about this route; but it is a very interesting and remarkable one, and if it was within easy reach of a frequented 'centre' would be very popular and much talked about. Indeed, considering the indignities which are being heaped on mountains elsewhere, the Bänder would run considerable risk of being fitted up with a handrail.

A Himalayan Barrier.

The following correspondence is taken from the 'Times' of March 18, 1907:—

To the Editor of the 'Times.'

Sir,—On returning to England I have found so much dissatisfaction in various scientific circles at the ultimate refusal of the Home Government to permit the ascent of Mount Everest that I shall be grateful if you can find space for the only three official letters, within my cognisance, on the subject. Mr. Morley telegraphs that he has no objection whatever to their publication.

The conception of this important scientific expedition was due to Lord Curzon; and, as I am neither an original promoter of the scheme nor an Indian expert, I leave it to others to comment on the regrettable interposition by a Liberal Government of a Himalayan barrier to the advance of knowledge in this direction.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

George Taubman Goldie,
President R.G.S.

1 Savile Row: March 16.

Memorandum.

1 Savile Row, Burlington Gardens, London, W.:
January 23, 1907.

Scientific Expedition to Mount Everest.

1. *Finance and Authority.*—The funds are found by members of the Alpine Club; but the expedition is also under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society.

2. *Leaders.*—The expedition will be commanded, if the Government of India permit, by Major the Hon. Charles Bruce, M.V.O., of the 5th Gurkha Rifles, and son of the late Lord Aberdare. Every one in India or in geographical circles at home will know that Major Bruce is exceptionally qualified for this work. Next to him is Dr. Tom G. Longstaff, M.A. of Oxford (Christ Church), and who has also taken there a medical degree—M.D. In 1905, with the sanction of the Government of India, Dr. Longstaff accom-

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panied Mr. Sherring, I.C.S., in his extensive journey through Western Tibet and attained a height of about 28,000 ft. Next to him is Mr. Arnold Mumm, late hon. secretary of the Alpine Club, who travelled last year in Uganda with Mr. Douglas Freshfield. Mr. Mumm is the partner of Mr. Edward Arnold, publisher to the India Office.

3. *Composition of Party.*—The above three gentlemen, with three Alpine guides, two of whom were in Tibet in 1905 with Mr. Sherring, I.C.S., and showed great tact and consideration in all dealings with the inhabitants, while the third guide displayed conspicuously the same qualities in 1905 with Mr. Douglas Freshfield in Uganda. There will also be half a dozen Gurkhas from the 5th Rifles or other regiments; but these will go without their arms, so as to avoid the possibility of trouble. For the same reason no down-country native servants will be taken. Porters and baggage animals will be obtained, as usual, in concert with the local authorities.

4. *Nepaul.*—Nepaul territory would be avoided. The party would travel from Darjeeling north to Kambajong, just on the Tibetan side of the Indian frontier. There it would turn sharply and nearly due west to Kharta, from near which point it would commence the ascent and scientific observations. Whether successful or not, it would return by the same route, so that the Nepaul territory would nowhere be violated; moreover there would be no appreciable inducement to pass through Nepaul if the ascent is to be tried from the north, although it might be a convenience if the monthly supplies of provisions, sent to restock the party and in charge of natives, were allowed to cut the corner of Nepaul territory; but this is in no way essential.

5. *Tibet.*—As the expedition would turn its back on Lhasa directly it left Indian territory, and as the regions through which it would pass are very sparsely populated, there can be no question of Tibetan timidity or anxiety being aroused or of any friction or trouble occurring during the journey. It would not resemble Mr. Sherring's mission in 1905, which penetrated into the heart of Western Tibet, and which, nevertheless, encountered no opposition whatever.

6. *General.*—The party undertake that all monetary transactions with the natives shall be directly dealt with by the English leaders, and that no precaution shall be omitted to avoid any cause of friction.

GEORGE TAUBMAN GOLDIE,
President R.G.S.

To the Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., &c.,
Foreign Office, S.W.

India Office: February 8, 1907.

DEAR SIR GEORGE GOLDIE,—I have given full consideration to the proposal in your memorandum of January 23 that a British party should be given facilities by the Government of India to attempt the ascent of Mount Everest from the Tibetan side, avoiding Nepaulese territory; and I am sorry to be obliged to refuse

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the present request for the same reasons which, as stated in the official letter from the Under-Secretary of State to the Royal Geographical Society of March 28 last, made it necessary for me, to my great regret, to decide that it was not possible, consistently with the interests of the policy of his Majesty's Government, for the Government of India to give encouragement or help to exploration in Tibet. There has been no change in the political situation since the letter of March 28 from this office to modify the considerations of high Imperial policy which led his Majesty's Government to decide that it was inexpedient to raise the question of facilities for travellers in Tibet with the authorities of Lhasa; and there can be no doubt that a British expedition proceeding by the route proposed through Tibetan territory, furtively as is suggested, and without previous notice to the Lhasa Government, would raise the question which his Majesty's Government wish to avoid in a more embarrassing form than if an application were made to the Tibetan Government for their consent.

I would add that this decision is based solely on considerations of public policy, and personally I am very sorry for the disappointment which it will cause to Major Bruce and Mr. Longstaff.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN MORLEY.

1 Savile Row, Burlington Gardens, London, W.:
February 9, 1907.

DEAR MR. MORLEY,—I am grieved at the decision announced in your official letter of the 8th inst., less on account of the public-spirited men who were prepared to risk their lives or spend their money on a scientific object than of the cause of knowledge itself, which would have been promoted by the observations of various kinds made during the ascent of Mount Everest. I desire to disclaim very clearly and positively two assumptions on which your official letters appear largely to rest.

First, it never occurred to me that the expedition would be in any way 'furtive.' I assumed that the Government of India would notify the Lhasa Government that a purely scientific party desired to move from the British frontier along the sparsely populated inside edge of Tibetan territory to the summit of Everest, keeping its back turned on Lhasa for the whole of that journey. I do not believe in 'furtive' policy except in war, when deceiving the enemy is recognised as fair.

Secondly, I submit that such a journey has nothing substantial in common with an exploration, such as was refused in your letter of March 28, 1906, which would have penetrated a considerable distance into a populous part of Tibet and largely in the direction of Lhasa.

I am yours faithfully,
GEORGE TAUBMAN GOLDIE,
President R.G.S.

To the Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., &c.

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