

Notes on a Buddhist Monastery at Bhoṭ Bágán (Howrah), on two rare and valuable Tibetan MSS. discovered there, and on Púran Gír Gosain, the celebrated Indian Achárya and Government Emissary at the Court of the Tashi Lama, Tibet, in the last century.—By GAUR DÁS BYSACK.

(With two Plates.)

Opposite to Calcutta, on the right bank of the river, is the village of Ghusari.¹ Ascending the flight of steps of a ghát at this place, a visitor is struck at the sight of a range of temples, behind which is a building of a peculiar structure, exhibiting marks of old construction with subsequent additions. It is a two-storied house of worship with a boundary wall, having in its centre a gateway facing the river, and affording a passage into the main quadrangle within the enclosure. The special feature in the construction is the absence of arches, and its partaking of a Tibetan character. A garden is attached to it, and the lands which formed part of the *demesnes* are let out to tenants on permanent leases; on one of the holdings, stands the "Goosery Cotton Mill." The following is a detailed description of the building for which I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. W. B. Gwyther, A. R. I., B. A., of the Public Works Department, who very readily complied with my request to visit the place and examine the structure. (See Plate I.)

"The structure, in the main, consists of the principal courtyard for religious, and a back-yard, for domestic purposes. The former is towards and entered from the riverside by the gateway which forms the subject of one of the sketches. A casual visitor arriving at the ghát would, on glancing at this face of the structure, find his attention first drawn to the portion over the entrance where the primitive trabeated form of construction is now seen in its original character, "despoiled of course to a great extent by the hand of time."

"Without speculating upon the details and forms in any minute degree, it must be expected, from the history and associations of the Tibetan visitors who established this place of worship, that a feeling

¹ *Ghusarir tyámk* (घुसड़िर द्याँक, sometimes spelled घुसड़िर *ghusurir*, Ed.), 'the turning jut of Ghusari,' and the *Vishálakshmi** *daha* or *Visúálakshir† daha* 'the whirlpool of disastrous water' or 'whirlpool of the broad eyed (Durgá),' are the Scylla and Charybdis of the Hughli river between Calcutta and Barrackpur, the *mælstrom* being near Titaghar. The dangers in doubling the *tyámk* are illustrated in the familiar song of the East Bengal boatmen. They are now not so much dreaded as in former days.

* *Visha* 'water,' *alakshmi* 'misfortune.'

† *Visála*, large,' *alashi* 'eye.'

“and peculiarity common to their own architectural instincts must have been imported: but there is nothing at present known which can show how much was originally built, and when and by whom subsequent additions were made. It cannot, however, be questioned that the portion closest to the river presents those peculiarities which might be looked for in a structure built under Tibetan influence. A plain wall, pierced here and there with small openings, forms the outer boundary, in the centre of which is the doorway. Over this doorway is a sort of gallery which overlooks the river on one side and the principal court on the other. Just within the enclosure wall is a double-storied construction: the ground floor, about a foot high, extends from that wall to the edge of the court; about a yard back, a row of massive square pillars, about 7 feet high, stand carrying a wooden architrave which forms the outer support to the beams, resting on the wall at one end and cantilevered forward at the other to form a projecting verandah.”

“The same construction is repeated on the upper story. The projecting ends of the beams are in some cases moulded ogee or double-ogee fashion and protected by means of an eaves-board, the lower edge of which is ornamented with a tooth or saw profile. The moulded beams and particularly the eaves-boards have come down to us from the original structure. The saw-edges are those which merely have triangular pieces cut out so as to leave a row of consecutive triangular points. In the tooth form, the face of the projecting points is dressed back towards the apex and a line or groove cut longitudinally where the teeth spring from.”

“The construction of the roof over the gallery appears to be a feature of no small significance. The strictly trabeated arrangement, to the exclusion of the arch, the use of which is suggested by the circumstances of the case, and the manner of obtaining height and prominence to this central portion by stilting the roof, are decidedly classic in idea. That classic influence extended to Kashmir and North Western India is well-known, and it is quite as possible as not that a careful examination of existing buildings in Tibet would reveal traces of several features associated with European architecture.

“The windows which pierce the enclosure wall already mentioned, and others which look out into the quadrangle, are peculiar in their construction, and must have been put up in the first instance, being made up on the lines given to the builders by Tibetan architects. The outer frame is cross-braced by means of a vertical and a transom bar, which divide the opening into four equal spaces. In some cases ordinary square bars are interspersed vertically for the sake of security.

“The two leaves of the window, which open inwards, close up against the stouter bars.”

The locality goes by the name of *Bhoṭ Bágán*,¹ the structure is called *Bhoṭ Mandir* or *Maṭh*, the priest in charge of it is styled *Bhoṭ-Gosain*² or *Bhoṭ-Mahant*,³ and the ghát passes under the designation of *Bhoṭ-Mahant's Ghát*.

Inside the Maṭh are to be seen a lot of idols of the Hindú and mostly of the Tibeto-Buddhist mythology. Among the former may be mentioned those of Vishṇu, Durgá, Vindhýávásiní, Gaṇeśa, Gopála, Sálagráma, and S'iva-lingas of various sorts, including the rare oviform ones of three different colours, also S'iva's bull; and among the latter those of Arya Tárá, Mahákála Bhairava, Sambhara Chakra, Samája Guhya, Vajra Bhrúkuṭi and Padmapáni.⁴ There are also a stamp of Kapila Muni's foot, and a pair of *kharams* or wooden sandals. A description of the first five Tibetan divinities, by my friend Bábú Sarat Chandra Dás, is given below. Such a room full of images is designated *Lha-khang*⁵ in Tibet. On the ground immediately be-

¹ *Bhoṭ Bágán*, lit., 'Tibet garden.' *Bhoṭ* or *Bhoṭ* is the name by which the Tibetans call their country; *bágán* is the Bengali form of the plural of the Persian *bágh*, 'garden.'

² *Bhoṭ Gosain*, lit, Tibet Gosain. *Gosain* (properly *gosáin* गोसाई) is the vernacular form of Goswámí, which has several literal significations such as master or possessor of kine, controller of the organs of the senses, the comprehender of the *Gáyatrí*, the lord of the earth or of the heaven. In these latter significations the term implies a holy man, a religious teacher or a saint. Among the S'aivas, or followers of S'iva, the *Udásís*, or non-householders, prevail more than in any other sect, and they pass under the designation of *Sannyásís* or *Gosáin*s, though the latter appellation is appropriated in Bengal by the *Vaishṇava gurus*, specially the followers of Chaitanya, the descendants of Adwaita and Nityánanda. In the Upper Provinces the term *Sádhu* is applied to the Vaishṇava Udásís, and Gosain to the S'aiva Sannyásís. The people of the two persuasions are easily distinguished by their *tílakas* or lines painted on the forehead.

³ *Bhoṭ Mahanta*, lit. a mahanta or chief or superior of a Tibetan monastery. The term *Mahanta* generally signifies the head of a religious establishment of the mendicant orders.

⁴ This is the name of the Bodhisatva who incarnated himself as Gedun-tubpa, a reformer, who received the spirit of the previous reformer Tsong-khapa in 1419, and built the monastery of Tashi Lhunpo in 1445 and repeatedly appeared as a Tashi Lama.

⁵ *Lha-Khang* (ལྷ་ཁང་) *Lha* is the Tibetan for gods and spirits who, by transmigration into other bodies in blissful regions, reap the rewards of their meritorious deeds. They are invoked and revered. There are six places for the transmigration of the soul of every living being.

hind the Maṭh is a low roofed small house, which may be characterised as a temple. Within it is a cubiform *samádhi-stambha*¹ ro tomb, which the Tibetans would call a *Dungten* or relic repository. It is surmounted by the usual *lingam* or phallus of Śiva or Mahádeva. The services performed in the Maṭha consist of a mixture of Hindú and Tibetan rituals.

No. I. TÁRÁ.

“The principal deity is Árya Tárá. She is identified by the Nepalese Buddhists with Prajñá Páramitá or transcendental wisdom and is universally believed to be the mother of all the past Tathá-gatas, or Buddhas, in Tibet. According to the esoteric doctrine of the Tántric school of the Northern Buddhists, she is the wife of all the present, past and future Buddhas, in which case she resembles the female energy or *Sakti* of the Indian Tántrics. The Tibetan name of Tárá is Grolma. Her image is made of copper, gilt with Chinese gold. It was evidently brought from China (Peking) by Púran Gir who accompanied the Tashi Lama to Peking.

“During my stay at Peking I paid a visit to the image manufactory near Hwangs-se or the yellow temple, which is situated at a distance of three *li* to the north of the Antaman gate, where I saw images resembling this (image) in construction. The goddess Tárá holds a mendicant’s bowl filled with gems in her left hand. With her right hand she holds a lotus. She wears a crown with five spires all of which are studded with rubies and turquoises. Her locks are coiled, in the Indian Buddhist fashion, at the crown of her head, at the top of which there is a beautiful gem, called *Norbu-mimbar*. Her dress is different from that of the Tibetan image of Tárá. She wears a Chinese petticoat with broad and loose sleeves, and a pair of Chinese embroidered shoes like a Manchu lady. The image is about two feet high. The daughter of the Emperor Tai-tsung of the great Tang dynasty was married to the first Tibetan king in 630 A. D. Sh^o

¹ *Samádhi-stambha*. Its familiar meaning is a tomb, with a *stambha* or monumental column erected on a *samádhi-kshetra* or burial ground. But this term *samádhi*, in its esoteric signification, is the absorption of the *jívatmá* or vital principle in the *paramátmá* or supreme soul of the universe, as stated in the verse **सुरीयमन्त्रं
ब्रह्म ब्रह्मसि परम्यद् । ब्रह्मं ब्रह्मत्ववस्थानं समाधिरिति गीयते ॥** Though the burning of the dead is now the principal custom among the Hindús, yet among most *Akhará-dhárí Vairágyís* and *S’áva Sanyásís*, burial or throwing the corpse into the river is the unvarying custom. In Benares, Mirzapur and other districts in the North-West, the dead body is often put into a stone coffin before depositing it into the earth.

was an acknowledged incarnation of Tárá. The image probably represents her figure.”¹

No. II.

“The most ingeniously constructed image is that of Mahákála Bhairava. It represents him in a hideous mood, with his *Sakti* in his embrace. His nine heads on all four sides, with a central one on the top, his thirty-six arms and eighteen legs, his weapons, and the string of skulls hanging down his neck to the extremity of his belly, give him a truly horrible appearance. He is the principal guardian of the Tibetan Lamas, particularly of the Tashi Lama.”

No. III.

“Sambhara Chakra is the chief of the Tántric deities of Tibet. He has ten arms, but one head. He also has the *Sakti* in his clasp. He stands on the breast of a vanquished demon, probably the devil *Márá*. He is painted with yellow. The image is of copper gilt, about nine inches high.”

No. IV.

“Samája Guhya is another Tántric deity, with three faces and six arms. He clasps his consort *Sakti* who also has three faces and six arms.”

No. V.

“Another form of Tárá is called Vajra Bhrúkuṭi. The figure of it, evidently cast in Nepal, represents the second wife of king Srongtsan gampa. She was the daughter of king Prabhávarma of Nepal, who reigned between 630 and 640 A. D. There is a saint’s glory round her head.”

There is an inscription on the door top of the tomb in the Bengalí language and character. It states, in very ungrammatical and corrupt language, that the principal *Mukhtiyárkár*² and *chela* (or disciple) Daljít Gir Mahant placed the symbol of Mahádeva on the *samadhi* of the late Púran Gir Mahant, and enjoins that all people should honour and worship this shrine and the Mahádeva; a Hindú not doing so would incur the sin of bráhmanicide, and a Musalmán and others, for the like offence, would go to *dozakh* (hell), as affected with guilt at the seat of

¹ On the pedestal of the statue is inscribed in Bengalí the name S’rí Khás Káminí (কামিনী or female energy and *خامی* chief, favourite), and the date, perhaps of the consecration, Samvat 1852, 15th of the light half of the month of Margaśira (November). Then follows the name Bholá Giri of Lhasa in the country of Bhoṭa-kshetra.

² *Mukhtiyárkár* is the Ar. *مختار كار* “a superintendent.”

Khodā-ta'āllā or the most high God. The date of the consecration is given as Samvat 1852, Śakābda 1717, Bangābda 1202,¹ 23rd Vaiśākha, Sunday, within 12 daṇḍas² of the Pūrṇimā. This date corresponds with the 3rd May 1795.

This cursory examination of the place, and its important objects suggest most important enquiries such as these: what is the history and origin of the Buddhistic temple on the river side so near to Calcutta, established in the early days of the British power in India? How comes it that images of Hindú gods and goddesses are mixed up with those of Tibet and receive due worship? Who was Púran Gir Gosain Mahant, claiming worship and honour from Hindús, Musalmáns and other religionists?

My request to the present head of the establishment Umráo Gir Gosain Mahant for any papers and documents in his custody that may throw light on these questions, was very readily and kindly complied with. His presentation to the Society, at my suggestion, of two rare and valuable Tibetan manuscripts was noticed at the January meeting. He produced four Persian *sanads* or grants and a passport in Tibetan. He produced four Persian *sanads* or grants and a passport in Tibetan. Of which I have taken copies; and these, with translations, in the annexures appear, I believe, for the first time before the public.

Nos. 1 and 2 show that the former grants, free of rent, 100 bíghás and 8 biswás³ of land on the river side, made up of one portion situated in Mauza Bárbakpúr, Parganah Boro, and of another portion situated in Mauza Ghusarí, Parganah Páikán, unto Púran Gir Gosain,⁴

¹ [The Bangābda or B. S. (Bangálí Samvat) is the same as what is commonly known as the "Fazli year." See the Tables in General Sir A. Cunningham's *Book of Indian Eras*, p. 196, Ed.]

² *Daṇḍa*, one-sixtieth of a day and night; hence equal to 24 minutes.

³ *Biswá*, *lit.* a twentieth part of a bíghá. Hence it is equivalent to a *kaṭṭhá*.

