ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES ON THE TRIBES OF THE SUBANSIRI REGION

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SHILLONG

PRINTED AT THE ASSAM GOVERNMENT PRESS

1947

INTRODUCTION

The following notes on the tribes of the eastern part of the Balipara Frontier Tract, commonly known as the Subansiri Region, were written at various dates during my appointment as Special Officer, Subansiri, in 1944 and 1945. I had then the opportunity of establishing close and friendly contact with tribes practically unknown to the outside world, and of entering tribal country never before visited by European or Indian. Information on certain social and economic aspects of tribal culture was then of importance to Government, and the notes collected in these pages were written as factual reports rather than as anthropological essays. The very nature of my work and the necessity of moving on occasion rapidly through unexplored country precluded intensive and detailed investigations into tribal institutions and psychological reactions. [illegible] had to concentrate on subjects connected with administrative problems and at the same time I tried to plac[illegible] as large as possible on the ethnographic map. Certain generalizations which may later require m[illegible] are an unavoidable feature of such an extensive survey, but it is to be hoped that the information co[illegible] these notes will enable future investigators to shorten the period of haphazard collection of data, and [illegible] them to penetrate more quickly to the dynamics of a culture-change which the virtual termination [illegible] tribesmen's age old isolation has now made inevitable.

Some of the notes written in 1944 have been revised in the light of the additional knowle[illegible] my tours of 1915, and the notes are now arranged according to subjects and not chronologically. [illegible] they fall short of a complete outline of the complex culture-pattern of the Subansiri Region [illegible] not too distant future I may be able to embody the rest of the material culled during tw[illegible] among Apa Tanis, Daflas and Miris in a more comprehensive anthropological study. Until [illegible] short field notes may serve as an introduction into the ethnography of one of the least known [illegible] on the borders of India.

HYDERABAD-DECCAN,
August 1946.

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NOTES ON TRIBAL GROUPS IN THE SUBANSIRI REGION

Accompanied by a Population Map

The Subansiri Region is one of the least known parts of the North-East Frontier. The first determined effort to explore the area south-west of the Subansiri, and particularly the valleys of the Kamla and Khru was the Miri Mission in 1911-12, and the greater part of the existing maps are based on the survey operations then undertaken. The Miri Mission concentrated mainly on topographical exploration, and the two published reports contain but scanty information on the ethnological, sociological and economic conditions in the area visited. From 1912 to 1944 no exploratory expedition entered the Subansiri Region; the tours of Political Officers were short and mainly confined to areas previously visited.

When in March 1944 I started work among the tribes of the Subansiri Region, no records more recent or fuller than the two Miri Mission Reports were available, and information on the distribution of populations, tribal divisions, languages, customs and migrations had to be built up from scratch. The area which I was able to tour in 1944 and 1945 includes most of the ground covered by the Miri Mission and in addition the Kiyi Valley and the Upper Panior Valley to the west, and the Sipi Valley to the north, none of which had ever been visited. This leaves more than half of the territory between the plains to the south and the great bend of the Subansiri to the north-east still unexplored, and even in the areas which I could visit enquiries into tribal conditions had to be in the nature of a rapid survey rather than of intensive investigation.

The population map which these notes are to accompany is therefore only a tentative beginning. It is accurate only in the areas visited, but where information on the populations in as yet unexplored country is available tribal groups have been entered on the map even if the exact distribution and position of villages is still doubtful.

No fully consistent policy could be adopted regarding the demarcation of tribal groups. Where reliable information has been gained sub-groups of tribes, such as exogamous phratries, have been entered separately and under distinct signs but where detailed investigations are lacking the units are blocked in rough outline.

Migrations of tribal groups of which historic evidence is available have been indicated by arrows, but purely legendary migrations, such as the migration of the Apa Tanis, have not been entered on the map.

In most parts of the Subansiri Region the village-names given on the Survey of India maps are inaccurate or out of date. For the Surveyors of the Miri Mission entered in many cases not the locality name, but the name of the clan-group predominant at the time of the survey*. For instance, the village of Mingö on the north-east bank of the Kamla which is inhabited by people of Kabak clan is not marked as "Mingö" but as "Kabak". This is apt to cause confusion, as the Kabak clan is not confined to Mingo, but forms the main population of several other villages. Similarly the village of Tapo on the south bank of the Kamla which contains the core of the Chimr phratry is marked as Chemir. On this population-map the clan-names entered on the Survey of India maps have been retained as village-names wherever they are still more commonly used than the locality-names. In other cases they are given in brackets below the locality-names.

DAFLAS OR NISU

The Assamese term Dafla, like the term Abor, seems to have originally meant 'wild man' or 'barbarian', but it has for a long time been applied to the tribes inhabiting the hills between the Miri country to the east and the Aka country to the west. Thus it would seem that the tribesmen known to their Assamese neighbours as Daflas do not extend as far east as the Subansiri River, but we will see presently that the distinction between "Daflas" and "Hill Miris" is largely arbitrary.

For administrative purposes the Daflas have been divided into Western and Eastern Daflas, and this division seems to be based on a difference in dialect in so far as the Daflas of the foothills and outer ranges are concerned. In their own language the Eastern Daflas describe themselves as Nisu or as Ni†, and refer to the Western Daflas as Yan. But the Western Daflas call themselves Malu and refer to the Eastern Daflas as Tagen. The dividing line between the two groups seems to coincide roughly with the watershed between Kameng and Par, but in the foothills the two groups dovetail. It is unlikely however that the distinction between Western and Eastern Daflas as the two main groups of the tribes can stand closer scrutiny. For it seems to cut across the groups based on the traditional genealogy of the Dafla clans.

According to tribal tradition all Daflas are divided into Dopum clans, Dodum clans and Dol clans, known as such after their legendary ancestors, the sons of Takr. Takr was a descendent of At Nia, whose father was Teni, believed to be the forefather not only of all Daflas, but also of the other hill-races sharing the Daflas' habitat., Whether the Dopum, Dodum and the Dol groups were ever strictly localized we do not yet know ; today there are areas where clans of all three groups live side by side, but others where only one group is represented.

The Dopum group is believed to be descended from the eldest of the three brothers, but in the area so far explored it is represented only by a very few clans and even these persist only as isolated households living in such foothill villages as Joyhing and Boguli. It is said that more populous clans of this group exist somewhere on the Upper Khru, but for this we have as yet no confirmation and it is by no means impossible that the splinters of the Dopum group now found in the foothills are all that remains of a group which was first split up and then almost obliterated by later waves of Dol and Dodum clans.

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* Daflas and Miris often refer to settlements by the name of a prominent clan and give the name of the locality only when directly questioned. It is therefore not surprising that the Miri Mission mistook in some cases clan-names for locality-names.

† *Ni* means 'human being' and is the root of such words as *nicga* man, *niw* 'woman', *nisgako* 'boy'.

The Dol clans, considered the descendants of the middle brother, are concentrated mainly in the area of the Khru and Upper Kamla, where, as it seems, they form the only population of large areas. The Dol clans that are found today in the Panior and Kiyi valleys have the clear tradition that they immigrated from an area near the Khru River, and in many cases the stages of this migration are still remembered.

The Dodum clans prevail now mainly to the south in the Par and Panior area, but they too believe their ancestors immigrated from the north *via* the Palin and Kiyi valley.

The Dol group is subdivided into several exogamous phratries, two of which can already be discerned with a certain degree of clarity.

The *Durum Dui phratry* comprises the clans of Likha, Gemir, Chuhu, Pil, Blöbu, Tassr and several semi-extinct clans such as Nikh, Yua, Tade, Tajin and Dohe. These clans are strongest in the Palin and Kiyi valleys, but the Chuhu and Pil clans, which were concentrated in a number of villages to both sides of the Panior, in the area where it is joined by the Pein, the Norchi and the combined Kele-Pangen, were dispersed four generations ago by the raids of the Techü and Napum clans, and today there exist no villages where Chuhu and Pil men form the predominant population, though individual families live in villages of the Kiyi valley, the Jorum-Talo area, and the Panior and Par valleys.

The *Dukum Duri* phratry consists of two subdivisions, a southern and a northern. The southern or Dukum sub-phratry includes the clans of Hora, Tai, Buri, Takum, Töchi, Höri, Bindu, Kümra, Böki, Khoda, Lido Linia, Tapi, Toko, Jorum and Tod. Its main concentration is in the Khru region and the hills between Khru and Kamla, but some four or five generation ago, the Toko, Jorum and Tod clans migrated southwards and occupied the area south-west of the Apa Tani country.

The northern or Duri sub-phratry comprises such clans as Töksi Tagro, Tumr, Tungam, Tayam, and Nöyi, known collectively as Tedr-Temr and the clans Sartam, Mei, Rugi, Tali and Haki, which are referred to under the term Haki-Hanya. This sub-phratry is said to include all the clans in the Selu valley as well as the clans inhabiting the Kamla valley from Tali upwards.

In the Kamla valley below Tali and Göba there is a group of clans known as Tai-Tamin, and there is good reason to believe that these clans which form today an enclave between villages of the GUNGÜ group are also part of the Duri sub-phratry. They include the Kabak clan (now divided into several sub-clans and spread over the villages of Mingö, Güte, Lapchi, Bidak and Hova), Lomra, Balu and Higlo. This group is not exogamous and Kabak and Balu, for instance, intermarry freely. Both the Gungü and the Kabak people have the tradition that the clans of the Tai-Tamin group immigrated into their present area from the higher country on the upper Kamla, and in doing so they split the Gungü group in two. The expansion of the Kabak clan, which radiated from Mingö has not yet come to an end and within the last two generations the village of Hova * changed from a Gungü village to a settlement of the Kabak clan.

It will be noticed that the last clans of the Duri sub-phratry and indeed also most Dukum clans inhabit an area which is commonly known as the "Miri Hills," and these clans form part of a population have been described in official records as Miri ever since the time of the Miri Mission. Yet, there can be no doubt that in the minds of the tribesmen and according to all traditional genealogies (genealogies largely legendary but yet reflecting actual tribal divisions) they form part of the DOL group. We are thus led to the conclusion that the arbituary divisions created by the official terminology and the divisions recognized by the tribesmen themselves, overlap and intersect.

Whereas the Durum-Dui and Dukum-Duri phratries are discernable at least in outline, little is as yet known of the other phratries of the DOL group, the areas of their distribution having so far only been touched on the fringes.

The *Bindu-Bene* phratry which includes the clans of Gollo, Chera Tedr, Tai, Tara and Tahe, seems to be concentrated mainly in the Panyi valley, and those families of Gollo clan, who live today in Mengo and other villages of the Panior valley have the clear tradition of having immigrated from villages on the Panyi River. The Gollo clan is represented also in villages on the upper course of the Paha, a tributary of the Kameng River. There is a direct route between the Panior and the Pahe valley, but we do not know as yet whether there is also a direct connection between the Paha and the Panyi valleys.

The Yan, known officially as Western Daflas, belong also to the Dol group. The Dodum Daflas though referring to the individual western Daflas as Yan, describe the whole group as *Jiti-Tekhu.* This may be the name of one phratry, best known to the tribesmen of the Par and Panior, or it may be a collective term comparable to Dukum-Duri, for several phratries of Yan Daflas. The fact that the language of the Yan si considerably different from the Leli dialect spoken in the Par valley, but has close affinities with the 'Aya' dialects as spoken by the Dol clans of the higher hills, seems to affirm the tradition that they too form part of the Dol group.

The third major tribal division is the DODUM group and this is sub-divided into four exogamous phratries.

The *Bhat* or *Tebu* phratry, consisting of the clans of Tabia, Tei, Bat, Debia, Te ri, Tebü, Tang, Tesü Golü, Takh, Kara and Tade is today found mainly in the lower Panior valley and in the Par region. Until three generations ago members of this phratry were settled in the Upper Panior valley and in the Kiyi valley, and there can be no doubt that several if not all clans of this phratry have moved int o their present territory only in fairly recent times.

The *Leli* or *Pokhe* phratry includes today the clans of Licha, Nielom, Tar, Lisi and Lod which are concentrated in the Kiyi valley. and the clans of Sodu, Sobum, Raha, Tana, Techü, Tao, To b and Nieri found mainly in the Panior and Par valley. There is a tradition that the ancestor of the Licha, Nielom, Tar and Lisi clans belonged originally to the Dol group but became the 'brothers' of the Leli group when during a raid they had to beg the help of some Leli men. Like the Bhat-Tebü clans, the Daflas of the Leli group have not always lived in the foothills, but are believed to have enterd the Kiyi valley from the north *via* the Yapubog pass, and to have then filtered southwards.

The *Kemdir* phratry, consisting of the clans of Pochu, Pei, Mai, Ralo, Naran, Kop, Tok, Taro, Niri and Telü, and are now strongly represented only in the villages of Mai, Pochu and Pei with an offshoot in distant Bua ; they share with the Leli group the tradition of an immigration *via* the Yapubog from the Palin and Khru valley.

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* This village is marked on the Survey of India (No. 83 I, A 1) as Tago after the Tago clan which was predominant in 1911 but is today nearly extinct.

The *Chili* or *Dumchi* phratry which is said to include the clans of Nabum, Nurum-Benga, Gömir Takum, Tara, Tade, Chipu, Lokam, Sanya, Bamü, Tamchi, Kami, Kamnu, Kahi, Rikam, Riki, Riang, Ride, Decha and Dara is the latest of the Dodum phratries to expand southwards and the ancestors of the important Nabum clan migrated only five or six generations ago from the Khru valley to Mengo in the Upper Panior valley. There the clan grew rapidly and soon spread into the Perüng and Par valleys. But most other clans of this, as yet little known, phratry still live in the Upper Khru valley, and it would thus seem that not only in the lowerhills of the Par and Panior Region, whose population consists largely of recent immigrants, but also on the Upper Khru clans of the Dopum, Dol and the Dodum groups live side by side, sharing if not the same villages the same valleys.

Language.—At first sight it would appear that the Major tribal divisions among the Daflas coincide with linguistic groupings. Daflas of the foothills refer, for instance, to their own dialect as Leli language, to the dialect of Likha as Durum language, and to the dialects spoken by the people on the Upper Par and Upper Panior and in the Upper Khru as Aya or Nabum language, 'Aya' meaning literally only "of the highlands". But these associations do not bear closer scrutiny. While originally the main tribal divisions may have been localized, each with its own distinct mode of speech, with the dispersal and merging of populations, the connection between tribal groups and phratries became obscured, and today the dialect spoken by a man is indicative of the region where he grew up, but not of his phratry or tribal group. Thus many members of the Nabum clan in the Par valley speak 'Leli', the people of Licha, though of Leli phratry for purposes of exogamy, speak a 'Durum' dialect, and the Nurum-Benga of the Upper Khru, though part of the Dodum group, speak a dialect associated with the Dol clans of that region.

In how far are these dialects mutually understandable ? A man of the foothills has no difficulty in conversing with people of say Mengo, the Panyi valley or the Palin and lower Khru valley. But when he meets members of the Tedr-Temr group in the Upper Kamla understanding becomes difficult. He may not be as completely at a loss as, for instance, a Konyak Naga finding himself in a Lhota Naga village, but there is no more a question of unhampered conversation. Considering the isolation of groups owing to difficult communications and frequent raids, it is the linguistic uniformity rather than dialectical differences which are surprising. In the Naga Hills language groups are sometimes confined to a dozen villages, and on a three days' walk one may pass through the zones of three languages not mutually understandable. In the Dafla hills this is unthinkable ; language groups extend over large areas and merge very gradually one into the other. An investigation by a trained linguist would probably reveal that differences are only dialectal, and that all members of the Dopum, Dol and Dodum groups speak basically the same language.

Racial characteristics.—Dafla traditions has it that all branches of the tribe have sprung from the same ancestor. The far-reaching linguistic uniformity and the similarity of custom in widely separated areas would seem to support this theory of a common origin, but the physical make-up of the tribe is clear evidence of its composit character. Racially the Daflas are far less homegeneous than many other hill-tribes on the borders of Assam, and though the majority bear some of the features commonly associated with the Palaeo-Mongolid races, there are at least two outstanding and greatly divergent types. The more frequent is characterized by a round, flat face with a broad snub-nose, prominent cheek-bones, eyes lying in flat sockets, and a small weak chin. Comparatively small stocky stature and a sallow yellow brownish skin colour seem often to go with this type.

There is a striking difference between the Dafla with these traits, which represent a fair picture of the Palaeo-Monglid type of the text-books, and the Dafla with an oblong face, a prominent often hooked nose with a narrow bridge, deep-set eyes, a well prounced chin, rudy complexion, comparatively high stature and athletic build.

It goes without saying that the Dafla race of today does not consist only of individuals conforming to either of these two types, and what we have described above are the extremes at the two ends of the range of physical characteristics, extremes which cannot have sprung from a single origin, and are therefore indicative of at least two distinct elements in the racial make-up of the tribe.

In this context we are interested only in the fact that the Daflas are not a homogeneous tribe, and it may be significant that the more progressive, strong featured type is even today found among the leading families, whereas individuals disyplaying the purest characteristics of Palaeo-Mongolid type seem to be more frequent in families of lower social status. Until the Daflas and their neighbours have been studied in greater detail, it would be unsound to draw from this situation any far-reaching conclusions, but there seems to be a *prima facie* case for the hypothesis that the Dafla tribe in its present form is the product of the blending of two or more distinct populations.

Social Divisions.—A division of the Dafla clans into two classes known as *Gute* and *Guchi*, blurred and largely forgotten in such areas as the foothills, but still recognized in the Khru and Kamla regions is perhaps a reflection of this two-fold origin of the Dafla tribes.

In the Kamla area the Daflas (and as we will shortly see the Gungü) describe certain clans and even whole phratries as *Gute* and others as *Guchi.* There is the tradition that the *Guchi* people were the first in the country, and the *Gute* are late comers. Another interpretation is that when the two ancestors of the Daflas first arrived, the younger brother went ahead to spy out the land, and the elder brother followed later. The *Guchi* clans are the descendants of the younger brother, who went first and the *Gute* the off spring of the elder brother. This story too seeks to explain the fact that the *Guchi* were the earlier settlers. There is a vague idea that the *Gute* clans are of higher social status than the *Guchi* clans and it is said that originally the two classes did not intermarry. Today this restriction is no longer in force and people of *Gute* class enjoy no privileges.

The division into *Gute* and *Guchi* is clearest on the Khru and Upper Kamla, the region least disturbed by recent migrations. Among the Duri group, for instance, Sartam, Rugi, Mei and Tali are *Guchi* clans, whereas the clans of Niktor, Tumr and Haki are *Gute.* Within the Tai-Tamin phratry Kabak and Balu are *Gute* whereas Lomra is *Guchi.*

In the Panior and Par regions the distinction between *Gute* and *Guchi* has been obscured, the latter term being used there for the descendants of slaves and no longer for whole clans.

It is obvious that if two or more ethnic elements have played their parts in the formation of the Dafla tribe, their amalgamation is very far progressed. Differences such as those between the outstanding racial types and the division into *Gute* and *Guchi* are suggestive of the composite character of the tribe, but our knowledge of the Daflas themselves and of their neighbours is still too slight to justify any speculation as to the nature or origin of these components.

For practical purposes the Daflas may today be regarded as an ethnic entity, and cultural differences between the various territorial groups seem to be largely due to local conditions and varying contacts.

Cultural Characteristics.—A detailed description of Dafla culture is outside the scope of this note, but an outline of the main features of the economy and social organization of the tribe will round off our picture.

Dafla economy is based on agriculture and animal husbandry, and trade and barter play only a secondary rôle. Nearly all Daflas, except for those in the villages of Talo, Jorum and Mai, which adjoin the Apa Tani country, are mainly *jhum* cultivators. In the Mengo area and in the Kiyi valley some villages have besides *jhum*-fields also a few irrigated rice-terraces, but neither in the Kamla valley nor in the Lower Panior and Par region is there any cultivation of wet rice. Rice, millet (*Eleusine coracana* and *Setariea italica*) and maize are the main crops. The breeding of live-stock is everywhere important: mithan, pigs, goats, and chickens are kept by all Daflas, but oxen are found only in areas that have connections with Assam.

The size of villages ranges from the three or four houses in small settlements to about thirty houses in the large villages. But as most houses are joint-family dwellings with as many as twelve hearths and room for as many families, a Dafla village of ten houses may well have a population of about three hundred. The houses stand never in streets, but are dipersed over the hill sides, each house or group of two or three houses standing on a different level. The village is no closely knit social and political unit. Families may join or leave at will, and in some areas there is a continuous movement of people from one village to the other. Wars are usually not between village and village, but between joint-family and joint-family. It is no unusual occurrence that one or two houses in a village are raided and burnt; and the inhabitants killed or carried away as captives, while the other households are neither scathed nor give any effective help to the victims.

There are no traditional village sites and settlements are easily shifted. Few of the present villages in the Kiyi valley, for instance, stood on the same site fifty years ago and most of the village communities than existing have since split up or have moved to other sites.

The primary social unit is the household comprising usually several families and in some cases as much as sixty or seventy members. The household is for practical purposes autonomous and self-contained: there is no system of village headman whose office gives them authority over the other householders. The clans are exogamous and within the village there is sometimes a fair amount of co-operation between families of the same clan. But many clans extend over several villages, and in such cases they no longer present a common front. Indeed internecine strife and feuds between clan-members are not unusual. There is no social or political cohesion between the clans of one phratry, but the phratries of the Dodum group and some of the Dol phratries observe exogamy. Although certain villages form territorial groups within which contacts are closer and marriage alliances more frequent than between villages belonging to different territorial groups there is no organization which lends territorial groups any measure of political unity.

While the distinction between *Gute* and *Guchi* clans is of no practical importance, there is the other and vital division between freemen and slaves. The latter are mainly people captured in war and either kept by their captors or sold. Their children become members of their owner's clan, but their status is that of dependents rather than slaves, and in time they can acquire wealth and become freemen of good social status. Thus there exists among the Daflas no slave class, whose members are barred from rising in the social scale.

Migrations.—The clans of the Dol and Dodum groups have for generations been in a state of unrest, which is manifested by frequent migrations and a continuous change in the population pattern of large areas.

The causes for these migrations are still obscure but we can clearly discern a north to south movement from the Khru region into the Panior-Kiyi region and from there to the Par valley down into the foothills. These migrations are partly legendary, and partly of so recent occurrence that the circumstances and leading personalities among the immigrants are still well remembered. Indeed in the area of the Lower Panior valley, few men live in the villages where they were born, and the grandfathers of many men now settled in the foothills are known to have lived in villages on the upper course of the Panior.

Tradition has it that the first groups to enter the Panior and Par regions were the Tebü-Bhat and the Kemdir phratries. They claim that when they arrived the country was uninhabited but for a few scattered settlements of Sulus; it was covered with virgin forest which they were the first to clear. The route of their migration can still be traced to a place called Supu Rab, where coming from the upper Kamla valley they are believed to have crossed the Khru near its confluence with the Kamla. From there they followed the Khru upstream as far as the Palin, and then moved along the Palin valley to the Yapubog pass, which separates the Palin and the Kiyi valley. From there the Tebü people went to Mengo on the upper Panior, whereas the Kemdir people moved across the range between Nielom and Talo into the Jorum-Mai area, where they are still to be found.

The Tebü people stayed for many generations in the Mengo area, and then moved to Nirjur Bari, near the present Pegabari near the confluence of Panior and Perüng, and from there to the villages on the lower Panior.

The Leli group is said to have come later, following the route opened up by the Tebü and Kemdir people. From the Kiyi valley they moved southwards across the Panior into the Par valley where they spread over many villages.

The Chili group is said to have crossed the Khru at the same place as the other phratries, but in the face of unfavourable omens, the people of this group followed the Khru eastwards far beyond the Palin. For a long time they remaied in the valley of the Upper Khru and in the Lebla area on the Panyi River. It is only six or seven generations ago that the first Nabum men moved from Lebla across the Yelibog pass to Mengo in the Upper Panior area. There they multiplied rapidly and spread into the valleys of Perüng and Par. The present members of the Nabum clan in these areas can still name all their ancestors as far back as the man who first came to Mengo from Lebla, and some men know even the names of forefathers who lived in the Lebla area. There can thus be no doubt that the migration of the Nabum people, as well as the movements of the clans which they displaced when occupying the Mengo area, are historical events and not legendary occurrences.

The movements of the Dol phratries cannot yet be traced with the same degree of accuracy.

Those clans of the Durum-Dui phratry that are now found in the Panior area, have the tradition of having immigrated from an area on the Khru River, passing through the Palin valley and over the pass of Yapubog. The first two clans of this phratry to occupy the Kiyi valley seems to have been Chuhu and Pil. The entire land now occupied by the Likha clan, was once held by Chuhu villages, and Chuhu people were settled also in the Panior valley. At the same time other clans of the Durum-Dui phratry, such as Yua, lived in villages near the confluence of the Panior and Pangen. But today all these Chuhu, Pil and Yua villages have been broken up, and the clans are dispersed. The Chuhu people attribute their downfall to wars with men of the Nabum clan of the Chili phratry and the Techü clan of the Leli phratry, wars suggestive of a clash between Dol and Dodum clans when both were settled in the Panior area. But the settlements of the Yua clan, that existed even thirty years ago were abandoned owing to raids by Likha linesmen

Chausher the Yua clan is now almost extinct, but the Chuhu and Pil clans though still fairly numerous, have not formed new settlements of their own ; they now live scattered in the villages of other clans in the Lower Panior and Par valleys.

The Durum Dui clan which is at present in the ascendancy is Likha ; within three or four generations Likha people have founded several settlements in the Kiyi valley have even pushed southwards across the Panior to settle at Pegabari. They too have the tradition of having come through the Palin valley and over the Yapubog ; on their arrival in the Kiyi valley they found strong settlements of the Kemdir and Leli phratries but quickly dispersed the inhabitants.

The Dukum clans on the Khru have been in possession of the land for a very long time, but those now settled in Talo and Jorum assert that their forefathers immigrated from Hidjat Lupukher an area on the Khru near its confluence with the Palin. The tract now in possession of the Toko and Jorum clans was then held by the two Leli clans of Torr and Tago. Four generations ago these extremely war-like clans were wiped out by a combination of villages, including the Toko Likha, Licha, Nabum, Tabia and. Tana clans. Some two or three years after this war, the Toko and Jorum clans, then still settled at Hidjat Lupukher, moved southwards into the land previously held by the Torr and Tago people.

