

instalments had been paid the British occupation of the Chumbi Valley should terminate, provided the terms of the Treaty should in the meantime have been carried out.

To this proposal the Secretary of State agreed on November 7,* but he added that, as regards the agreement giving the Agent at Gyantse the right of access to Lhasa, His Majesty's Government had decided to disallow it, for they considered it unnecessary, and inconsistent with the principle on which their policy had throughout been based.

Finally, the Secretary of State reviewed the whole affair in a despatch dated December 2. When Lord Curzon, in his despatch of January 8, 1903, made his proposal for a Mission to Lhasa, Tibet, though lying on our borders, was practically an unknown country, the rulers of which persistently refused to hold any communications with the British Government even on necessary matters of business; and if the Tibetan Government had become involved in political relations with other Powers, a situation of danger might have been created on the frontier of the Indian Empire. This risk had now been removed by the conclusion of the Treaty. And it was considered most satisfactory that, having regard to the obstinacy of the Tibetans in the past, I should, besides concluding the Treaty, have good reason to believe that the relations which I had established with them at Lhasa were generally friendly.

In the Treaty I had inserted a stipulation that the indemnity was to be paid in 75 annual instalments, and I had retained without modification the proviso that the Chumbi Valley was to be occupied as security till the full amount had been paid. The effect of this was to make it appear as if it were our intention to occupy for at least seventy-five years the Chumbi Valley, which had been recognized in the Convention of 1890 and the Trade Regulations of 1893 as Tibetan territory. This would have been inconsistent with the repeated declarations of His Majesty's Government that the Mission would not

* Blue-book, III., p. 77.