⁴ *Púran Gir Gosain*. In the sanads, Púran is written *پوران*, but in the Bengálí inscription *পূরান* Purán. I think these are vulgar readings of the Sanskrit *पूरणा*. Gir, of course, is the vernacular of *Giri*, indicating that the Gosain belonged to the *Giri* sect of the *Dakṣiṇmís*, and that he was initiated at the *Jyost Maṭh* in the Badarikárama, a fact which is confirmed by the statement of the present Mahanta of the Bhoṭ Bāgān. It is said that the great philosopher Ś'ankarāchārya, towards the end of the 8th century, tried to introduce reforms based on the doctrines of the Vedantic school, and for the purpose of spreading his teachings, founded four *maṭhas* in four different places; *viz.* *Ś'ringa Giri Maṭha* near Tungabhadra where Vyása is said to have had his monastery, *Śaradā Maṭha* in Dwáriká in Gujarát, *Govaradhana Maṭha* in Jagannáthapurí, and *Jyost Maṭha* in the Badarikárama, situated near the sources of the Ganges. Ś'ankarāchārya had at first four disciples and each of them had several others: 1, Padmapáda who had two followers who received the titles of *Tírtha* and *Árama*; 2, Hastámalaka who had

the most sage and wise and the head of all the seekers of truth, in consideration of his virtue and piety that he may erect a temple thereon and plant a garden. The latter grants to the same individual in the same terms, 50 bighás of land on the same site in Mauza Bár-bakpúr, consisting of three portions situated within the properties of Mahárája Nab Kishan,¹ Ráj Chand Rái, and Rájá Rám Lochan.²

also two with the titles of *Vana* and *Aranya* : 3, Mandana who had three designat-
ed *Giri*, *Párvata* and *Ságara* : Totaka who had likewise three with the appellations
of *Saraswatí*, *Bháratí* and *Purí*. Daśanámí (having ten names) is the name of these
four disciples and their followers collectively. The first two founded a school of
teaching in the Sáradá Maṭha ; the second two in the Govardhana Maṭha ; the next
three, including *Giri*, in the Jyosí Maṭha ; and the last three in the S'ringagiri Maṭha.
The common characteristic of all the Daśanámís is their regarding S'iva as another
name of Brahma, and their faith mainly accepts the teachings of the Vedantic philo-
sophy according to the interpretation of S'ankara's commentary. The S'iva Samhitá
teaches the contemplation of S'iva as *nirákára* (having no form), the *achintya* or in-
conceivable, the *ananta* or infinite, the *amara* or immortal, the one, the all-pervading
&c. Among the Daśanámís were celebrated characters of great scholarship and ascetic
lives, authors and commentators : the name of Ananda *Giri* is well-known as
the writer of the S'ankara Digvijaya and of the glosses on the commentaries of
the Vedanta Sútra and of the Upanishats ; Rámásrama was a commentator of the
Veda, Mádhaváchárya had the title of Vidyáranya Svámí. There were also, amongst
this class of ascetics, men who were possessed of indomitable courage and of extra-
ordinary powers of endurance, who were great travellers in India or in the most
distant countries beyond it, as seekers of knowledge and experience, or as enter-
prising merchants. Our Púrpa *Giri* Gosain and Púrpa *Purí* are the names of two
most unique characters reflecting the highest credit on the Daśanámís as enter-
prising spirits, combining the qualities of active benevolence and philanthropy with
knowledge of philosophy, piety, devotion, and in the case of the latter, of a travel-
ling *tapaswí* practising the most astounding austerities. The life of the former
appears in the text, and that of Púrpa *Purí* has appeared in the Researches of the
Society and in other books. Captain Turner saw him and heard much of him from
the Regent at Tashi Lhunpo, and he gives some notices of him in his report. [See
Jonathan Duncan's account in the *Asiatic Researches* Vol. V, p. 37ff, VI, p. 102.
With regard to S'ankaráchárya and the Daśanámís, see H. H. Wilson's account, *ibid.*,
vol. XVII, p. 178-182. According to him, the *Giris*, *Párvatas* and *Ságaras* are
disciples of Totaka. Ed.]

¹ *Nab Kishan*, corruption of *Navakrishna*. The sanad has only نكبش *Nab Kish*.
The well-known Mahárája's estate still holds lands in Bár-bakpúr, on the other side of
the river opposite to Calcutta.

² *Rájá Rám Lochan* and *Ráj Chand Rai*. These persons were the sons of Ráma-
charan Rai, who was the Dewán of Governor Vansittart and General Smith. He
acquired a large fortune and lived in Pathuriyághaṭṭa in Calcutta, his descendants
removed to Andul, and were known as Andul Rájás. One of their scions, Rájá Rájá-
náráyana, attempted to establish the identity of his caste (*Káyastha*) with the
Kshatriya, and is said to have put on the sacrificial thread, but his caste-men
repudiated the pretension, or dared not follow his example. He was also vain
enough to introduce a new era in his family, styled the *Andulábda* !

Both these sanads are as usual addressed to Mutaṣaddís,¹ Chaudharís,² Qánungos, Ta'aluqdárs, &c., their jurisdiction being described as that of Darí Bárbakpúr, Parganah Boro, in Sarkár Sātḡáon,³ appertaining to Chaklah Húglí in Šúbáh Jannatu-l-bilád⁴ Bangálah. Both

¹ *Mutaṣaddí* has various meanings, such as clerk, accountant, &c., but in the last century it was used to signify superior officers in the fiscal department.

² *Chaudharí* is used both in Hindí and Bengalí to mean the headman of a caste or profession, also as an honorific title. Mr. Bogle speaks of a "*chaudri*" who came to visit him while he was in Tibet; and Markham, p. 172, on the authority of Hamilton, explains in a note that "*chauduri*" or '*desali*' in Nepal is a subordinate revenue officer under the Fauzdár, and he identifies the word with *chautariya* (minister), an officer next in rank among the Kerantis in Nepal whose title and office were hereditary. Hamilton also describes a *chauduri* as a zamíndár acting as a minister to a chief among the Kerantis, and says *chautariya* is the title of the collateralers of the royal Gorkha family who sometimes became ministers. In Bengal the titular affix *chaudharí* is common to names of persons belonging to the highest as well as to the lowest castes. In the latter case it bears the sense of headman of a guild or profession, and in the former it is an honorific epithet, which is borne out by tracing it to the Sanskrit *chaturadhurīṇa* "sagacious chief or manager of affairs" or to *chaturdhurīṇa* "chief of four (departments)." In the Upper Provinces the term is applied, I believe, only to the headman of a trade or guild. In early days, in Bengal, it was a title of landholders superior to taluqdárs. There are many families whose ancestors, from one reason or other, had this title, and among them it has become, like Majumdárs, Sarkárs, &c., hereditary.

³ *Sarkár Sātḡáon*. The Muhammadan empire in the time of Akbar was at first divided into twelve large sections, called *šúbahs* or viceroyalties, which were subsequently increased to fifteen. Each of these was subdivided for fiscal purposes into *sarkárs* or provinces, each *sarkár* comprehending a number of *parganahs* or *mahals*. Aggregates of several *parganahs* again were formed into groups which in the reign of Sháh Jahán were designated *chaklahs*. In the tables of the *taqsim jama'* in the *Áin-i-Akbarí šúbah Bangálah* is divided into 24 *sarkárs*, one of which is *Sātḡáon* (Sanskrit *saptagrāma*), a group of seven villages. In its relation to *chaklah* Húglí, as described in the sanads to the Tashi Lama and Púran Gir, it must, with the latter district, have formed part of the dominions of the ancient kings of Támralipti (Támruk) which had been visited by Fahian. It was formerly of immense size, the residence of kings, and had a famous place of worship in it. A reference to the tables of the fiscal divisions of the Mughal empire in the *Áin-i-Akbarí*, will show that *Sarkár Sātḡáon*, in which the sanads speak of the place being comprehended, contain *mahals*, two of which are named Bárbakpúr. One stands by itself, and the other is linked to *Kalkattá* and to another place Bakuá. No doubt the place opposite to *Kalkattá* (Calcutta) derived its name from the one at the Calcutta side. Whether the names *Bárbakpúr* and *Bakud* were the old designations of the place, now known as *Sutánutí* and *Govindpur*, which together with *Kalkattá*, formed old Calcutta, is a point worthy of research. As to the Mahal Bárbakpur in the 'Ain, Blochmann indicates in a note to the Persian text that another reading gives *Bárikpur*. So has Bakuá many other readings, as *Maçumá* &c. Our *Kalkattá* is variously named *Kaltás*, *Kalná* and *Talpá*.

⁴ *Jannatu-l-bilád*, the paradise of civilized nations. This epithet was applied

of them also bear on the top two square seals.¹ The date of No. 1 is 12th June 1778, 1st *Asháda* 1185 B. S., 16th *Jumáda-l-awal* of the 20th year of the imperial reign; and that of No. 2 is 11th February 1782, 2nd *Fálgun* 1189 B. S.

The two other sanads, marked No. 3 and No. 4, bear the same dates as, and grant the same quantities of land as those mentioned in Nos. 1 and 2 respectively. In fact the two former appear to be duplicates of the latter two, with this very material difference that, in Nos. 3 and 4, in place of the grantee's name being *Púran Gir*, it is *Teshé Lámah Panchan Ardani Bakdeo Panchan*,² and the attributes of the latter are exactly those of the former. The seals also are different: on Nos. 3 and 4 they are those of the East India Company as *dewán* and servant of *Sháh 'Álam Bádsháh*. No. 3, moreover, bears two seals, one at the top, the other on the right margin. Both sanads bear the signature of *Warren Hastings* almost obliterated.

The simple facts now disclosed are, that in the years 1778 and 1782, a *Hindú* ascetic, named *Púran Gir Gosain*, and a *Buddhist* Pontiff conjointly, but by two sets of grants, one in the name of each, received a certain quantity of land on the river side, which aggregated 150 *bíghás* and constituted the area of *Bhoṭ Bágán*, and that the former died in 1795, and was buried as a saint near his *Maṭh* there, by his *chela* or disciple *Daljít Gir Gosain*.

This information, though by itself it does not satisfy but rather magnifies the curiosity already raised, affords a clue to the line of historical investigation which would carry us to the goal. The inquiry, however, leading, as it does, into the most eventful period of British Indian history, proves almost unfructuous. Vain is the search for such apparently trifling incidents as the foundation of the *Bhoṭ Mandir* or the career of merely a *Hindú* mendicant, in the annals of the

to Bengal by *Aurangzib*, and in the last century it was customary to describe Bengal in public records and formal documents with this title. *Humáyún* called *Gaur Jannatábád*, 'a paradise settlement,' though when the plague was raging there, which depopulated it and led to its desertion, the pun came into vogue as *Gaur ba gor*, "from *Gaur* to the grave."

¹ One seal has an inscription in *Nágari* characters. See footnote on p. 95.

² *Teshé* (تيشي), so spelled in the sanads. The Tibetan is *dkraśis blama*, pronounced *Tashi Lama*. The full name of the Lama was *Panchen Nagwañ Lossañ Paldan Yeshe*. The first element, spelled *panchan* (پانچن) in the sanads is a compound of *Pan* 'a *pañḍita*' or 'learned man' and *chan* 'great' or 'conspicuous.' *Ardani* is a corruption of *Erteni*, a gem. The Gem epithet, though not exclusively applied to a *Tashi Lama*, indicates, in his case, perfection and the efficacy of his adoration. The terms *ertení* and the Sanskrit *ratna* seem to be congeners. *Bakdeo* is the Sanskrit *Vákyadeva*, equivalent to the Tibetan *Nagwañ*.

statesmen who were laying the basis of the British Power in India. In practice, "History," says Arnold, "has been beguiled, so to speak, from its proper business, and has ceased to describe the life of a Commonwealth," much more so in respect of the history of this country under its peculiar circumstances. It is, therefore, from the bye-ways of history, personal narratives, accounts of travellers, published correspondence, and official reports, and authentic traditions, from materials in fact out of which history is constructed, that threads have been gathered and woven into the following story. The story itself, apart from many of its interesting features and almost romantic character, has important bearings upon questions of the greatest moment which occupied the attention of the infant British Indian Government, and which still perplex its Council in its imperial growth.

The first part of the retrospective inquiry leads to the time when the great *Chhiyāttara Manwantara*,¹ as the great famine of 1176 B. S. is called by the people of Bengal, was raging in its fiercest fury in the country, and decimating its people by thousands, when the streets of Calcutta were strewn with bodies of the dying and the dead, and when Governor Cartier was feeding daily 15000 people in the city. A little earlier than this catastrophe on the plains, a cruel and destructive war had broken out on the mountain heights and valleys on the frontier.

The aggressive incursions of the ambitious Prithvī Nārāyan, chief of the Gorkhas, into the valley of Nepal, led to that great revolution in this State which subverted its tripartite rule,² and brought it under

¹ *Chhiyāttara Manwantara* the famine of 1176 B. S. or 1770 A. D. Preceded by three years of scarcity, and followed by three years of plenty, it was strictly a one-year's famine, but it was the most appalling and disastrous calamity that ever visited Bengal, or perhaps any other part of the world. It exhibited, in its course and its sequel, such harrowing and extensive scenes of dreadful suffering, pain, misery, disease and death, as to have obtained in our country the singular name of a *manwantara*, which literally means a period equal to 4,320,000 years, implying thereby that it was such a visitation as recurs only at intervals of æons, the ordinary names of famine *durbhiksha* ('when alms are not obtainable') and *akāla* 'bad time' not being thought of sufficient significance. In fact, no Sanskrit dictionaries that I have consulted attach to *Manwantara* famine as its synonym. Some information on this great famine will be found in Sir W. Hunter's *Rural Bengal* and in the letters of Mr. Bogle (see Markham, p. cxxxix) who was himself an eye-witness of the calamity, as well as in sundry notices and poems.

² *Tripartite rule of Nepal*. Before the Gorkha conquest of Nepal proper, it was occupied by an agricultural and commercial race called Newars, who had borrowed their arts and civilization from Tibet, and who encouraged trade between Tibet and India by allowing it to be carried on through the Nepal passes. Their chiefs had the title of Mall (Sanskrit *malla*.) Since the death of the sixth king of this dynasty, his dominions according to his directions, were divided into three

the subjection of that warlike tribe. It is said that unheard of cruelties were perpetrated in this war, which were witnessed by two members of the Roman Catholic Mission. This warfare, brought on by internecine dissensions, led one of the Nepalese old dynasties to entreat for aid from the English in India, with the result of the despatch, in 1769, perhaps for the first time, of a force under Captain Kinloch to the frontiers, though it proved unfruitful. Following close upon the Gorkha conquest of Nepal, Depa Shidar,¹ the chief of Bhutan, urged by purely hostile propensities, pounced upon Sikkim, retained possession of it, for a short while, and subsequently in 1772, when Warren Hastings had just assumed the rule of Bengal, invaded the Kuch Behar Ráj.² This Ráj, in its distress, sought the aid of that keen-sighted statesman, who lost no time to send a battalion of native infantry against the invaders.³ The Bhutanese, after a desperate resistance, were utterly routed, pursued into their fastnesses, and forced to sue for peace. Depa Shidar entreated the Tashi Lama who was then Regent of Tibet and

principalities governed by three branches who had their respective capitals in Kathmandu, Lalita Pattan and Bhatgáon. These were subverted by the Gorkha chief. Their religion was Buddhist, but they recognised caste. Their descendants, now obscure, still follow the Buddhist faith. The dissensions of the kings of the three principalities led to the chief of Bhatgáon to seek the aid of the Gorkha Prithví Náráyan who, after subduing the enemies of his ally, turned his arms against the latter, and after long years of fighting made himself completely master of the whole country.

¹ *Depa Shidar* (ཐེཔ་ཤི་ར་ལྷོ་རྩ་ལྷོ་རྩ་); also called *De-tar-yag* or *De-tar-ya*, the "Dêh Terria" of Turner.

² Kuch Behar, a state on the north-east frontier of British India. It lies between Bengal and Assam, and is divided from Bhutan by the *Duárs*. In olden times it was very extensive, and formed the western division of the ancient Kám-rúp Ráj. The name of the place is a museum of mythic history. According to a certain Tantra (the *Yogini*) Hirá Devi was a great devotee of S'iva who incarnated himself and lived in *Kuchinápárá*, a settlement of the *Kuch* or *Konch* tribe, and the fruit of his amour with her was a chief who became a great Rája, and as the Ráj was the result of S'iva's *vihára* (cor. Behar) or 'dalliance,' the State received the appellation of *Kuch Vihár*. Kám-rúp is the mine of the Tantras, and hence these works spread on both sides, to the hills and the plains. Wilson, in a note in his translation of the *Vishnu Purána*, includes Kuch Behar in the *Matsya Desá*.