We know as yet too little of the Dol clans on the Upper Kamla to be able to trace definitely their recent migration routes, but there can be little doubt that the Tai-Tamin clans and particularly the powerful Kabak clan, pushed south-eastwards along the Kamla and displaced, in occupying their present land, people of Gungü stock, who had inhabited it previously.

Of the migrations of the Bindu-Benl clans we know so far only that some four or five generations ago several families of the Gollo clan left the village of Debia in the Panyi area and moved to Mengo on the Upper Panior. They claim to have settled in Mengo before the Nabum people, but judging from the number of generations mentioned in genealogies it would be safer to assume that both clans arrived approximately at the same time. Another branch of the Gollo clan is found in some villages on the Paha River, a tributary of the Kameng.

The migration from the Panyi to the Panior is still continuing and some six years ago a family of Tedr clan, which belongs also to the Bindu-Benl group moved from Litlot to Mengo.

A general movement of Daflas from the north and north west to the south and south-east is thus clearly discernable and seems to have been in progress for a considerable time. Its causes are obscure and must remain so until the area on the Upper Khru and Kamla has been explored. There may be a pressure of other populations, perhaps of Tibetans or Tibetanized tribes on the Daflas of the higher regions, or exhaustion of the cultivable land and an increase in population may have forced them to seek new land in the lower valleys where forest and unexhausted *jhum*-land is more plentiful. If Dafla tradition is to be believed the Par Region and lower Panior valley were uninhabited but for the scattered Sulus until the arrival of the Tebü people, who were the first to carve fields from the virgin forest. There is certainly a great difference between the densely wooded outer ranges and the hills denuded of forest by successive immigrants in the Talo-Jorum area or the lower Kiyi valley. The movement towards the outer ranges has not yet come to an end, and a serious situation may arise if in the Par and lower Panior valley too over-population leads to over-cultivation and exhaustion of the available land.

HILL MIRIS OR GUNGÜ

The population of the upper Kamla valley, reckoned in the reports of the Miri Mission, among the "Hill Miris", is, as we have seen, part of the Dol group, which embraces also many of the Dafla clans located today in the Panior, Kiyi and Khru valleys. To describe this population as a separate "tribe" would be unjustified and any line drawn in that area between "Daflas" and "Miris", would have to be entirely arbitrary. Personally I am of the opinion that the sooner the distinctive terms "Daflas" and "Miris" are dropped, the better ; only those hillmen familiar with Assamese know these names and there would still be time to replace them by a term taken from a tribal language and thus do away with a division which must ultimately only create confusion.

Both the Daflas of the Panior region and the tribesmen of the Kamla region refer to themselves as Nisü or in some places as Ni a word whose meaning is 'men', but which has gradually developed into a term applied only to the inhabitants of the hills.

The plains people are called Nipak by the Kamla tribes and Höli by the Panior Daflas, and hillmen settled in the plains Nipak Nisü and Höli Nisü respectively. Thus the name Nisü could be used for all the tribes now known as Daflas and Hill Miris, and individual tribal groups could be referred to by their phratry names such as Leli, Kemdir or Durum-Dui. Another possibility would be to use the term Dodum-Dol as a tribal name for all the clans claiming to belong to either of these two groups.

As long, however, as the term Hill Miri is retained in official usage, it should at least be confined to the one tribal group which includes all the *posa*-holding "Hill Miris" and is considered distinct from the Dol clans on the upper Kamla. This group is commonly referred to as Gungü, and extends over the hills to both sides of the Kamla west of its confluence with the Khru. In addition there is a group of Gungü villages on the upper Kamla, split off from the main tribe by the south-east movement of the Kabak clans.

The Dodum Daflas claim that the Gungü have also sprung from their mythical ancestor Dodum, and maintain that they are indeed only another Dodum phratry just like Leli or Kemdir. But this theory is refuted by the Gungü themselves, who have the tradition that their original ancestor was a brother, and not a descendant, of At Nia, the forefather of the Dol and Dodum clans.

Be that as it may, the Gungü intermarry freely with both Dol and Dodum clans, and though their origin may have been different, they have certainly absorbed a great deal of Dol and Dodum blood.

The term Nisü, if chosen as the common name for all the tribes of the Par, Panior, Khru and Kamla regions could include the Gungü who use this term to describe themselves and their neighbours of the Kamla valley, but it is doubtful whether the term Dodum-Dol could be stretched so far as to include the Gungü. Many of them would certainly protest against such a name, implying a relationship which they do not recognize.

The GUNGÜ group is divided into phratries which are still largely localized.

The *Pei* phratry includes the clans of Gocham, Golom Niedo, Godak, Gobak, Gemdir, Tago, Köcho, Maga and Kegam, and the villages known commonly by these clan names are situated to both sides of the Kamla near the confluence with the Subansiri. The members of this phratry, frequently visit the plains and are there known as Sarak Miris.

The *Perü* phratry includes the clans of Rotom, Bini, Biku and Taya, and these are concentrated in villages on the Persen River and on the south bank of the Kamla. The Perü phratry is commonly known in the plains as Panibhutia Miris.

The *Ghimr* phratry with its subdivisions Yüchi-Yüli includes the clans of La, Hipu, Pui, Goduk, Puri, Ripu, Rishar, Goyuk, Guchi, Lumi, Teji, Haro, Nakr, Dumr, Niemar and Chili. Originally the Chimr clans lived in villages on the north bank of the Kamla, but today they are concentrated in the villages of Tapo and La on the south bank, the last Chimr settlements left on the north bank having broken up about one generation ago. Although the Chimr people are today one of the smaller Gungü phratries, the name Chimr is used by Apa Tanis and Daflas of the Panior region as a generic term for all Gungü clans on the lower Kamla.

The *Komdu-Kange* phratry includes the clans of Dochak, Duge, Muke, Hili, Meli, Yukar, Higi, Yuma and Höchi. Even thirty-five years ago, there were still several villages of this phratry on the north bank of the Kamla but they have all been abandoned, and today there is only one village, Dobom, where Komdu-Kange clans predominate.

The *Telü-Todum* phratry includes the clans of Rakhe, Murga, Pemir, Hayo and Yom living in villages of their own between Kamla and Pein, as well as the clans of Boni, Bongom, Purü and Bar in Bua village.

The *Tenü-Talom* phratry has been separated from the rest of the Gungü group by the comparatively recent intrusion of the Kabak clans. It consists of the clans of Guchi, Sojam and Rei, and the Guchi people of Rute-Hate, now divided into the two sub-clans of Dangme and Dungu, still recognize a connection with the Guchi clan of the Chimr group.

The large number of phratries and clans in the Gungü group may well give the impression that it equals in size the Dodum and Dol groups. Actually, however, the number of Gungü people is small, and many of the clans consist of only two or three families. There seems to have been a drop in population within the last one or two generations ; some villages were abandoned and others have shrunk from settlements of twenty and more houses to hamlets of one or two households. The Gungü themselves attribute this drastic decline to disease rather than to war, and increased contact with plains populations and the consequent dangers of infection may well have been responsible for the decimination of the Gungü of the lower Kamla valley.

Language.—The language of the Gungü group differs both from the so-called Leli dialect of the foothills and the dialects spoken by the tribesmen of the Duri group on the Upper Kamla. But the differences are not sufficiently great to bar understanding and men, say, of the Chimr phratry are able to converse with Daflas of the Leli or Kemdir group as well as with people from the Selu or Sipi valley. Only the isolated clans of Guchi, Sojam and Rei have so adapted their dialect to those of the neighbouring Kabak and Duri clans that they are no longer easily understood by men of the Panior region, though, on the other hand, they can talk freely to Gungü people of the lower Kamla valley. Linguistic investigations are still outstanding, but observing men of different groups and areas brought together and attempting to converse with each other, one comes to the conclusion that the Gungü dialect must lie somewhere midway between the language of the Panior and the upper Kamla area. For while men of these two regions find it very difficult to make themselves understood, Gungü men seem to be able to converse freely with both.

Racial characteristics.—The same racial types that occur in the Dodum and Dol groups are found also among the Gungü. Judging from purely visual observation (a most inadequate method of assessing the physical characteristics of a large population), I would say that the type with very large prominent features and high stature is comparatively rare, and that here there is evidence of a strain of a small, pointed faced, wavy haired element which recalls vaguely the Veddid type met with in certain Konyak Nagas. Whereas on the upper Kamla, Selu and Sipi you find types which suggest Mongolid influences different from the Palaeo-Mongolid sub-stratum of the area, the Gungü do not show particularly pronounced mongolid traits. Their skin colour is on the whole of a reddish-brown and their eyes are often light, but some individuals among the South Kamla Gungü have skins of a deep wheat colour.

Social Divisions.—The Gungü are still conscious of their division into *Gute* and *Guchi* clans ; practically however this differentiation is of little account. Both the Pei and Perü phratries are today composed only of *Gute* clans, but one half of the Chimr phratry are *Gute* and the other *Guchi*. Among the latter is incidentally the nowadays most prominent Chimr clan Guchi, of which the headman of Tapo is a member. In the Telü-Todum group there are *Gute* as well as *Guchi* clans, and here too the most influential clan, Rakhe, is *Guchi*, while the small Murga clan is *Gute*. This fact supports no doubt the Gungü's claim that while the *Guchi* were the earlier comers and the descendants of a younger brother, they are at least today, socially not inferior to the *gute*, the descendants of the elder brother.

RAU

The genealogical tree of the Dodum and Dol clans, as unfolded by the tribesmen of the Panior and the Kamla area, does not include the tribes inhabiting the valleys to the north and north-east that drain into the Subansiri. Yet, some of these tribes stand in marriage relations with villages of the Kamla valley, and it would seem that their distinctive appearance is due more to the Tibetan influence, to which they are subject, than to any major tribal division.

The people of the Sipi valley are collectively known as Rau, and include the following clans: Nilö, Dade, Mosü, Dei, Tamin, Raji, Hina, Sikam, Lösar, Kange, Karre, Gidu, Söngia, Komchu, Tania, Soki, Dungium. Some of these clans, for instance, Nilö, are *Gute*, others. such as, Dei, Tamin and Raji, are *Guchi.*

The language spoken by the Rau is very similar to that of the Temr-Tedr group, and is understandable even to the Gungü.

The Rau group is said to include also the inhabitants of the Möngö valley to the north, and it is certain that the populations of these two converging valleys stand in very close contact and speak a similar language.

In physical type the Rau people resemble the tribesmen of the upper Kamla valley, but pronounced Mongolid features, such as slit eyes and light yellow skin are comparatively frequent.

RISHI-MASHI

On the southern slopes of the 12,000 feet range between the Kamla and the Subansiri River lies a group of villages inhabited by a population described by the tribesmen of the Kamla valley as Rishi-Mashi. The most important of these villages are Agla Soreng, Erü Soreng and Longpu, on the route between Kamla and Subansiri, and the principal clans are Tong, Tado, Tagio, Nigio and Tao.

We do not yet know whether these clans claim descent from Dol, but they do intermarry with such Dol clans as Tumr, Sartam, Tali and Haki, and their language is similar to that spoken in the villages on the upper Kamla near its confluence with the Selu. But many men of the Rishi-Mashi group entertain relations with Tibetans and have learnt to speak the dialect of the traders from Tibet.

I have seen only a few women of this group. They had light skin and Mongolid features of a more delicate and progressive type than generally found among the hillmen of the Kamla valley.

NIDU-MÖRA

The inhabitants of the Upper Subansiri valley, which is known to the tribesmen of the Kamla region as Agla Marpa, are said to belong to the tribal group of Nidu-Möra. Since this area has never been visited, information on its population is based on the accounts of tribesmen who have been to Agla Marra for purposes of trade. It seems that the Nidu-Möra speak a language understandable to the Kamla tribesmen, but are conversant also with a Tibetan dialect. Their clothes and weapons are Tibetan, but their economy is basically the same as that of the tribesmen further south. They are reported to resemble the Kamla tribesmen in physical type and to intermarry with the Rishi-Mashi group.

CHIKUM-DUI

Very little is as yet known of the inhabitants of the Sigi valley (marked Singen on the Survey of India map). The Gungü of the Kamla valley refer to them as Chikum or Chikum-Dui, and say that they are like the "Abors" of the Subansiri, cutting their hair short and wearing round hats but no clothes other than skins and furs.

A reconnaissance party of the Miri Mission passed through the area and reported that their contacts were mainly with the tribesmen east of the Subansiri and it may be that racially and culturally they are allied to the Abor tribes to the east of the Subansiri. There can be no doubt that they lie outside the social orbit of the Dodum-Dol tribes, and do not to any extent intermarry with the populations of the Kamla region. But their language seems to be understandable to men of the Gungü group who go there occasionally to trade.

SULUS

Distinct from all the tribal groups so far mentioned are the Sulus or Sulungs, a small, scattered tribe, found in the high country on the upper reaches of the Par River, in the hills between the Panior and the Panyi River, and in the hills flanking the Selu River. There are probably yet other groups of Sulus, but so far little is known of this elusive people.

The origin of the Sulus is obscure, but they are believed to have already been in the country when the other races immigrated. They speak a language of their own, ununderstandable to the Dodum and Dol tribes, but are usually familiar with the tongue of their neighbours. Judging from the few Sulus I have seen, I would say that they are of comparatively primitive racial type, and are distinguished from all the other tribesmen by a pronounced prognathism.

In the economic field the differences between Sulus and Daflas are very marked. While the basis of the economy of all other hillmen is agriculture and animal husbandry, the Sulus subsist mainly by hunting and trapping and the collection of jungle produce. They are believed to have had no cultivation until they came in contact with other tribes and learnt from them how to till the soil. Even now the areas they till are very small and they live in a semi-nomadic style, leaving their villages for months at a time to range the forests and hills in search of game and wild jungle produce.

They are reputedly good blacksmiths and brass founders, and fashion waste iron, into knives and *dao* make pipes and even imitations of such ceremonially precious bell-metal objects as prayer bells by the *cire perdue* process. The Daflas of the Panior area have the tradition that they learnt the blacksmith's craft from Sulus.

The Sulus in the area of the Sipi and Selu Rivers are known as Kora Sulus, and are divided into clans among which are Köpik, Kui, Koriang, Löbung and Löi. Sulus known as Lukur and Mania are said to live in the vicinity of the upper Khru, and among the Sulu clans of the Panior area are Picha and Dunkr.

Sulus do not normally intermarry with any other tribe, but casual unions between captured Sulus and Dafla slaves may have led to a limited amount of miscegenation.

APA TANIS

Whereas most other tribal groups merge imperceptibly one into the other, and even the Sulus, though distinct in language and habit have no compact territory of their own, the Apa Tanis constitute a separate endogamous community with its own territory, language, customs and tradition, and an economy fundamentally different from that of all other tribes of the Subansiri region. In a single valley of about 20 square miles 20,000 Apa Tanis live in seven villages ranging in size from 160 to over 1,000 houses. These villages fall into three groups, each of which has a distinct tradition regarding the migration that preceded the Apa Tani's settlement in their present habitat. The first group consists of the single village of Hang, the second of Hari and Bela, and the third of Haja, Duta, Mudang Tage and Michi Bamin. Each group constitutes for certain purposes a ritual unit: the greatest annual Apa Tani festival, the Mloko, for instance, is celebrated by each of the three groups in turn. There is a slight difference in dialect between the groups, but the Bela dialect resembles in some respects that of the Haja group rather than the dialect of Hari with which Bela is allied. The three groups intermarry freely, and there are no appreciable differences in custom. A system of reciprocal rights and obligations welds the seven villages into a closely integrated community, conscious of its national character and distinct cultural heritage.

Cultural Characteristics.—The fact that a thousand people find a living on one square mile would be unusual anywhere among primitive populations dependent on their own resources, but in an area where no other tribe has any conception of intensive cultivation, the achievement of the Apa Tanis is truly astonishing. Coming from the Dafla country into the Apa Tani valley with its irrigated rice-fields, gardens and groves, is to enter another world. Both Daflas and Apa Tanis are agriculturists, but there can be no greater contrast than the difference in their systems of cultivation. While the Dafla seldom tills a piece of land more than two or three years in succession and recognizes no individual property in land, the Apa Tani tends every square yard of his land with loving care and the greatest ingenuity. Land is to him the source and essence of all wealth and only the possession of land gives a man economic independence. All

cultivated land is jealously guarded private property and good, irrigated fields fetch prices in cattle and valuables that in the plains of Assam would be considered fantastic. Rice, cultivated on irrigated, terraced fields, is the Apa Tani's main crop, but on dry land millet (*Eleusine coracana*) and maize are grown. Ploughs are unknown and the field-work is done entirely with iron hoes, digging-sticks and wooden batons. Small as is the area under cultivation compared with the population of the valley, the Apa Tanis not only grow enough food for themselves, but sell a good deal of rice to Daflas and Miris, who pay mainly in mithan and pigs.

Whereas the Daflas dwell in huge, single homesteads, sometimes with as many as fourteen families under one roof, and these homesteads are loosely grouped over hillsides into settlements, the Apa Tanis live in crowded villages, each family in its own house, and in some villages there are a thousand or more houses standing eave to eave in long lines of streets and narrow lanes. Some of the villages are subdivided into *Khel* and in each village there are numerous exogamous clans (*halu*). The spirit of extreme and almost aggressive individualism and independence so characteristic of the Dafla would be fatal and disruptive in such populous settlements. Men who rub shoulders from morning to night have no other choice but to co-operate and to settle disputes not by force but through arbitration, or should that fail, by a regularized and only symbolic display of force. Unrestricted war between Apa Tani village is unknown and the whole tribes a social and endogamous unit whose cohesion is maintained by numerous traditional and ceremonial ties.

Each of the seven Apa Tani villages is administered by a council of elders, and though there is no common head of the whole tribe, the village-elders consult with each other on questions affecting two or more villages.

Within the villages social life is regulated by an elaborate system of clan-elders, executive clan-dignitaries and messengers, but their administration of public affairs is unobtrusive and their powers are limited. While tradition and custom closely prescribe behaviour in all normal circumstances, there is no power which can impose an unusual course of action on any section of the tribe. In the pursuance of peaceful activities the Apa Tanis have attained an admirable degree of co-operation and concerted action, but when attacked by their warlike Dafla neighbours they seem to lack organization and leadership. Small bands of well-led Daflas have often captured Apa Tanis out hunting or their mithan grazing in the forest without provoking collective action on the part of this numerous tribe.

Practically all cultivated land is private property and there is little scope for expansion, almost the entire valley bottom being divided into irrigated rice-fields, dry land and pasture. Some men possess more land than the members of their household can cultivate, while others own no or little irrigated land. The disparity between rich and poor is very great, and a poor man needs exceptional energy and intelligence to acquire a holding large enough to secure his material independence.

Apa Tani society is thus perhaps more static than Dafla society and the predominance of a wealthy family may persist for generations. The same stability applies to the two classes : *mite* or patricians and *mura* or plebeians.* All slaves belong to the latter class, and though they or their descendants may be "freed", *i. e.*, given houses and land of their own, they can never be absorbed into or even intermarry with—the class of patricians. This unsurmountable social distinction is not always paralleled by a corresponding distinction in material possessions ; many a *mura* is very well off, while there are *mite* who own no land and have to earn their living by work as daily labourers.

Trade is for such poor men a valuable source of income, and though the Apa Tanis are as a people far more settled than any group of Daflas, they are most enterprising traders and undertake expeditions to areas several days' march from their own country. In this way cloth and *dao* manufactured by Apa Tanis filter to distant villages and occasionally even across the trade-divide between India and Tibet.

Racial Characteristics.—The difference in appearance between Apa Tanis and Daflas is striking. This is due not only to the Apa Tanis' distinctive dress but even more to their peculiar racial characteristics. Apa Tanis, and particularly those of the upper class undiluted by marriages with foreign slaves, stand out from any crowd of hillmen, be they Daflas, Miris or Abors. They are tall, or slender build with delicate long hands ; their features are progressive, the faces long, the noses narrow and often elegantly curved, the light eyes are comparatively large, and deepset : indeed some men could pass for Europoids were it not for the ruddy brown of their skin. The hair is often wavy and in children frequently very light. There is a certain resemblance between some Apa Tanis and Daflas of the more progressive type, but in the former the non-Mongolid features are much more strongly pronounced than in any Dafla.

In spite of the somatic, cultural and to a lesser degree linguistic differences between the Apa Tanis and their neighbours, and the fact that the Apa Tanis form a self-contained social and political unit their racial isolation is not complete. Daflas captured or bought as children grow up as Apa Tanis and later marry into *mura* clans, and Apa Tani women visiting such neighbouring Dafla villages as Mai, Jorum and Talo are not averse to casual affairs with Dafla men. There are no formally arranged marriages between Apa Tanis and Dafla girls, but there are a few cases of Apa Tani women who have entered into permanent unions with Daflas and have gone to live in the husband's village, the children of such unions becoming Daflas.

Migrations.—The Apa Tanis have the tradition that their ancestors came from a country to the north or north-east, lying near the two rivers called Supupad-Pudpumi. These may be two branches of the Subansiri but neither the Apa Tanis nor any one else is likely to identify the area of their origin. They all agree, however, that they crossed the Subansiri and came to a place in the Sipi valley called Karr which lies beyond the Pij Cholo, a mountain peak visible from the hills above the Apa Tani valley. There they are believed to have split into the three groups—the nucleus of the three village groups—each of which skirted the Pij Cholo and took a different way to the Apa Tani country.

The people of the Haja group crossed into the Kamla valley by the so-called Regang route. Later they crossed the Khru River at a place called Ombu-Rabuk which lies between Mintlat and Rakhe. They then went eastwards along the combined Khru and Kamla as far as the mouth of the Pein River and finally reached the Apa Tani valley *via* the Gungü village of Bua, entering the valley on the side now belonging to Bela and Hari.

The Bela and Hari group followed the Haja people from Pij Cholo as far as Ombu-Rabak. But after crossing the Khru-Kamla they moved upstream along the Khru westwards, as far as the Palin valley. They then went up the Palin, crossed the Yapubog pass and reached the Apa Tani valley *via* the present Dafla village of Licha, emerging on the side of the Apa Tani valley now occupied by the villages of the Haja group.

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* Apa Tanis use also the terms *gute* (synonymous with *mite*) and *Guchi* (synonymous with *mura*) the use of these terms is possibly due to contact with Daflas, but *Gute* and *Guchi* have among the Apa Tanis a somewhat different implication than among the Daflas.

The Hang group took an altogether different route, a route known as Tapin Rego, lying east of the Pij Cholo. They crossed the Kamla near Gocham (not far from its confluence with the Subansiri) at a place called Enta Rego and made their way to the Apa Tani country through the hills now inhabited by the Gungü clans.

But the migrations of the Apa Tanis belong to legend and while many Daflas clans have been in a state of flux for several generations, the large Apa Tani population is completely settled. From time to time their neighbours have changed and many villages beyond the borders of their small domain have passed from one group of Dafla clans to another, and with this vacillation in Dafla politics friend has given way to foe and foe to friend, but the Apa Tanis have made neither attempts at expansion nor have they even been seriously threatened by foreign invaders. They are, as they have been for centuries, the most stable element in the population pattern of the Subansiri Region.

Large areas of the Subansiri Region still await exploration, but from the existing evidence it would appear that Apa Tani civilization is unique in the Assam Himalayas. No other tribe has developed the resources of its habitat to the same extent as the Apa Tanis, and though the latter have had the advantage of an unusually fertile piece of country, I do not believe that a favourable milieu alone can explain their success in transforming a mountain valley of barely twenty square miles into a garden where twenty thousand people can maintain a standard of living far higher than that of any neighbouring tribe. The genius of Apa Tani culture seems to be fundamentally different from that of Dafla, Miri and Abor culture, and the considerable physical difference between Apa Tanis and Daflas suggests that not only the cultural but also the racial heritage of the two populations is distinct.

Conclusions.—In my recent work in the Subansiri area I could lift the curtain from a country unknown to anthropology, but a good deal of further research will have to be done before we can approach the solution of its many ethnological problems. So far we can discern three major cultural strata among the many tribal groups which are scattered over this part of the hills between the borders of India and Tibet: the ancient stratum of semi-nomadic food gatherers and hunters represented by the Sulus, the broad stratum of *jhum*-cultivators such as Daflas and Miris, and the most advanced stratum of a highly developed agricultural civilization based on the cultivation of rice on irrigated terrace-fields. In other parts of the Eastern Himalayas there exists also a stratum of shepherds and cattle-breeders, semi-nomadic peoples living in high altitudes above the region of the sub-tropical rain forest. When the exploration of the Subansiri area is continued such a population may still be discovered in the highlands immediately below the Great Himalayan range, and among the Daflas of the Panior valley I heard indeed vague stories of people known as Nga, who are said to breed sheep, wear woollen clothes and build houses of stone. But until the upper courses of Khru, Kamla and Subansiri are explored, our knowledge of these and other high altitude dwellers will have to rely on hearsay reports, and for the present only the three cultural strata represented by Sulus, Daflas and Apa Tanis are open to anthropological investigation.

Notes on Agriculture and Animal Husbandry among the Apa Tanis.

The economy of the Apa Tanis is without parallel in Tribal India. Secluded from the outside world by natural barriers and war-like neighbours, the Apa Tanis have developed the resources of their small country to an extent which would be creditable to any civilized community and is truly miraculous in a tribe of archaic and in many ways primitive culture.

The Apa Tanis' habitat is a single broad valley lying at an altitude of 5,000 feet, roughly speaking midway between the Panior River and the Kamla, one of the main tributaries of the Subansiri. Steep mountains rising to 8,000 feet ring this valley whose plateau-like formation stands in striking contrast to the neighbouring country where rivers rush through deep gorges and mountains sweep up to rugged crests with hardly as much as a ledge between river-bank and peak seven or eight thousand feet above. There is much to suggest that the valley was once a lake far above the gorges on either side, and the silt brought down by streams from the surrounding mountains has filled out this lake and built up a plain whose fertile soil has enabled the Apa Tanis to develop their peculiar type of civilization. This plain is drained by the Kele River. Before the advent of the Apa Tanis the Kele may have been a meandering stream in a spacious valley of swamps and bogs, but today it is forced into a more or less straight course between high dams. The wide flat valley has been transformed into an enormous mosaic of carefully tended rice terraces, while on islands of higher ground lie groves of pines, bamboos and fruit trees and great villages, almost towns, with labyrinths of densely crowded streets.

