary in the