³ Hastings in his two letters to Sir George Colebrooke and John Purling dated, respectively, 15th January and 31st March 1773, writes of the famine and of this war. Among other things, he says, "I shall ever oppose remote projects of conquests, yet I shall sedulously promote every undertaking which can complete the line of our possessions or add to its security." The Bhutanese "are a resolute and daring people. They made a desperate defence of the fort of Behar." (Cooch Behar.) "Many of them meeting death at the muzzle of the sepoy's pieces." (See Gleig's *Memoirs of Warren Hastings*, I. pp. 278 and 295.)

the guardian of the minor Dalai Lama of Lhasa, to intercede in his behalf, and the Lama accordingly sent a deputation to Calcutta, with a letter to Warren Hastings in 1773. This letter of mediation was received by Warren Hastings on the 29th March 1774, when it was laid before the Board. It is a remarkable document, and is given in Captain Turner's Account of an Embassy to the Court of the Tashi Lama in Tibet.

“ The affairs of this quarter in every respect flourish : I am night and day employed in prayers for the increase of your happiness and prosperity. Having been informed, by travellers from your country, of your exalted fame and reputation, my heart, like the blossoms of spring, abounds with satisfaction, gladness, and joy. Praise be to God that the star of your fortune is in its ascension. Praise be to him that happiness and ease are the surrounding attendants of myself and family. Neither to molest, nor persecute, is my aim : it is even the characteristic of my sect, to deprive ourselves of the necessary refreshment of sleep, should an injury be done to a single individual ; but in justice and humanity, I am informed, you far surpass us. May you ever adorn the seat of justice and power, that mankind may, in the shadow of your bosom, enjoy the blessings of peace and affluence. By your favour I am the Rájá and Lama of this country, and rule over a number of subjects, a circumstance with which you have no doubt been made acquainted, by travellers from these parts. I have been repeatedly informed, that you have been engaged in hostilities against the Dêh Terria (De-tar-ya), to which, it is said, the Dêh's own criminal conduct in committing ravages and other outrages on your frontiers, gave rise. As he is of a rude and ignorant race, past times are not destitute of instances of the like misconduct, which his own avarice tempted him to commit. It is not unlikely that he has now renewed those instances : and the ravages and plunder which he may have committed on the skirts of the provinces of Bengal and Behar,¹ have given you provocation to send your avenging army against him. Nevertheless his party has been defeated, many of his people have been killed, three forts have been taken from him, and he has met with the punishment he deserved. It is as evident as the sun that your army has been victorious ; and that, if you had been desirous of it, you might, in the space of two days, have entirely extirpated him ; for he had not power to resist your efforts. But I now take upon me to be his mediator ; and to represent to you, that, as the said Dêh Terria (Deb Rájá)² is dependent upon the Dalai

¹ Kuch Behar.

² The person who performs all administrative functions in Blutan is called

“Lama, who rules in this country with unlimited sway, though, on account of his being yet in his minority, the charge and administration of the country, for the present, is committed to me; should you persist in offering further molestation to the Dêh Terria’s country, it will irritate both the Lama and all his subjects against you. Therefore, from a regard to our religion and customs, I request you will cease from all hostilities against him; and in doing this, you will confer the greatest favour and friendship upon me. I have reprimanded the Dêh for his past conduct; and I have admonished him to desist from his evil practices in future, and to be submissive to you in all things. I am persuaded that he will conform to the advice which I have given him; and it will be necessary that you treat him with compassion and clemency. As to my part, I am but a Fakeer; and it is the custom of my sect, with the rosary in our hands, to pray for the welfare of mankind, and for the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of this country; and I do now, with my head uncovered, entreat that you will cease from all hostilities against the Dêh in future. It would be needless to add to the length of this letter, as the bearer of it, who is a Gosein,¹ will represent to you all particulars; and it is hoped that you will comply therewith. In this country the worship of the Almighty is the profession of all. We poor creatures are in nothing equal to you. Having, however, a few things in hand I send them to you as tokens of remembrance and hope for your acceptance of them.”²

It will be seen from the letter that the Tashi Lama alludes therein to a Gosain who headed the deputation, and Turner thus speaks of him:—“Of the persons deputed on this occasion by the Lama, two only ventured to encounter the burning atmosphere of Bengal; one a native of Tibet, named Paima; the other a pilgrim from Hindostan whose name I have already mentioned, Poorungheer Gosein.”³

The request of the Lama was very favourably received. Warren Hastings became eager to know more intimately the writer of this letter, which was conceived in a very friendly spirit and founded on

Deb Rája, also Kusho Depa, while the spiritual head is called Lama Binpoche or Dharma Rája. “But the real power has long been in the hands of the military governors, or Penlos of east and west Bhutan, whose capitals are respectively at Tong-sar and Paro.” Markham, *Narrative of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet, etc.*, Introd., p. lv.

¹ This is Púran Gir.

² Turner’s *Account of an Embassy to the Court of Teshoo Lama in Tibet*, Introd., pp. ix—xii.

³ Turner, *ibid.*, Introd., p. xiii.

good sense, which evinced high sentiments and self-respect and, at the same time, conveyed a gentle menace, couched in the most humble language. He perceived in it also the best opportunity to carry out his cherished view for the extension of British intercourse with the *terra incognita* on the Himalayan heights.

A treaty of peace was accordingly entered into and ratified between the Governments of Bengal and Bhutan, on the 25th of April, 1774. By the different articles of this treaty it was, among other things, agreed that the English would relinquish the Deb Rája's possessions acquired by conquest; that they would deliver up the Kuch Behar Rája Dwijendra Náráyan and his brother Devan Deo who had been taken away as prisoners of war; that the Bhutanese Mahants shall have their former privilege of duty-free trade, and allowed to visit Rangpur annually; that the Bhutanese shall not cause incursions into the country, nor molest the rayats (or subjects) of the Company; whatever Sannyásis are considered by the English as enemies, the Deb Rája shall not allow to take shelter in any part of the districts now given up, nor permit them to enter into the Honourable Company's territories or through any part of his.¹

This treaty having been concluded in the interest of Kuch Behar and the Company on the one hand, and in that of Bhutan on the other, whereby the Lama's intercession was completely respected, Warren Hastings' mind was turned upon commercial schemes, which were not a little matured at the sight of the presents which the Lama had sent by his deputation. He conceived the idea of sending a mission to the Lama in Tibet, and accordingly framed a letter to him, proposing, among other things, a treaty of amity and commerce between the Bengal and Tibetan states, and entrusted it to a deputation composed of Mr. George Bogle, servant of the Company, and Dr. Hamilton, with Púran Gir Gosain, as their sincere and faithful friend.

This is the first of a series of missions which Hastings successively sent to the *cis-* and *trans-*nivean states on the frontier heights, and it is from among the incidents of this initial deputation that the main facts which led to the grant of the *sandás*, the foundation of the Bhoṭ Mandir, and the consecration of the motley group of idols there, are to be gleaned. In this mission as well as in the second attempted embassy to Tibet under Mr. Bogle in 1779, in the third, under Captain Turner in 1783, and in the last, under Púran Gir Gosain himself, just at the closing period of the same statesman's career in 1785, are to be sought all the important services that the great Gosain has rendered to the British Government, and the conspicuous traits of his remarkable character, and

¹ Captain B. Boileau Pemberton's Report on Bhutan, App., p. 178.

some portions of the concluding history of the Bhoṭ Bágán down to the period of the chivalrous Gosain's tragic end. A rapid sketch therefore follows, of the broad features of these missions, bearing upon the present subject, based mainly upon the records left by Mr. Bogle, which form the narrative of Mr. Markham, and upon Turner's report.

It was moreover from the proceedings of these missions that the first administrator of India obtained a thorough knowledge of the wonderful politico-religious influence which, emanating from Tibet, operated, with more or less effect on China and Mongolia, and on its then protected state of Sikkim, and the semi-independent principality of Bhutan as well as on Nepal.

The communication of the Lama stirred the fertile brain of Warren Hastings, to conceive a consummate policy of peace and friendship with the hierarchical chief, believed to be an incarnation of Buddha himself, seated in his snow-clad mountain home. By this policy he aimed at the commercial prosperity of Bengal. Through two successive missions to Tibet, and four to Bhutan, he succeeded, in some respect, to re-establish the old trade routes and re-open, in a partial way, that active commercial intercourse which had subsisted and prevailed, from before the Muhammadan rule, between the plateau of Tibet and the plains of Bengal through the passes of Nepal, Bhutan and other channels, but which were sadly interrupted and checked by diverse causes.

The first mission under Mr. Bogle started from Calcutta in 1774, and, after proceeding to the hills, called Nagarkoṭ in Bengal and Boḍla¹ in Tibet, which form the common boundary of these two countries in the north, Bogle says, the only scanty information about the roads, the climate and the people which he there received, was from the Sannyásis.

Proceeding, stage after stage, Mr. Bogle, with his party, arrived at Tashi Chhoijong,² the capital of Bhutan, and met the Deb Rájá,³ who gave him a good reception, but great obstacles having been raised in respect

¹ *Boḍ* (native name of Thibet) + *la* 'a pass' = 'The pass into Thibet' Markham, *ibid.*, p. 15.

² Tashi Chhoijong is the modern capital of Bhutan, 106 miles from the town of Kuch Behar. There is in it a palace and a citadel. The latter is a lofty stone building of seven stories, in the fourth of which the Deb Rájá of Bhutan resides.

³ Deb Rájá. According to Sir Ashley Eden, the country, now called Bhutan, was formerly occupied by a people from Kuch Behar, who were, three centuries ago, driven away by an invading army of Tibetans over whom a Lama of the Red sect named Dugwang Sabdung acquired paramount influence as "Lama Rinpoche or Dharma Rájá. On his death Sabdung became incarnate in a little child at Lhasa who "was conveyed to Bhutan. When this child grew up, he confined himself to spiritual "concerns and appointed a Regent called the Deb Rájá." He is now elected by a council of six for three years.

of his intended visit to Tibet by a concatenation of influences ultimately emanating from China, they were finally removed by the zealous, persevering and masterly services of Púran Gir Gosain. The party accordingly left that capital, on the 13th October, and came to a place called Phari-jong,¹ where were observed the boundary-marks that separate Bhutan from Tibet. Thence they rode up, on the 8th November, to the gate of Tashi Rabgya,² the palace of the Tashi Lama. After several interviews with him, and residence there for some time, they, at his desire, accompanied him to his next palace and monastery, Tashi Lhunpo. Here, during a sojourn of five months, Mr. Bogle picked up some knowledge of the Tibetan language, acquainted himself with the religious tenets and practices of the people, studied their character, habits and manners, noted their unique marriage customs, penetrated into the mystery of their peculiar hierarchical government, threaded his way into the mysterious labyrinth of their politics, and, with cautious or rather furtive observation, acquired a partial knowledge of the productive resources and the trade routes of the country, old and new, but could carry out the object of his mission in only a limited way. And the little that he was able to do in this last respect, was due to his frankness and ability to understand the people and above all to conform to their ways that were innocent. He himself says, "The Lama used daily to send a priest to me in the early morning, with some bread and tea or some boiled rice and chopped mutton, of which last, as I always like to do at Rome as they do at Rome, I used to eat very heartily." He used even to put on "a Tibetan dress consisting of a purple satin tunic lined" with "Siberian furskins, a yellow satin cap, faced round with sable, and crossed with a red silk tape and a pair of red silk Bulgar hide boots." He followed the Lama's example and gave alms to the Sannyásís and Faqírs. He was not only admitted into the churches where he saw the idols, and the nature of the holy service, but introduced to the ladies of the Lama's household; and thus there grew up between Mr. Bogle and the good Lama a real personal friendship. Púran Gir Gosain, who enjoyed the esteem and confidence of both these persons, contributed in a great measure to bring about this desirable state of things. The deputation left Tashi Lhunpo, in April 1775, and returned in June following. Warren Hastings, in order to keep up an intercourse with the Himalayan states, so auspiciously opened, sent Dr.

¹ Phari-jong is a pass at the head of the Chumbi valley which was used both by Bogle and Turner. Near it is the city of Paro which Mr. Bogle selected as a trade mart for the merchandise of Bengal and Tibet.

² Tashi Rabgya is a small place in which the Tashi Lama temporarily resided, when small-pox broke out at Tashi Lhunpo.

Hamilton, who had accompanied Mr. Bogle to Tibet, to Bhutan on two successive missions, one in November 1775, and the other in July 1777. With these the present theme has no concern.

Mr. Bogle was again appointed an envoy to Tibet in April 1779, and Púran Gir Gosain, who had returned with him, was also to have accompanied the mission as before, but it was postponed on account of the arrival of the news that the Tashi Lama was, at the invitation of the old Chinese Emperor Kúnglung, about to start for Peking. During this delay Mr. Bogle, with all the persevering zeal he possessed in the cause of the Government, made the grand project of presenting himself before the Chinese Court, through the influence of the Lama, that he might thereby explain matters in a proper way, in the hope of removing Chinophobia from the Tibetan authorities in the matter of dealings with foreigners. And in this affair also, as on other important occasions, Púran Gir, the trusted and favourite agent of the Lama and the Bengal Government, was desired previously to join the Lama before he left Tibet. This the Gosain accordingly did, when the Lama had already started on his journey, and accompanied the Lama to the Chinese capital where his most important services will be described further on. There was the greatest probability of the success of Mr. Bogle's most wisely conceived scheme, which was founded upon the previous assurances he had received from the Lama while at Tashi Lhunpo, and which, as the sequel will show on the evidence of Púran Gir, the good honest Lama had almost brought about, but the death of the Lama in November 1780 from small-pox at Peking, and of Mr. Bogle at Calcutta in April 1781, prevented the realisation of this great object.¹

According to the politico-religious theory which regulates the elective hierarchical Government of Tibet, and of its dependencies, and of the territories which acknowledge a theocratic sway, a grand Lama revivifies himself after his death in some infant form which is discovered by some signs, and the child becomes the succeeding Lama. There are two principal Lamas in Tibet: one the Tashi Lama, at Tashi Lhunpo, the other the Dalai Lama at Lhasa, with equal authority, but the latter, on account of the residence of Chinese officials and troops at his capital, is assumed to be the superior.

At the time of Bogle's mission in 1774, the Dalai Lama was a minor, and the Tashi Lama was his Regent, and on account of his learning, piety and great virtue, was deservedly esteemed and revered throughout Buddhodom. On his death, his brother Chanjo Kusho was ruling at Tashi Lhunpo, as Regent during the interregnum.