The length of this valley is about 6½ miles and its breadth at the widest point about 2 miles. But the seven villages comprise some 3,650 houses; if we reckon five to six inhabitants for each house we come to a population of 20,000 Apa Tanis who all derive the bulk of their substance from the twenty odd square miles of cultivable land and use the surrounding hills only as hunting grounds. There are not many areas in rural India with a population of nearly a thousand per square mile, and I cannot recall any other example of an Asiatic hill tribe surviving and indeed maintaining a comparatively high standard of living in so restricted a territory.

The agriculture of the Apa Tanis as the basis of their economy is thus not only of great intrinsic interest but provides us with an example of an elaborate and most efficient system of soil exploitation developed by a race cut off from the material development of the Indian high civilizations. The achievement of this tribe is all the more remarkable since the neighbouring Dafla and Miri tribes follow quite different and far more primitive agricultural methods. Indeed to come from the land of these cultivators of oft shifted hill-fields, carved as it would seem haphazardly from the jungle and abandoned again after one or two years, into the Apa Tani country with its purposeful order and evidence of the loving care bestowed on virtually every square yard of ground is like bridging thousands of years of man's development and passing in a single step from the age of barbarism into the era of an ancient, highly developed civilization. In many ways the Apa Tani stands on the cultural and economic level of neolithic man (though iron is of course in common use), but if we consider the perfection with which by no other economic methods than those of the later neolithic age he has established his mastery over nature, we begin to understand how many of the oriental high civilizations could have been evolved during epochs preceding the dawn of the metal age.

1. *The Lay-out of Villages and Cultivated Land.*—There is a certain uniformity in the composition of Apa Tani villages and the lay out of the surrounding land conforms to so definite a pattern that to visualize one village in its setting will give us a fairly accurate idea of the Apa Tani valley as a whole.

The village is built on high ground that rises like an island from the level of the rice-fields; hundreds of pile-dwellings stand wall to wall in streets, some wide and some narrow, that radiate from the assembly platforms (*lapang*) while on the outskirts, out of reach of village fires, are clusters of raised granaries; wherever there is space, there are groves of bamboo, carefully fenced-in kitchen-gardens, high pines and fruit trees. Narrow lanes lead from the village through the groves and gardens to the irrigated rice-fields; more granaries on wooden piles fringe the edge of the island and nearby always under water are rows of small terraces, covered in winter with a layer of pale green slime, but luminous in early summer with a thick carpet of bright green rice seedlings. These are the nurseries for the young rice plants and beyond, stretching across the central valley, across the Kele River, as far as the village opposite are rice-fields, terrace after terrace following each other in uninterrupted succession. Standing out from this sea of terraces are isolated hummocks of high land on which there are gardens and groves and the soft green sward of pastures and clan burial grounds. Inter-village paths run along the dams and the Kele River is bridged by stout planks and bamboo structures. Towards the hills, the rice-fields extend right up to the rising ground, threading a trail through the low undulating country below the high mountains. Here on gentle slopes are gardens, plots for vegetables, millet seedlings and tobacco, each strongly fenced-in, and perhaps more groves of bamboo, fruit trees and pines. High, level ground is used for dry crops, the bracken covered hummocks as pasture land, but wherever there is water, an oozing trickle or a rushing mountain stream the Apa Tanis have harnessed it to their service and a tapering tongue of terraces climbs the narrow ravine or skirts the base of spurs and hillocks. At the fringes of the valleys there are the treeless, bracken covered hills that are used as grazing grounds for cattle and mithan and the curious fenced-in plots of luscious green which although one would take them for pastures, are really kept for the cultivation of leafy plants from which a salty substancee, the black "Apa Tani salt" is extracted.

From the broken country on the edge of the valley, paths, broad and in excellent repair as all paths in the Apa Tani country, rise steeply, but it is not yet the end of cultivated land. The hillsides are covered with forest, plantations of pines and other useful trees in carefully nurtured plots, in which all trees are of the same size and kind. Several thousand feet above the valley is the untended forest, with its rank growth of enormous rhododendrons, the many trees of the sub-tropical rain forest and a multitude of climbers, tree ferns and orchids. From any vantage point on these high ranges you may have a bird's eye view of the lovely tranquil Apa Tani country: the villages, like small towns with winding streets and long rows of gabled thatched roofs, pressing round them the dark pine-groves and light green bamboo gardens that in the spring are broken by the white and pink of flowering fruit trees, and to all sides the brilliant stretches of water flooded fields, an expanse almost like a lake, laced with the delicate irregular lines of dissecting dams. From this luminous sea emerge islands clothed in groves and gardens and irregular peninsulars of field and pasture, but however far the eye reaches, there is no spot in this valley, which does not show the traces of man's controlling hand.

2. *Land Tenure.*—Land so intensively and carefully tended, the object of so much ingenuity and labour and transformed, no doubt out of all recognition from its original state, must obviously be highly prized by those who reap the harvests of its manifold products. Among the Apa Tanis as among other peasant folks—and unlike the neighbouring Daflas and Miris—the influence and social status of a man depends largely on his property in land. Land is the source of wealth and all other and less permanent possessions are mainly valued as a means of acquiring more land.

Any study of Apa Tani agriculture must therefore begin with an inquiry into the system of land-tenure, which is intimately linked with the complex social organization.

According to the type of ownership the tribal land of the Apa Tanis can be divided into three categories :—

1. Land owned by individuals.
2. Clan-land.
3. Common village-land.

The first category comprises practically all cultivated land, *i.e.*, irrigated rice-fields, fields for dry crops, garden plots for maize, millet, vegetables and fruit trees, groves of bamboos, pines and other useful trees, as well as sites for houses and granaries.

Clan-land consists of meadow land near the village used as pasture and burial g rounds and tracts of forest, sometimes at a very great distance from the village, where only the mem bers of the owner-clan have the right to hunt and trap.

Common village land is confined to one or two usually not extensive stretches of pasture, and to forest tracts on the periphery of the Apa Tani country.

Privately owned land.—The disparity of rich and poor is very great, not so much in the standard of living as in the holdings of cultivable land. Except for slaves and a few very poor men of better class, the average Apa Tani owns land of various kinds. Inside the village he owns his house-site, which lies with rare exceptions in the quarter inhabited by his clan. A good house-site in one of the main streets, preferably near an assembly platform (*lapang*), has a very high price and is seldom to be had for less than 10 mithan*.

As the population is more or less static most men inherit a house-site and have not to purchase it, but a man with several sons may have difficulty in securing for each a site in a good position. Poor men and freed slaves usually have houses on the outskirts of the clan quarter, and a man of good family, fallen on bad times, is often tempted to sell his valuable house-site and move to a back street. Many families have, on the other hand, spare house-sites, which until required are used as vegetable gardens and maize plots and these are much prized because of the ample manure available in the village.

Apart from his house-site a man requires the site for at least one granary, which lying on the outskirts of the village, is valued at one cow or half a mithan. And he requires one or more bamboo groves on the high ground adjoining the village or on a neighbouring 'island' These groves are plots between one quarter of an acre and two acres in size; they are well protected against thieves by high fences and elaborately fastened doors, and contain not only bamboo, but usually also some pines and fruit trees. Without such a bamboo grove a man must buy the material with which to build his house and granaries as well as bamboo required for making baskets and implements. For no wild bamboos grow within easy reach of the villages. Very poor man fetch bamboo from forests several hours' march from their villages, but it is virtually impossible to bring the bamboo for an entire house from so great a distance. The bamboo groves are therefore essential parts of a man's holdings. A fairly large grove near the village with good bamboos and a few pine trees may change hands for three mithan, but a very small grove with very young bamboos or a grove on a hillside at some distance from the village can be obtained for as little as one mithan.

Sometimes interspersed among the bamboo and pine groves, but more often in separate places are garden plots, where vegetables, maize and tobacco are grown. Though on the same type of soil, gardens are cheaper than groves with standing timber or bamboo. Even the poorest men have usually such gardens which can be bought for a big pig, a Tibetan *dao* or three or four cloths.

But the most valuable part of a man's property are his irrigated rice,fields, on which he grows the bulk of his food supply. The price of such wet land is so high that unless an Apa Tani inherits at least two or three terraces he has very little chance of every building up a holding sufficient for his needs. Near the villages where land is most expensive, ten mithan and more may be paid for a single terrace (of about ½ acre). Smaller plots in the same area change hands for two to five mithan, but it is only in the outlying side-valleys, which do not hold water as long as the centre of the valley, that a terrace of half an acre can be obtained for as little as two or three mithan and smaller terraces even for one mithan or a cow. There are, of course, no fixed rates for land, and a plot may within a few years change hands twice at widely differing prices.

A concrete case of a land sale may give some idea of the value of good rice fields. A man of Hari village bought from a man of his own clan two terraces of a total annual yield of approximately 100 small carrying baskets of unhusked rice (equalling about 650 seers) which corresponds roughly to the value of two small mithan bulls. For these two terraces he paid to the owner five large mithan cows, 11 oxen, as well as one Dafla cloth and an Apa Tani *dao*. To the five negotiators of the purchase he paid moreover fees amounting to the value of at least one mithan. Expressed in small mithan bulls—the standard for the valuation of land—the price *plus* commission amounted to 16 mithan and the annual yield of the field is thus just over 12 per cent of the invested capital without reckoning the expense of the labour to work it.

An average family of five or six members can meet its consume of rice from the yield of approximately 1½—2 acres of well irrigated wet land having a yield of about 300 *yagi* baskets of unhusked rice. The value of such a holding is partly determined by the distance of the fields from the village, and the price for which it can be bought depends on various incidental circumstances. But it would be safe to say that the price will not be lower than twenty and not higher than fifty small mithan. Expressed in Indian currency this would amount to between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 5,000 and such a sum does not include the dry fields, gardens and groves a man must possess to be independent for his food supply.

The dry land, used mainly for the cultivation of millet, is much cheaper, and plots change hands for one or two mithan, while even a pig or an *endi* cloth may buy a very small plot. Poor men with little or no wet land, have thus a means of growing at least part of their food supply, but rice cannot be cultivated on such dry land, which can therefore never altogether compensate for the lack of irrigated terraces.

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*1. Apa Tanis measure most higher values in mithan (*bos frontalis*), which are virtually a currency; the value of a full grown mithan expressed in money is today between Rs. 100 and Rs. 300.

In some places it is possible, however, to transform dry land into rice terraces, and a poor man may thus acquire some wet land at comparatively low cost. But such rice terraces on high ground are not as productive and therefore not as valuable as those in the bed of the valley ; they cannot be kept moist throughout the year.

Another way of obtaining land suitable for rice cultivation is to lay out new terraces on common clan-land. Many clans possess common pastures in the bracken covered hillocks, and here and there a few narrow terraces could be fitted into a depression or ravine. Only members of the owner clan may build such terraces which become their private property once they have established permanent cultivation ; but once under cultivation, these terraces may be sold to non-clan members.

Similarly common pastures near the villages can sometimes be turned into fields for dry cultivation, but the cattle owners among the clan-members often resist such attempts and will even force a poor and landless man to relinquish a plot on which he has begun to cultivate.

The high price of irrigated land, the fact that it can only be bought for cattle and mithan and the restricted area of the Apa Tani country, have given rise to a capitalistic trend in Apa Tani economics. A large part of the best land is today concentrated in the hands of a few rich men, whereas there are numerous poor men with holdings too small to feed them and their families. This is not the place to investigate the reasons for this inequality, but it is obvious that a man without sufficient land to support himself has only a slender chance of ever acquiring the cattle with which he could purchase additional land. The rich man, on the other hand, has usually a surplus of grain and by bartering this to neighbouring Daflas or Miris for mithan he obtains quite easily the means whereby he can add to his holding.

Two examples from the village of Haja may illustrate the manner in which holdings are built up and enlarged.

Nada Tomu, a member of the most prominent clan, was given by his father twenty-five terraces lying in groups of five at five different points of the village land, as well as two bamboo groves and one garden. He thus began with far more land than necessary to support a family. Every year he sold some rice to Daflas of neighbouring villages, and with the mithan received in payment he bought more land, altogether 62 terraces in ten different places. Nowadays he can buy with his surplus an everage of three mithan a year and possesses twelve slaves who all work on his land, though only seven live in his house, the others having set up their own households.

Nendin Tagum of the same village acquired his land in a less orthodox fashion. He inherited from his father six rice terraces in two groups of three and bought subsequently three more terraces for a total of twenty mithan. Of these only three were mithan which he had inherited ; eight he had bought for rice, and nine he had obtained as ransoms for captured Daflas.

But it is only the man of some means and an established social position who is likely to profit from the risky game of raiding and man-catching. For the poor landless man without influential kinsmen to effect his release if the tables are turned, it is too dangerous. In recent years, however, an alley has been opened by which he too can attain a minimum of economic independence. Work in the plains of Assam has enabled many a man to purchase calves, either buying them for cash in the plains and driving them up to the hills or purchasing them from fellow tribesmen for goods obtained in Assam.

It is characteristic of Apa Tani economics that land can only be bought for cattle. Pigs, cloth or *dao* may go with the price, but the basic price consists always of mithan and cattle. Only very small patches of dry land are occasionally sold for a big pig or some valuable, such as a Tibetan prayer bell, but the proper currency for transactions in real property is and remains cattle.

The principle that all cultivated land is private property of which the individual owner can dispose of as he wishes is so deeply ingrained in Apa Tani mentality that village boundaries are no real consideration in the transfer of land. For convenience everyone likes, of course, to have his fields as close to his village as possible, but nothing prevents a man from purchasing rice-terraces on the land of a neighbouring village Indeed in the central valley and particularly in the contact zones of the political units the ownership of land often transcends the village boundaries and the fields of the inhabitants of two adjacent villages dovetail across the traditional frontiers. In the side valleys intrusions of similar nature are less frequent and here the transfer of land is largely an endo-village affair, the intruders on a clan's traditional land being members of the same village, but of different clan or perhaps even different *khel*.

At first sight it may appear as though there is no check on the capitalistic trend in Apa Tani economics and that more and more land must of necessity accumulate in the hands of the rich men. Yet, such a view would be one sided. There are various forces which counteract such a development. The inheritance laws provide that the land of a man is divided more or less equally among his sons, and many men divide up most of their land when their sons marry and set up their own households. Thus large holdings are seldom handed on undivided to the next generation. A wealthy man is moreover expected to provide some land for his dependents. Slaves who have grown up in his house and shown themselves able and hard-working, are usually allowed to set up their own households once they are married and have one or two children. Their master is then under an obligation to give them some land—it may not be very much, certainly not enough to make them self-sufficient—and once given, the land cannot be reclaimed unless the freed slaves now turned dependents die without male issue. Finally there are the many vicissitudes of fate which may force a rich man to dispose quickly and at comparatively low rates of some of his land. A long drawn out illness with the need for innumerable sacrifices of mithan and cows, may compel him to sell land for cattle, or a number of his household may fall into the hands of raiders and must be ransomed with mithan and valuables which again may be obtainable only by the sale of land. While Apa Tanis will give land to their dependents, they never hire it out, and a poor man cannot make a living by cultivating a rich man's land and sharing the crop. He must either be content with the irregular income of daily wages, working alternatively for several rich men, or he must join a rich man's household and accept a position hardly different from that of a slave.

Clan-land.—The land held jointly by all the members of a clan comprises undulating pasture land and bracken covered hillocks, hunting grounds in the forests surrounding the valley and, usually close to the village, an open grassy stretch used as burial ground and as a place where mithan can be tethered before slaughter or sale.

Generally clan-land is not held by a single clan, but by a group of two or even three clans that inhabit a separate quarter of the village, and may either intermarry or stand in a brother relationship. When a clan dies out the land does not become common village land, but goes by right to the traditional marriage partners of the extinct clan.

The importance of the clan-land lies not so much in the open pasturage, but in the forest tracts used for the extraction of wood and cane, for trapping and for hunting. These tracts are not concentrated in one block, but are scattered over the hills enclosing the Apa Tani country.

The two principal clans of Duta village, for instance, possess jointly twenty-nine tracts of common land in addition to their collective burial ground, Pape, in the central valley. These tracts are known by name and comprise a cluster of bare hills used for grazing, a piece of jungle with a salt lick for mithan, six tracts of forest near the village used only for cutting firewood, grazing mithan and sometimes for rat-hunting ; the remaining twenty-one tracts are in widely separated areas, some near the Dafla village of Licha, west of Duta, others south of Hang village about one day's journey from Duta, and yet others east of Hari. Trapping in these tracts is the perogative of the owners, but any Apa Tani may hunt there with bow and arrow and even cut wood.

Within such clan forest, certain areas are the trapping preserve of individual clan members and it is indeed obvious that the setting of traps and particularly spear traps, dangerous to man and beast alike must somehow be regulated. Such an area has all the features of private property except that the owner's exclusive rights cover only trapping and the extraction of cane ; for hunting with spears or bows and arrows his piece of forest is open to all members of the clans with adjoining hunting grounds, a group which may comprise part of a village, a whole village or even two villages. It is only within this group that a man may sell his forest, or more precisely his right to trap and cut cane within a circumscribed area. The prices paid for such rights are small compared to the prices of cultivated land or groves, and trapping grounds change hands for as little as a pig, a few *dao* or several cloths.

Common village land.—Within the Apa Tani valley the areas held jointly by all clans of a village are comparatively small and unimportant, but there are certain tracts of forest on the periphery of the Apa Tani country which are claimed by the one or other village without being the property of individual clans. These tracts are used as hunting grounds Apa Tanis going as much as two days' journey on their hunting trips, but they lie at too great a distance from the villages to be useful for trapping or as pasture for mithan.

The common village land within the Apa Tani valley, on the other hand, is mainly used as pasture for oxen. Theoretically it is a reserve where men short of land may construct new gardens and fields for dry crops, but such a transformation of pasture into cultivated land needs the consent or at least the connivance of the other villagers.

3. *Methods of Tillage.*—Only by the most intensive and skilful working of the available land can the Apa Tanis maintain themselves in an area where one square mile of land, comprising fields, gardens, groves and pastures, must provide the subsistence for at least one thousand persons or, roughly speaking, two hundred families. Their methods of tillage are primitive, and indeed of a type proper to the neolithic age rather than to the world's great peasant civilizations of today, in so far as they depend entirely on human labour; but in other respects they are highly specialized and are proof of a far greater capacity for planning and concerted effort than the wasteful methods of cultivation in many parts of India, which for millenia have been familiar with the plough and the exploitation of animal labour.

Wet Crops.—The corner stone of Apa Tani agriculture is the cultivation of rice on irrigated terraces Rice is the staple food, and all other crops are grown mainly to provide variety of diet and to utilize those portions of the country not suitable for irrigation. Rice too is the principal item in the Apa Tanis' export trade.

But for the high lying islands and the undulating tongues of land under dry crops, and the spurs and hillocks of the broken country at the foot of the hills, the whole bed of the central basin as well as every side valley is laid out in rice terraces (*asi gare*). These terraces as we may well call them, though many lie almost on a level, can best be visualized if we begin our description with the highest terraces at the top end of a side valley where a stream is first tapped and follow the course of the water from terrace to terrace, until it flows into the broad bowl of the main valley where the surplus water from channels and terraces drains into the Kele, the river which traverses the entire length of the Apa Tani valley.

Everyone of the larger streams rising on the wooded heights that ring the Apa Tani country, is tapped soon after it emerges from the forest and reaches a gully wide enough to accommodate a series of narrow terraces. A short distance above the terraces occurs the first diversion from the stream but usually only a little water is here deflected ; the stream continues on its course while the feeder channel branching off at an angle leads water alongside the series of terraces so that by blocking or opening the connecting ducts any field can be flooded or drained as required. At the head of the valley the terraces are on an average narrow, perhaps 15 by 30 yards, are partly dug out of the hill-side and partly built up, with a difference of one to three feet in level of the individual terraces or groups of terraces. As the valley broadens, the terraces grow in size and the differences in their level dwindle to one or even half a foot. But wherever the trickle of a spring has eaten a small ravine into the fold of the rounded hillocks that flank the valley, subsidiary series of small terraces are built up to meet the water practically at its source. It is in these subsidiary valleys where poor men short of land are using every irrigable corner for cultivation, that the individual terraces are narrowest and the dams highest, the difference between one terrace and the next being often as much as five or six feet. But unlike such terrace-builders as the Angami Nagas or the Ifugaos of North Luzon, the Apa Tanis do not construct terraces that climb the mountain slopes for a thousand feet and more. The genius of the Apa Tanis has manifested itself rather in a meticulous and expert care for every crop, than in impressive feats of engineering. Yet the lay-out of the terraces is no mean example of co-ordination of effort and perfection of technique. In the side valleys, several hundred yards broad, the parent stream has often been tapped of most of its water and when it fans out into the central valley only a shallow flow remains in the main channel, deep cut against times of heavy rain when floods are a threat to the dams. These courses are secured against flood erosion by rows of wooden stakes and threatened points strengthened by linings of strong bamboo matting. Along the embankments of the main channels run paths strewn with gravel which renders them usuable in even the wettest weather. After heavy rain there is always the danger of flood water breaking over the dams and submerging the sprouting crop. Normally, however water is not allowed to overflow the dams. Where two terraces lie on much the same level the mud-dam is cut to allow the water to flow from one field to the next, but elsewhere the terraces are drained through wide wooden or bamboo pipes let into the dam ; these allow of a steady flow from the higher to the lower terrace without the rush of water eating into the dam.

The rainfall is so ample and the many streams and rivulets converging from the ring of high wooded ranges bring so much water into the shallow bowl of the Apa Tani country, that the flooding of all the low-lying terraces is on the whole no problem. Water rights are not sold or bought, and there are no fixed rules as to which terraces have the first claim on the water of any particular stream. Disputes over water are said to be rare, but when they occur a settlement can usually be reached by the division of a channel.

There is an essential difference between the terraces in the bottom of the valleys, which are served by streams and channels, and are for the most part kept under water during the greater part of the year, and terraces on high ground which, watered by monsoon rivulets are largely rain fed. We will see presently that they receive different treatment and are used for growing different varieties of rice.

The upkeep of the terrace fields, dams and channels absorbs a major part of the Apa Tanis' energy. The harvest is hardly garnered when repairs and alterations on dams are put in hand and throughout the winter, until the first days in May, men and women can be seen moving earth, levelling fields, constructing and rebuilding dams, often standing ankle deep in mud and water at a temperature only just above freezing point. They are not content merely to maintain an established system of terraces and channels which to the casual observer looks little short of perfect. If the yield of a field has not been up to standard an Apa Tani will carry out improvements before the next sowing season : divide a large field perhaps not perfectly watered into two terraces, or conversely turn two terraces into one, gaining thereby the space of the dividing dam. For all such earth-works as well as the repairing of embankments and the levelling of fields the Apa Tani shifts the soil from one area to another on large flat wooden trays, that are easily dragged over the slimy surface of the partially flooded ground. When the work is done by parties of young men and girls, it is mainly the latter who with hoes hack up the soil and cut away the face of bunds and fields while the young men and boys load the soil on to the trays and drag it off for redistribution. Both flat wooden batons and iron hoes are used in the remodelling and repairing of dams and fields. The wooden batons are long thin slivers of wood pointed at one end and the iron hoes are of the type in common use on tea gardens and are without exception imported from Assam ; although today they appear indispensable to the Apa Tani, old men still remember the wooden hoe-like implement used in their father's time and there can be no doubt that then the work of building terraces took up an even greater part of the Apa Tanis' time.

Although there do not seem to be many openings for an expansion of the area under irrigation, there passes no year without some small plot being turned into terraced fields. The easiest way of bringing new land under rice cultivation is to level and ring with dams a plot previously used for growing millet, relying on rain water to fill the terrace and soften the ground. But such fields can only be used for the early rice, for the shortest period of dry weather can seriously harm the crop. Where a perennial stream can be tapped and the water brought in a channel, the chances for gaining new valuable fields are far better. Villages like Michi Bamin and Hang and, to a lesser degree, Hari have still land for expansion and in the last two years new terraces have been built in outlying areas in marshy ground as well as built up the course of streamlets that trickle from some obscure source. Men of Hang village, for instance, have recently constructed a whole series of terraces on land that had been occupied by pine-groves and pasture, and have successfully carried a long channel across a pasture and split it up into several branches to provide sufficient feed for fifteen to twenty terraces.

We have seen that there are two types of rice-fields : those permanently kept under water or at least in a very moist condition, and those that dry out and harden soon after harvest. The former, which are considered the more valuable are not dug over and on these the stubble sprouts in the following year as soon as the field has been flooded. The rice is here perennial and the plants bear fruit for two or three years. In the planting season, women go over the field planting out barren patches, but the entire field remains undisturbed for many years, and manure is only scattered over the surface. Such fields are used exclusively for a late ripening variety of rice (*emo*). Close to them lie terraces which could also be kept under water the whole year, but are allowed to drain off ; these are cleaned and dug over with hoes before each period of cultivation and then flooded from channels ; the water is allowed to filter slowly over the field and when the soil is thoroughly impregnated it is puddled by young men who, supporting themselves between two poles, treadle the mud underfoot so that to a depth of two or three feet the soil is churned to a smooth thick paste. On these fields the three varieties of early ripening rice (*plare*, *plate* and *plaping*) are grown.

Distinct from low-lying, channel-fed terraces are those on higher ground, which depend almost entirely on monsoon streams. There the ground is dug over with hoes and the clods are broken by hand or moon-shaped hoes. On such terraces the channel water is scarcely enough to convert more than the surface soil into mud at the time of transplanting and during the period of growth the rice is largely dependent on the rainfall.

All rice is sown in nurseries. These are small terraces lying for the most part immediately below the villages adjoining the granaries or in narrow protected valleys shut in by bamboo and pine groves. Only a few nurseries lie at any distance from the village, in the middle of the terrace fields. Throughout the year the nurseries are kept deep under water and a good deal of manure is regularly thrown in. In the months before the sowing of the rice, the surface water is drained off, the soil thoroughly cleaned and puddled until it turns into a thick cream, in which the workers sink up to their knees.

Sowing—By the second half of February the nurseries (*miding*) lie ready for the seed, the surface of the mud is levelled by hand and the small terraces ringed by half hoops of split bamboo or, wherever there is danger from straying cows fenced in with fine bamboo lattice. The seed is not sprouted before sowing. The women scatter it dry, as it comes from the granary, over the surface of the mud. Each variety of rice is sown in a separate block, the larger part of the nursery being devoted to the late ripening kinds. After sowing the seed is not covered ; within a few days it takes root and soon a thick film of green shoots covers the ground ; then the water is allowed to filter into the field.

