

either sheltered themselves behind the Chinese or said that they had no orders to give any answer for Lhasa, and could only report.

Mr. White's immediate superior, the Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division, agreed with him that the levying of a duty of 10 per cent. *ad valorem* at Phari was a clear breach of the main article of the Trade Convention. He contended that by Article IV. of the Regulations it is provided that goods entering Tibet for British India across the Sikkim-Tibet frontier, or *vice versa*, shall be exempt from duty for a period of five years, and that this meant a general exemption from all duties, wherever imposed, the place of realization being altogether irrelevant. He recommended, therefore, that this breach of the main article of the treaty, to which all the other provisions were ancillary, should be made the subject of a representation to the Chinese Government.

The Government of Bengal took the same view. They thought the levy of the duty at Phari undoubtedly seemed to be inconsistent with the terms of the treaty, which provided for free trade for a period of five years. And the Lieutenant-Governor felt that no time should be lost in making this matter the subject of a representation to the Government of China.

And in this view our Minister at Peking, Mr. (afterwards Sir Nicholas) O'Connor, Ambassador at St. Petersburg and Constantinople, thoroughly concurred, and suggested to the Viceroy that the imposition of a 10 per cent. *ad valorem* duty at Phari should be very strongly protested against as contrary to treaty stipulations.

The Government of India, however, "recognizing the necessity for extreme patience in dealing with the Tibetans, decided that it would be premature to make any formal complaint of their obstructiveness."* They wrote to the Government of Bengal that "The information in regard to the levy of duty at Phari and to the obstructiveness of the Tibetans was certainly unsatisfactory, but the Regulations

* Blue-book, p. 24.