This Regent communicated to Warren Hastings the sad intelligence

¹ Markham, *ibid.*, Introd., p. lxx.

of the death of the Tashi Lama at Peking by a letter which was received on the 12th February 1782. In this letter, among other things, the Regent spoke of his fervent hope in the return of the hour "of transmigration, that the bodies may be speedily exchanged, and our departed Lama again be restored to our sight."¹

The happy news of the discovery of the spirit of the Tashi Lama, incarnated in an infant in the valley of Painom,² was soon received by Hastings, and he determined to seize the opportunity of communicating to the Regent his congratulations on this auspicious event, as the best occasion for sending another mission to Tibet. He accordingly selected Captain Samuel Turner for this purpose, who, with Lieut. Samuel Davis and Dr. Robert Saunders and the inevitable Púran Gir Gosain as their guide and adviser, left Calcutta on the 9th January 1783.

Captain Turner followed the previous route of Mr. Bogle, and on arriving at Tashi Chhoijong transacted such affairs relating to Bhutan as he had been instructed to attend to, and after a stay of three months at this capital, proceeded to his destination. Early in the morning of the 22nd September, dazed at the sight of the resplendent beams of the rising sun reflected from the gilt tops of the monasteries, and regaled with "the deep tone of many sonorous instruments which were "summoning the religious to their morning orisons," the party found themselves ushered into the very splendid apartments of the Tashi Lhunpo palace.³ The Regent gave the Governor-General's envoy a hearty and respectful reception, assured him of the identity of the Lama who, in his previous existence, had been a great friend of Hastings', and informed him of his regeneration having been acknowledged by the Emperor of China. The mission had indeed arrived in Tibet at one of its most important eras; it was at a time when the nation was preparing by a grand demonstration to announce their acknowledgment of the regenerated Lama who was then being removed into the Tharpa Ling monastery for that customary training and education, for which the Chinese Emperor had issued strict injunctions. The Captain witnessed here most interesting objects and scenes, and collected materials by his intelligent observation and inquiry, whereby he confirmed and widened the knowledge regarding the country which had been laid open by his predecessor. When the time came to leave the place, he was introduced to the infant Lama, then only a child eighteen months old, and he gives the most surprising and most romantic account of this audience, and of the manner in which this little *Avatár* comported himself. Throughout the whole period of the sojourn of the mission our Púran Gir was most

¹ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 450.

² Turner, *ibid.*, 280.

³ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 240.

actively engaged in all such departments of business in which he could prove himself useful. At length on the 2nd of December the mission departed from Tashi Lhunpo on the return journey to Bengal, where they reached Patna in March 1784, and there the Captain submitted to Mr. Hastings his official report detailing an account of the result of his mission.¹

At the commencement of 1785 Warren Hastings contemplated appointing Púran Gir Gosain as a diplomatic agent at the Tibetan court, and delivered to him despatches for the new or rather regenerated Tashi Lama and the Regent. On the 8th of February 1785, he resigned his Governor-Generalship and embarked for England. Captain Turner introduced the Gosain to the officiating Governor-General John Macpherson, and he was allowed to proceed on his mission which started in March of the same year. Passing through Bhutan and transacting business there, the Gosain arrived at Tashi Lhunpo. He too had come here on a momentous occasion, he saw the removal of the child Lama from the Tharpa Ling monastery, and his installation on the throne of his predecessors, who in fact were believed to have been different corporeal forms of his own spirit. He had frequent interviews with the Regent and various Tibetan authorities, during which he did his best to confirm the friendship between the Bengal Government and the Tashi Lhunpo Court, under the shadow of which he remained for five months, and then returned to Calcutta with letters from the Lama and the Regent, which together with his own report he delivered to the above statesman.²

Thus ends a brief summary of the salient points of the missions to Tibet under Warren Hastings' rule; and in fact Púran Gir's diplomatic agency is the last of the missions which the British Government has, up to this moment, been able to send to that land of mystery.

The Bhoṭ Bágán originated from the incidents of the first mission in the following way. Mr. Bogle in relating the conversations he had with the Tashi Lama at Tashi Rabgya says, that on one occasion the Lama assured him that "his heart was open, and well disposed towards the English, and that he gave no credit to the representations which had been made to their disadvantage."

"I wish to have a place on the banks of the Ganges to which I might send my people to pray. I intend to write to the Governor on this subject, and wish you would second my application." "I replied that as I knew how desirous the Governor was to cultivate his friendship, I was persuaded on this or on any other occasion he would find him very ready to gratify him as far as in his power."³

¹ Turner, *ibid.*, pp. 326—358.

² Markham, *ibid.*, p. 138.

³ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 419.

Mr. Bogle in his letter to Mr. Hastings of the 5th December, which perhaps he wrote from the above place, alludes to the Lama's desire of founding a religious house on the banks of the Ganges, and adds what he had heard from the Lama. "About seven or eight hundred years ago, the Tibetan Pontiffs had many monasteries in Bengal, and their priests used to travel to that country in order to study the religion and languages of the Brahmans and to visit the holy places in Hindustan. The Musulmáns, upon conquering Bengal, plundered and destroyed their temples, and drove them out of the country. Since then there has been little intercourse between the two kingdoms. The Lama is sensible that it will throw great lustre on his pontificate, and serve to extend his fame and character, if he can, after so long an interval, obtain a religious establishment in Bengal, and he is very solicitous about this point. He proposes, also, to send some of his Gylongs, during the cold season, to wait upon you at Calcutta, and afterwards to go on pilgrimage to Gaya and other places, and has written to Chedzum Tamba,¹ at Peking, who has great interest with the Emperor, informing him that the English are now masters of Bengal; that you, their chief, have shown him great favour; that the English allow every one to follow his own religion unmolested; and advising him to send some persons to wait upon you, and to visit the principal temples in Bengal. I own I encouraged all this, in the view of strengthening the intercourse and connection with Tibet, and thinking it would be of advantage to the Company to open any channel of communication with the Court of China; and although I am not so sanguine as the Lama about the success of his endeavours, however sincere, to obtain leave for you to send a person to the Emperor, I do not altogether despair, by your favour, of one day or other getting a sight of Peking."²

Again, in the course of the first visit which Mr. Bogle paid to the Tashi Lama, on his return to Tashi Lhunpo, the latter referred to his previous proposal in respect of forming a religious house on the Ganges, and on receiving the reiterated assurance of the former, as to its compliance, the Lama spoke of the Chankya Lama,³ the high priest at Peking, and of his great influence at the Chinese Court, and of his intention to

¹ Properly *Jetsun Dampa*, identified with the Táránáth Lama. He is the third Pontiff of the Gelugpa or yellow cap sect, and resides north of Tibet among the Khalka tribes of outer Mongolia near Urga.

² Markham, *ibid.*, p. 134.

³ The Tashi Lama always spoke to Mr. Bogle of this high priest of China with great respect, and described him as having great influence over the Chinese emperor. Through his mediation an attempt was made for resort of Chinese trading pilgrims to Hindústán.

write to this personage, to the effect that the Feringis¹ were masters of Bengal, and had shown him great favour, and added that he thought it probable that the priest would send some of his people to visit the principal religious places, and expected, in the event of his doing so, that the Governor would give them a good reception.² At another interview, the Lama desired that Mr. Hastings should send an embassy to the Dalai Lama, when he would come of age, and that, in the event of his obtaining a grant of land on the banks of the Ganges, *he would place Púran Gir Gosain there*, and if he should stand in need of any small matter, he trusted the Governor would supply him.³

On Mr. Bogle's inquiry as to what site he would prefer, the Lama said, *he would like some place in the neighbourhood of Calcutta*, that the people to be sent down might have opportunities of seeing the Governor, to whom and to the Pandits he would leave the matter; the only thing he would press for, was that it might be near the Ganges. He further explained his idea on the subject of building a house there, and said, "I propose that Púran Gir who was then down in Calcutta should settle it. I do not wish it to be a large house, and let it be built in the fashion of Bengal." He intimated, that he would give the necessary instructions to Púran, who, he said, "has served me well, and I have not found him guilty of so many lies as most other fakirs, and I hope the Governor will show him favour." He here mentioned the name of another old Gosain 'Sukh Deb' who, he said, "has also asked me leave to go down to Calcutta, he will accompany you; and I have also written to the Governor about him, and I hope he will favour him."⁴

On another occasion the Lama showed Mr. Bogle *the images with their dress which he intended to send down to Bengal*, through Púran Gir, to be put up in the proposed temple, and inquired particularly about the situation of a town called S'ambhal.⁵ The reason assigned by the

¹ *Feringis*, a term usually applied in most parts of Asia to Europeans. It is said to have been derived from Frank. A stranger is generally called *Peling*.

² Markham, *ibid.*, p. 146.

³ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 164.

⁴ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 165.

⁵ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 168. S'ambhal is a fabulous city, the Utopia of the Northern Buddhists, on which Bábú S. C. Dás has supplied the following information. The Tashi Lama wrote a book called *Shambalai Lamyig*, i. e., a journey to Shambala. According to the Tibetan work "Selki-melon," the name S'ambhala is derived from that of king S'ambhaka of the S'akya race. Literally it means "one who makes happy," and S'ambha is the name of Íswara. According to the Tibetans, the position of the country of S'ambhala is as follows. It is a vast plain of the shape of a lotus of eight petals, entirely surrounded by a wall of snowy

Lama for his fondness for Bengal was that "although in the different " periods of his reviviscence he had chosen many regions for the places of " his birth, yet Bengal was the only country in which he had been born " twice ; for which reason," he said, " he had a predelection for it beyond " any other, and was desirous of making it a place of his abode, ap- " parently esteeming the sanctity of the Ganges, as a consideration of " inferior importance."¹

The religious prejudices which endear Bengal to the Tibetans, are again thus explained by Turner, who bases his information upon what he had heard from the Regent and Sapon Chenpo :²—" But Bengal is ren- " dered peculiarly dear to them by the powerful influence of religious " prejudice. The regeneration of their Lama is said to have taken " place, in times of remote antiquity, near the site of the ancient and " ruined city of Gowr, and all those places held in veneration by the " Hindoos, as Gya, Benares, Mahow and Allahabad, are equally ob- " jects of superstitious zeal, with a votary of the Tibet faith, who " thinks himself blessed above his fellow disciples, if he can but perform " a pilgrimage to these hallowed spots."³

After Mr. Bogle's return to Calcutta, the Lama, as he had proposed in his first conversation with him on the subject of his proposed temple, wrote to Mr. Hastings on the subject,⁴ and Mr. Bogle in his general report, speaking of the apprehension of Tibet merchants, in respect of the heat and unhealthiness of Bengal, urged that " prejudices of this " kind are to be cured only by habit, and your compliance with the " Teshu Lama's desire of founding a monastery and temple on the banks

mountains, and conveniently intersected by many great rivers. At the centre of this great country stands as the filament of a lotus, its capital, the city of Kalápa, with extensive gardens and parks round it, which are protected by a circular wall of very lofty snowy mountains with four gates. Four rivers issuing from the snowy barriers, water the city and its garden, and then flow into two lakes, called Upaságara and Puṇḍaríka, which adorn the earthly paradise of Kalápa. At the southern extremity of the city stands the garden of Malaya, with the palace of the Chakravartí Rája Chandra Bhadra. The mansions of the 25 Kulika emperors, who followed the line of the seven Dharma Rájas, stand on the bank of the river and line the lotus. The first Chakravartí emperor of Sambhala was Súryaprabha. In each of the eight petal-like divisions of S'ambhala there are 12,000,000 cities, in consequence of which 96,000,000 of cities cover the entire empire. The European scholars of Northern Buddhism are inclined to identify S'ambhala with Europe, making London (the Western) Kalápa.

¹ Turner, *ibid.*, p. xv.

² Sapon Chenpo was cup-bearer and minister to the Tashi Lama ; he was during the Regency of Chanjo Kusho second in rank at the court of Tashi Lhunpo.

³ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 268.

⁴ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 138, note.

“of the Gauges will probably tend to remove these strong prepossessions against the climate of Bengal, and to produce an intercourse with the northern nations. The safe return of the people whom the Lama proposes to send next winter to visit the holy places in Bengal will serve to inspire their countrymen with confidence; the fondness for the Tibetans for every thing strange or curious, strengthened by religion, will probably lead many others to undertake so meritorious a journey; and these pilgrimages, like the Hajj at Mekkah, may in time open a considerable mart for the commodities of Bengal.”¹

Warren Hastings, apprised of the Lama's wish by his direct communication, and urged by Mr. Bogle as to the paramount necessity of complying with it, issued the necessary orders under which a piece of land was purchased and given to the Tashi Lama, and the construction of a Buddhist temple was commenced under the direction of Mr. Bogle, who had been previously trusted by the Lama with a considerable remittance in money. As soon as it was completed, Hastings wrote thus on the subject to the Lama, who had previously sent images to be deposited in it—“By the blessing of God it will be the means of making your name known in this country, and of strengthening the friendship which is between us, and you will consider it as a mark of the confidence and regard which I bear to you.”²

Mr. Markham discovered a note on the manuscript of Mr. Bogle which he supposes to be in the handwriting of A. Dalrymple, Esq. It records some of the above facts, and adds that “people from Tibet and Bhutan constantly resorted to it “(Bhot Mandir)” during the time for which my knowledge reaches.”³

The connection of the British Government in India with the Bhot Bágán is now so far revealed as to make it clear that Warren Hastings at the earnest and repeated solicitations of one of the Grand Lamas of Tibet designated the Tashi Lama, and wishing to cultivate his friendship in the interest of Tibeto-Bengal trade, made choice, at his direction, of a little upwards of a hundred bighás of land (either originally rent-free or subsequently made such), purchased it, and in 1778 by the sanad No. 3 gave it to him formally, and actually to Púran Gir Gosain as their protégé and deserved favourite. It does not appear in the history of the missions how the 50 bighás of land, mentioned in the sanads Nos. 2 and 4, came to be granted to them in 1783,⁴ but from

¹ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 198.

² Markham, *ibid.*, note 1, p. 138, note 1, p. 146, and Turner, *ibid.*, Intro., p. xv.

³ Markham, *ibid.*, note 1, page 138.

⁴ It should be noted here that the Sanad No. 4 for 50 bighás was executed in favour of a Lama in 1783, but his name is identical with that of the then deceased Lama, who had, while living in 1778, received a grant of 100 bighás by sanad No.

an episode relating to the Bhoṭ Bágán, which will be noticed hereafter, it will be seen that Captain Turner refers to these 50 bighás, when he says in one of his communications to the Governor-General (John Macpherson) in 1786, that it "is a part of the land situated on the western bank of the river, opposite to Calcutta, which was formerly granted, under a sunnud of this government, to Teshoo Lama, for the foundation of a place of worship, and as a resort for those pilgrims of his nation, who might occasionally make visits to the consecrated Ganges."¹ He also in the same paper describes the whole as Púran "Gir's little territory."