The transplanting of the rice begins in the middle of April. First the seedlings of the early ripening *plare* rice are planted out in those newly flooded terraces which have been dug over with hoes and then softened by treadling. At the time that men and boys are still busy in rebuilding and preparing other terraces and the transplanting is done by women and girls who lift the seedings from the nurseries, tie them into bunches and carry them still wet from the water in open work basket to the fields. Starting at the edge of the field they move forward as they work, planting single seedlings at intervals of about 8 inches.*

Next the *plate* rice and then the *plaping* rice, both early ripening varieties are transplanted on terraces prepared in a similar manner. The three early varieties of rice are also grown on outlying terraces with scanty water supply, but here transplanting awaits the first heavy rain and is indeed often deferred till the first half of May.

All through the spring months work on the dams continues and at the end of April begins the transplanting of the three late ripening varieties of rice (*empu. elang* and *rade*) which are known collectively as *emo* and form the bulk of the Apa Tanis' rice crop. The late ripening rice is planted out on terraces most of which have been cleaned by hand, but not dug over and where the previous year's rice-plants are already sprouting After a period of years such terraces are also dug over and then the seedlings are planted into the soft, newly turned soil before the field is actually flooded. Towards the end of the transplanting season, young men and boys, largely free from other work, join in finishing the transplanting, but the major part of this work is still done by women.

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* In the plains of Assam the workers move backwards when transplanting, and plant three or four seedlings in one place and at a distance of about 20 inches.

By the middle of May all the fields in the central valley are planted out and people are busy transplanting on distant, late flooded fields of side-valleys and, as we will see presently, with the work on their dry land.

Lastly *emo* rice is planted even in some of the shallower waterways and appears to thrive in spite of the current and of periodical submersion on days when heavy rain floods the channels.

The weeding of the rice-fields is done with great thoroughness; permanently flooded terraces are weeded two or three times, and terraces less amply watered as much as five times. Certain outlying fields, near the grazing grounds or forest land are fenced-in with strong wooden stakes either individually or in blocks to protect them against straying mithan. But in the area between the villages no fencing is necessary.

The harvest of the *plare* rice, the early ripening red rice, begins early in August. This rice is not cut, but the grains are stripped from the ears by hand. Most poorer people are by this time short of food, and the newly reaped rice is eaten almost at once.

Shortly afterwards the *plate* rice, a white variety, ripens and is reaped in similar manner.

The *plaping*-rice, which is also white, ripens in the beginning of September on the fields where it was planted early, and at the end of the month on outlying fields, where planting was late.

The main rice-harvest, when all *emo* rice—the white *empu* and *rade*, and the red *elang*, all bearded varieties, are reaped at the same time begins in the middle of October and lasts until early in November. It demands perhaps the greatest concerted effort of the year and men, women and children work without respite for two or three weeks. The women reap the rice with sickles, bought in the plains and used nowadays generally in place of the knives of Apa Tani blacksmiths, cutting the stalks about a foot from ground. Tied into sheaves the ears are heaped together and the men thresh out the grain on the spot in a somewhat unusual fashion. The sheaves are beaten against a slanting wooden board and the grain slides down into a large carrying basket, which is immediately carried off to the granary; the straw which is the Apa Tanis' principal thatching material is stacked or just left lying about in low piles on the field.

Seed grain of all types of rice is separated from the food supply while still on the fields, the best yielders being allocated for this purpose, but the rest of the harvest is poured on the floor of the granary for Apa Tanis do not use baskets for storing their grain. The granaries are built on wooden poles, and roofed, not with thatch but with ribs of split bamboos. There are no devices to keep away rats, which are a pest both in house and granary.

When the harvest is over, the cows are let loose on the fields and throughout the winter months they are free to graze on the stubble but there are too few of these animals for their manure substantially to benefit land under such constant and intensive cultivation. The Apa Tanis, however, recognize the need for preserving the fertility of the soil, and they expend a great amount of energy on manuring. Throughout the winter and spring months, from the end of the harvest until the time for transplanting, women and men are to be seen daily carrying baskets of rice chaff, pig and chicken droppings, ashes and kitchen refuse to heap on their fields. When the dried-out terraces for the early rice are dug over and cleaned, the stubble and rubbish is collected in heaps and burnt. The ashes are then spread out and worked into the soil, and this process is also adopted in the case of the dry millet fields. Even cattle dung is collected from the pastures and whenever a house is rebuilt the thick layar of black soil below it, a medley of Kitchen refuse, ashes, animal dung and human excretment, is excavated, filled into baskets and, as the most valuable of manures, spread over the nursseries and vegetable gardens.

Thus the Apa Tani gives back to the soil much of what he extracts, and the rich humus washed year after year from the high ranges, clad in sub-tropical rain-forest never touched by axe, and deposited by innumerable streams in irrigation channels and on terrace fields, goes no doubt a long way in maintaining soil-fertility.

Dry Crops.—Though dry crops do not rival rice in importance, the same meticulous care which the Apa Tani lavishes on his rice terraces characterizes his treatment of millet, maize and various vegetables. Many of these crops are grown in gardens and the methods employed in their cultivation are those of the horticulturist rather than of the farmer.

Dry fields lie on islands and peninsulars of slightly raised ground and on the rolling land that leads up to the broken country on the fringes of the valley. Besides the fenced-in gardens that often adjoin groves of bamboo and pine, there are the stretches of open fields, used almost exclusively for the cultivation of millet. The soil of gardens and fields is identical, and indeed new garden plots are sometimes established in the middle of a stretch of millet fields. Most lands for dry crops are divided up into small raised oblong beds, about four by six feet large.

The principal dry crop is *Eleusine coracana* and of this two varieties are grown: an early millet (*mipa*) which is mainly planted along bunds of rice-fields and in garden plots, and a later ripening millet (*sarte*) cultivated on the open dry fields and also planted on rice-field bunds. Both varieties are, like rice, transplanted, and this seems to be a peculiarity of the Apa Tanis. Neither among the neighbouring Daflas nor anywhere else in India have I heard of *Eleusine coracana* a crop equally suitable for shifting cultivation and peasant farming—being transplanted or sown in any way other than by broadcasting. The Apa Tanis grow the seedlings in gardens near the houses or in small fenced-in plots on islands surrounded by rice fields. They scatter the seed densely over the moist soil, but do not cover it with earth. At the end of April, when the young plants of the *mipa* millet are about 5 inches high, they are planted out in gardens and on the dams of rice-fields. This work is usually done by two women: the one, wielding a pointed stick, makes holes in the earth and the other moving after her, plants the millet-seedlings closing the earth with her fingers. It is a laborious process, typical of the Apa Tanis, determination to make the fullest use of every square foot of their country. When the millet ripens it lines every path along the dams and although the yield on the dams enclosing one terrace may not be very considerable, the total amount of millet grown on many miles of dam must come to thousands of baskets. An additional advantage is that the roots of the millet strengthen the dams, not only during the period of cultivation, but even when the crops have been reaped and the drying dams have the tendency to crumble.

A few weeks later, mainly in the first half of May, late ripening *sarte* millet is planted out on the remaining rice bunds, and on the many an odd bit of dry ground between paths, dams and channels. These plots are laid out in neat beds, a few feet square, separated by paths, and single seedlings are planted at intervals of about 5 inches. Immediately before planting the tops of the seedlings are clipped and this is said to lead to a quick, strong growth.

But the preparation of the dry fields has to wait until all the work on the irrigated terraces and most of the transplanting of rice is completed. It is only the first half of May that the Apa Tanis find the time to dig over the dry fields, still covered with last year's stubble. This is mainly a man's job; it is done by groups of three to six young men, but occasionally one or two girls may work with them side by side. To-day large iron hoes are used for turning over the soil, but in the old times the work was done with wooden

hoes and must then have been even more strenuous. Most of the dry fields are almost flat, but some run up the gentle slopes of the broken country and there rough terraces are built to prevent erosion and too rapid drainage. There is no attempt to flaten these terraces, a moderate gradient being considered no disadvantage for dry crops. After the men have turned over the soil, the women break up the clods and smooth the ground with the small hoe (*palü*) which is made of split bamboo looped so that the crossed ends forms a handle. Finally the *sarte* millet is taken from the nurseries and the seedlings are planted out one by one on the dry fields. Here the women do not hole the ground with sticks, but press the plants gently into the level surface of the rain soaked earth.

Millet is weeded twice, and this too is done by women with their bamboo hoes. The early *mipa* ripens at the same time as the *plare* rice in the first half of August. It is grown in small quantities, and the reaping is done almost entirely by the women who cut off the ears and take them home for immediate consume. Only rarely is the early millet stored in granaries. *Mipa* millet is stored with the grain still in ear ; it is never threshed until required for the pot, when threshing and husking is a combined operation conducted with heavy pounders in bowl shaped blocks.

The harvest of the *sarte* millet follows the *emo* rice harvest, early in November and millet is thus the latest ripening crop. The ears are cut with sickles and carried into the granaries, where they are heaped on the floor.

Millet is mainly used for making beer, but it is sometimes also crushed and made into a rough kind of bread. Apa Tanis do not sell millet to outsiders, and they sometimes even buy millet from neighbouring Daflas.

Although familiar with *Setarica italica* and *Sorghum vulgare* both cultivated by Daflas and Miris, the Apa Tanis only grow *Eleusine coracana*.

The dry crop next in importance to millet is maize, and of this the Apa Tanis cultivate three varieties: *nire* a white and red variety, ripening before the *plare* rice and thus the first of all the grain crops, *nite* a white and red variety ripening together with the *plate* rice, and *nime tani*, a red variety with very small cobs, ripening together with the *plaping* rice. All three varieties of maize are grown in the gardens inside the village, but *nire* and *nite* are also cultivated in the more distant garden plots near groves and dry fields. The individual grains are dibbled into the ground 8 to 10 inches apart and maize is thus the only grain crop the Apa Tanis do not transplant.

The other garden crops of the Apa Tanis are beans, chillies, tobacco, marrow, cucumbers, taro, ginger, potatoes, tomatoes and a coarse kind of spinach. All these vegetables are sown in the gardens both inside the villages and near bamboo groves early in March, and chillies, tobacco and tomatoes are transplanted a few weeks later.

The Apa Tani beans (*perung*) are a small non-climbing variety with seeds of a light golden brown, that are dried and eaten boiled. The chillies cultivated in the Apa Tani country are larger than the kind commonly grown in India ; they find a ready market in the plains and are indeed the only vegetable grown not only for home consumption but for sale in the plains of Assam, where Apa Tanis exchange them mainly against salt.

Tobacco is cultivated with great care ; all Apa Tanis both smoke and chew tobacco from a very early age. The first leaves are plucked early in May ; these are not dried whole, but are cut up, trampled under foot and then dried on mats.

Marrows ripen in September and October and are boiled, but cucumbers are usually eaten raw.

Taro plays no very important role in Apa Tani diet and is grown much less than in the neighbouring Dafla country, but ginger is a favourite cooking spice and thinly sliced is eaten on many ceremonial occasions.

Potatoes and tomatoes are obviously of comparatively recent introduction and are neither very large nor very extensively cultivated. The first potatoes are dug up as early as May, and considering how economical Apa Tanis are in other respects it is strange that they often dig up and eat potatoes hardly as big as a cherry.

From the point of view of their value to Apa Tani diet the leafy, spinach-like vegetables are probally the most important garden produce. These are grown and eaten in very large quantities ; with a gap of a few winter months they are available throughout the year. Though not specifically grown as food, young bamboo shoots from the bamboo groves are gathered and eaten in large quantities in March, April and May.

It may be noted here that cotton does not rank among the dry crops of the Apa Tanis. Their weaving industry is more highly developed than that of any tribe in the vicinity, but the cultivation of cotton on land urgently required for growing food crops is apparently not considered an economic proposition and the Apa Tanis purchase nearly all their cotton from neighbouring Daflas, returning the seed after the cotton has been ginned for the Daflas next season's sowings.

Groves: Covering less ground than the irrigated rice terraces, but rather more than the vegetable gardens, the groves of bamboo, pines and fruit trees form an integral part of Apa Tani economics. Villages of up to a thousand houses would have difficulty in finding sufficient building material in nearby forests, unless regeneration kept pace with fellings.

In the hills surrounding the Apa Tani country various kinds of bamboos occur but that cultivated in carefully tended groves is a medium sized straight stemmed variety of male bamboo, that stands up well to the cold winters with seasonal snow. According to tradition the Apa Tanis brought this species with them when in the dim ages of the past they arrived in the Apa Tani Valley. Be this as it may, the Apa Tani bamboo is not found in the surrounding countryside except where it has been cultivated in the villages of nearby Daflas. Other Daflas do cultivate isolated clumps of bamboo, usually the giant spraying species also found in Assam. The Apa Tani lays out whole groves of bamboo, spacing the roots at two or three foot intervals, and rigorously prunes every shoot allowing only one or two stems to grow from each root. Once established a grove will retain its regenerative power indefinitely and can be exploited over a period of years. Before laying out a new grove the Apa Tani cleans and levels the soil almost as carefully as on his dry fields, surrounding the whole plot with high fences. The roots for a new grove are lifted from an overcrowded grove and planted in shallow holes during the months of December, January or early February, for the roots set forth their first new shoots in April. Being male, the Apa Tani bamboos never flower or seed, and the planting of roots is the only way of propagatton.

In good soil bamboos grow to a size usable for house-building in four years, but only bamboos of seven to ten years' growth are strong enough for house posts or main rafters.

Pinus excelsa is the most characteristic tree of the Apa Tani country. It dose not occur in neighbouring valleys of similar altitude, and the Apa Tanis hold that they brought it with them when they immigrated from the country north of the Kamla and Subansiri River. At some points well over 6,000 feet high on their traditional route of migration there are small numbers of pine trees and the Apa Tanis claim that their ancestors planted these as they passed through the country.

Pinus excelsa is a magnificient tree, which in the Apa Tani country grows to a height of over 170 feet ; it is found both in the forest of the lower slopes and in groves near the villages. In the vicinity of villages groves of bamboo are generally interspersed with pines or part of the grove may be set aside for pine trees; but in groves where pines have grown to a great height bamboos do not thrive in the shade of their spreading branches.

The time for planting young saplings, brought from the forest or more often taken from other groves, is February and the first half of March. For four or five young trees suitable for transplanting (about one to two feet high) one *dao* or a cloth or rice of similar value is paid. The wood of *Pinus excelsa* is used for building purposes, roughly cut house posts, or long slender rafters as well as for firewood ; the Apa Tanis tap the larger trees and concoct from the resin a medicament calculated to cure all inflamamtions, swellings, aches and pains. Owing to its resinous content this pine makes very fine torches and no Apa Tani will set off on a journey without one or two chips in his bag with which to kindle a fire.

Most groves contain besides bamboos and pines also a number of fruit trees and in the spring the fresh green of forest, garden and grove is splashed with the white, pink and deep rose of their blossoms. There are four distinct kinds of fruit trees cultivated by Apa Tani. *Semo* is a small cherry, the flower a dark rose, the fruit slightly oblong, reddish with white pulp. *Thakhum* is a pink flowering peach, smaller but not essentially different from the peach grown in Europe either in flower or fruit. These peach trees are planted not only in groves, but also in gardens and close to houses. *Pita* is a very small pear and *picha* a greenish and rather bitter apple ; both are found also along paths and lanes and on burial grounds where they are considered village or clan property. All fruit trees are planted in March or early April.

Whereas the groves on flat land close to the villages contain as a rule only bamboo, pines and fruit trees, in those running up the hill-slopes, pines are sometimes interspersed with a few other trees valuable as building material. For in re-afforesting a slope with young pines, Apa Tanis sometimes leave existing timber which will come in usefully. The well-stocked pine groves on the hillsides surrounding the valley are a remarkable tribute to the Apa Tanis' skill in forestry ; the trees are usually of uniform age and the entire grove is fenced-in to protect it against straying cattle.

4. *Animal Husbandry*.—In Apa Tani economics the breeding of domestic animals plays a secondary rule and a very considerable number of the mithan and pigs required for sacrifice and slaughter are annually bought from neighbouring Daflas and Miris. It is not that the Apa Tanis do not value mithan or pigs, but that in their intensively cultivated country there is little scope for large herds of cattle, and in the congested villages no room for roaming pigs.

Though not the main source of wealth as among the Daflas, the mithan (*bos frontalis*) is yet an important measure of wealth, and a man's economic status is judged by the number of his mithan almost as much as by the size of his holding. Indeed mithan are in a manner of speaking the recognized currency in all transactions to do with land : the value of a field can only be expressed in mithan. It thus appears that the mithan has, apart from its material value as a source of meat, a fictitious value as a medium of exchange. A man, for instance, who has a surplus of grain and wants to acquire additional land, will usually sell his surplus rice for mithan and than with these mithan purchase land. Bride-prices, ransoms and fines are ususally paid in mithan, and while pigs are the sacrificial animals at most of the communal agricultural rites, mithan must be slaughtered at the rites and feasts performed by individuals who want to raise their prestige.

I have no statistics regarding the number of mithan owned by Apa Tanis, but believe that it must lie between two and three thousand. Only a very few of these animals are, however, to be seen in the Apa Tani valley and Apa Tanis say that if they kept all their mithan near their villages and cultivation "there would not be a blade of rice or millet left". Mithan prefer the shade of forests to the open pastures, and roam single or in small groups rather than in large herds. Considering the manner in which mithan are kept by Apa Tanis we can hardly class them as 'domestic' animals, for the only times when a mithan comes anywhere near his owner's house is possibly on the day of purchase and invariably on the day of slaughter. Otherwise mithan live in the forest and are only rarely and for specific reasons, such as for inspection by purchasers or for care in times of sickness, brought to the communal grazing grounds near the village where they are kept tied up on long hide ropes.

Each village and in some villages each *khel* or clan owns communal grazing grounds for mithan, usually a damp shady valley watered by a stream, with patches of bog where mithan can wallow up to their knees. In some of these valleys there are natural salt licks and it seems that a mithan let loose in such a haunt, will not stray far a-field. Some of these forest pastures are many hours' walk from the Apa Tani villages and theft of unguarded mithan is the most frequent cause of trouble between the Apa Tanis and their Dafla and Miri neighbours. Every four or five days a man will either go himself or send a slave to have a look at his mithan ; a little salt fed from the palm of the hand and the soft call "*Leli leli leli*" brings an animal from the thicket. The Apa Tanis are connoisseurs in mithan characteristics and an animal's points are so catalogued in their minds that identification is no difficulty, but rich men with many mithan sometimes mark the horns with their own signs. Whereas in the Naga Hills mithan are invariably black with white stockings, the colouring of Apa Tani mithan cover a wide range ; there are black, white and piebald mithan, mithan with white or black stockings and many with lovely creamy patches that deepen to orange where the hair is longest.

But many mithan owners, and I believe they are the majority, do not keep their animals in the Apa Tani country at all ; they give them into the care of Dafla and Miri friends. Not only are Daflas and Miris experienced in the keeping of cattle, but their country is also far better suited for mithan than the Apa Tani valley and they can keep the animals fairly close to their villages without risking great damage to the crops, their *jhums* being as a rule well fenced in. The reward for keeping another man's mithan is one calf out of three or four according to agreement. By dispersing his mithan over several villages an Apa Tani insures himself moreover against the danger of losing his entire stock through disease. Epidemics of foot-and-mouth and rinderpest are fairly frequent and have been known to decimate the livestock of whole areas.

Neither Apa Tanis, Daflas nor Miris control the breeding of mithan, and as the animals are largely left to themselves and the bulls are never castrated any selective mating would indeed be impossible.

Besides the mithan owned by individuals, there are a number of mithan which are the common property of village, *khel* or clan and these are used for sacrifices in the interest of the whole community.

Less valuable than mithan, but used in the same manner for sacrifices, as a source of meat and as currency, but never milked, are oxen of the small breed common in the plains of Assam. This cattle is almost certainly derived from imported stock and even today Apa Tanis buy calves in the plains and drive

them up to the Apa Tani country. Those born in the hills have a thicker coat than plains cattle and they stand up well to the frost of winter. Unlike mithan, cattle rarely leaves the open parts of the valley, usually remaining on the grasslands near the villages. In the spring and summer there is ample grazing, but in the winter, when the pastures are shrivelled and brown, the cattle lives precariously on the rice and millet stubble of the previous harvest. Apa Tanis make no attempt to feed their cattle, and the cows are allowed to wander over the dried out rice terraces and millet fields, any damage done to the brittle dams being outweighed by the value of the manure.

As soon as the rice and particularly the millet on the dry fields is planted out the cattle is banished to the grazing grounds at the ends of the valleys and the fields in the vicinity are carefully fenced in so that a cow would have to pass through a labyrinth of narrow passages and lanes, before it could reach the centre of the valley where there are unprotected plots.

Very little care is given to this cattle, and there is no system of herd boys. Summer and winter the animals are in the open day and night. Theft of cattle is therefore easy, and it is more the drastic punishment meted out to offenders—death being the penalty for habitual thieves—than the precautions of the owners that provides a safeguard. The neighbouring Daflas do not steal cows as frequently as mithan, for thieves would have to venture close to the villages and in driving off the cattle in the open country they would risk being intercepted.

Crosses of mithan and plains cattle are known, and hybrids count for ritual purposes as mithan. But the Apa Tanis certainly do not encourage cross-breeding, and cattle and mithan are kept apart by their own habits and preferences for different grazing grounds. The problem of cross breeds is therefore of little practical importance.

No goats are kept in the Apa Tani valley. The goat is too destructive an animal to be let loose in such a carefully husbanded area. A few Apa Tanis do however own goats and keep them with friends in neighbouring Dafla villages, they are never milked but they can be used for certain private sacrifices, such as the propitiation of disease bringing spirits, and the meat is, of course, readily eaten. On the whole, however Apa Tanis are not interested in goats; they think of them only as meat and not as an investment. This, attitude is born out by a comparison of tribal values; a Dafla considers the price of a she-goat higher than that of a he-goat but the Apa Tani, indifferent to the possibilities of goat-breeding, pay more for a large male goat.

Pigs are in certain respects the favourite domestic animals and here the word domestic applies in its narrowest sense. For Apa Tani pigs are housed below the pile-born dwellings in boarded-up enclosures between the house-poles. Once a pig enters this enclosure it leaves it usually only on the day of slaughter. No pigs roam the village streets; for if let loose they would indeed be a serious danger to rice nurseries, gardens and fields. This necessity of keeping pigs shut up, sets a limit on their numbers, for unlike Dafla or Miri pigs which find a good deal of food rummaging about the village, the pigs of the Apa Tanis must be fed, and no household can afford more than three or four full grown pigs at a time. The food given to pigs consists of the husks of grain, the dregs remaining from the brewing of millet and rice beer, kitchen refuse, the sago-like pith of a certain forest tree which the Apa Tanis collect specially for this purpose and last not least human excrement. Apa Tanis relieve themselves on narrow verandas that run alongside their houses and the excrement, falling straight into the pig stye, is immediately devoured. In these huge villages the pig is a very necessary sanitary institution and the house of a poor man without any pigs has not a pleasant smell.

Yet, comparatively few pigs are bred. Apa Tanis find it on the whole more profitable to buy young pigs from Daflas and Miris and feed them until they are full grown rather than keep sows for breeding purposes, and hundreds of pigs are imported annually into the Apa Tani country. However, if a man decides to breed from his sow and has no boar of his own, he borrows a young boar and shuts it up for a day or two in his pig-stye. For this service he either pays the boar's owner a small fee or promises him one of the piglets. But Apa Tanis say that breeding spoils the flavour of pork and that sows that have littered are never as fat as those that have not; they prefer therefore to fatten sows which have never given birth.

Boars are castrated when two or three months old, and as none are set aside for breeding purposes such sows as are allowed to breed are inseminated by very young boars. Castration is effected by the removal of the testicles and this is one of the few tasks which Apa Tanis consider defiling. A special person known as *kenna*, usually a woman, performs the operation; she has to live by herself in a house on the outskirts of the village is subject to certain social and religious restrictions but never wants for food or clothing; indeed her job is considered a lucrative one.

The pig is the sacrificial animal indispensable for all communal rites connected with agriculture and there is a good case for the assumption that it is older in Apa Tani culture than the mithan. Pork and bacon are more highly prized than any other meat, and sides of bacon are not only the most acceptable gifts between friends and kinsmen, but are a recognized "currency" for ceremonial payments.

Fowls are kept by all Apa Tanis for the sake of their eggs as well as for their flesh. For the taking of omens and for innumerable minor sacrifices and offerings chickens are needed and on a bamboo structure erected on the occasion of a single sacrificial rite one may sometimes count as many as a hundred shells of eggs, broken in the course of the ritual. Required for so many vital purposes chickens are therefore expensive. Two eggs count as a day's wage, a hen costs as much as a knife and a big cock as much as a short *dao* or a simple cloth. At night chickens are shut into baskets or roost in the rafters, but during the day-time they run about the village, feeding mainly on refuse and the fallen grain from the winnowing fans and pounding blocks.

Dogs are of the ordinary pariah breed common all over the plains of Assam. The most frequent colouring is a reddish brown, but black, white and pie-bald dogs are by no means rare. If the Apa Tani ever had a distinct breed of dog (and it stands to reason that like the Nagas the tribes of the Eastern Himalayas did at one time possess dogs different from the mongrels of the Indian plains) the strain has been so diluted by inter-breeding that the type is no longer recognizable. Many of the Apa Tanis going to the plains return with dogs, which they pick up for a nominal price, and this continuous influx of new blood must have ruined any indigenous race. Dogs are also bought from Daflas and Miris, but the canine population of the villages is kept down by the frequent use of dogs as sacrificial animals. Though Apa Tanis eat dog, few dogs are slaughtered only for the sake of their meat; they are the sacrificial animals proper to the rites performed by raiding parties and are accepted by the gods in times of sickness and personal disaster. The value of dogs in the Apa Tani country is therefore far higher than in the plains of Assam or among the neighbouring tribes.

Apa Tani dogs live on scraps and kitchen refuse, and few look at all well fed. They are not badly treated, living undisturbed in the houses, hunting with their masters and in the evening pressing with the children round the hearth fires, but the Apa Tani expects his dog to fend for himself and does not often give him a very substantial meal.

5. *Division of Labour.*—An exhaustive discussion of the division and use of labour would lead us too far into the sphere of sociology, but agriculture cannot be entirely divorced from the human element and so we must consider not only by what methods the Apa Tani's land is cultivated, but also by whom the work on the fields is actually done.