History then corroborates the statements in the sanads that the total area of the Bhoṭ Bágán is a trifle upwards of 150 bighás, and shows that the object of the grant was fully carried out by the liberality of the Lama, the amount of whose remittance, received by Mr. Bogle for the construction of the temple and dwelling, though not traceable now, is stated to have been 'considerable,' and hence the structures were no doubt originally commensurate with the large expenditure that had been incurred on account of them. There were also guest-houses, (as the traditions of the place confirm), in which people from Tibet, some of whom were important enough to have been introduced to Warren Hastings, were lodged. The building that is now seen, with partial reconstruction of some ruined portions, must be the remains of what was once of much larger dimension and extent.²

Of the grantees whose names the sanads mention, one is the Lama, the other Púran Gir Gosain. The title of the former, as given in the Persian, and as already set forth, is *Teshí Lámah Panchan Ardání Bak-deo Panchan*, which I think would be correctly *Tashi Lama Panchan Ertení Vákya Deva*, meaning "the Tashi Lama Paṇḍita, the gem of great Paṇḍitas, Vákya-deva (lord of speech)." It was thus for the first and last time in the annals of Tibet and Buddhodom and of British India, that an *Avatár*, the living divinity, who from his palace on the highest regions where man can dwell, exercises his hierarchical sway over the largest extent of territories in the world, condescended to accept sanads from the representative of the British Power in India and to become his Jagírdár a hundred and twenty years ago! The personage who gave the kindest reception to Mr. Bogle and formed with him a real friendship,

2. This anomaly may be explained by the fact that it is not the name of a person, but the official designation that is mentioned in both the sanads.

¹ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 432.

² The Bhoṭ Bágán or rather Bhoṭ Mandir in fact was constituted a *maṭh* in which character it is perhaps the only one besides that of the celebrated Tarkeśwar, in Bengal.

and who was in fact the formal assignee of the Bhoṭ Bágán land, is described by the latter as having been forty years of age, and of low stature, fairer than an ordinary Tibetan with jet-black hair, and eyes small and black. He could speak Hindústání tolerably. His disposition was open, candid, and generous, and merry and entertaining in his conversation. Says Mr. Bogle, "I endeavoured to find out, in his character, those defects which are inseparable from humanity, but he is so universally beloved that I had no success, and not a man could find in his heart to speak ill of him."¹ He remarks elsewhere, that the Lama's thirst for knowledge was insatiable. The other assignee's name in the sanads appears in Persian as Púran Gir, and in the Bengalí inscription on the tomb-house door-top in the Bhoṭ Bágán as Purán Giri Mahanta.

The next point of inquiry is, how under the influence of Buddhism, a religion so well-known to be antagonistic in its main tenets to Hinduism as derived from the Vedas and Puráṇas—representatives of Hindú and Buddhist mythology are found mixed up in the Bhoṭ Mandir ?

In the sixth century before the Christian era Buddhism was founded in India; three centuries later it became the state religion of the country, and in the early part of the fourth century before the same era, it was introduced into Ceylon where it is believed to have been preserved in its purest state, but as missionaries began to spread it in different countries out of India, great departures from the original institution began to take place. It was accepted in China, at the commencement of the era, and it reached Tibet,² in the beginning of the seventh century through the influence of a Chinese princess. It came from China and India in two mixed streams; from the former country flowing through successive beds of old religions and indigenous philosophy, and from the latter, as from its main source, it came in continuous currents through translations and retranslations of its hagiology, and through Puránic and Tántric literature under the teachings of the Bráhmans, and from both weighted with exhaustless legends since the days of Sákya-muni. Among the holy books imported into Tibet from India are mentioned the Tantras in twenty-two volumes. According to the commentary on the Kálachakra Tantra, after Buddha's death "the compilers *writing* in three books the three vehicles (or works on

¹ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 84.

² "It is said that a native king established the seat of Government at Lhasa in 617 A. D.; that he married a Chinese princess of the Buddhist persuasion, and that he sent his minister to India, who returned with the great body of truth contained in the Buddhist canonical Scriptures, framed the Tibetan alphabet from the Devanagari of India, and commenced the translation of the canon from Sanskrit into the language of the country. Markham, *ibid.*, pp. xlv, xlvi.

“three fold principles), they expressed all the three true repositories of “Sutra, of Tathagata, in his language. The Prajñyá-páramitá and the “Mantras in Sanscrit; the several sorts of Tantras in several languages, “Sanskrit, Pracrit, Apabhransha, in that of the mountaineers, and all “sorts of mlechchhas. Accordingly all the three Vehicles (yánam) in “Tibet were written in the Tibetan language.”¹ Csoma Kőrösi describes four different systems of Buddhism derived from India.

Mahámáyá², a revered name in Hindú mythology, and specially in the Sakti doctrine, is also the name of the mother of Buddha, and as such, around it have accumulated legendary accretions, which, in Tibet, have greatly predominated. The incarnation of the Grand Lamas, though it may at first appear, in its temporal aspect, peculiar to Tibet, is in its essence the widely accepted doctrine of metempsychosis in Hindú mythology and philosophy.

Besides the circumstance of the import of Hindú Sástras of different periods into Tibet, its very situation in the midst of mountains and lofty peaks, sources of great rivers and springs, and lakes held equally sacred by the Hindús and Buddhists, has, from the remotest times, rendered it the common meeting ground of pilgrims of both faiths, not to mention the frequency of such meetings between the mountaineers and the people of the plains bent upon mercantile errands, whereby a blending of the two religions became inevitable.

The history of the missions, moreover, brings out striking proofs of such blending. The very first thing, at every stage of their journeys from the *dúars*³ of Bhutan up to the mountain terraces, to Tashi Lhunpo, which the two envoys Bogle and Turner marked, was the very great respect paid by the people and the chiefs to the Gossains and Sannyásis, the Gelongs,⁴ and even Faqírs.⁵ They both saw in the palace of the Lama, in the temples and monasteries, and in other places, idols and church services, to confirm them in the belief that Tibetan Buddhism was intimately connected with many important phases of mediæval and modern Hinduism. Says Bogle “The religion of the Lamas is some- “how connected with that of the Hindus, and many of their deities are “the same, the Shaster is translated into their language; and they hold

¹ Hardy's *Eastern Monachism*, pp. 188-189.

² Mahámáyá. In one of the Játakas there is a legend that king Sanja became Suddhodana, the father of Gotama Buddha; the queen Phusatí became Mahámáyá Deví, his mother. Hardy's *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 118, 133.

³ *Dúars* from Sanskrit *dvára*, door, gate.

⁴ Gelong, i. e., *dGe-slong*, a monk.

⁵ *Faqírs*. Though applied to Muhammadan mendicants, the term is loosely applied to mendicants of all religions.

“in veneration the holy places of Hindustan.” In the gallery of the Tashi Lhunpo palace he saw, among others, the image of the god of war; probably it was that of Kártikeya. In speaking to him on one occasion on the subject of trade, the Tashi Lama said that “the Lama had temples “in Benares, Gaya, somewhere in Purneah and at several other places; “that their priests used to travel there to study the Shaster and the “religion of the Brahmans; and after remaining there ten, twenty, or “thirty years, returned to Tibet communicating their knowledge to “their countrymen, and thereby gaining great reputation; that about “eight hundred years ago Bengal was invaded and conquered by the “Mussulmans, who destroyed and pillaged the temples and plundered “the people, so that such as escaped returned to their mountains along “with some Brahmans who fled from the persecutions; since which “time the inhabitants of Tibet have had little connection with Bengal “or the southern countries.” In a conversation turning specially on religion, the Lama pointed out the connection between his faith and that of the Bráhmaṇ, said, the Tibetans worshipped the three Hindú gods Brahmá, Vishṇu and S'iva, but not their inferior deities.¹ These three names symbolically express the three attributes of the deity as comprehended in the Vedic holy syllable *Om*, but the three emblems *Om Han Hoong* which Bogle saw on three round brass plates on the front of the Tashi Rabgya palace, are said to refer to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Turner, when speaking of the places of pilgrimage in India which Tibetans frequented, says “Gungasaugor (Gangá ságara) an uninhabited “island situated at the confluence of the Ganges with the sea, and the “pagoda of Juggernath (Jagannátha) on the coast of Orissa, are also “deemed of equal sanctity.” He notices also the practice of pilgrimage by proxy—he had heard the late Tashi Lama having by his agents pilgrimized to Kási, Prayága, Gangá Ságar, and Jaggannáth Purí. Among the assemblage of gods he saw in Tibet, he mentions the Hindú deities, Durgá and Káli, Gaṇeśa and Kártikeya. He refers elsewhere to a Bhutanese Durgá Pújá. Thus cumulative proof is found to justify Tibeto-Buddhism, allowing Buddhistic and Hindú idols to be worshipped in the same temple, as it is seen in the Bhoṭ Mandir.

The public services of Púran Gir commenced, so far as records show, when as a young Sannyási, not more than perhaps twenty-five years old, he received from the Tashi Lama, the famous letter of mediation on behalf of Depa Shidar of Bhutan, and with a single Tibetan companion of the name of Paima, came down the mountain heights, and “ventured “to encounter the burning atmosphere of Bengal” towards the end of March 1774.

¹ Markham, *ibid.*, pp. 72, 142.

We see in our mind's eye this personage in his ascetic garb with *danḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu* in his hands, and with his tiger skin flung on his shoulders, ushered into the saloon of our Government House, and introduced to the first Governor-General as the holy envoy from the Grand Lama. He presents his credentials to him, and lays before him the Lama's presents, which included "talents of gold and silver, bulses of gold dust, and bags of "genuine musk." Long and searching were the inquiries which were made by the inquisitive Mr. Hastings, and the answers he received were most satisfactory and suggestive, and led to the mission of Mr. Bogle. When Púran Gir accompanied Mr. Bogle on this mission, his services were found of immense value, and almost indispensable at every important stage of the journey. At Tashi Chhoijang, while the mission waited to receive the Lama's permission to proceed to Tibet, Chinese intrigue and jealousy at Lhasa, operating at the Tashi Lhunpo Court, threatened to cut short the progress of the deputation. The Tashi Lama had written letters to Mr. Hastings, to Mr. Bogle, and to Púran Gir, which were received by the Deb Rája. In the two former, the addressees were informed that "his (the Lama's) country being subject to the Emperor or of China, whose order it is that he shall admit no Moghul, Hindu-stani, Patan or Fringy, he is without remedy, and China being at the "distance of a year's journey, prevents his writing to the Emperor, for "permission, and desires me therefore to return to Calcutta."¹ The communication to Púran Gir again informed him that he (the Lama) wished to postpone Mr. Bogle's visit to Tibet on account of small-pox breaking out there. Suspecting these to be mere pretences to cover some real cause of aversion on the part of the Lama to see him, Mr. Bogle now almost in despair turned towards our Gosain Púran, and says he, "In this "situation all my hopes of seeing Teshu Lama were chiefly founded on "the Gosain. As my journey had been undertaken upon his assurances, "he was engaged in honour to see it accomplished, and I endeavoured "to strengthen this principle by powerful motives. While he remained "at Tassisudon (Tashi Chhoijang), he could be of no service, and I "readily consented to his proceeding to the Lama."²

The noble Gosain was keenly alive to a true sense of honour; he was much trusted by the Lama, and his words carried weight. He explained to him the true state of things, and disabused his mind of wrong impressions against the English, and at his suggestion the Tashi Lama wrote to the Dalai Lama's Minister, drawing his attention to the courtesy and high-mindedness of the Feringís in their dealings with the defeated Depa Shidar in compliance with his request, and warning him of the consequence of refusing permission to the admittance of the mission.

¹ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 45.

² Markham, *ibid.*, p. 46.

The permission was granted and forwarded to Mr. Bogle through the Deb Rája. Not content with being instrumental in obtaining passports, he came down to meet the mission in their journey up, and joining them at Giansu, conducted them at once to the Lama's Tashi Rabgya palace.

During the whole period of Mr. Bogle's sojourn in Tibet, Púran Gir was not only his cicerone, interpreter, and adviser, but he was unremitting in his endeavours to establish a friendly disposition in the mind of the Tashi Lama towards the British Government, and to bring about that intimacy which grew up between these personages. He was the constant referée of both on various matters of importance, and often cited by them as a witness in respect of the personal dealings of each relating to the mission on any points in the administrations of Tibet and Bengal. Bogle asking him to say how tolerant of religious matters, and how successful in promoting security of life and property was the Government of Hastings, and the Lama inviting him to testify how peace-loving and quiet were his people, and how grateful were his sentiments towards Mr. Hastings for his ready compliance with his request, of whom he said "he (Mr. Hastings) has made him very happy, and "has done a very pious action. My servants (among whom was "Púran Gir) who went to Calcutta were only little men, and the kind "reception they had from the Governor I consider as another mark of "his friendship."¹

It has been already stated that the contemplated second mission to Tibet under Mr. Bogle in 1779 was prevented by the departure of the Tashi Lama at the time to Peking, and by the death of Bogle himself in 1781, and that Púran Gir Gosain had, at the instance of the Government of Bengal, accompanied the Lama to China.

He showed his powers of observation by taking notes of every important event in the journey of the Lama, of his interview with the Emperor and of his reception. He actually wrote out a graphic account of all this. Who translated it is not known, but a translation was with Mr. Hastings from whom, through various channels, Mr. A. Dalrymple obtained it, and published it in the *Oriental Repertory*. It is most interesting and of special value in connection with the present subject, it, or rather its original, being the literary production of our versatile Gosain. Among many facts contained in it, those that should be noted here are:—the extraordinary veneration and esteem which the Chinese Emperor exhibited towards the Lama in his repeated entreaties, whereby he pressed him to come to China on his having at first declined to go there; in the grand and expensive preparations that were made throughout the entire course of a long and slow journey, and in the assiduous

¹ Markham, *ibid.*, p. 136.

and respectful attentions shown him during his sojourn in Peking, where, on his arrival, he was seated on the highest cushion on the imperial throne on the right side of the Emperor; the proceedings of the spiritual 'initiation through the Lama's whispering of the *mantra* or sacred text into the Emperor's ear after the Hindú fashion in the presence of Changya guru;¹ and the particular interview in which the good Tashi Lama, true to his word, informed the Emperor that "in the country of Hindústán, which lies on the borders of my country, there resides a great prince or ruler for whom I have the greatest friendship. I wish you should now regard him also, and if you will write him a letter of friendship and receive his in return, it will afford me great pleasure, as I wish you should be known to each other, and that a friendly communication should, in future, subsist between you."

The Emperor, on hearing this request from the much venerated Lama, replied that it was a very small one indeed, "but that this or any thing else he desired, should be complied with. He continued to inquire of the Lama what that Prince or Governor's name was, the extent of the country he ruled over and the number of forces &c." At this stage the Lama sent for his confidential Púran Gir, presented him before his Celestial Majesty, and desired him to answer the inquiries of the Emperor regarding the Governor of Hindústán "as (he) the writer² had often been in his country. The writer "then informed him that the Governor of Hindústán was called Mr. Hastings, that the extent of the country he governed was not near equal to that of China, but superior to any other he knew, and that the troops of that country were upwards of three lacks of horsemen."³

On another occasion the Lama in the presence of Púran Gir reminded the Emperor that "he had some time before mentioned to him a prince or governor of Hindústán, called Mr. Hastings, with whom he (the Lama) held strict friendship, and repeated his wish that the Emperor should know him and hold friendly intercourse with him also by writing to him and receiving his friendly answers. Much more was said by the Lama on this subject, to all of which the Emperor replied, that he could only assure the Lama, he joined most heartily with him in what he wished, as it would give him much pleasure to know and correspond with the Governor of Hindústán, his friend; and to convince him of his sincerity, he would, if the Lama desired it, cause a letter immediately to be written to the Governor in such

¹ The Chinese high priest.

² Púran does not speak of himself in the first person but as 'the writer.'

³ Oriental Repertory, VII, pp. 145—164.

“ terms as the Lama should dictate, or if the Lama thought, it would be more effectual towards establishing the friendship, he wished that the letter should be in readiness when the Lama took his departure from China, and that he should take it with him, and have the care of forwarding it, in such manner as he thought best, to the Governor of Hindústán. The latter mode the Lama made choice of, and expressed much satisfaction.”

It was destined, however, that all this friendly endeavour on the very eve of bearing fruit should be frustrated, for the Lama was seized, as elsewhere stated, with small-pox, about which he had forebodings before he left Tashi Lhunpo, and in fact had written to the Emperor as one of his apprehensions which disinclined him to go to China. Of this disease the Lama died on the evening of the 12th November 1780 as he sat at prayer. Púran Gir, whom the Lama in his dying hour had sent for and conversed with, describes his death “to have been remarkably tranquil.”

The Emperor who, on receipt of the sad news, had come to see the dead body still remaining in a sitting posture through the help of pillows, was moved to tears.¹ In that position it was put into a coffin, then into a large temple-shaped receptacle of pure gold, with an outer covering of copper, and was sent in great procession to Tashi Lhunpo, under the charge of the departed Lama's brother, to whom the Emperor said that “he trusted to the Almighty soon to hear of his arrival there, “but above all other things he would impatiently long to hear of the *Lama's regeneration,*” which it was his special request strictly to inform him of.

Púran Gir accompanied this procession, and saw the gold cased earthly tenement of the Lama deposited in a mausoleum in Tashi Lhunpo, while the Buddha world in the north remained expectant for the appearance of an infant, vivified by the departed spirit of the Tashi Lama to be elected his successor.

The Chinese Emperor Kuen-lung's proceedings with reference to the Lama closed with a letter which he addressed to the Dalai Lama, informing him of his death, and touchingly alluding to the foreboding which had at first disinclined him to visit China.²

¹ The affecting scene described by Púran Gir, when the Chinese Emperor was shedding tears at the bedside of the dying Tashi Lama, bears some resemblance to the great Akbar repairing with his *Hakim* to the house of his favourite Faizi the celebrated poet and scholar, when he found him breathing his last, throwing away his head gear as a mark of great sorrow and bitterly uttering an extemporised mourning verse.

² A translation of this letter by M. Amiot, a missionary, is also published in the *Or. Rep.* vii, p. 273. Mr. Amiot had previously communicated information to

The Regent¹ above named as well as the minister to the late Lama Soipon Chenpo, in two very curious letters, conveyed to Warren Hastings the melancholy intelligence of the death of the Lama at Peking, expressing at the same time a hope for the speedy incarnation of his soul. In both these letters our Púran Gir is often and often mentioned with expressions of great confidence in his character and ability. The Soipon Chenpo writes—"From the relation of Púran Gir inform yourself of those things which are past, and of those which are present, and of those things which are to come to pass," and the Regent after giving a brief account of the late Tashi Lama's visit to China and his melancholy fate and funeral, says, "Poorungheer Gosein arrived here in the year 1193, after the departure of the Lama towards China and two letters, and nine strings of pearls, &c. &c. arrived safe" * * "I have communicated other matters, and other things, to the faithful Poorungheer by whom you will be informed of them. In compliance with your wishes, you will permit him to remain under the shadow of your protection, and favour him with such marks of your kindness, as may enable him to pass his days in returning thanks for your goodness.²

There is, in the last letter, allusion in two places to some "village of the Raja" in respect of which Hastings had shown the Lama some favour and likewise with reference to "the certain portion of land and the *mahsool* thereon and in settling the disputes appertaining thereto." It is obvious that the allusions refer to the encroachment on the Bhot Bágán to be noticed further on. The Regent also applies for the grant of "a lot of land³ in the noble city of Calcutta, on the bank of the river." Concerning this affair says he, "I have spoken fully and particularly to the Gosein Poorungheer, and he will make known to you the whole thereof, and you will comply with my request."

Púran Gir, when he accompanied Captain Turner to Tibet, rendered services in promoting the object of the mission as valuable as in the case of Mr. Bogle, and the Regent reposed in him the same confidence as had been done by the deceased Tashi Lama; and though the Captain does not, in his report and narrative, refer to him as often as his prede-

a Paris Journal of the imperial preparation for the celebration of a ceremony on the seventeenth birthday of the Emperor, to which the *Pan-tchan Erteni*, as he calls him, was invited. The Emperor writes in the above letter, "Although I am well aware that to come and to go are but as the same thing to the *Panchan Erteni*, yet when I reflect &c."

¹ The Regent's letter has already been incidentally noticed.

² Turner, *ibid.*, Ap., pp. 449—456.

³ This seems to have been a fresh request for land within the city of Calcutta. It is not known how it was dealt with.

cessor did, he always speaks of him with great appreciation, calls him a Hindú Gosain, a kind of religious hermit or pilgrim, and says, "Motives of religious duty, which, among the order of Goseins more specially, attaches peculiar respect to every kind and degree of penance, having occasionally led Poorungheer among the different tribes of Tartars, he had acquired, during his residence amongst them, a very competent knowledge of their manners, and of their language, which he spoke with apparent ease; and by the exemplary regularity of conduct he had uniformly preserved in his intercourse with the inhabitants of these regions, I found that he had strongly recommended himself to their notice, and obtained the favour of all their chiefs."¹ And again that he as well as the Tibetan Pauima "were men of acute understanding and ready information, and from them much knowledge was collected both of the country from which they came, and of the way which led to it."

It was a grand and momentous occasion when the Bengal Mission arrived in Tibet. It was the celebration of a festival on the Tashi Lama's (a Boddhisatwa) having sacrificed his Buddhahood for the behoof of his devotees and reappeared in the flesh. There was a mighty stir and flutter throughout the Buddha domains, extending on the one hand to China and Tartary, and on the other to Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal. Magnificent preparations, calculated to produce a spectacular effect, were made to remove the infant Lama from his house in the Painon valley to the monastery of Tharpaling for his training. Turner sought, through the mediation of Púran Gir, to obtain for him admittance into the arena of the imposing ceremony, but the assiduous Gosain failed in his endeavour. Chinese jealousy of strangers was apprehended, and the Regent's and Soipon Chenpo's conversation on a former occasion explained this, when they cited Púran Gir as witness to "the anxiety they had laboured under, in contriving to conduct" the Captain to Tashi Lhunpo. Captain Turner was perfectly satisfied as to the genuineness of this dread of Chinese influence, though this nation deify the Lama. He says in the recital of their embarrassments, "though they are averse to own any immediate dependance upon the Chinese, I could plainly trace the greatest awe of the Emperor of China, of his officers stationed at the court of Lassa styled Umbas, as well as of the Jasoos, and the Raja of that place, Gesub Rimbochay² who had usurped even,

¹ Turner; *ibid.*, p. 38, note.

² Properly Gyetshab Rinpochhe (also called Sadag for which Turner finds no exact English equivalent, but supposes it to mean Prime minister and something more, *ibid.*, p. 245) is a temporal sovereign who, during the minority of the Dalai Lama at Lhasa, presides as the Regent. As this minority is of frequent occurrence, the

“from the hands of the Dalai Lama, the greatest portion of his temporal power.”

The Regent and the minister, however, soon after the retirement of the Chinese troops and officers, who had been sent by the Emperor to escort the infant Lama to the monastery, allowed Captain Turner to obtain, through the Gosain's endeavour, a ready compliance with such requests as he made from time to time. He was admitted into the monasteries, and allowed to enter the mausoleum of the late Tashi Lama, the structure, adornments, and riches of which, and the ceremonies in which, he describes with great circumstantiality. He saw depicted, upon the pedestal, the imperial Chinese dragon—a conspicuous indication of the suzerainty of this nation. Under the portico of the mausoleum, sat a priest reading a book¹ with the greatest attention, indifferent to what was going around; there were others to relieve him, it being their duty to pray perpetually upon the same spot, and keep alive the sacred fire² that burns before the shrine. The departed Tashi Lama, whose corpse cased in gold was deposited at the base of the pyramidal tomb, in an upright sitting devotional attitude, was represented on the top in an effigy of gold. Púran Gir Gosain and others “prostrated themselves nine times with devout humility.” The Captain saw also every religious edifice adorned with the head of the lion evincing the Tibetan veneration for the animal.

Towards the commencement of December, when, on the return journey, the deputation came to the foot of the hill on which was situated the Tharpaling monastery already noticed, in which the infant Lama, then eighteen months old had been lodged for education, Captain Turner was allowed to visit this Lama, whom he found seated in great form upon his throne with his parents on each side. The child turned towards a crowd of visitors that came to worship him, “and received them all with a cheerful look of complacency.” The father, among other things said, that the Lama rose earlier than usual, “because the English gentlemen were arrived, and he could not sleep.” “During the time we were in the room,” says the Captain, “I observed that “the Lama's eyes were scarcely ever turned from us, and when our “cups were empty of tea, he appeared uneasy, * * * until “they were filled again. He took some burnt sugar out of a golden cup,

Gesab in fact is considered as the real sovereign, the Dalai on coming to years of maturity often tries to shake off the control of the ambitious Gesabs, but the latter succeed by foul means to retain power.

¹ Like the reading of the *Chandi* in the Hindú shrines; but the Tibetan practice of unremitting recitation is unique.

² The preservation of the sacred fire is another old Hindú religious practice adopted by the Tibetans.

“containing some confectionary, and, stretching out his arm, made a motion to his attendant, to give them to me. * * * * *

“I found myself, though visiting an infant, under the necessity of saying something; for it was hinted to me, that notwithstanding he is unable to reply, it is not to be inferred that he cannot understand.” He, the Captain, then made a brief speech, beginning with an allusion to his (the Lama’s) death in China and happy regeneration, and to the joy of the Governor-General at this last auspicious event, and ending with a request for an extensive communication between his votaries and the dependants of the British Nation. “The little creature turned,” writes Captain Turner, “looking stedfastly towards me, with the appearance of much attention while I spoke, and nodded with repeated but slow movements of the head, as though he understood and approved every word, but could not utter a reply. * *

“His whole attention was directed to us; he was silent and sedate, never once looking towards his parents; * * * his behaviour, on this occasion, appeared perfectly natural and spontaneous, and not directed by any external action, or sign of authority. * *

“He made the most expressive signs, and conducted himself with astonishing dignity and decorum. * * He had an animated expression of countenance; altogether, I thought him one of the handsomest children I had ever seen.” When a watch on another visit was presented to him, “he admired it, but with gravity and without any childish emotion.”¹

The work performed by Púran Gir, when he himself as envoy of the Governor-General presented himself before the Regent of the minor Tashi Lama, has already been briefly noticed. In his journey through Bhutan, he received from the subjects of the Deb Rájá the most ample and voluntary assistance to the frontier of his territory, and experienced upon the borders of Tibet such an unusually inclement weather by a heavy fall of snow as to leave him no doubt of his falling a victim to it, but an early change taking place, the party were enabled to advance. The mission reached Tashi Lhunpo on the 8th May, and Púran Gir immediately presented himself at the Durbar of the Chanjo Kusho, Panchhen Ertini Nomankhan, and explained the object of his mission which was the same as the previous ones. The Gosain received a most favourable reception, as due to one in whom the late Lama, the Regent himself and the Governor-General of India reposed the utmost confidence and whom the people of Tibet and Bhutan venerated. He was introduced into the garden, where the young Lama² was then taking

¹ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 334-36.

² Then within his fourth year.

his recreation, attended by the Regent, his parents and others. Here he made his prostration, and showed other marks of veneration. The despatches were broken open by the Lama, who examined every article of the present brought to him, and regarded the Gosain with a very kind and significant look, talked to him in the Tibetan language, and gave his dismissal by laying his hand upon his head which he had previously uncovered for the purpose.

Púran Gir witnessed one of the grandest and most imposing ceremonies in Tibet, which was the removal of the child Lama from the Tharpaling monastery to that of Tashi Lhunpo, and his installation there on the throne of his predecessors. Here he saw ambassadors from China, the Dalai Lama himself from Lhasa, and deputies from many other countries, accompanied by numerous trains of attendants and officers, swelled by an unprecedented crowd of people whose devotion or the pleasure of sight-seeing had drawn thither, and he beheld with wonderment arrangements which were conducive to pomp and parade, grandeur and magnificence.

The Gosain had frequent interviews with the Regent and the Tibetan authorities at Tashi Lhunpo, who all assured him of their desire to encourage the commercial intercourse established under the auspices of the late Governor-General, and of the respect they entertained for the integrity of the character of the English nation, of which they had been convinced by intercourse with the agents of Warren Hastings, specially as the Regent said that "the views of the English tended to "no scheme of ambition, but were confined merely to objects of utility "and curiosity."

With Púran Gir's mission in 1785 ended the statesmanly and most wisely concerted proceedings of the first Governor-General of India, to open friendly and commercial relations between the Tibetan, Bhutanese and other Himalayan states and Central Asian regions on the one side, and the British Government and its subjects on the other—relations which received a rude shock under the Government of Lord Cornwallis, when he failed to realise the importance of promptitude of action in protecting the Tashi Lama's realm from the unprovoked and wanton invasion by the Gurkháli dynasty of Nepal, in 1792. The tardy measures which led to "the despatch of Captain Kirkpatrick, followed too late after the Chinese General Sund Fo had vindicated the honour of the Tashi Lama, and curbed the ambitious chief of Nepal by a crushing defeat of his army."

It will now be seen that while the establishment of Bhoṭ Bágán and the despatch of the Tibet missions owe their origin remotely to the Gurkha invasion of Sikkim, followed by the Bhutanese invasion of

Kuch Behar, in 1769, and the masterly and conciliatory policy of Warren Hastings ; and proximately to the mysterious doctrine of Lama metempsychosis and the zealous and faithful service of a Sivite Sannyási ; the most audacious Gurkháli invasion above alluded to, culminating in the sack of Tashi Lhunpo and the flight to Lhasa of the same Tashi Lama who as an infant had received the Turner and the Gosain missions, as well as the foresightless and the masterly inactive policy of the Cornwallis rule, are to be regarded as immediate causes of the final closure of the gates for British officials to the *Cis-* and *Trans-nivean* states. It was also within a short while subsequent to those events that in the Bhoṭ Bágán the brave Gosain met his death at the hands of robbers, as the sequel of the narrative will show. The Gurkha invasions, therefore, of 1769 and 1792, should be remembered as the two mile-stones of very important occurrences in the history of British India.

The important features of the extraordinary character of Púran Gir, the co-assignee of the Tashi Lama, have been gleaned from the history of the missions to Tibet. He possessed remarkable intelligence and wisdom, a fund of inexhaustible energy, a mastery of many languages including Tibetan and Mongolian, a wide range of experience acquired by travel in and out of India, a practical insight into all the commercial relations of Asia of which Tibet formed the heart, and enjoyed and deserved a reputation for piety and integrity which made him the trusted agent of the Tashi Lhunpo authorities and the Bengal Government.