In families of average means most of the work of fields and gardens is done by husband and wife and their children as well as any relative or slave who may be a member of the household. On some days this working unit engages on one task, but on others the members go about their different occupations necessary for the maintainance of their holding, the husband being mainly responsible for the building and up-keep of dams, terraces channels and fences, for the digging over of fields and the planting of trees, and the wife being mainly occupied with the care of nurseries and gardens, the transplanting of rice and millet and the weeding of crops. But this division of labour is not complete, and on many occasions men and women work side by side, be it in building dams or even in transplanting rice. Though a couple is normally quite capable of cultivating their land without outside help, there are yet many times when help is either sought or given by other members of the community.

From childhood every Apa Tani boy or girl belongs to a labour gang (*patang*) and this association continues to some extent in later life. Thus a man who has to rebuild a rice terrace will ask some of his *patang* friends to help in the work, and in turn he will work on their fields whenever his assistance may be required. Similarly women often join forces in the tedious work of transplanting rice-seedlings, a group of four or five women working in turn on each other's fields. No payment is made for such mutual assistance, but the person on whose field the group works is expected to provide a mid-day meal or at least a fair amount of rice-beer for the labourers.

Whereas married men and women work only at times with the members of their old *patang*, boys and girls, from the age of seven or eight until they set up their own households spend most of their working days with their own *patang*. All members of a *patang* are approximately the same age and often of the same clan; there are girls and boys in a *patang* and if they are of the same clan, they are debarred from marriage. But in some *patang* there are girls and boys of different clans and there it happens quite often that working companions become lovers and marry when they grow up.

As a rule *patang* work in turn on the fields of their members' parents, and a man whose son or daughter has joined a *patang* has thus a right on the services of the entire *patang* whenever his turn comes. These services are free, except that he has the obligation to provide the *patang* with a meal to be eaten on the fields. But rich men can sometimes hire a *patang* out of turn for wages and then the hire is divided equally among all its members.

The hiring of *patang* is, however, only one of the means by which rich men obtain the labour necessary for the cultivation of their large holdings. Many poor men and women subsist entirely or at least to a large extent on the grain received as wages for daily labour, and as a rule they have little difficulty in finding employment. For although rich men have usually a number of slaves or dependants who work for them throughout the year, they often need additional labour to keep abreast with the agricultural calendar and complete the building of dams, transplanting and harvesting in proper season. The average daily wage is just under two seers of husked rice, and this is just enough to feed two persons for a day. Thus if a husband and wife both work for wages, they can support themselves and two or three children, but unless they engage in trade and go to work in the plains of Assam, it is almost impossible for them to better their position by saving and then acquiring land of their own. True, there is the reserve of clan-land where new terraces can still be carved from the hill-sides, but the really poor who live from hand to mouth by daily labour, can seldom spare the time for the strenuous task of building new terraces.

Apa Tani agriculture depends thus both on the mutual help of the owners of small holdings and on the labour hired by the rich. Co-operative and capitalistic trends exist side by side and neither trend shows at present any sign of eliminating the other. The man of modest means who cultivates his fields with the help of his family and the *patang* of his children is not in danger of being ousted by the owner of a hundred fields nor have the poor very much chance of effecting a more equal distribution of the existing land.

6. *The Annual Cycle.*—Agriculture is the dominant factor in the Apa Tanis' life and a brief table of the work done month by month will demonstrate how the annual cycle revolves round agricultural pursuits.

We will begin with the month of *Kume*, corresponding to January-February, with the first preparations for the new cultivating season:

Kume ... ... (January-February)	Repair work on the dams of terraces begins. Gardens are newly fenced and new groves planted. Manure is carried to fields and gardens. The cattle is allowed to wander over the fields. People go to work in the plains and to trade in Dafla and Miri villages. The Morum feast is celebrated with a ritual scattering of rice over the fields and phallic fertility dances; individuals raise their prestige by slaughtering mithan. Rites in honour of the earth deity are performed. Young men spend much time in hunting and trapping.
Kunje or *Pagar-pulo* ... (dam-building month) (February-March)	Dams and channels are repaired and new terraces laid out. Rice is sown in the nurseries and millet in the seed beds. People go to work in the plains and to trade in Dafla and Miri villages. In the villages whose turn it is to celebrate the Mloko, large stocks of firewood are accumulated, assembly platforms are rebuilt, posts for the festival are dragged in and erected. Hunting expeditions continue.
Mloko ... ... (March-April)	Gardens are prepared and maize, potatoes, taro, ginger, tobacco, spinach, marrow, cucumbers and chillies are sown. Fruit trees are planted. The repair work on terraces and the digging over of fields for the early rice continues. The Mloko, the greatest Apa Tani festival, is celebrated by one of the three village groups. Pigs and fowls are sacrificed for the deities of earth and sky. When the rice seedlings sprout the Mlokung rite is performed. Hunting expeditions continue.

Month	Activities
Haling ... ... (April-May)	The preparation of the irrigated fields is completed. The transplanting of rice begins and is usually completed except on a few outlying terraces. Millet is planted in gardens and on the rice bunds. The dry fields are dug over. The first green vegetables are ready for consume.
Indu ... ... (May-June)	The transplanting of the late rice and of all the millet is completed. Weeding begins. Some tobacco ripens. Many green vegetables are ready for consume. Tomatoes, chillies and tobacco are transplanted.
Pome or *Empu* ... (June-July)	Weeding of the dry fields and the irrigated terraces. *Plare* rice and *mipa* millet come into ear. Vegetables including cucumbers and potatoes ripen. The Dire rite is performed to protect the crops from insects.
Puje or *Milo* ... (July-August)	*Plare* rice, *mipa* millet and *nire* maize are reaped and eaten in the first half of the month. *Plate* rice and *nite* maize are reaped and eaten in the second half of the month. Chillies ripen. Weeding of the late rice continues.
Halo ... ... (August-September)	*Plaping* rice on the near fields and *nime tani* maize are reaped. Weeding of the late rice continues. The men collect wood against the time of the harvest when they are too busy to go cutting wood. The Yapung rite is performed to protect the crops from hail.
Bunchi ... ... (September-October)	*Plaping* rice on distant fields is reaped. Tomatoes and pulses ripen.
Bunte ... ... (October-November)	The harvest of the late rice (*emo*) begins and is completed before the end of the month ; the harvest of the late millet (*sarte*) is completed shortly after the rice harvest. All remaining vegetables and pulses are harvested. A few men go to the plains to sell chillies and buy salt.
Imo ... ... (November-December)	There is no more work on the fields. The grain is stored in the granaries. Rice straw is collected and stacked as thatch. The cattle is brought in from outlying pastures and let loose on the fields. Manure is carried to the fields and scattered. Houses are rebuilt and repaired. Women go to Dafla villages to engage in weaving and to obtain cotton. Men go hunting and trapping in large numbers. Men begin going to the plains for work.
Nengko ... ... (December-January)	Manure is carried to the fields. Houses are rebuilt and repaired. Pine trees are planted and groves laid out. Women go to Dafla villages to weave cloth and obtain cotton. People go to work in the plains and visit Dafla and Miri villages for purposes of trade. Wood is collected for the Morum feast. Hunting and trapping continue.

Conclusions.—The above notes do not exhaust the study of Apa Tani agriculture, a subject which if fully treated could easily fill a book. But scanty as our knowledge still is, we can safely say that the Apa Tanis' agriculture is a very complex and elaborate system of cultivation, essentially different from the simple shifting cultivation of their Dafla and Miri neighbours. The Apa Tanis have developed the exploitation of their country to a high degree of efficiency and unlike many *jhum*-cultivators they have succeeded in preserving indefinitely the fertility of the soil.

The fact that 20,000 Apa Tanis can subsist and maintain a comparatively high standard of life on less than twenty square miles of cultivable land speaks for itself and there can be no doubt that very few tribes can boast of such an achievement.

How it is that in an area where all other tribes follow as primitive a form of tillage as *jhum*-cultivation, the Apa Tanis alone should have developed such elaborate methods of intensive farming, is a question we cannot yet hope to answer. Mishmis, Abors, Miris and Daflas alike are *jhum*-cultivators and even the partly Tibetanized Monbas of the Dirang Dzong area have nothing to rival the Apa Tanis' system of rice cultivation. Indeed the nearest Assam hill people whose agricultural methods are in any way comparable to those of the Apa Tanis are the Angami Nagas, who inhabit the hills round Kohima, over a hundred miles to the south-east beyond the Brahmaputra Valley. And even this similarity is very limited. The Angamis show extraordinary skill in constructing irrigated terraces following the contours of steep hill-slopes whereas the Apa Tanis concentrate mainly on the intensive cultivation of the valley bottom and have nowhere attempted large scale cultivation along hill-slopes. The Apa Tanis' cultivation of perennial rice and their transplanting of millet has no parallel anywhere in the Naga Hills, nor have the Angami Nagas gardens and groves comparable to those of the Apa Tanis. Yet there are elements common to Apa Tani and Naga culture, and though no direct connection need be assumed, there can be little doubt that both civilizations have some of their roots in the same cultural sphere, a sphere, which despite the Tibeto-Burman languages now spoken by Apa Tanis and Nagas, is probably associated with the neolithic civilizations of the Austronesian and Austroasitic races. Certain elements in Apa Tani Culture seem to be at home in the sub-tropical regions of Assam and Northern Burma rather than in mountains of Southern Tibet, but influences from across the Great Himalayan Range may have reached the Apa Tanis no less than their Dafla and Miri neighbours. Elaborate irrigation has been observed among the Tibetans of Chayul Dzong, near the upper course of the Subansiri * barely 70 miles north-west of the Apa Tani country and it would be premature to exclude an inspiration from that side from among the factors that may have contributed to the remarkable development of Apa Tani agriculture. Anthropological research in the Subansiri Region has only just begun and much work will have to be done before we can view Apa Tani culture in its proper perspective.

Cf. F. Kingdon Ward *Assam Adventure*, London 1942, page 44.

VILLAGE ORGANISATION AND TRIBAL JUSTICE AMONG THE APA TANIS

The complex economy of the Apa Tanis, which is based on the peaceful co-operation of large groups, is matched by a social order fundamentally different from that prevailing among the neighbouring Dafla and Miri tribes. There every household stands by itself, friendship and alliances are ephemeral, and even members of the same clan as well as inhabitants of the same village may wage war against each other. Tribal feeling is vague and does not find expression in political units of any stability. The head of a Dafla household is a law unto himself, acknowledging no binding allegiance to a larger group, tied neither by property in land nor by tradition to a definite territory, he is always free to sever his connections with the village in which he may be living, and to seek his fortune in new surroundings and carve from wooded hills new land for his *jhum* cultivation.

Not so the Apa Tani. To migrate is for him well nigh impossible ; he is tied to his valuable land and to the one valley where alone he can carry on his elaborate system of agriculture, and thus he is linked for better or worse with a village community of several thousand souls.

Indeed all Apa Tanis have a very marked tribal consciousness, a great pride in their 'national' culture and way of living, and a passionate attachment to their small homeland which they have turned into a veritable garden, and which they jealously guard against encroachment by warlike neighbours.

Though this feeling of tribal solidarity is not always strong enough to unite the whole tribe in the face of minor quarrels and feuds with Daflas or Miris, it finds expression in the unquestioning acceptance of certain forms of social conduct and tribal justice according to which quarrels between Apa Tanis must be settled in a way altogether different from the course followed in disputes between Apa Tanis and other tribes. For the Apa Tanis, living in crowded villages of several hundred houses and concentrated in a small area with a population of about one thousand per square mile, must abide by fairly strict rules of behaviour if quarrels and strife are not to disrupt the harmony of the whole community. Their Dafla neighbours' practice of raiding and sometimes wiping out whole settlements to right a real or an imagined wrong would spell the doom of their prosperity, which is based on an elaborately organized economy, and lead to chaos which would soon affect the entire population of the valley. Private disputes are therefore never allowed to go beyond a definite limit and as soon as a quarrel threatens to become the cause of serious dissension within the village or the tribe, it is for the recognized leaders of the various sections of the community first to mediate and later, if necessary, to take such action as may help to restore the disturbed social equilibrium.

Apa Tani society is divided into two endo-gamous classes, the *mite* or paticians and the *mura* or plebeians and slaves.† This division is unalterable and neither wealth, wisdom nor prowes in war can enable a man to rise from the *mura* class to that of the patricians. According to Apa Tani tradition all *mura* were originally the slaves of the *mite* freemen, but today this position is often obscured by the wealth and personal influence of individual *mura*, some of whom have gained a certain prominence through the newly established trade with Assam in which to engage the more conservative patricians consider beneath their dignity.‡ Yet the innate superiority of the *mite* is never questioned, there is no inter-marraige between the two classes and every *mura*, whatever his material circumstances, stands still in a relationship of dependence to a patrician family which involves certain obligations on ceremonial occasions.

Besides this horizontal division of Apa Tani society into patricians and plebeians, there is the more obvious vertical division into seven villages, ranging in size from 160 to over a thousand houses, into 'quarters' (which in accordance with the terminology of the Naga Hills we may call "khels"), each with a ritual centre or *nago*-shrine, and into clans. The loyalty to the "khel" is sometimes stronger than the loyalty to the village, for the Apa Tanis know no more important political tie than that between the clans using the same *nago* as their ritual centre. The visual symbol of the social cohesions of the individual clan (or sometimes two or three closely related clans) is the *lapang*, an assembly platform built of enormous wooden boards and fulfilling all the functions of megalithic meeting place. It is on these *lapang* that the clan members meet and councils are held, it is below the *lapang* that criminals are tied up and it is on the *lapang* that after an execution the ritual weapons of the executioners are displayed.

In the following outline of the structure of the Apa Tani villages, the clans are grouped according to 'khels'' and *nago* groups, and the *mura* clans are specified as such ; every *mura* clan is enumerated immediately after the *mite* clan to which it stands in a relationship of dependence.

Hang village.—Hang which comprises 887 houses, is not as clearly divided into 'khels' as for instance Bela. But there are three *nago* shrines, each used by a group of clans.

Nichi *nago* ... ... Tapi, Naru, Padu (*mura*), Buliu (*mura*); Kago, Budi (*mura*), Talo (*mura*) ; Ponyo, Hari (*mura*), Lali (*mura*) ; Belo, Mudang, Talo (*mura*) ; Hibu, Tablin, Tenyo.
Nami *nago* ... ... Nami, Tiling, Penji.
Naran *nago* ... ... Naran, Takhe, Nea.

Hari village.—Hari which comprises 451 houses is divided into two 'khels', Hage and Pato, each of which has one *nago*.

Hage ... ... Hage, Doging (*mura*), Landi (*mura*) Dusu (*mura*) ; Mudo (or Doka).
Pato ... ... Tasso (or Chigi), Gate ; Mipla.

Bela village.—Bela, which is the largest village with a total of 1,012 houses, is divided into three 'khels', Reru, Tajang and Kalung.

Reru

Padi *nago* ... ... Padi, Khru, Nenkre, Ruka, Koda. Duyu, Havung.
Nani *nago* ... ... Nani, Dui.

Tajang

Tage *nago* ... ... Rade, Tage (*mura*), Milo, Min (*mura*).
Tabu *nago* ... ... Tabu.

Kalung

Kalung *nago* ... ... Kalung, Taging, Taliang, Lod, Naran, Mom, Koru, Rabi, Subu.

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†The corresponding Dafla and Miri terms, which are sometimes also used by Apa Tanis, are *Gute* and *Guchi*.
‡Nevertheless some poor *mite* have seized the opportunity of bettering their conditions in this way, and have in late years gone with bands of slaves to the plains.

Haja village.—Haja consists of 640 houses and is closely linked with Duta. There is no clear division into 'khels', but the clans using the same *nago* shrine form units which resemble 'khels'.

Kimle *nago* ...	... Kimle, Dusu (*mura*), Dora (*mura*).
Nada *nago* ...	... Nada (sub-clans Dumpr and Plagang), Miri (*mura*), Hidu (*mura*).
Taru *nago* ...	... Taru, Taro, Taku Pemu (*mura*), Kago.
Puna *nago* ...	... Haj, Puna (*mnra*), Dani.
Nendin *nago* ...	... Nendin, Pura, Nenko.

Duta village.—Duta comprises 193 houses and is not divided into 'khels' ; there is only one *nago*.

Chigi *nago* ...	... Chigi, Koji (sub-clans Akhang Koji and Aio Koji), Honyo (*mura*), Yachang (*mura*).

Mudang Tage Village.—Mudang Tage which consists of 307 houses has only one *nago* shrine, but the clans are grouped according to localities which give their names to some of the *lapang*.

Tadu *lapang* ...	... Tadu, Dohu.
Nami *lapang* ...	... Tage, Lyagi (*mura*).
Mudang *lapang*...	... Mudang, Legang (*mura*).
Nako *lapang* ...	... Mudang.
Naran *lapang* ...	... Buru, Hating.

Michi Bamin Village.—Michi Bamin village comprises 160 houses and consists of the Michi 'khel' and the Bamin 'khel' ; they have separate *nago* shrines, but Bamin is inhabited mainly by members of *mura* clans some of which are dependent on *mite* clans of Michi.

Michi ...	... Michi, Tanyang (*mura*), Dilong (*mura*), Dule (*mura*).
Bamin ...	... Tamo, Roto (*mura*), Tiling (*mura*), Hano (*mura*), Tanyang (*mura*).

Each of these villages occupies a clearly defined site and the houses stand close together in long streets and lanes. Two villages, Duta and Mudang Tago, practically merge into each other, but this proximity does not imply any close social connection ; indeed Duta acts in certain respects together with Haja and not with Mudang Tage.

In what respects does a village function as a social unit ? The most obvious expression of its unity is the simultaneous observance of the principal feasts and *genna* by all the members of a village. Some villages own communal forest and pasture land ; yet generally forests and pastures are owned by individuals clans, or groups of clans, whereas all cultivated land is private property. Boundary disputes involving entire village communities do, however, occur and in recent years Hang and Michi-Bamin quarrelled over a piece of land on which thatching grass grew. Michi-Bamin resisted the encroachment of Hang, and was supported by several other villages. Sometimes quarrels between individuals are taken up by their respective village communities and two or more villages may then oppose each other. In such an event the village functions clearly as a social and political unit, but there are other times when only one quarter or 'khel' of a village is at variance with another village, or when two 'khels' of the same village have a quarrel. This leads us to the inner organization of a village. Most villages comprise two or more 'khel' and each of these 'khels' has one or two ritual centres,, *nago* shrines, where important rites are performed and the trophies of war, such as the hands of slain foes, are kept until their disposal. Duta village, on the other hand, has only one *nago* shrine and the Apa Tanis say themselves that for this reason Duta is more united as a village, and that it is easier for Duta to act as a body than for most other villages. In villages where there are several *nago*, each is the focal point of a group of clans. A 'khel' consisting of several clans may stand slightly apart from other 'khels' separated perhaps by a belt of garden plots and hedges, but more frequently the 'khels' merge imperceptibly into each other. A 'khel' acts in many cases as a separate social unit ; one 'khel' of a village may have a feud with a neighbouring Dufla village, while other 'khels' may continue trade relations with their co-villagers enemies.

Within each 'khel' are several clans (*halu*). These clans are strictly exogamous and no clan is found in more than one village. Even when two clans of different villages have the same name, they are still considered separate units and may intermarry. Decent in the clan is patrilineal. Certain clans of the same village are, however, regarded as standing in a "brother" relationship and no marriages are permitted between their members.

Within a village the clans are as a rule localized, the houses of all members of a clan standing close together in streets or clusters. Most clans have a sitting platform (*lapang*) as their social centre, and certain rites that concern the whole clan are performed on or near this platform. Occasionally two or three clans share one *lapang*, but very large clans have more than one sitting platform. A clan is either of *mite* or *mura* class, but in most villages the number of *mite* clans is on the whole greater than that of *mura* clans. Besides the fully privileged members of a *mite* clan, there are, however, in nearly every *mite* clan also slaves and descendants of slaves, persons who, themselves of *mura* class have adopted the clan-name of their masters and thus become *mura*- members of a *mite*-clan.

The clan, whether *mite* or *mura*, is a very real social unit and its members are bound by definite obligations of mutual help. It is the only unit in Apa Tani society which can be expected to act in nearly all circumstances in complete solidarity. Only very close relationship through the maternal line may outweigh this clan solidarity and determine a man to take sides against a member of his own clan.

The representatives of the clans, who in their plurality constitute a kind of village Government, are the *buliang*, men of character and ability, who are appointed either from among the members of a family which owing to its wealth and status always furnished one or two *Buliang* or on account of their personal influence in the community. There are three types of *buliang* : the *akha buliang*, old men past the time when they can take a very active part in the conduct of village affairs but with whom lies the ultimate decision in all important matters; the *yapa buliang*, middle aged men who carry on negotiations and sit in the village councils and who keep the *akha buliang* informed of developments and place agreed settlements and disputes before them for sanction; and finally the *ajang buliang*, young men who are employed as messengers, go-betweens and assistants of the *yapa buliang*, and act as the leaders of the young generation. In practice this division of duties is not always as clearly cut, and some of the older *ajang buliang* assume gradually the functions of *yapa buliang*. But normally *a yapa* does not become an *Akha buliang* until the death of the *Akha-buliang* representing his clan or group of clans. The *Akha buliang* appoint the *Ajang buliang* from amongst the ranks of the eligible young men, and in this selection they do not necessarily give preference to members of their own clan but see to it that their clan-group is represented by men of talent and efficiency.

The *buliang* are rewarded for their services to the community by ceremonial gifts of beer and meat on the occasion of village feasts and during the Mloko an annual festival celebrated by the whole tribe, every *buliang* receives gifts from his opposite member in the village standing in a relationship of ceremonial reciprocity to his own village or quarter.

Though the *buliang* are the arbiters of tribal law and the upholders of tribal justice they are primarily the spokesmen of their own clan or clan-group and not village headmen with absolute authority. Their duties are not those of a police and they do not take action unless a dispute has become a public issue which must be dealt with by the community as a whole, be it by mediation or by the use of force.

The Apa Tani is for all his social sense a great individualist and if he is wronged by a fellow tribesman his first reaction is not to appeal to the *buliang*, but to retrieve his loss or vindicate his honour by taking the law into his own nands. As a rule it is only when a quarrel has dragged on or when it begins to undermine the peace of the whole community that the *buliang* enter the field of action.

Astonishing as it may seem to the outsider, the Aya Tanis are in no way perturbed if two villagers fight out a quarrel over the unfaithfulness of a wife or husband, by attaching each other's property or even capturing each other's children or relatives. More than once have I seen houses fenced in with high bamboo palisades in which the owner held a co-villager imprisoned and it is no unusual thing to kidnap a defaulting debtor or a troublesome relative and guard against his escape by putting his foot into a heavy log. A few examples will demonstrate this system of private enforcement of the law, and make it obvious that the underlying idea is not the punishment of an offender but the realization of a claim or the extraction of compensation under pressure.

In Kach, a sub-settlement of Hang village, I once saw a house surrounded by a bamboo fence, higher than its roof, without any entrance in front. The only opening in the palisade was at the back of the house, so high up that to enter one had to climb up a ladder outside and down a ladder inside. A platform, a good deal higher than the house gable, was erected above the back verandah and seemed to serve as a kind of sentry box. When I asked for the reason of these fortifications I was told that a prisoner was kept in the house. The prisoner, as Ponyo Tamo, the owner of the house, explained was his own son-in-law, Tapi Pusang, and he had seized him on account of his bad treatment of his wife, Ponyo Tamo's daughter. Many years ago Tapi Pusang had married a sister's daughter of Ponyo Tamo, but divorced her after a short time. Then he married Ponyo Tamo's daughter Sante, paying one mithan-cow as bride-price. Though the marriage remained childless Pusang and Sante lived together for about ten years. But some time ago Pusang had grown tired of his wife and had told her to leave his house. Several time he drove her away, as it seems with the intention of marrying another wife. Sante, however, was not willing to leave him and returned to him again and again. Some seven months ago Pusang came to Tamo's house and told him to take his daughter back. Tamo refused and when he failed to persuade Pusang to agree to a reconcilation, he seized him and tied him up with a heavy log on his foot. To prevent his flight or rescue he surrounded the house with apalisade and erected a platform where he or another man of his household kept watch every night.

Tamo said that he would release Pusang if he either consented to take his wife back or paid a ransom of one hundred mithan values * to atone for the insult to Tamo's family. For the last seven months Tamo, with his whole family including his daughter Sante and her imprisoned husband Pusang bad been living in the fenced-in house, and Pusang was at that time still determined neither to take back his wife nor to pay the ransom.

But when I re-visited Kach a year later the fence had been removed from Tamo's house, and I was told that Pusang's clansmen had ransomed him by paying to Tamo forty mithan-values as compensation. The parties were reconciled, but Pusang and Sante had finally separated. In the negotiations leading to the release the *buliang* of Hang village played no doubt an important part, but it is significant that for many months they took no action to prevent the imprisonment of one fellow villager by the other. Their attitude had been that the quarrel concerned only the two families, and since it did not disturb the general peace of the village their intervention was not called for until the parties approached them with the request to effect a settlement.

Rather different were the circumstances which led another Apa Tani to transform his house into a fortress. In the main-street of Reru, a "Khel" of Bela village, I found a house surrounded by a firm bamboo-palisade and was told that the owner Nani Jile was there living in what amounted to self-inflicted confinement. He had quarrelled with his father's brother over the possession of certain rice-fields, and in the course of the dispute had captured his cousin's wife and kept her for a month with a log on her foot in his house. To effect her release her husband paid a ransom of five mithan-cows and five mithan-calves, but Nani Jile still did not set her free and in the end the husband with some friends forced their way into Jile's house and rescued the woman. Nani Jile was sure that his cousin would take the next opportunity of revenge and capture him or a member of his family. To provide against such a fate he fortified his house, and for the last five months neither he nor his wife nor his children had left the narrow space enclosed by the palisade. From their verandah they could see out through the fence on to the village-street and chat with passersby, and their friends and relatives were, of course, free to climb over the carefully guarded palisade and keep them company inside the house. But only Jile's two slaves ever went out, and it was they who fetched water and brought in foodstuff provided by Jile's relations-in-law. The latter helped the slaves also in the cultivation of Jile's fields, but Jile and his wife and children were debarred from any productive work.