Of the personal history of this remarkable and extraordinary Sannyási, unfortunately there exists no record ; whatever was known of him, has, like that of most of our illustrious countrymen, passed into oblivion. It is a happy thing that so many particulars and incidents connected with his public life and such abundant testimony to his character, capacity and comprehensive knowledge of the important affairs of the time, have been preserved in the pages of Markham's "Narrative of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet"—a narrative the materials of which were traced by the author in the possession of private individuals, and were not found in the public records of Government ; and in the Reports of Captain Turner as well as of the Gosain himself. The statement of the Gosain was taken down by Turner and submitted to the Governor-General Macpherson, and this forms an annexure of the Report. But even such information as is here given from these works is of a meagre character, and is so promiscuously scattered rather as digressive matter that it had to be collected with great circumspection.

Among the papers which were kindly delivered to me by Umrao

Gir, the present Mahanta of Bhoṭ Bágán, is, as already stated, a passport¹ in Tibetan, which had been given to Púran Gir by the Tashi Lama for his pilgrimage to the celebrated sacred Lake of Mana Sarovara, the source of the Sutlej, 800 miles from Lhasa. This document shows what great regard and respect the Lama had for our Gosain, for whose comfort and convenience most minute injunctions were given in it. A facsimile of the text (see Plate II) with a translation by Bábú Sarat Chandra Dás is annexed.

Some particulars about the Gosain have been gathered from the statements of the said Mahanta. According to him Púran was a Bráhmaṇa by caste, though as a *Daṇḍí*² he had cast off his sacrificial thread. His title Gir (or Giri) shows he was a follower of Śankarácárya's teachings and one of the *Daśanámí daṇḍís*, and must have been initiated at the *Jyotí maṭh*. In the passport the Tashi Lama describes him as an *Achárya*. He was a young man when he went to Tibet as a pilgrim, he had fair features, and was tall, strong and sinewy. His usual dress consisted of the Sannyásí's *kaupina*, with a short red ochre-dyed piece of cloth wrapped round his loins, and a tiger skin thrown over his shoulders, but on certain public occasions he wore a kind of toga, and covered his head with a turban. He was also a good rider, as testified to by Messrs. Bogle and Turner, with whom he rode races on the Himalayan plateau. His habits were simple and his heart pure, he took a single spare meal, and cooked his own food consisting of rice and vegetables only. He never ate before feeding his guests. Pious men of all sects frequented his monastery, and many of them lodged there. He used to be entrusted with valuable commodities, chiefly gold, for sale in Bengal, and he had a concern of his own also, but he never amassed any fortune, which he could easily have done, but he bestowed what he gained in large and open-handed charities. It was the special wish of the Lama that in the

¹ The passport granted to Púran Gir by the Tashi Lama, from Tashi Lhunpo, may be compared with the one granted by the Dalai Lama, from Lhasa, to an Armenian in 1688, published with a translation by Csoma de Körös in the 2nd volume of this Journal. Though indeed they are for different purposes. It may be here stated in passing that the seal attached to Púran Gir's passport is the oval signet seal of the Tashi Lama, and that on the Armenian's passport is a square seal of the Dalai Lama. If the engraving in the latter had been shown, there would have been an opportunity of comparing it with the seals on the Persian sanads given to Púran Gir. Púran Gir is described in the passport as an *Achárya*.

² *Daṇḍí*, *lit.* one who carries a *daṇḍa* in his hand. Though this term applies generally to a mendicant carrying a staff, it is the peculiar appellation of a mendicant of that particular order which follows the teachings of Ś'ankarácárya.

* *Kaupina* is a strip of cloth worn crosswise between the thighs to cover the privities.

Bhoṭ Bágán monastery Tibetans, who resorted to places of pilgrimage in Bengal and its neighbourhood, should meet with Púran Gir's hospitality. Captain Turner himself gives an instance of a tall, emaciated Sannyási pilgrim from Tibet, whom he met in the streets of Calcutta, introduced to the Governor-General, and made over to Púran Gir to be lodged in the Bhoṭ Bágán during the period of his sojourn in Bengal. Mr. Dalrymple also, as alluded to elsewhere, testifies to such facts by his personal knowledge.

In speaking of Púran Gir's last mission it has already been stated that he returned to Bengal after its successful prosecution. Captain Turner, in his most valuable memorandum of information, which he gathered from the Gosain and which he submitted to Mr. Macpherson on the 6th February 1786, draws among other things, the attention of the Governor-General to the important facts which he ascertained with infinite satisfaction from the Gosain and says "I learn from the reports " of Poorungher, the flourishing state of the lately projected scheme of " trade ; to promote which, he assures me, not anything has been want- " ing in facility of intercourse ; that the adventurers, who had invested " their property, had experienced perfect security in conducting their " commerce, had carried their articles to an exceeding good market, and " found the rate of exchange materially in their favour."¹

When Púran Gir was away in Tibet on the Government service, he had left the Bhoṭ Bágán in charge of his *chela* or disciple Daljit Gir, but when he returned with despatches from the Tashi Lama, he found to his mortification that a portion of his, or the Lama's, property on the banks of the river had been invaded and taken possession of by a zamíndár. On the subject of this encroachment, the good Captain Turner thus put in a paragraph in the memorandum alluded to:—"the " little territory his adopted *chela* was left in charge of, having during " his absence been violently invaded by Raaj Chund, a neighbouring " zemeendar, and to the amount of 50 begas forcibly taken out of his " hands. Prevailed on by his earnest and repeated solicitation, I am " induced to say for him, that in your justice and favour are his only " hopes of relief from his embarrassments, and he humbly asks your pro- " tection in restoring and securing him in the possession of his invaded " rights. The liberty of this intercession, I am confident to think, would " be forgiven, were it not in favour of one who has rendered various " useful services to this Government ; but though of trivial importance, " it affords also an authentic instance, of the encroaching disposition of " inferior zemeendars. Yet another circumstance, it may not be improper " to point out ; that the ground alluded to, is a part of the land situated

¹ Turner, *ibid.*, p. 433.

“ on the western bank of the river, opposite to Calcutta, which was
 “ formerly granted, under a *sunrud* of this Government to Teshoo Lama,
 “ for the foundation of a place of worship, and as a resort for those
 “ pilgrims of his nation, who might occasionally make visits to the
 “ consecrated Ganges.”¹

It will be remembered that in one of the sanads already described, dated 11th February 1783, a portion of the 50 bighás of land, thereby granted to Púran Gir or the Lama, is stated to be situated within the property of Rájchand Rái. Now in the absence of Púran from his *maṭh*, this Rájchand, believing perhaps he was dead and not recognising the title of his *chela* to the property, seized not only the portion of land which no doubt had been purchased of him or his brother Rámlochan, but the other portions which, together with it, made up the 50 bighás mentioned in the sanad. It does not appear what was the result of Captain Turner's mediation for the restoration of the land; probably Púran regained possession of it.

Our Púran Gir Gosain, now between 1785 and 1786, settled down for good in his *demesne*, which, in his time, it is said, was exclusively and rigidly devoted to the purposes intended by the Lama. They were both religious and secular, that is, the encouragement of the Tibeto-Buddhist religion and the promotion of the interests of the Tibeto-Bengal trade. His little territory had numerous cottages all around for the accommodation of pilgrims and traders from Tibet, and he divided his time between devotion and the carrying out of mercantile projects, which latter, so far as he was concerned, he advanced to enable him to perform those acts of piety and charity, in which the Lama, his patron, and he took supreme pleasure.

He is said to have understood the esoteric principles of the *S'ákta Tantras* as well as those which, perhaps in a modified form, found their way into Tibet or were of indigenous origin there, and he adopted the ideas of the Vedánta philosophy, as represented in Saivism by Sankarácárya, to the *Giri* branch of whose school he belonged. He, moreover, was constituted an agent to conduct mercantile transactions in which regular traders as well as pilgrims from Tibet and Bhutan participated. With reference to the latter it is stated by Mr. Bogle and Turner, that Sannyásis used to be entrusted with “articles of great value but of little bulk and weight.” His principal agency business was directed to help the traders or their people in disposing of their wares and making purchases. The principal commodities,

¹ Turner, *ibid.*, pp. 431, 432.

which people from the various regions used to bring, were gold dust¹ in bambú barrels, musk, &c. ; and the goods they carried back to their countries consisted chiefly of cotton, Maldah cloth, broad-cloth, spices, sandalwood, indigo, amber, and various miscellaneous articles, such as knives, snuff boxes, &c.

For about a decade since his final return from Tibet, Púran Gir Gosain lived happily, piously and usefully in the Bhoṭ Bágán, enjoying the pious veneration of all people who came into contact with him, and the high esteem and regard of the Bengal Government. The Governor-General, it is said, used to visit him at times in his maṭh.

But a terrible catastrophe soon happened which cut short his extraordinary career and the happy and useful life he was enjoying under almost the very shadow of the Government House. The fame of Bhoṭ Bágán, as a store-house of the richest gold, had spread far and wide. Dakoities, which in their terrible aspect, formed the sequel of the great famine known to our countrymen as the *manvantara* of '76, were then the order of the day. The ranks of the dakoits² were also swelled by roving bands of sannyásis, who in the guise of mendicants traversed different countries, and lost no opportunities of ravaging and plundering them. The official correspondence of the time is rife with statements regarding them, and projects for their suppression. It will be remembered that, in the treaty with the Deb Rájá already noticed, there is an extradition clause regarding these sannyásis.

On an unlucky night a gang of dakoits, whether dakoits or hypocrite sannyásis who had perhaps experienced the hospitality of the Bhoṭ Bágán, it is not known, burst within its precincts and sacrilegiously entered the *maṭh* with the intention of plundering it; but our valiant Gosain, it is said, snatched a sword, kept the robbers at bay by its dexterous use, fought for a short while, and at last was overpowered and fell senseless, pierced with the thrust of a *sarkí* or bambú spear. The robbers took no further notice of him, and swept clean the temple and dwelling of whatever valuables could be found therein, and decamped as quickly as possible. The news of this calamity was promptly conveyed to the Governor-General, who lost no time to send a surgeon to help the poor Gosain, and if possible to bring him round, but all the arts of the physician were of no avail, and the victim of violence and perhaps treachery and ingratitude, after lingering for about thirty-seven hours, breathed his last, unfavourably commenting no doubt on his own statement to the Tashi Lama and Regent as

¹ It is said a *maund* of gold dust used to come from Tibet every year. This quantity at the rate of 16 Rs. a *told* would be worth 51,200 Rs.

² Dakoits, properly *dákait*, i. e., robbers.

to the undisturbed security of life and property under the British *rāj* at that time. This occurred most probably in the early part of 1795, the date of the consecration of the tomb being the 23rd Vaisákha of 1202, 3rd May 1795. At this time his age is said to have been not less than fifty years, a statement which harmonises with the fact, which Mr. Bogle has incidentally noticed in his narrative, that Púran Gir, when he first saw him, that is in 1774, was a young man.

Thus ended the life of the great Púran Gir Gosain, the Bhoṭ Bágan mahant, the linguist, traveller, religionist, and merchant, the first and the only ambassador of the Tashi Lama sent to Bengal, the guide and material helper of the British missions to Tibet, the companion of the Lama in his journey to China, where in the court of Peking he stood before the Emperor, and perhaps in Chinese described to him the grandeur of the Ráj of Hindústán ruled by a great king of the name of Hastings Sahib who was solicitous to open a friendly and commercial intercourse between Bengal and Tibet and his empire, and lastly, the man who exhibited such strong and repeated instances of his ability, intelligence, intrepidity and faithfulness as to be appointed, by that keen-sighted statesman Warren Hastings, the sole envoy accredited to the court of Tashi Lhunpo in 1785.

One may be excused in indulging a hope that had this Gosain's life been prolonged, he would no doubt have succeeded, with officers of the style of Bogle, Turner and Hodgson, to open that desirable commercial intercourse between the Himalayan states generally, and specially the commerce-promoting, peace-loving and peace and knowledge-seeking Tibet, on the one hand, and the Indian provinces on the other, and saved that trouble, expense, and waste of energy which our Government, under one policy or other, is, up to this time, undergoing to attain that great object.

Daljít Gir Gosain mahant, the *chela* and successor of Púran Gir, formally reported the melancholy news of his death to the Government. Sharp was the enquiry and quick the vindication of justice that followed:—four dakoits expiated their guilt on the gallows, erected in the Bhoṭ Bágan itself.

The pious Daljít lost no time in performing the funeral rites of his *guru* or spiritual teacher, whose corpse was laid in a coffin in a sitting posture, as was the case with the Tashi Lama's dead body, and interred in a place behind the main portion of the *maṭh*. A *samádhi stambha* or tomb was raised over the grave with the already mentioned inscription in the Bengálí language and character, and the structure was crowned at the top with the phallus emblem of Mahádeva, into whose spirit, as the inscription describes, that of Púran Gir was absorbed. In

order to carry the account of Bhoṭ Bágán and Púran Gir Bhoṭ mahanta, down to the present time, I should say in passing, that the Lama, or rather the Regent, had requested Captain Turner to take with him to Bengal the old Suk Deo (Sukha Deva) Gosain, who was afraid to travel through Bhutan with his wealth accumulated by his forty years' mercantile journeys over various distant countries reaching to Siberia on the north. This old Gosain is said to have lived for a short time in the Bhoṭ Bágán monastery.

After Púran Gir's death, his successor Daljít Gir continued to be the head of the *maṭh* for nearly forty-three years, as his death is recorded on the said tomb to have happened on the 6th Mágha 1243 B. S. His place was taken by Káli Gir Mahanta, who built one of the Siva temples in the vicinity of the *maṭh* previously noticed, on the 15th Áswina 1254 B. S., and died on the 2nd Vaisákha 1264 B. S. One of the two present¹ Mahantas, Bilás Gir Gosain, having consecrated the said temple in the month of Vaisákha 1265 B. S., was installed on the *gaddí* of the *maṭh*. There was some litigation between him and another Gosain, named Umráo Gir, who, having established his claim, has become an associate Mahanta with equal rights and privileges.

The Bhoṭ Bágán has gradually lost its primitive character; for a long time since the murder of Púran Gir, and the plunder of the *maṭh*, the place became notorious as a nest of robbers and wicked people; guest houses fell into ruins, and hospitality and charity died away, a mere mummery of unmeaning *púja* has been kept up, the lands have been leased away piecemeal in *maurúgi* and *muqarrarí* tenure, and nothing but the *maṭh* now remains, enshrining grotesque and even obscene figures of Hindú and Tibeto-Buddhistic mythology, a solitary monument of the genius and policy of the first Governor-General of India, of the piety of the Tashi Lama, and of the Tibeto-Bengal trade which flourished centuries ago, and was restored, though in a stifled form, a century ago.

Before concluding this paper I am tempted to point to certain facts and make some observations, which the account of Bhoṭ Bágán and the story of Púran Gir Gosain suggest. In the first place, the history of the missions connected with these accounts unfolds the fact that Tibet, from time immemorial, has been the resort of merchants.

Tibet, in the days of Warren Hastings, was little known except to readers of the rare works containing accounts of the travellers and Capuchin Missionaries, whom curiosity, love of knowledge, or religious

¹ Bilása Gir Mahanta, who had been suffering from a lingering disease for some time, expired on the 28th February 1889, and was duly buried by his associate Umráo Gir Gosain, who has now become the sole mahanta of the *maṭh*.

zeal impelled to visit that place, and it is said by his faithful Boswell, Gleig, that he prepared himself by a study of some of these books to give proper instructions to the first mission under Mr. Bogle, as to how he should proceed, and what he should do. With an eagle's glance he ascertained what wealth the bleak regions on the summits of the lofty *Himálaya* could yield, and through his missions completed his knowledge of the trade and commerce, and of the most curious hierarchical form of government existing in the world that, with the aid of religion, minimises the dangers of an elective monarchy. His grand policy was to tap, by a really sincere and friendly method, the vast productive resources of that region, to link the trade of Bengal with those commercial arteries, which from Tibet as their heart, ramify down the Himalayan slopes, and extend to China and Scythia, and confines of Siberia; and well did he, with his reputed sagacity for selection, choose his officers, not despising the mendicant *Gosain Púran Gir* to make one of his ambassadors. He moved step by step, understood the difficulties of his friend, the *Tashi Lama*, inspired though the latter was with a natural and sincere desire to promote *Tibeto-Bengal* trade, in the face of Chinese opposition. He understood the people he was dealing with, an unambitious, peace-loving, peace-seeking race, bent upon promoting commercial prosperity, and in spite of repeated attempts by interested monopolisers and prejudiced Chinese, embracing Europeans with open arms, who by their learning, sincerity and ways of dealing captivated their hearts.

Great and most powerful are the ties which bind Tibet to Bengal; the religious associations, the traditions and remembrance of ancient commercial intercourse should attract the Tibetans to our country. If the policy of the first administrator of India had been only continuous, our Government could, by this time, have enjoyed its best results. A sensitive people like the Tibetans, where a disturbing object is rightly or wrongly apprehended, shrinks from contact, as the tortoise draws in its limbs under a similar instinctive fear. A statesmanship with tact, caution, delicacy and foresight, and guided by a knowledge of the political history, religion and customs of the country, cannot but serve to restore the old policy of the last century. Nor at times should native agency, about which Bogle and Hodgson say much, be despised. Even if *sannyási* agency be sought, there would be no difficulty perhaps to find men who, though not equal to *Púran Gir* and *Púran Purí*,¹ may be their not undeserving followers. We lately saw *sannyásis*,

¹ *Puran Purí*. Turner saw him in 1783 in the streets of Calcutta riding upon a Tangan horse from Bhutan. He was then forty years of age. Two *Gosains* attended him and assisted him in mounting and alighting from his horse, for his hands were

learned in the Sāstras, with an unquenching thirst for knowledge, in their mendicant dress, and with matted hair, orating cleverly in English in the midst of a large audience at the Town Hall, and at other places.

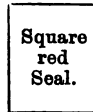
And cannot Bhoṭ Bágán or any other place be utilised to draw the affections of the Lama towards Bengal ?

I cannot resist the temptation of quoting here a kind of peroration and prayer of Mr. Bogle.

“Farewell ye honest and simple people ! May ye long enjoy that happiness which is denied to more polished nations, and while they are engaged in the endless pursuits of avarice and ambition, defended by your barren mountains, may ye continue to live in peace and contentment, and know no want but those of nature.” And who would not say Amen !

APPENDIX.

Sanad, No. 1.¹



متصدیان مهمات حال و استقبال و چودھریان قانونگوہان و تعلقداران و رعایا

و مزارعان

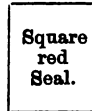
دری باریک پور وغیرہ عملہ پرگنہ بورو وغیرہ سرکار سانگام متعلقہ چکلہ
ہوگلی مضاف صوبہ

immovably fixed over his head with the fingers locked into each other. “The circulation of blood seemed to have forsaken his arms, they were withered, void of sensation and inflexible,” but he assured the Captain that he would recover their use in the following year when his penance would end. He is said to have been a Panjábí of the Kshatriya caste, he started “by crossing the Peninsula of India, through Guzerat ; he then passed by Surat to Bussora, and thence to Constantinople, from Turkey he went to Ispahan ; and sojourned so long among the different Persian tribes, as to obtain a considerable knowledge of their language, in which he conversed with tolerable ease. In his passage thence towards Russia, he fell in with the Kussauks (hordes of Cossacks) upon the borders of the Caspian Sea, where he narrowly escaped being condemned to perpetual slavery : at length he was suffered to pass on, and reached Moscow ; he then travelled along the northern boundary of the Russian empire. and through Siberia arrived at Pekin in China, from whence he came through Tibet, by the way of Teshoo Loomboo and Nipal, down to Calcutta.” Turner, *ibid.*, p. 271.

¹ Of the two square seals on Sanads I and II, the red seal is larger than the black one. The former, which is the Grand Lama’s seal, contains a legend, in three perpendicular lines, in Lantshan (Nágari) characters, the exterior ones beings मं (man-

جنت البلاد بنگاله بدانند موازی یکصد بیگه و هشت بسوه اراضی که منجمله آن شست و شش بیگه از موضع دري بارک پور پرگنه بورو و سي و چهار بیگه هشت بسوه از موضع کھوسادي پرگنه پایکان که بلب گنگ در یکجا واقع است نظر بر حق پرستي و حق بيني بمسجم دانش و فرهنگ سالار حق پڑوهان بي رپورنگ مظهر کمالات حق بيني پورن گیر گسائين در وجه لاخراج بنابر احوادث معبد و باغات من ابتداے سنه ۱۱۸۵ یکھزار و یکصد و هشتاد و پنج مقرر گشته که جاي عبادت و باغات احوادث نموده قابض و متصرف بوده باشند باید که آنها خراج اراضي مذکوره را معاف و مرفوع القلم دانسته اخذ مالگذاري آن ننمایند و بوجهي من الوجوه مزاحم و متعرض نباشند و سند مجدد نطلبند درینباب تاکید مزید داند بتاريخ دوازدهم ماه جون سنه ۱۷۷۸ انگریزي مطابق فرغ ماهه اساده سنه ۱۱۸۵ بنگله موافق شانزدهم شهر جمادي الاول سنه ۲۰ جلوس والا قلمي شد •

No. 2.



متصدیان مهمات حال و استقبال و چودھریان و قانونگویان و تعلقداران و رعایا و مزارعان دري بارک پور عملہ پرگنه بورو سرکار سانگام متعلقہ چکلہ هوگلي مضاف موہے جنت البلاد بنگاله بدانند موازي پنچاے بیگه اراضی در موضع بارک پور مذکور که منجمله آن نہ بیگه هفت بسوه در تعلقہ مهاراجه نبکش و بیست ونه بیگه در تعلقہ راج چند رای و یازده بیگه سیزده بسوه در تعلقہ راجه رام لوچن بلب گنگ

gala), the medial, an illegible monogram. The latter is the Court seal of the Tashi Lama, containing an illegible legend in two perpendicular lines, in the square form of the ancient Mongolian character, called the Yungar, used in Mongolia in the 11th and 12th centuries A. D. In the upper margin of the red seal is inserted the sign of the *lingam*, in that of the black seal the mark 卐.

در یکجا واقع است نظر بر حق پرستی و حق بینی بمسئع دانش
و فرهنگ سالار

حق پژوهان بی ریزنگ مظهر کمالات حق بینی پورن کیر گسائین در وجه
لاخراج بنابر احداث معبد و باغات من ابتدای سنه ۱۱۸۹ یک هزار و یکصد
و هشتاد و نه بنگله مقرر گشته که جای عبادت و باغات احداث نموده
قابط و متصرف بوده باشند باید که آنها خراج اراضی مذکوره را معاف
و مرفوع القلم دانسته اخذ مالگذاری آن نمایند و بوجهی من الوجوه مزاحم
و متعرض نباشند و سند مجدد نطلبند درین باب تا کید مزید داند

بتاریخ یازدهم

سنه ۱۷۰۰ انگریزی مطابق دوم ماه پهاگن سنه ۱۱۸۹ بنگله قلمی شد •

No. 3.

Warren Hastings.

Black oval.
Seal of English
Government.

متصدیان مهمات حال و استقبال و چودهریان و قانونگویان
و تعلقداران و رعایا و مزارعان دری بارک پور و غیره عملی پرگنه
بورو و غیره سرکار ساگام متعلقه چکله هوگلی مضاف صوبه
جنت البلاد بنگالا بدانند موازی یکصد بیگه و هشت بسوه اراضی
که منجمله آن شست و شش بیگه از موضع دری بارک پور پرگنه بورو
و سی و چهار بیگه هشت بسوه از موضع کهوسازی پرگنه پایکان
که بلب گنگ یکجا واقع است نظر بر حق پرستی و حق بینی

Black oval.
Seal of English
Government.

بمسئع دانش و فرهنگ سالار حق پژوهان بی ریو

ورنگ مظهر کمالات حق بینی تیشی لامه پنچن
اردنی بکدیو پنچن در وجه لاجراج بنابر احداث
معبد و باغات من ابتدای سنه ۱۱۸۵ یک هزار و یکصد و
هشتاد و پنچ مقرر گشته که جای عبادت و باغات
احداث نموده قابط و متصرف بوده باشند
باید که آنها خراج اراضی مذکوره را معاف و
مرفوع القلم دانسته اخذ مالگذاری آن نمایند
و بوجهی من الوجوه مزاحم و متعرض نباشند
و سند مجدد نطلبند درین باب تا کید مزید داند

¹ Two figures of the English date are torn away.

بتاریخ دوازدهم ماه جون سنه ۱۷۷۸ انگریزی مطابق غره
 ماه اسلاسه سنه ۱۱۸۵ بذكله موافق شانزدهم شهر جمادی الاول
 سنه ۲۰ جلوس والا قلمی شد •

[N. B. This seal bears the autograph signature of Warren Hastings
 on the left of the seal.]

No. 4.



منصفیان مهمات حال واستقبال وچودھریان و قانونگویان
 وتعلقداران ورعایا و مزراعان دري باریک پور عملہ پیرگنہ
 بورو و سرکار ساتنام متعلقہ چکلہ ہوگلی مضاف صوبہ
 جنت البلاد بنگالا بدانند موازی پنچاہ بیگہ اراضی در
 موضع باربکپور مذکور کہ منچملہ آن نہ بیگہ ہفت بسوہ در تعلقہ
 مہاراجہ نبکش و بیست ونہ بیگہ در تعلقہ راج چند رای
 و یازدہ بیگہ سیزدہ بسوہ در تعلقہ راجہ رام لوچن بلب گنگ
 در یکجا واقع است نظر برحق پرستی و حق بینی بمستجمع دانش
 وفرہنگ سالار حق پڑوہان بی ریورنگ مظہر کمالات
 حق بینی تیشی لامہ پنچن اردنی بکدیو پنچن دروجہ لاخراج
 بذابر احداث معبد و باغات من ابتداء سنہ ۱۱۸۹ یکہزار یکصد و
 ہشتاد ونہ بنگلہ مقرر گشتہ کہ جایی عبادت و باغات
 احداث نمودہ قابض و منصرف بودہ باشند
 باید کہ آنها خراج اراضی مذکورہ را معاف و
 مرفوع القلم دانستہ اخذ مالگذاری آن نمایند و بوجہی
 من الوجوہ مزاحم و متعرض نباشند و سند مسجد
 نطلبند درینباب تاکید مزید دانند بتاریخ یازدہم
 ماہ فبروری سنہ ۱۷۸۳ انگریزی مطابق دوم ماہ پہان سنہ ۱۱۸۹
 قلمی شد •

Translation of Sanad I.

Know ye, the Mutaşaddís of affairs, for the present and future times, Chaudharís, Qánúngos, Ta'aluqdárs, tenants and cultivators of Darí Bárbakpúr, etc., in parganah Boro etc., sarkár Satgáon, appertaining to chaklah Hughlí, in the şubah of Bengal, the Paradise of countries, ¹[that 100 bigahs and 8 biswahs of cultivated land, out of which 66 bigahs are situated in mauza' Darí Bárbakpúr, parganah Boro, and 34 bigahs and 8 biswahs in mauza' Ghusarí, parganah Páikán,] and all collectively situated on the bank of the Ganges, are rent-free granted to ²[Púrangir Gosain], the store of wisdom and prudence, the head of the unpretending seekers of truth, and the source of perfect righteousness, in consideration of his righteousness and devotion to truth, for the purpose of erecting a temple and planting a garden, from the beginning of the Bengalí year ³[1185]. It is desired that in erecting a temple and planting a garden on the land, he should possess and enjoy the same. You must know the said land to be free of rent; you shall not receive the rent thereof, shall not in any way interfere, and shall not demand any new sanad. You are to know that in this matter strict observance is required.

³[Dated the 12th June 1778 English, corresponding to the 1st Asárh 1185 Bangalí and 16th of the lunar month Jamádi-l-Awal of the 20th year of the reign].

Sanad II is identical with Sanad I in every respect, excepting the two portions, marked¹ and² in brackets, which run as follows:

¹[that 50 bigahs of cultivated land in the said mauza' Bárbakpúr, out of which 9 bigahs and 7 biswahs are on the property of Maharájah Nabkish, 29 bigahs in that of Rájah Rái Chand Rái, and 11 bigahs and 13 biswahs in that of Rájah Ram Lochan].

²[Dated the 11th, 17 ... English, corresponding to the 2nd of Fálgun 1189 Bangalí].

Sanad III is identical with Sanad I in every respect, excepting the portion marked² in brackets, which runs as follows:

²[to Teshí Lámah Paachan Ardani Bakdeo Paachan].

Sanad IV is identical with Sanad II, but contains the portion, marked² in brackets, as given in Sanad III. The date, which is mutilated in Sanad II, is perfect in this Sanad, and runs as follows:

²[Dated the 11th February 1783 English, corresponding to the 2nd of Fálgun 1189 Bangalí].

Literal translation of the Lam-yig or passport from Tashi Lhunpo.

To—the districts of Narthañ, Gya-chhūñ, Ņo-dsoñ, Phuñ-tshog-liñ, Lhar-tse, Ņamriñ and the Lama of Neriñ. Take notice—that one of the servants of this (Government) Āchārya Punagiri with three attendants proceeds to make ablution in the lake Mapham (Mansarawara) and to walk round it. In the above mentioned places, (the party) should be provided with fuels, earthen ware, &c., cooking utensils, ponies, cook servants, &c., other necessaries when required, during morning and night halts.

Four ponies and seven strong beasts of burden will be required. The relay of ponies should be arranged from here to Phun-tshog-liñ, from Phun-tshog-liñ to Lhar-tse, from Lhar-tse to Ņamriñ, from Ņamriñ to Sagah-wa. The chief grooms in charge of the pasture lands in the different districts and sub-divisions, should, as directed by the letter preceding this, arrange for relaying strong ponies of the above named number and also send pony returners quickly and render (the party) all possible help (in the journey). The relay of the beasts of burden should be arranged from the town of Shiga-tse to Phun-tshog-liñ, from Phun-tshog-liñ to Ņamriñ through, from Ņamriñ to Neriñ and from Neriñ to Sagah-wa at once. The party should be furnished at every stage with returners of the conveyance animals and an experienced and intelligent guide to accompany them (in their journey). All possible help should be rendered to (the party). Similar arrangements to the above effect should be made during the return journey. This is important—dated year Earth-Dog, 1778 A. D.