After some months, however, Jile relaxed his precautions, and when about half a year later I came again to Reru, the fence round Jile's house had been removed and another house across the street was fenced-in. It was his cousin's house and Jile himself was kept in it as a prisoner. Soon after he had dropped his vigilance and ventured out of his house, his cousin, still smarting under the insult heaped on him and his wife had captured Jile and he refused to set him free until Jile's relatives had paid him full compensation for the loss of mithan and prestige which he had suffered through Jile's capture of his wife. When I finally left the Apa Tani valley the dispute, which had lasted for nearly two years, had not come to an end, but I have little doubt that Jile was ultimately ransomed and the cousins reached some kind of agreement which freed them from the fear of being captured and imprisoned.

In this case too the *buliang* took no action and the general attitude of the villagers was indeed that the quarrel of the two cousins did not concern anybody but themselves and their nearest relatives.

While the capture of one's opponent is a favourite and usually fairly effective means of pressing a claim, it is employed mainly in what we might call 'civil' disputes. If an Apa Tani of wealth and good social status thinks his honour at stake, he resorts to a very different procedure to vindicate himself and humiliate

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* Mithan-value is the unit in which prices are expressed; one full-grown mithan cow counts as about five mithan-values.

his enemy. This procedure known as *lisudu* involves the ritual destruction of wealth and recalls in that respect the *potlatch* rites of the North-West Americans. A man who challenges a co-villager to a *lisudu* competition starts by killing one or several of his mithan in front of his opponent's house and leaving the meat for the other villagers to eat. Sometimes he adds to the holocaust valuables, such as Tibetan bells, bronze plates and swords. If his opponent accepts the challenge he must slaughter at least the same number of mithan and destroy property of equal value in front of the challenger's house. The next move is that the latter kills an even greater number of mithan and this number must again be matched by his rival. The competition may go on until both parties are nearly ruined, but in theory the man who can continue longer with this destruction of property wins thereby his opponents entire property in land and movable possessions. But I have heard of no concrete examples of a *lisudu* which was carried as far as the utter defeat of one of the competitors; usually the *buliang* intervene and negotiate a settlement which spare both parties the humiliation of defeat. The following incident in Hang village is a fairly typical example of a *lisudu*.

A Dafla, Licha Seke, had come to live in Hang and stayed in the house of Taj Toko, a freed slave of Ponyo Tamar, the richest and one of the most influential men of Hang. Now Licha had some years previously taken part in the capture of a mithan belonging to Belo Lampung, another prominent man of Hang. But the matter seemed forgotten and for a full year Licha Seke lived in Hang without being molested. Then one day when he was going to cut fire-wood Belo Lampung captured him and kept him for one night in his house. Ponyo Tamar considered the capture of a man who was living in his slave's house an insult to himself, and offered Belo Lampung five mithan as ransom for Licha Seke. But Lampung said that nothing but Seke's death would satisfy him. Next morning he and his clansmen took Licha Seke to the public execution place on the bank of a stream, beheaded him and then cut the body into pieces and threw them into the water.

Ponyo Tamar, enraged by the killing of his slave's guest, seized two cows belonging to Belo Lampung and slaughtered both cows close to his house. Lampung was apparently not keen on continuing the quarrel with the rich and influential Ponyo Tamar, and ignored the killing of his cattle. But Ponyo Tamar, deeply wounded by the insult to his house and anxious to preserve his prestige, was out for a fight and forestalled any action on Lampung's part by challenging him to a *lisudu*. He began the competition by slaughtering in front of Lampung's house three mithan-cows and smashing one Tibetan bell, one bronze-plate and one sword. Lampung retaliated by killing in front of Tamar's house four large mithan, but he did not destroy any other property. Next Tamar killed ten mithan and Lampung answered by killing twenty. The following day Tamar slaughtered thirty mithan, and Lampung, far from admitting defeat, collected sixty mithan and killed them in a single day. Thereupon Tamar called upon all his kinsmen and gathered eighty mithan. He was prepared to slaughter them, but the *buliang* intervened and persuaded him to kill only sixty, thereby matching Lampung's last bid without outstripping him. A settlement was achieved on the basis that the *lisudu* ended undecided, and Lampung agreed to pay to Tamar a fine of one mithan-cow for killing a man who had stayed in the house of one of Tamar's dependents.

We note that in this case Tamar had no material claim against Lampung, and had suffered no loss in property. But his honour as one of the leading men of the village had been attacked, and he resorted to the *lisudu* to re-establish his prestige.

Where personal honour is at stake Apa Tanis are extremely sensitive and even among near relations questions of prestige may lead to serious and long-drawn out disputes. In Haja village two brothers, Kimle Tara and Kimle Dübo quarrelled over the possession of the house-site of one of their deceased dependants who had died without heirs. In the normal course of events the property of a dependant without heirs reverts to the master or masters, and in so far as the cultivated land was concerned the two brothers had agreed on its disposal. But as the house-site was near Tara's house, he claimed it for himself. Dübo however, felt that by ignoring his legitimate claim to a fair share his brother had slighted his honour and he started a *lisudu* by slaughtering four mithan at the Kimle *lapang*; next day Tara killed five mithan, which was followed by Dübo killing ten, Tara twelve, and Dübo 12; here negotiations might have settled the matter, but Dübo insistent on vindicating his honour slaughtered ten more mithan on the day after he had slaughtered twelve and Tara replied by killing another ten. Here the clansmen intervened and the *buliang* negotiated a settlement wherebly the house-site as well as the lands of the deceased dependant were to be divided between the brothers.

The animals slaughtered at a *lisudu* are not always those of the competitors. It is customary for the kinsmen, both maternal and paternal, to show their group solidarity by lending the animals required, even when there is little chance of early repayment. It is therefore understandable that sooner or later the competitorkinsmen persuade the *buliang* to intervene and prevent too great a destruction of property. Yet, there remains the idea that the more wealth a man can destroy the higher his social prestige rises. The very fact of the support given by numerous kinsmen is proof of his importance and influence in a large social group. But since the pursuance of a *lisudu* to its logical conclusion might spell the economic ruin of a whole group of families, the *buliang* usually intervene in favour of a compromise.

Whereas it would seem that the *lisudu* is the recognized means by which a man can vindicate his personal honour slighted by a fellow villager, disputes between members of different villages may ultimately result in a ceremonial and prearranged fight, a *gambu sodu*. The partisans of an aggrieved man challenge, in such a case, the supporters of his opponent to an open fight, and on the day and time fixed for the combat the men of both parties line up and fight armed with spears, bows and arrows and sometimes even with *dao*. The men whose dispute is the immediate cause of the *gambu* do not generally take part, but they are responsible for marshalling their partisans, and they must pay compensation for those falling in the fray. It is argued that they are not permitted to risk their lives in the fight, because if they were killed there would remain nobody to pay compensation to men wounded or to the relatives of men who fell in the fray. The actual combat is governed by various rules and conventions, and there is no intention to inflict heavy losses on either side. As soon as there is a fatal casualty or two on either side the *gambu* is usually called off; it seems that no permanent enmity results from these pre-arranged fights and it may be argued that they serve as a kind of safety valve through which pent up ill-feeling between groups may be discharged with a minimum of harm to the tribal community as a whole. While in the heat of the fight, some damage may be done to gardens and bamboo groves, there is never any large scale destruction of houses and granaries, such as in the raids of Daflas, and the fight is more or less ordered, and confined to long-distance arrow shooting and spear throwing, with perhaps an occasional thrust into the opposing line with drawn-swords. I have never heard of a *gambu* which ended in a general melée where men fought with swords and knives for their lives.

A few examples will demonstrate the type of quarrels that can lead to such pre-arranged fights:

About five years ago Haja raided the Dafla village of Linia, and a Hari warrior who had joined the raiding party was killed in the fighting by a Dafla of the attacked village. A year later Linia men came to buy rice in Bela, the Apa Tani village nearest to Hari, and the killed man's brother, Hage Sa, hearing of their

arrival ambushed them as they were returning and killed one man and one woman. The people of Bela were exceeding by angry at the attack on their trade partners, particularly because it was [committed on Bela territory, and theyatdemanded that Hage Sa should pay compensation to Linia. When Hage Sa refused two ' khels" of Bela declared a *gambu* against Hage Sa, who took up the challenge and was supported by his village. On the day arranged the men of Bela and Hari lined up on an open field midway beteen the two villages. Numbers were fairly equal and the parties attacked each other with arrows and spears, sometimes sallying forth to thrust at an opponent with swords, while the women brought up reinforcements in the shape of new bambo-spears. Many were wounded, but after two on each side had been killed the *gambu* was broken off; there was no formal peace-making, but the dispute was considered settled and both villages resumed friendly relations.

Another *gambu* in which Hari was recently involved resulted also from the interference of one Apa Tani village with the Dafla friends and traditional trade partners of another. The events leading up to the fight are rather involved. Two Apa Tani friends, Tache Tagang of Hang and Tasso Sili of Hari went to Bua, a Dafla-Miri village two days, journey, from Hari, to purchase cotton. On their return journey they were captured by Daflas of the Hidjat-Lupukher area. Takhe Tagang was kept in stocks at Hidjat and Tasso Sili was sent across the Khru River to another village. From there he escaped and made his way home, but Takhe Tagang had to be ransomed by his firiends of Hang, who employed an influential Dafla of Licha village as go-between and negotiator.

After his return, Takhe Tagang blamed his friends and trade partners of Bua for having made no efforts to effect his release, although he had been captured on the way from their village to Hang. So when he heard that some women of Bua were coming on visit to Hari to attend the Mloko festival, he and some other Hang men ambushed the two women and took them to Hang.

Both women were kept in stocks and when the Hari men demanded their release Hang refused. At that Hari challenged Hang to a *gambu* and the Hang men replied that they would fight, shoot arrow for arrow, hurl spear for spear and draw sword for sword. Hari gained the support of the villages of Bela, Mudang Tage and Michi Bamin, whose hunting and grazing grounds adjoin Bua and who had at that time all pacts of friendship with Bua.

On the day fixed for the *gambu*, the warriors of these four villages marched to Hang, and formed a long line on the fields in front of the village. The men of Hang were furious about this challenge and in anger took one of the captive women to a *nago*, killed her and burned the body. Then they came out to fight.

The battle raged for some time inconclusively, watched by crowds of warriors from the neutral villages of Haja and Duta. Just when the men of Hari and their allies were on the point of pushing the Hang men back into their own village, and of entering the labyrinth of streets, the rumour spread that the son of Hang's richest and most influential man, Ponyo Tamar, had been mortally wounded. The news sobered the Hari men, who realised the seriousness of such an incident and they withdrew from the fight. The rumour was actually exaggerated and the boy, though hit in the chest by an arrow, escaped with his life. On Hari's side two men had been wounded, but there were no fatal casualties on either side.

Two months after the *gambu* the surviving Bua woman was ransomed by her husband, but there were no formal peace-negotiations between Hari and Hang; normal relations were resumed gradually, the *gambu* being considered sufficient revenge for the insult suffered by the Hari men through the capture and subsequent murder of their guests.

Another *gambu* was fought by Hang on account of a boundary dispute with the small village of Michi-Bamin. The later was supported by Mudang Tage village and the two parties lined up on opposite banks of the Kele River, and shot at each other with arrows. One man on each side was killed and as a result Michi-Bamin, though hardly one-fifth as populous as Hang, retained its right on the disputed land.

Whereas a *lisudu* is as a rule the ultimate outcome of a civil dispute between equals, and the *gambu* is the last resort for ending tension between two village communities, which for one or the other reason could not be resolved by the ordinary ways of arbitration. Neither of them fall within the sphere of tribal justice whereby offenders against the accepted moral standards and the common interest of the community are brought to book by public action. Such tribal justice in the narrower sense of the word comes into operation when an anti-social or criminal act arouse the anger of the community and the leading men confer and decide to punish the offender.

In a society where wealth is held in such high esteem as among the Apa Tanis crimes violating rights in property are considered extremely serious, and the punishment for habitual theft is death. A first offender will not be dealt with as severely, but may be tied up for some days beside a *lapang*, being both uncomfortable with his leg fastened in a heavy log of wood and exposed to ridicub. Subsequent offences may be expiated by the payment of compensation, but if a person habitually steals the *buliang* may take more drastic steps to end the public nuisance and may even inflict the death penalty. Such action is usually backed by public opinion, though if the thief belongs to a respectable family his immediate relatives and his clansmen may put up a show of indignation and even talk of reprisals.

But most of the thieves who pay for their offences with their lives are members of slave clans, and there is usually no one to take their part and attempt to save them from their fate. Indeed their own masters, who normally would act as their protectors, are likely to be their chief prosecutors, having already been called upon to atone for their misdeeds.

Executions of thieves are comparatively rare events, and only one occurred during the time I spent in or near the Apa Tani country. But I was told of several cases which give an adequate idea of the circumstances under which a thief may be put to death.

Ponyo Yepu was a young unmarried slave girl belonging to Ponyo Hakhe, a respectable citizen of Hang. She was unruly, and often left her master's houses and went to stay in other houses. Ponyo Hakhe made no particular effort to detain her, for she was useless as a worker and had a reputation for petty theft. Once she went to Mai, a neighbouring Dafla village, which is often visited by Apa Tani who weave cloth for the Daflas for wages. In Mai Yepu also began to steal, and when her master heard of her disgraceful conduct in a foreign village, he became extremely angry, and fearing no doubt that the thieving of his slave might bring him into conflict with some of his Dafla neighbours, he went with his son Ekha to bring her back. Ekha captured her in the forest near Mai. Ponyo Hakhe, Ponyo Tamar and other important men took her straight to Khogo, the public execution place near the Kele River, and Hakhe beheaded her. They cut her body into pieces and threw them into the river. No part of the corpse was taken to the village and no ceremony was performed afterwards.

Very similar was the fate of another slave girl of Hang, Ponyo Rali. She was unmarried, very young and utterly irresponsible. She strayed from her master's house, living now in this and now in that house, and had casual sex relations with numerous young men. While her promiscuous habits would have been a matter of indifference to the other villagers her stealing of rice, fowls and beads caused general annoyance. When one day she was caught red handed in the house of Tabin Koda, her master, Ponyo Kara, made up his mind to inflict on her the customary punishment for habitual theft. His son-in-law seized her and she was tied up at the Ponyo *lapang*. The important clansmen gathered and resolved that she should die. Her master's slaves dragged her to the execution place, and the *buliang* and clan-elders followed. At the execution place she was killed, not by one man, but by all those present, who hacked up her body and threw it into the river with all her clothes and ornaments. Subsequently a nominal *rope* ceremony was performed at the *nago*, because she had—like a captive enemy—been kept tied up at the *lapang*.

Rather different from these two executions, which amounted to no more than the riddance of the community from a public nuisance was the killing of Chigi Duyu, the member of a patrician family of Duta. Chigi Duyu had had his hand in several doubtful cattle deals, and was finally found in the possession of a cow stolen from Hang. I was told that he had been known as a thief for years ; he had stolen cows and mithan belonging to Apa Tanis, slaughtered them in the forest and sold the meat to Daflas and conversely he had sold the meat of stolen Dafla cattle in Apa Tani villages. Thereby he became a menace to the peace between the two tribes, and a cause of dissension among the Apa Tanis themselves. When at last he was caught selling a cow, undoubtedly stolen from a man of Hibu clan of Hang, the prominent men of Hang held council and decided to enlist the support of the *buliang* of other villages in dealing with the offender. They went from village to village and the case was debated first on the assembly platforms of Hang, then on those of Hari and Bela, and finally on the *lapang* of Haja and Michi-Bamin.

Thus practically all prominent Apa Tanis were aware of the contemplated action and had agreed to the capture and killing of Chigi Duyu. Only his own co-villagers seem to have been excluded from these discussions, no hint or rumour of which reached the intended victim.

Shortly before the Morum Festival, an annual rite when all the seven Apa Tani villages strengthen their ties of friendship by reciprocal gifts and the exchange of formal visits, several prominent men of Bela and Hang surprised Chigi Duyu on a *lapang* of Mudang Tage, the village adjoining Duta, and dragged him off to Hang in full view of his friends. No one intervened in his favour. Chigi Duyu was taken to Hang and tied up at the Taliang *lapang*.

Two days later the Duta men, led by Chigi Nime, famous priest, seer and *akha-buliang*, went in solemn procession for their annual visit of goodwill to Hang. There they found, much to their embarrassment, Chigi Duyu, with his leg in a log, tied to a *lapang*. Chigi Nime offered to pay four mithan for Duyu's release, and after some negotiations Hibu Tarin, whose cow had been stolen by Chigi Duyu and who acted therefore as the main captor, agreed to the deal. But the other captors, and particularly the *buliang* of Bela village did not consent to any ransom or reprieve for Chigi Duyu.

While he was kept tied to the *lapang* he was given rice and beer, but realizing no doubt his desperate situation, he ate little and did not say much to his captors. When the hour of his execution arrived, Padi Chiliang, one of the most prominent Bela men and a few other important men of Bela and Hang, told him that on account of his thieving habits he had to die ; it was his own fault and he should bear them no grudge. Then they cut off his hand " with which he had stolen ", slashed him over the eyes "with which he had spied on other men's cattle " and over the mouth " with which he had eaten stolen goods ". In a few moments he was dead. The men of Bela took one of his hands to their village and kept it in their *nago*, and the rest of the body was burnt in Hang close to the Nich *nago*.

On the day of the execution I returned to Duta from a short tour in Dafla country, but as the Morum Festival was in full swing in both Haja and Duta I noticed nothing unusual. Three days after the execution Chigi Duyu's relatives held the funeral rites with chanting and wailing. As they had been unable to recover any part of the body, they buried Chigi Duyu's cloth, ornaments and hat close to his house and erected above this " grave " a single bamboo to which they fastened the carcass of a fowl. I was told that the reason for erecting the cenotaph of a man murdered or otherwise killed near his house, instead of on the common burial ground, was the wish to keep alive the wrath of the killed man's kinsmen.

That same night Chigi Nime came to tell me his version of the incident. Without denying Chigi Duyu's guilt,he complained bitterly that the Hang men had not accepted the offered ransom, and in his first indignation he insisted that Duyu's kinsmen would not be content until they had taken the life of one of the executioners—omens would decide which one. But this would not disturb the general peace : they would quietly enter the chosen victim's house and allow his wife and children to leave ; then they would kill their man and none of the other villagers would interfere.

However no one took Chigi Nime's initial indignation very seriously and I heard of no retribution against the men who killed Chigi Duyu. Even Chigi Nime admitted that the execution would not be considered as a break of the *dapo* (treaty of friendship) between Duta and Hang. " Only owing to the existence of this *dapo* can we live in peace," he said, " without it no one would be sure of his life or his property".

While any murder or even the capture of a member of a friendly village constitutes a breach of the *dapo* between the villages concerned the execution of Chigi Duyu was oviously considered a very different matter, and even his kinsmen could not seriously deny that the executioners had acted within the limits of tribal custom. When seven days after the execution I went to Hang I found on the Taliang *lapang* were Chigi Duyu had been killed, a pile of shields and spears. They remained there until two days later when Hang performed the *rope*-ceremony. At this rite a mithan, the price of which had been raised by public subscription, was sacrificed, and all the men danced with shields and spears as we had seen them do during the full rites at the disposal of the hand of a slain enemy.

The Apa Tanis, who live in crowded villages in a strictly limited area must have a fairly severe code of justice and criminals must be drastically dealt with if serious disorder is to be avoided. As the Apa Tanis have no prisons or other means of segregating bad characters, the death sentence is the only effective means of eliminating a disturbing element. Banishment from the tribal territory might be considered an alternative solution, but this is not free from danger, for an Apa Tani with a tendency to crime may either involve his home village in a dispute with the Dafla or Miri village in which he finds refuge, or turning renegade he may put his knowledge of Apa Tani country and grazing grounds at the service of hostile raiding parties, and thereby take revenge on his own tribesmen.

However, I have heard of at least one concrete case when an Apa Tani sold a troublesome slave to Dafla. Public opinion is not much in favour of such deals, because there is the strong feeling that Apa Tani slaves should not be disposed of outside the tribe, not even as a punishment for criminl offences. When some

years ago Michi Pilia sold a boy of slave class, Duli Pilia, to a Dafla of Mai, his action was followed by endless litigation, and was obviously not regarded as a legitimate way of dealing with a youthful thief. Duli Pilia was the son of a woman married to one of Michi Pilia's freed slaves ; he developed at an early age the habit of stealing rice from granaries, and Michi Pilia had repeatedly to pay compensation. Tired of being held responsible for his slave's misdeeds, he sold the boy, then little more than twelve years old, to Mai Höl, the headman of the Dafla village of Mai. The boy's maternal kinsmen, who live in Bela village, objected violently to this transatcion and one of them, Tage Kago, captured the man who had acted as go-between in the negotiations which had preceded the sale. To ransom his friend Michi Pilia had to pay five mithan, but he retaliated soon by capturing not Tage Kago himself, but his patron Milo Rayo, a man of patrician family. Milo Rayo too was ransomed by his kinsmen, who had to pay twelve mithan to Michi Pilia. But as everybody, and particularly Michi Pilia, was tired of the quarrel the parties agreed to bury the dispute by concluding a *pai*-pact, *i.e.*, a pact of friendship such as arranged between individuals in a way similar to the conclusion of a *dapo*-treaty between villages. To seal this pact Michi Pilia slaughtered one mithan and paid to Milo Rayo seven mithan and various valuables.

The slave-boy remained with Mai Höli where he seems to have given no more trouble, but in May 1945 he was captured by an Apa Tani of Hang who had a private quarrel with Mai Höli and seized the boy with the idea of enforcing a claim for mithan. A remarkable feature of the ensuing negotiations was Duli Pilia's violent objection to being brought back to the Apa Tani country ; he protested that he had become a "son" of Mai Höli and wanted to live as a Dafla.

Whereas theft committed by a member of the Apa Tani tribe or a person of other extraction living permanently among the Apa Tanis is definitely considered an offence against the community and is often dealt with by public action, a different view is taken of thefts by visitors to the Apa Tani country. Such thefts are treated more or less as civil disputes, and the owner of the stolen property is out for compensation, usually greatly exceeding its value, rather than for punishing the offender.

A few days after the execution of Chigi Duyu for theft, an Apa Tani surprised a Dafla woman removing rice from a granary of Mudang Tage village. Finding herself observed she fled, dropping her basket, but various circumstances pointed to the probability that she was from Talo village and the owner of the granary, Tage Takr, took the basket to Talo and asked everybody to whom it belonged. Toko Höli, one of the richest and most influential men, rec ognized the basket as belonging to one of his wives and when he heard how Tage Takr had come by it, he offered to pay compensation. But on his way back to Mudang Tage Takr and his companions met Toko Höli's wife and captured her.

Negotiations for her release were initiated almost at once. Toko Höli offered one mithan, but Tage Tak demanded a ransom of two mithan. Prominent men of Tolo came to Mudang Tage, and some of the most respected *akha buliang* of Haja and Duta went as mediators to Talo. All these negotiations took place in a most amicable atmosphere and no one had the slighest doubt that the incident would soon be settled. After a few days an agreement was reached and Tage Takr released Toko Höli's wife on receiving a ransom of a Tibetan bell worth about one mithan. I heard subsequently that Toko Höli's wife had been caught stealing on previous occasions, and that her husband was so annoyed by this habit, that he refused to accord her any longer the status of a wife, but kept her in his house like a concubine of slave origin. Her own brothers, who lived in Talo, had repudiated her, and had even suggested that it would be better if Toko Höli killed his wife rather than allowed her to bring disgrace upon his house.

But the Apa Tanis were indifferent to this aspect of the case. It was not their business to reform or punish a criminal Dafla woman, but her attempt to rob them of their rice entitled them to compensation, and so they seized her to make sure that her husband would pay up.

It may be argued that the Apa Tains conception of tribal justice is strictly utilitarian. The preservation of social harmony and equilibrium is the supreme aim. The man or woman of low social status or little wealth who through the habit of petty theft becomes a nuisance and a source of irritation and disunity is eliminated by public action, whereas the rich man who picks a quarrel with an equal and in its course captures perhaps men and mithan, is allowed to carry such a dispute as far as the squandering of wealth during a *lisudu* competition. There is obviously a subtle difference between common crime and certain acts of violence which are not altogether disreputable and do not necessarily discredit the perpetrator in the eyes of his co-villagers.

Our knowledge of customary Apa Tani law is yet too scanty to allow of enumeration and classification of offences, but the examples given in these notes leave little doubt that the Apa Tanis have evolved an effective system of preserving tribal harmony and dealing with social elements in a way which not only eliminates the source of disurbance but acts as a deterrent to other potential law-breakers.

The very fact that in the face of habitual crime the leaders of the tribe, fully backed by public opinion, take action against the offender, distinguishes Apa Tani justice from the attitude *vis-a-vis* crime prevailing among their Dafla and Miri neighbours. There every family feuds for itself and retaliation is practically the only answer to any trespass on property or attack on persons. Raids on houses and the slaughter of whole families feature in the recent history of most of the largerDafla settlements, and the Daflas lack an independent authority comparable to the Apa Tanis *buliang* which could check such feuds as have led to a series of raids and counter-raids. Such unbridled violence is unthinkable among Apa Tanis, and while I have heard of a good many instances of *lisudu* competitions and of a smaller number of pre-arranged *gambu* fights, there has within human memory been no raid of Apa Tanis on the house of a fellow-tribesman. Individuals may be seized and held to ransom, but the wholesale burning of houses and massacre of families, which is so common an occurrence in Dafla feuds, is foreign to the Apa Tanis as a means of settling endro-tribal disputes, although they resort to it in wars with neighbouring tribes. Public opinion and the social sense of the vast majority of Apa Tanis is too strong to permit such drastic and unilateral action. The *buliang* as the leaders of the tribe allow individual citizens ample scope to fight out private disputes without outside interference, but once the public peace is endangered they come down heavily on an offender guilty of criminal acts or they end by negotiation a quarrel which has assumed threatening aspects. And in this work as gaurdians of the peace they are supported by the other tribesmen who realize that in an area as congested as the Apa Tani valley prosperity as well as the security of life and property are dependent on the maintenance of law and order.

The position of slaves among the Apa Tanis

Slavery is an institution prevalent among most of the hill-tribes of the North-East Frontier, but the social position of slaves varies greatly from tribe to tribe. Among the Daflas, for instance, any man, however prominent his family may lose his freedom if captured by enemies and is then subsequently sold as a slave. But similarly, a slave or a man born as the son of a slave may gradually improve his position, and gain not only economic independence but a social status equal to that of the freeborn. Thus slaves do not form a caste of their own, but becoming a slave is an incident of fate, and in no way an immutable condition.

Not so among the Apa Tanis. In their more static society, the slaves and descendants of slaves constitute a class from which no one can rise whatever may be his economic resources, personal prestige or influence. The members of this class are known as *mura* (or *guchi*) whereas the members of patrician families are described as *mite* (or *gute*). Under no circumstances can an Apa Tani pass from one class to the other ; *mite* and *mura* do not inter-marry ; a man or woman born as a *mura* will always remain a *mura*, and his or her legitimate descendants will also be *mura*.

Thus the Apa Tani tribe is permanently divided into the two classes, *mite* and *mura*. But to the outsider this division is not at once obvious, *Mite* and *mura* dress similarly and do not markedly differ in their style of living. Except on ceremonial occasions they share each other's food, and though the richest people are generally of *mite* class, there are a good number of very poor *mite*, while some *mura* own considerable wealth.

The origin of this division is doubtful. The Daflas too recognize a grouping of clans into two classes known as *gute* and *guchi*, but among them freemen as well as slaves may belong to either class. There is no doubt the possibility that the *mite* and *mura* of the Apa Tanis represent two different, though today largely assimilated, ethnic elements, and it is certain that all foreign slaves acquired by Apa Tanis and even those members of other tribes who have come voluntarily to live among Apa Tanis have been absorbed only within the *mura* class. A certain difference in physical type between the Apa Tanis of the leading *mite* families, and the average *mura* is unmistakable. It is mainly among the former that we find high stature and the Europoid features which distinguish many Apa Tanis from all the other tribesmen of the Subansiri Region, whereas types resembling Dafla and Miris are much more frequent among the *mura*.

In my note on "Village Organization and Tribal Jurisdiction" I have pointed out that there are a number of separate *mura* clans, but that in addition some of the patrician clans have *mura* as well as *mite* members. It is not impossible that some of the clans consisting today only of *mura* were once *mite* clans, and that their *mite* families have died out while the families of slave descent multiplied. The fact that in some cases a *nago*, serving as the ritual centre for a whole group of clans, is called after what is now a *mura* clan rather than after a *mite* clan would seem to lend credence to this theory.

1. *The Position of Slaves.*—There are among the Apa Tanis a good many men and women, either of *mura* class or foreigners purchased or captured in war, who are the absolute property of their masters and can therefore be accurately described as 'slaves'. Such a slave living in his master's house, and dependent on him for every necessity of life, has in theory no rights whatsoever. He must do what his master orders, he can be sold at any moment without being consulted, and if, owing to unruliness or criminal tendencies, he becomes a liability rather than an asset, his master may even kill him. But the average slave's daily life does not reflect this insecure status. A slave is assured of food and shelter, shares in his master's meals and is given clothes only slightly inferior to those ordinarily worn by his master. There is nothing in his hair-dress and appearance that stamps him as a slave. The work he does is essentially the same as that of free men, he joins in all public amusements and goes on visits and trading trips to distant villages and even to the plains of Assam.

To some extent the position of a slave depends on the manner in which he was acquired and there are various ways in which a man or woman may become the property of another.

2. *Slaves acquired by inheritance.*—Many wealthy Apa Tanis of *mite* class inherit from their fathers a number of slaves, some of whom belong to families which have for generations been associated with their masters. Such slaves bear their masters' clan-name and if this is, *e. g.*, Ponyo, they are known as Ponyo *guchi* or Ponyo *mura*. They may have grown up in their master's house, or in a separate house given to their parents close to their master's house.

Let us assume that a *mite* man of some wealth inherits on his father's death a young boy and girl, who may be the children of slaves belonging to his father's household or may have been bought in their childhood by his father. They will live in his house and work alongside his own sons and daughters on the fields and in the house ; like all young Apa Tanis they will at an early age join a working gang (*patang*) consisting of boys and girls of similar age, both *mite* and *mura* and like the parents of the other members of this *patang*, so their master will have a right to the work of the entire gang on certain days, and on these days he is expected to feed the young people with rice, rice-beer and possibly meat. When the boy grows up, he will make love to the girls of his own *patang* as well as to other unmarried girls of the village, observing the rules of clan exogamy, but winning very likely the temporary favours of several *mite* girls without thereby causing offence. But his wife he must choose from among the daughters of other slaves or *mura* and if he finds a girl willing to marry him, she will come to live with him in his master's house, and his master is likely to pay the bride-price. The payment of the bride-price is important for the future of the children. If the girl is a slave's daughter and the boy's master pays to her owner the full price, say one mithan, one cow and one *dao*, then all the couple's children will belong to him ; if he pays only a small price, say one calf and one *dao*, the sons will belong to him and the daughters to the girl's owner, or if there are only sons they will be divided, and if he pays no price at all all the couple's children will become the property of the girl's owner. This is the general rule, but variations may result from special agreements or circumstances.

As soon as the couple has one or two children and sometimes even before, the master may give the slaves a house-site and help him to establish a household of his own, provided he has proved a reliable and good worker. The Apa Tanis speak of slaves living in houses of their own as a *penam mura*, a 'separated slave' and there is a gliding scale in the degree of dependence between such slaves and their masters, the owner-slave relationship developing, particularly in the second and third generation, often into a patron-client connection. Sometimes such a 'separated slave' is given only a house-site and a piece of garden, and continues to work almost everyday for his master, receiving from him all requirements of grain and cloth. Particularly the cutting and bringing of wood is a task for which in a big household such slaves are very useful. But sometimes a 'separated slave' is given by master a few rice-fields and some dry land of his own and in this case he is for his food supply largely independent of his master, and works for him only occasionally and when specially requested. The crops he reaps on his fields are his own and he can, if industrious, begin to acquire additional property. Unless he commits a grave offence or refuses persistently to work for his master when called upon to do so, the latter cannot take back the land bequeathed nor in the case of the master's death can the heirs contest the separated slave's claim to the land. This land is inherited by the slave's sons and there can be little doubt that many freed *mura* families are descended from separated slaves.

Usually the children of a 'separated' slave-couple remain with the parents, but work, according to the arrangement made at the time of the marriage, occasionally for either the father's or the mother's previous owner. As long as their parents are alive it is only in some cases and by mutual agreement that half-grown boys or girls go and live in the master's house which is incidentally seldom more than a few yards from their parents' home. But if their father dies, while they are young, such slave-children are taken into their master's house and are there cared for, automatically resuming the status of ordinary slaves who are subject to the possibility of being sold, notwithstanding the fact that their parents were 'separated' slaves.

But not every slave is necessarily 'separated' and provided with a house of his own. Men of little intelligence and initiative who are not likely to make a success of an establishment of their own often remain all their lives in their master's house, I was told that some slaves actually prefer the security of their master's household to the necessity of having to fend for themselves, and I have come across actual cases of the sons of separated slaves who of their own free will went to live in the house of their master or some member of his family, although they retained their father's land.

Slave-families attached for generations to some prominent *mite* family, bear the clan-name of their masters and there remains no memory of any other name or association.

3. *Slaves acquired by purchase.*—Besides inherited slaves many wealthy men own slaves whom they have purchased either from Apa Tanis or Daflas, and I should say that nearly half of the slaves living in their owners' houses have been bought by their present masters. That many a rich man, owning a large number of rice-fields, is anxious to increase his number of slaves and dependants, and to acquire thereby cheap and ever available labour, is easily understandable but what induces slave-owners to dispose of their valuable human assets ?

A slave-owner faced with the necessity of providing mithan for a sacrifice, of paying a fine or of ransoming a captured relative, or with any other emergency may find the sale of a slave the quickest way of obtaining the necessary animals or valuables. He will normally sell not a 'separated slave' but a young boy or girl living in his house, or in rare cases a married couple with or without children. A young slave of either sex fetches a price of three to five mithan or cows, but a middle-aged slave may change hands for as little as one mithan and one cow. Another reason for the sale of a slave is disagreement between him and his master. It seems that the relations between masters and slaves are generally cordial, but if a slave gives trouble and refuses to work, the master may sell him. I was told, for instance, that if a man should discover that one of his male slaves had a love-affair with his daughter he would first warn him and if this was of no avail, he would sell him. Similarly a slave embarrassing his master by stealing is likely to be sold provided anyone is prepared to buy him. But if he is a notorious character, his master may cut his losses and expel him from his house.

While the selling of slaves to other Apa Tani villages is a common practice, Apa Tani slaves are seldom sold to men of other tribes and public opinion is definitely against the sale of Apa Tanis outside their own country. I have heard only one Apa Tani slave who has recently been sold to Daflas. In 1943 Michi Pilia of Michi-Bamin sold a young boy of Duli clan (one of the *mura* clans of Michi-Bamin) to a Dafla of Mai village. The boy's parents had been heavily indebted and had agreed to work for Michi Pilia in the position of slaves if he paid their debt and thereby saved them from being seized by their creditor. When they died their small son came to live in Michi Pilia's house, but as he caused his master trouble by stealing, Pilia sold him to Mai for the comparatively moderate price of one mithan cow and calf, one large pig and some cloths and *dao*.

Though Apa Tanis do not approve of members of their tribe being sold to Daflas or Miris, they themselves purchase a good many slaves from Daflas, preferably children, who can be as easily assimilated. It is difficult to estimate the number of Apa Tani slaves of Dafla origin, for those bought as children dress as Apa Tanis, speak only Apa Tani, marry Apa Tanis and bearing their master's clan-name do not appear as strangers even to the other villagers. The resultant absorption of Dafla blood within the *mura* population explains perhaps the difference in physical type between many *mura* and the members of the more prominent *mite* families. It seems that many Dafla slaves remain all their life in their master's house, and that it is as a rule only their children who are separated and given land. Some of the Dafla slaves owned by Apa Tanis come from distant villages on the Upper Khru, and have been traded down by nearer villages such as Licha. Apa Tanis prefer to buy Dafla children from distant villages, for they are not likely to try and escape, and there is little likelihood of their being traced by their kinsmen. On the other hand there are many cases of Dafla slaves of less distant villages who run away and are helped on the journey by people of intervening Dafla villages.

Slaves already in the possession of a master who has acquired them by inheritance, purchase or capture, are not the only persons who may be offered for sale. Some Apa Tanis, although born free, have been sold by their own parents or kinsmen into slavery. Thus there is in Haja village a girl of Mudang Tage who was sold by her own brother for four mithan when he was short of grain ; and another girl was sold by her own parents for the same reason for two mithan. It seems, however, that only people of *mura* class and particularly the descendants of separated slaves sell their children or relations. The status of persons sold in this way is equal to that of any other slave, they lose their clan-name and all rights to inherit from the free members of their family.

4. *Slavery resulting from economic obligation.*—Distinct from individuals born as slaves, captured in war, or sold as slaves by their relatives, are those who lose their freedom through economic failure. An Apa Tani and also a Dafla dealing with Apa Tanis automatically guarantees his business obligations with his own person. If a man borrows rice or any other commodity and cannot or will not repay it within a reasonable time his creditor is entitled to attach his person and to make him work as an unpaid servant until he has repaid his debt. During this period the debtor temporarily deprived of his freedom is strictly speaking not a slave, for he can earn money by extra work for other men and may go to work in the plains and clear his debts with valuables bought there. But if several years pase and the debt remains uncleared, his position becomes that of a slave, and if he causes his creditor any trouble he may even be sold. A debtor's service in his creditor's house, is not necessarily the result of compulsion, but may be based on mutual agreement ; but this system of 'bond service' gives rise to a great deal of friction between Apa Tanis and Daflas. For Apa Tanis often give credit to poor Daflas in the expectation that sooner or later their Dafla customers will be unable to pay, and they will be able to force or to persuade them to become their bond-servants and finally their slaves. A few examples will demonstrate this :—

1. Two years ago Serbi Tade, a Dafla of Jorum, came to live in Bela and borrowed a great deal of rice from Duyu Talu. When he could not repay Nada Karu of Haja agreed to pay one mithan for the rice if Serbi Tade came to work in his house until he had repaid the mithan. Serbi Tade agreed and worked for one year for Nada Karu. Then he escaped to Licha without repaying the mithan.

2. Three years ago Lishi Tamo, a Dafla of Licha, came to Haja and stayed for about one year in Pura Pila's house. During that time he bought on credit rice from Haj Kacho. But he could not pay and Haj Kacho seized him and kept him tied up in his house. Haj Kojing released him by paying his creditor one bullock, one brass plate and one Tibetan sword on the understanding that Lishi Tamo would work for him like a slave until he had repaid the value of the ransom. But soon afterwards Lishi Tanio fled to Licha.

3. Padi Layang, a prominent Apa Tani of Bela, sold large quantities of rice on credit to a Dafla of Pemir. Then the latter died leaving one son, but no property. So Padi Layang took the son in compensation for his loss. But the boy did not like to live among Apa Tanis and requested Padi Layang to sell him to a Dafla village and take the price in clearance of his father's debt. Complying with his wish Padi Layang sold him to a Dafla of Licha for one mithan-cow with calf, one cloth and one pig. The buyer however protracted the payment, and when within a year the slave-boy died he refused to honour his obligations.

Although an Apa Tani of *gute* class, if defaulting in the payment of a debt, may also be seized by his creditor, in practice he never serves his creditor in the capacity of a slave, it is said that all his kinsmen and clansmen, rather than suffer the disgrace of a *gute* man working as a slave, will subscribe to his ransom.

5. *Slaves acquired by Capture.*—Many of the Dafla slaves owned by Apa Tanis have been captured in raids either by Apa Tanis or by Daflas who then sold them to Apa Tanis. When Apa Tanis raid a village and make prisoners, they keep them as a rule for several months in stocks and await their kinsmen's offers of ransom. If no such offers are forthcoming or the offered ransom is too small, they sell the captives as slaves either among themselves or to neighbouring Daflas. Children are usually disposed of in the Apa Tanis country, but women are sold to more distant villages, where the chances of escape are smaller.

When last year some Apa Tanis of Haja and Duta raided Linia they captured the two wives of a Dafla and his son, who was about 10 years of age ; the two women were subsequently released on receipt of ransom but not the boy. The captor sold him to another man of Haja for two mithan.

When the Apa Tanis of Bela last raided Dodun, a Dafla village near the Khru, they captured ten women and ten small boys. Only three of the boys were ransomed. All the remaining captives were sold ; the boys to Apa Tanis and the women to Dafla villages such as Mai and Leji.

Apa Tanis never raid each other and they hold therefore no Apa Tani slaves captured in war. Nor are there to my knowledge, at present any Apa Tani captives held as slaves by Daflas ; for although many Apa Tanis have in recent years been captured by Daflas, they have been either killed or ransomed, the ransom paid by Apa Tanis being usually higher than the market price for a slave among Daflas. I know of only one Apa Tani slave who was captured by Licha and made to work there as a slave ; his owner tried to release him but the captor refused to accept any ransom. This slave, however, died one year ago.

6. *Change of a slave's clan-name.*—In theory every slave adopts his master's clan-name and counts for matters of exogamy as a member of his master's clan. Actually however, a newly acquired slave's previous clan-name is both remembered and used, and it is only his children who are generally known by the master's clan-name. If a slave belonged to a *mura* clan of the same village, even his descendants in the second and third generation are conscious of their origin, although they bear, whether separated or not, the master's clan-name.

There is, however, one exception to the rule that every slave adopts his master's clan-name. When a freed *mura* burdened with debts agrees to serve a wealthy man in the position of a house-slave provided the latter pays his debts, he retains his own clan-name ; for he is not a slave bought without being consulted, but has entered his master's house of his own free will. Yet, such a slave can be sold if he fails to keep his part of the bargain.

That newly acquired slaves are not in every respect reckoned as *mura* members of their master's clan emerges from the fact that the male and female slaves of one man are allowed and sometimes even encouraged to marry. An Apa Tani who owns a Dafla youth and a Dafla girl, for instance, told me, that he asked them to marry, but that they did not like each other and refused, and a slave whose life-story is recounted below married the daughter of one of his master's other slaves.

7. *Sex relations and Marriage rules.*—Premarital sex-relations of a fairly promiscuous character prevail among boys and girls of all classes, and slaves and the children of slaves are not excluded from the general community of the village youth. Thus young slaves may become the lovers of *mite* girls, and slave girls have often casual love-affairs with *mite* boys. As a rule, however, a man has no sex relations with his own female slaves or the daughters of his slaves, and he cannot accord to a slave woman the position of a second wife or recognised concubine. Some of my informants were emphatic that sexual intercourse between a *mite* man and his slaves never occurred, and they voiced no doubt the official and theoretical view. Others went so far as to concede that if a man chose to keep a slave girl as his mistress, no one would interfere, but that it was not a usual thing to do. Still others admitted that if a man has a son from a slave girl, the boy takes the father's name, but does not inherit his status ; he is a *mura*, and may become the founder of a new *mura* branch of his father's clan.

As public opinion does not favour permanent unions between *mite* and slaves, little is said about any attachment of a slave owner to one of his female slaves. So much is clear, however, that female slaves are neither *ipso facto* the concubines of their masters as for instance among Konyak chiefs, nor that intercourse between a man and his slaves is considered clan-incest. The very fact that sexual intercourse between a slave and his master's daughter does not seem to incur very heavy penalties disposes of any assumption that sex-relation between masters and slaves count in Apa Tani opinion as incest.

Any child born by an unmarried slave-girl in her master's house, is his property and takes his clan-name. Even if the father happens to be a *mite* man, he can make no claim to such off-spring.

Slaves are expected to marry slaves or girls of *mura* class. A free *mura* girl marrying a slave who still lives in his master's house, herself reverts to slave status and may, in theory, be subsequently sold either together with her husband or even separately. A slave girl marrying a free *mura* man, on the other hand, gains her freedom provided the husband pays her master her full price. The customs regulating the fate of a slave's children have already been described in detail.

It seems that masters allow their slaves a good deal of freedom in arranging their marriage affairs. I was repeatedly assured that a master cannot prevent a slave-girl from going to live with the man of her choice, even though he may lose thereby her help in house and field. He may demand a bride-price but cannot enforce its payment and his only compensation for the lose of a slave who may have cost him five mithan is

the claim on her children. This is demonstrated by an occurrence which illustrates so many aspects of Apa Tani slavery that it deserves quotation in full:—

> Tiling Tayo, a *mura* and dependant of Michi Tamo of Michi-Bamin village, married to a Ponyo *mura* girl of Hang, quarrelled with his patron and went to live in Hang, taking with him his wife and small daughter. In Hang he found refuge in the house of Hibu Goji, but having no land for cultivation he soon found himself in difficulties and at a time when he was short of food he arranged to sell his daughter Mado for one mithan worth of rice to Hibu Goji's brother Riku ; but he failed to inform his host Hibu Goji of this transaction. Riku gave Tiling Tayo the rice, but when he demanded the child, Goji heard of the deal and claimed the girl for himself, pointing out that the family had come to live in his house, and that having offered them shelter he had the first claim on Tiling Tayo's daughter. So violent was the quarrel that the brothers started a *lisudu* competition of destroying wealth ; between them they killed 47 mithan but at last the head-men (*buliang*) intervened, the competition was stopped and the girl Mado was given to Riku, who sold her subsequently to Hibu Rave for six mithan. After she had worked for Hibu Rave for about ten years, she fell in love with Budi Servi, a *mura* dependant of Kago Tamo, and went to live in his house. Hibu Rave raised no objection and demanded no compensation for his six mithan which she had cost him. Mado had no children, and Hibu Rave died sometimes afterwards without leaving any direct heirs. Had Hibu Rave left a son and Mado had had any children, her daughters would have been claimed as slaves by Hibu Rave's son.

8. *Property rights of Slaves.*—A slave living in his master's house neither possesses property nor can he acquire any property of his own. He depends on his master for food and clothes and all he earns belongs to his master. When he goes to the plains (and many wealthy Apa Tanis, though themselves never leaving their own country, send their slaves to work in the plains) all the goods purchased with the money he earns as wages, belongs to his master. Usually he is allowed to keep a cloth and perhaps a little salt, but this is a concession and not a right. Being unable to acquire and possess property he consequently cannot purchase his own freedom ; nor can he inherit land or valuables from a freed kinsman. If he has children they too are the property of his master and any bride-price for his daughters goes to his master.

His position changes radically when his master 'separates' him, gives him a house-site of his own and some land to cultivate. Not only does such land become his personal property but from then he can begin to acquire other property. When he returns from work in the plains he can trade the purchased goods for his own benefit, though as a matter of courtesy he may give his master a present of salt or cloth. As long as he fulfills his obligations his land cannot be taken back by his master, and is inherited by his sons. His master can now no longer sell either him or his wife, but his children are still the property of his master, and may under certain circumstances be sold. While he manages his own land and reaps its entire crop, of which no share goes to his master, he still has to work on his master's land whenever his help is required. If he dies young his children return to his master's house and have the status of slaves until in time they themselves are separated, but normally his sons are allowed to work on his land and to succeed him in the enjoyment of his property ; and when his daughters marry he is usually given a share in the bride-price. If he dies without direct male heirs, his land reverts to his master, daughters not being entitled to inherit.

The dependence of such separated slaves on their masters lessens with each generation, until a stage is reached when a man's *mura* have no other obligation than to give him the heads of all animals slain in the chase or killed for sacrifice ; and this obligation remains even if the one time slaves become as rich and richer than the patron. But if such a *mura* family, descended from slaves and bearing the name of a *mite* clan dies out, all their property reverts to their *mite* patrons.

If a slave owner dies without leaving sons or brothers, the slaves who lived in his house are not taken over by distant kinsmen, but are allotted some inferior parts of their master's land and house-sites on the outskirts of the village. They thus acquire the status of separated slaves and owe their late master's kinsmen only the usual tribute of animal heads.

9. *Obligations of a master towards his slaves and dependants.*—While a slave is living in his master's house, he is fed and clothed as a matter of course and even when a slave lives in a separate house and has fields of his own his master helps him whenever necessary with loans of grain. He affords him, moreover, protection of person and property—an important point in a society where the individual can expect little protection from an impersonal law. Most vital becomes such protection by a wealthy patron when a slave or *mura* happens to be captured by Daflas. In general slaves are less liable to capture than wealthy men of *mite* class, but there are yet many cases when slaves or freed *mura* are captured and then ransomed by their masters or patrons :

> Thus Nani Dole, a separated slave of Nani Habung of Bela village, was captured by men of Licha when out hunting. His master ransomed him with two Tibetan bells, each worth one mithan, and one *dao* ; Dole is under no obligation to repay Nani Halung.
>
> Similarly Nani Talo, a separated slave of Nani Kojun, was also captured by Licha men, and ransomed for 1 mithan, 2 Tibetan bells of mithan-value, 2 brass plates, 2 Tibetan *daos*, 3 Apa Tani *dao* and 3 Dafla cloths ; all this was paid by Nani Pusang, his master's father.

Cases such as these are numerous and Apa Tanis seem to consider it a matter of honour to ransom any of their dependants, who happen to fall into captivity. The ransoms are sometimes higher than the price of a slave and this tends to show that Apa Tanis feel real responsibility towards their dependants. A slave-girl of Dafla birth, brought up as an Apa Tani in the house of Padi Layang of Reru, was recently captured by men of Licha and kept in stocks for three months ; to effect her release Padi Layang paid a ransom of 3 mithan-cows, 3 female mithan-calves, 4 Tibetan bells, 4 bronze plates, 4 Tibetan *daos*, 2 big *endi* cloths, 10 Apa Tani cloths, 20 Apa Tani *dao*, and 1 maund of salt. This is far more than the price of any slave, and even the fact that the girl in question was then pregnant does not explain so extravagant a ransom if Apa Tanis regarded their slaves only as an investment.

10. *Treatment of criminal slaves.*—Normally the masters of slaves have no need to resort to any drastic means to assert their authority, and I have never heard of corporal punishment inflicted on slaves for such reasons as laziness or inefficiency. It is only when a slave refuses consistently to obey his master's orders or commits an offence which would be criminal even if committed by a free man, that serious action is taken. Even then a master will often show considerable patience, though once this is exhausted, he is swift to mete out justice. The obvious way of getting rid of a troublesome slave is to sell him, but if the slave has a notoriously bad character, a buyer is not easily found. In such a case, a master, unable to control his slave, may disclaim all responsibility and leave him to his own resources or may take the lead in inflicting on him the death-penalty. This is demonstrated by two cases of criminally inclined slaves from Hang village which I have described in detail in the note on 'Village Organisation and Tribal Justice.'

Though in these two cases the death sentence was imposed for habitual stealing, it must not be supposed that equally drastic action is taken against all thieves. A slave woman of Haja who was caught in a petty theft during my stay in the village, has several times been punished by being put into stocks and by having her hair clipped, but has remained incurable and is yet tolerated.

In the case of another slave executed some years ago in Hang the guilt is less clear:

Hibu Tajang was the son of slave bought from Michi-Bamin and had been separated and given a house and land of his own by his master Hibu Hipa. He was married, but had no children. It seems that while in Hang he proved a general nuisance by refusing to obey his master and flouting the authority of the village headmen. At last he fled to Talo (Toko), a nearby Dafla village, leaving his wife behind. But the Hang men sent word to Talo, informing the villagers of his bad record and requesting that he should be returned to Hang. The men of Talo complied with the request, seized him and brought him back to Hang. There he was kept for two nights at the Hibu sitting platform and then executed by his master and several other prominent men. His offence is somewhat obscure, but it seems that his unruliness, his refusal to work for his master and his escape to Talo, were the main reasons for the decision to kill him.

No case of a slave committing a murder is remembered, but there can be no doubt that in such an event the culprit would be executed.

If a slave commits any offence, such as killing purposely or by accident another man's mithan, his master is responsible for the payment of compensation. But the aggrieved person may at once take the law into his own hands, seize the offender and keep him tied up until his master or patron has paid the compensation.

11. *Escape of slaves*: Cases of Apa Tani slaves running away from their masters seem to be rare, and this may be due to two reasons. The treatment of slaves is on the whole good and the Apa Tani country is so small that a slave must flee to another tribe to be sure of avoiding recapture. The many slaves going annually to the plains return practically without exception, although they could find there ample employment and undoubtedly realize that if they stayed away their masters could not recover them. But only two Apa Tanis are known to have escaped to the plains in recent years; the one has settled in Charduar and the other a young boy, is serving in the Political Officer's Permanent Labour Corps.

Apart from Hibu Nipa, whose flight to Talo cost him his life, I have heard of only one Apa Tani slave who fled to a Dafla village, and this was a girl of Hang, who after her owner's death escaped with her Dafla husband, like herself a slave, to Sekhe a village south of the Panior River.

Captured Daflas, kept as slaves by Apa Tanis, on the other hand, often succeed in escaping.

If a slave leaves his master's house and places himself under the protection of another Apa Tani the latter may do one of two things : he may hand the slave over to his rightful owner, or he may take the slave into his house and compensate the former master by paying a reasonable price.

12. *The Behaviour of slaves*:—A visitor to an Apa Tani village finds it at first difficult to distinguish between free men and slaves. He may notice the dignity and noble bearing of certain members of prominent *mite*-families, but sees little difference in the behaviour of the rest of the men After some time he will realize, however, that some men with a smattering of Assamese and a particularly pushing manner are slaves or the descendants of slaves. Those most familiar with the plains of Assam describe themselves as *gaonbura* and try to impress the visitor both with their own importance and that of one particular rich man of *mite*-class, to whom they refer as 'raja' and who is their master or patron. They appear in no way oppressed or timid and many of them are well dressed. These are usually men who have been given their own houses and fields, slaves still living in their master's house are usually less ostentatious in their manners.

For an outsider unfamiliar with the language it is, of course, very difficult to judge the social and psychological position of an underprivileged class, but I would say that on the whole slaves are no less cheerful than other tribesmen, and the Apa Tanis are a people whose cheerfullness borders on boisterousness. The freedom of slave boys to join the working gangs of the village youth and even to have love affairs with girls of *mite* class, tends certainly to blur class differences, and to establish a friendly intimacy between *mite* and slaves of approximately the same age, an intimacy which later distinctions in wealth and position cannot completely obliterate. A slave addresses his master as 'father' if he is older and as 'younger brother', if he is younger, and the master addresses him by the complementary terms.

On the other hand, every slave living still in his master's house must be conscious of his dependence on the latter's goodwill, and aware of the potential danger of being sold. Yet, even such an event does not tear him from a familiar milieu, friends and kinsmen; for all Apa Tani villages lie so close together that even after a change of masters he is necessarily still within easy reach and often within sight of his old home. Though in theory the members of a family may be sold separately I have never heard of a case when husband and wife have been forcibly separated by the master selling one without the other.

The difference in the material standards of living of the average slave and the poorer people of *mite* class is not great; both live in similar houses, eat similar food and do work of similar type. But it may be that on an average slaves have to work harder; even when middle aged they have to undertake tasks, such as wood-cutting, which among free men are left to boys and young men. The main disabilities of the slaves, however, lie in the social sphere. They are excluded from the competition for social prestige which is an engrossing and extremely important part of an Apa Tanis' life. Not for them are the thrills and the access of self- reliance which a free man gains from performing such rites as the mithan sacrifices at the Morum festival or asserting his wealth and prominence in a *lisudu* competition.

It is only when they are 'separated' that slaves can acquire wealth, and those who are economically successful, can gain a certain influence in their village. Some of the larger *mura* clans are represented on the village councils by their own *buliang*, but these are men born free whose dependance on their patrons is only of a ceremonial nature.

Failing infinitely more detailed knowledge of the Apa Tanis than I have been able to gain in the short time at my disposal, it would be dangerous to generalize on the psychological position of Apa Tani slaves, but the following sketch of a life story of a slave of Dafla origin may illustrate how members of other tribes are being absorbed into the *mura* class of the Apa Tanis:

The teller, Taj Tako or, as he calls himself more frequently, Ponyo Tako, is an old man of rather, striking appearance; very tall and lean, with a narrow, well chiselled face, an elegant and very thin hooked nose and deep-set light brown eyes. He knows some words of Assamese and uses them mainly to assure you again and again and with immense pride that he is a man of a great 'Anka raja', meaning Ponyo Tamar, his master, undisputedly the richest man in Hang.

Taj Tako's parents were Daflas of Licha, but his father Taj Tamar quarrelled with his brothers and went to live in Haja, where he stayed in the house of Kago Buti. There Tako was born. His father was a great hunter and while in Haja he largely supported himself by hunting deer and wild pig and selling the meat. Sometimes he worked on Kago Buti's fields or cut wood and his wife helped the women of the house and earned wages in rice by going to work on other people's fields. When leaving Licha his father had brought with him three *maje* (Tibetan bells) and these were subsequently stolen by Apa Tanis of Michi-Bamin who had watched him burying them in a bamboo grove. After the theft Taj Tamar left Haja with his wife and child, and went to Mai, his wife's home village. There it was not long before he persuaded his wife's kinsmen to join him in capturing some of Michi-Bamin's mithan. On

a moonlit night they went to Michi Bamin's pasture land and were just driving off five mithan, when they ran into some Apa Tanis. Tamar aimed an arrow at one of the men, but another Apa Tani hurled a pointed bamboo fence pole and hit him in the throat. He died on the spot and his companions fled. Next day his body was buried by the man of Michi-Bamin.

Tako was then a small boy, some five years old, and he and his mother went to live in the house of Mai Niri. When he was about ten years old, Mai Niri sold him to Tania Doni of Talo. Subsequently his mother married Taji Topu of Mai, but died soon afterwards. When Tako was a boy of seventeen or eighteen, he ran away from Talo ; he stayed for three days with his relatives in Mai and from there he went to the plains and stayed in Rangajan village near North Lakhimpur, first for a few days with Bogo Tora, who worked in a tea garden, and then for one year with another Dafla who had some cultivation.

As he had been separated from his mother while he was still very young, he knew very little of his father, and to find out the circumstances of his death, he went one day to Hang. There he met Ponyo Tamar, who was already one of the richest men of the village, and Tamar suggested that Tako should stay with him in Hang. Tako, who did not like the idea of spending all his life in the plains, readily agreed, and Ponyo Tamar paid subsequently three mithan to Tania Doni of Talo in order to avoid the accusation of harbouring a run-away slave.

At first Tako stayed in Ponyo Tamar's house ; he went cutting wood and worked on the fields, and often he would go hunting ; in Talo he had learnt woodcraft far superior to that of Apa Tanis and so he made himself popular by supplying Tamar's household with game. Tamar had another Dafla slave married to an Apa Tani woman, and Tako found favour with their daughter. She dressed as an Apa Tani and spoke only Apa Tani, but Tako did not mind this and she came to live with him as his wife. When Tako's eldest son was born, Ponyo Tamar gave him a separate house, quite close to his own, and a garden plot in which to grow vegetables. But Tako did not care to have rice-fields of his own ; he was quite content to work for Tamar and receive from him the grain he required. He has altogether three children, two sons and one daughter.

His eldest son Loma, though not yet married has been given two rice-terraces by Tamar. Of his own accord he went to live in the house of Tamar's sister, the wife of a very rich man, but he cultivates separately and cooks on a separate hearth. To Tako's younger son, Teke, Ponyo Tamar gave also two rice-terraces, but instead of setting up a household of his own Teke continued to live in Tamar's house. Although he is not yet married, he too cooks on a separate hearth. Tako taught both of his sons to be good hunters, but otherwise they are just like Apa Tanis.

"I myself", says Taj Tako, "have become half an Apa Tani, and at home I speak Apa Tani with my wife and my little daughter. Life among the Apa Tanis is very pleasant, far better than in a Dafla village. As the man of the Anka Raja Tamar, I am in want of nothing. Yes it is good to live here in Hang."

We would, no doubt, be mistaken in assuming that all Dafla slaves are as happy among the Apa Tanis as Taj Tako, but other cases of Daflas entering voluntarily the service of Apa Tani masters in a position very similar to that of slaves are not wanting.

The Apa Tanis' economic relations with neighbouring Populations

By a collective effort unparalleled among the hill tribes of the North-East Frontier the Apa Tanis have developed the natural resources of a single bowl-shaped valley, less than 20 square miles in area, to such a high degree that the 20,000 members of the tribe can maintain themselves in this one valley on an economic level distinctly higher than that of neighbouring tribal folks. A system of agriculture combining optimum exploitation of the limited land with indefinite preservation of soil fertility enables the Apa Tanis to produce sufficient food for themselves as well as a surplus, which constitutes not only a broad margin of safety, but is normally available for export. Despite the lack of animal traction and ploughs Apa Tani agriculture has advanced beyond the stage of subsistence farming. On an average every man working on the land produces more grain than he consumes ; the balance can be spared for feeding craftsmen and a small class of men engaged more in social and political leadership than in manual production with still sufficient to be exchanged against commodities which are in short supply in the Apa Tani country.

The relations between the complex and highly specialized Apa Tani economy and the more primitive economy of the neighbouring semi-barbaric Daflas and Miris are a remarkable example of the interdependence of basically different cultures. Trade appears today as a necessity for the Apa Tanis, but while they have for centuries inhabited the same territory and their economy has attained the stability resulting from long undisturbed growth, their less stable neighbours have frequently changed. Tribal tradition tells us that Dafla clans, which now stand in close trade relations with the Apa Tanis, lived only four or five generations ago in distant valleys to the north-west where they had probably little knowledge of even the existence of the Apa Tanis. Trade with a people able to supply large quantities of grain is for them undoubtedly a novelty, but experience shows that whatever may have been their previous economy, they were not slow in availing themselves of the new opportunities. The position of the Apa Tanis is different. They have often been the only firm rock in a sea of shifting and warring tribes, and must more than once have seen their neighbours of yesterday defeated and scattered by more powerful new-comers. But these new-comers conformed to the same economic pattern as the populations whom they had displaced and were usually willing enough to step into a barter system by which they could obtain grain and the wares of expert Apa Tani craftsmen.

Apa Tani economy has thus for long been tuned to the exchange of goods with the outside world, and there can be no doubt that any break in this external marketing would seriously disrupt the structure of the delicately balanced economic system.

Today the Apa Tanis are in need of goods produced by their tribal neighbours as well as of articles of Indian and Tibetan origin. We will first consider the trade by which they obtain the products of Dafla and Miri tribesmen.

Inter tribal-Trade.—The trade between Apa Tanis and their Dafla and Miri neighbours is largely based on the complementary nature of their respective economies. The Apa Tanis are primarily agriculturists and their densely populated country offers little scope for the raising of large numbers of domestic animals. The Daflas on the other hand, are indifferent cultivators, but, living loosely scattered over extensive areas of jungle-covered and grassy hill-sides, have ample opportunity, and as it would seem considerable aptitude, for breeding cattle, goats and pigs.

The exchange of surplus Apa Tani rice against surplus Dafla (or Miri) animals is therefore to the advantage of both tribes. Apa Tanis require mithan and pigs for sacrifice, and they value meat, and particularly pork and bacon so much that they will go to great expense and trouble in order to obtain animals for slaughter. At the time of the Mloko, the principal annual festival, the need for pigs is as great as the need for turkeys is in England at Christmas and an Apa Tani desirous of gaining social prestige can do not better than to sacrifice a number of mithan during the Morum feast.

The need of Daflas for the agricultural produce of their Apa Tani neighbours is less constant and not immediately connected with ritual observances, but depends mainly on the quality of their harvest. In years when their *jhum* fields yield exceptionally good crops, they may be able to dispense with grain purchases altogether, while in times of scarcity they will pay double the normal price for supplies of Apa Tani rice. *

Rice is usually paid for in mithan, and the Apa Tanis are always willing to take these animals which have practically the value of a currency, and function as such in all barter transactions concerning land. The normal price of a full grown mithan cow is 30 carrying baskets of unhusked rice, but in years of food shortage among the neighbouring Daflas and Miris it may drop to as little as 15 carrying baskets, each containing about 30 seers. A Dafla or Miri in need of grain usually comes himself to the village of an Apa Tani friend and if he succeeds in concluding a bargain he and the members of his family carry the rice back to their own village. Usually the price is paid at once and many a prospective buyer brings a mithan with him when he comes to negotiate a deal. But sometimes Apa Tanis give rice on credit, and quarrels arising from the delay over payment of such debts have been the cause of many bloody feuds between the two tribes.

For the Apa Tanis have the tendency to use advances of grain as a means whereby they may bring their debtors gradually under their control ; according to Apa Tani custom it is indeed perfectly regular that a man unable to repay a loan should become the dependent of his debtor until his debt has been cleared. But although an impecunious, or temporarily embarrassed Dafla may, when hard-pressed acquiesce to such a position which differs but little from the status of a slave, he will grasp the first opportunity of getting his own back, and many raids on Apa Tanis or their cattle have been led by previous Dafla bond servants who employed their familiarity with the country to their former master's detriment.

The frequency with which trade disputes develop into full scale feuds is responsible for the curious position that the traditional trade-partners are often also the hereditary enemies.

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* It must be remembered, however, that only those Daflas and Miris whose villages lie within one or two days' journey of the Apa Tani valley have come to rely on such grain supplies ; the existence of such a source of supply appears to have stimulated the demand and while other Daflas and Miris fall back on jungle produce and cultivate large areas of *jhum*, searching out new land when their old plots are exhausted, the neighbours of the Apa Tanis would appear careless of their agriculture methods and are content to cultivate exhausted soil or imitate the wet cultivation of the Apa Tanis with limited success. Nor is the rice surplus of the Apa Tanis inexhaustable ; only rich men can afford to dispose of part of their crop, and in their desire to acquire mithan they will sell rice to Daflas while their poorer co-villagers go short.

Each of the seven Apa Tani villages has traditional trade ties with certain Dafla and Miri villages usually with those whose land borders on their hunting grounds. Thus Hang entertains trade relations mainly with the Dafla villages of Leji, Pochu, Mai and Jorum ; Michi-Bamin and Mudang Tage † with Mai, Jorum and Talo (Toko) ; Duta and Haja with Jorum, Talo, Nielom, Likha, Licha and Linia ; Bela with Linia, Dodum, Taplo, Pemir, Murga, Rakhe, and Bua ; and Hari with Rakhe, Bua and Tapo (Chemir). Such traditional trade ties do not amount to a difinete monopoly, but under normal circumstances an Apa Tani of Hang would not go to trade with Nielom or Licha, Dafla villages within the sphere of influence of Duta and Haja. ‡

Between the traditional trade partners there may exist a formal peace treaty (*dapo*), there may be temporary hostilities excluding all trade, or there may be a state of undefined relations, usually an interim between an open feud and the conclusion of a new peace-treaty. During such an interim period a small measure of trade is kept up by slaves, who can without very great risk of capture go backwards and forwards.

A complete paralysation of trade between an Apa Tani village and all its Dafla trade-partners results for the Apa Tanis, with their highly specialized economy, in real hardship, and hostile feeling must run very high, before they will abandon all individual trade contacts. There are innumerable instances of Apa Tanis continuing to trade with Daflas who to all intents and purposes are at war with other families of the Apa Tanis' own village. It is only when a feud has unleashed particularly violent sentiments of anger and revenge, that an area dominated by a Dafla clan may become dangerous for any Apa Tani and the flow of trade ceases. Both sides are then forced to obtain necessities or market their goods by using other and often circuitous trade channels.

The inconvenience, to say the least of it, thus caused to the estranged trade-partners becomes obvious when we consider the range of usual exchange goods. Besides buying mithan for rice, the Apa Tanis obtain from Daflas almost all the cotton required for their highly developed weaving industry. As almost all their land is under food crops, it is not economical for Apa Tanis to grow their own cotton. They buy the raw cotton, gin it, spin and weave it into cloth, and very often sell the cloth again to the original suppliers of the cotton. Usually they barter the cotton for rice, Apa Tani made *dao*, or cotton cloths, but there is also a system whereby Apa Tani women experienced in weaving can obtain cotton in exchange for their services as weavers. They go to Dafla villages and undertake to weave cloth on the understanding that during their stay they are fed and that finally they are given as wage a quantity of cotton equal to that which they utilized in weaving cloth for their clients.

Though not a cotton growing people the Apa Tanis possess probably more and better textiles than any of their neighbours, and they weave not only for home consumption but with the definite idea of using cloth for barter transactions. Through Apa Tani traders, as well as through middlemen of other tribes, Apa Tani cloth reaches areas as distant as the Upper Panior Valley, the Khru valley and the Miri villages on the upper Kamla.

Dao and knives manufactured by Apa Tani smiths are also articles of trade and on their trading visits to villages of Daflas or Miris Apa Tanis usually carry with them *dao* and knives for small payments. *Dao*, knives and cloth are the main exchange goods with which they purchase pigs, dogs (which the Apa Tanis eat —and the Daflas do not), fowls, tobacco, cotton, gourd vessels, dried bamboo shoots, and also such articles of dress as cane belts, cane hats, and fibre rain-cloaks. Sometimes they give in exchange also salt which nowadays they obtain from the plains of Assam. The salt extracted from the ash of certain herbaceous plants grown in the Apa Tani country is no longer an important article of trade, but it is probable that before Assamese salt was easily available this home-made ' salt ' found ready buyers among the Apa Tanis' tribal neighbours.

A minor item of trade are earthen pots. Among the Apa Tanis pots are made only in one village—Michi-Bamin—and even there only by certain clans. Many Apa Tanis purchase therefore pots from such Dafla villages as Jorum and Talo, paying usually in rice. But as shortage of fuel limits the production of finished pots in those villages, Apa Tanis sometimes buy unburnt pots, and carry them across the country denuded of forests by the Dafla's cultivation till they reach the forest-belt which divides the Apa Tani from the Dafla country ; there they build fires and bake the pots before taking them home.

No currency is used in trade transactions between Apa Tanis and Daflas, but both tribes have their systems of values, which though similar, do not completely coincide. The Apa Tani scale of values is as follows :

1 *pachu*	2 eggs or 1 small chicken or 1 day's wage.
1 *paroe*	1 middle-sized chicken or 1 small knife or 3½ seers unhusked rice.
1 *soe*	1 hen or 1 knife.
1 *pue*	1 short Apa Tani *dao* or 1 cock or 1 plain white Apa Tani cloth or 6½ seers unhusked rice, such as contained in a *pue yagi* (basket).
1 *pili*	1 average sized Apa Tani *dao* or 1 white Apa Tani cloth with red and blue border. or 1 white bazar cloth (worth in North Lakhimpur about Rs. 2-0) or 1 piglet.
1 *puhan*	1 long Apa Tani *dao* or 1 white Apa Tani cloth with broad multi-coloured border or 1 small pig or 3 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice.

† Mudang Tage has some hunting grounds on the opposite of the valley that adjoin the Bua-Chemir area and Apa Tanis of Mudang Tage also go to trade in these villages when the opportunity offers.

‡ Apa Tanis of one village, related by marriage or through the maternal line with another Apa Tani village with a different set of villages within its trade sphere may however sometimes engage in trade and establish friendships with such villages other than those of their traditional block.

1 *pupe*	1 small blue and red Apa Tani cloth or 1 middle sized pig or 4 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice,
1 *pungue*	1 normal-sized blue and red cloth or 3 white bazar cloths or 5 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice,
1 *pukhe* (or *apu*)	1 long Assamese *dao* or 1 double cloth cloak or 1 big male goat. or 1 pig of the size of a dog, or 6 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice.
1 *kanue*	1 Assamese silk cloth or 1 large pig or 7 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice,
1 *pine*	1 small Tibetan sword. or 8 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice.
1 *kua*	1 large Tibetan sword or 9 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice,
1 *puliang*	1 new large Tibetan sword or 10 *pue yagi* of unhusked rice.

In these standard values practically any price can be expressed ; the value of irrigated land is however usually reckoned in mithan.

A few examples will give an idea of the prices of the more costly commodities. An embroidered cloth such as is worn by priests on ceremonial occasions is worth one *puliang plus* one *pukhe* ; a cow is estimated at 2 *puliang plus* one *pukhe*, a small mithan at 4 to 5 *puliang*, and a full grown mithan cow as 8 *puliang* or 80 *pue yagi* baskets of rice.

The correlation of values ruling the barter transactions with Daflas and Miris corresponds in many respects to the above scale of values, but prices are never stable and depend to a great extent on the local relation between demand and supply as well as on the individual Apa Tani's skill in bargaining. Thus an Apa Tani trader venturing with some cloth and *dao* to Miri villages north of the Kamla River, may obtain much better prices than if he tried to dispose of them in such nearby villages as Jorum and Talo.

When trading in distant villages Apa Tanis barter their wares not only for such commodities as pigs, fowls or cotton, which they require for their immediate use, but accept payment also in the shape of valuables such as beads, small bell-metal bells (*maje*) and bell-metal discs, which have in many ways the character of a currency and are purchased with the definite idea of an ultimate advantageous resale.

Almost all barter transactions between Apa Tanis and neighbouring tribes are simple business deals devoid of ritual or institutional associations. While among Dafla the purchase of a valuable prayer-bell creates between seller and buyer ceremonial ties comparable to those between families linked by marriage, and such ties add materially to a man's prestige and security, economic gain is practically the sole motive in trade transactions between Apa Tanis and Daflas ; barter transactions between Apa Tani and Apa Tani are, however, wrapped up in a certain ceremonial formality which includes a meal at the expense of the buyer ; even [illegible] for his services.

2. *Trade with the Plains of Assam.*—Though most of the commodities in use among the Apa Tanis are produced by themselves or bartered from their tribal neighbours, the import of a small number of articles from the plains of Assam has to-day become a necessity. We do not know for how long the Apa Tanis have been in the habit of obtaining iron and salt from Assam, nor whether in olden times they obtained these goods from other sources. Today Apa Tanis purchase these articles not only for their own use but also for resale to tribesmen of villages further from the plains.

For six months in the year, *i.e.*, from April to September, no Apa Tani normally ventures on a journey to the plains ; the rivers are then often in flood and unfordable, and [illegible] -pitous country involves considerable hardships.* But in the cold weather, when communications are easier, numerous Apa Tanis have for years been accustomed to visit the plains of North Lakhimpur. Their number varies from year to year, but even before 1945, when Government began employing Apa Tanis on a large scale as porters, several hundred of them used to come to North Lakhimpur and the surrounding villages. Most of them were men and young boys, but a few Apa Tani women occasionally accompanied their husbands. Men of wealth and high status never went to the plains, and when I first arrived in the Apa Tani country I found that none of the clan-headmen had ever left the hills. Only slaves, descendants of slaves or very poor men were in the habit of going to the plains.

The goods which such men took with them for sale were of little importance. They usually carried chillies (*capsicum* of a particularly large variety very much in demand among plain's people), which they bartered for salt or for their daily requirements for the time of their stay in the plains. Most of them found employment as agricultural and forest labourers, and worked for periods ranging from ten days to three months. Before the war they earned daily wages of four to five annas but nowadays they can earn Re. 1 and sometimes even as much as Rs. 1-8-0 a day.

Among the goods purchased in the plains, salt ranks first. To the present-day Apa Tanis it has become almost indispensible both for their own consumption and as an article of exchange for their trade with other tribes. Salty substances gained by filtering water through the ashes of bracken and certain other plants are used for cooking, but are not considered equal to proper salt. Every year many loads of salt are brought up from the plains and a good many Apa Tanis go there for the specific purpose of purchasing salt.

Other goods bought in the plains are iron hoes, axes, bowls of bell-metal and more rarely brass pots, Assamese silk cloth (*endi* cloth), occasionally ordinary cotton cloth, woollen Bhutia cloth, locally known as 'tonga', beads, bracelets, brass hair-pins and ear-rings, safety pins. cows, pigs and dogs.

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*Since the operations of 1945, when a bridge [illegible] over the Panior below Potin and the route frequented by Government porters rendered safe for travellers, some [illegible] down to the plains in between the open seasons.

Iron hoes have become a definite necessity for the large iron hoe of the type used in tea-gardens has completely replaced the older wooden type. Hoes bought in the plains are also the main raw material of Apa Tani blacksmiths, who manufacture from the metal axes, *dao* and knives. Recently the Apa Tanis have been experiencing difficulty in obtaining hoes. It seems that formerly most of the hoes purchased in the plains were either discarded or stolen from tea gardens, the thieves being tea garden coolies who traded them at cheap rates to hill men thus avoiding detection. But since iron implements have become expensive and scarce, the tea gardens have tightened their control and are using even worn hoes, which previously were disposed of locally at cheap rates . If the shortage of hoes continues for any length of time Apa Tani agriculture and Apa Tani blacksmiths will be hard hit.

Woollen Bhutia blankets are much prized, but they are rarely used in their original form ; the Apa Tanis unravel the woollen yarn, dye it in various colours and use it for the manufacture of woollen ceremonial cloths and the embroidery of cotton cloth. For the last few years no Bhutia blankets have been obtainable in North Lakhimpur and the Apa Tani most highly developed craft has had a serious set back.

'Endi' cloths, usually of the mixed silk-cotton type are worn by all the wealthier Apa Tanis wrapped round the body and held in position by iron pins or modern safety pins. They are softer and warmer than cotton cloth, and worn under the stiff embroidered cloaks they are useful and aesthetically pleasing. The men who work in the plains of Assam for wages often buy 'endi' cloths and sell them to rich men in their own country for rice, domestic animals and in rare instances even plots of land. Similarly white and more rarely black cotton cloth is bought in the plains ; some is taken up by Apa Tani customers and some is traded on to Daflas of the interior. Plain, machine-made cotton-cloth is, however, not very popular among Apa Tanis, and rarely worn by men of good social status. It is indeed very inferior to home-spun Apa Tani cloth Women, however, sometimes wear a length of light white bazar cloth as a wrap when otherwise they would leave their breasts and shoulders bare.

Cups and bowls of bell-me al, such as are made in the Kamrup district of Assam, are owned by most rich men and are very much valued. Ordinary brass-ware, on the other hand, is not popular and does not fetch any appreciable price among either Apa Tanis or Daflas.

Silken 'endi' cloth and bell metal vessels are no doubt luxuries, but luxuries of a solid and useful type in keeping with the spirit of Apa Tanis culture. Their introduction serves perhaps as a corrective to extreme differences between rich and poor. For trade in these commodities gives poor men a chance of bettering their position and even purchasing land, while the desire to possess such things as silk cloth and bell-metal bowls induces rich men to part with some of their accumulated rice store and in certain cases even with land.

While a poor man has otherwise as good as no chance of acquiring cattle, work in the plains of Assam has enabled many a man to build up a small stock of cows. Apa Tanis often buy for part of their wages a calf or a cow and take the animals up into the hills. This is not without risk, for about one out of every five cows so driven up into the hills succumbs to the hardship of the journey, but in a country where cattle is practically currency and at the same time a symbol of wealth, the attraction of possessing cattle is very great. Besides cows, Apa Tanis purchase in the plains also large numbers of dogs and small pigs, both of which are eaten and used for sacrifice.

Most of the beads nowadays worn by Apa Tani women are small, blue glass beads bought in the bazars of the plains. But many women possess also necklaces of much larger beads of transparent or dark blue glass which do not seem to have come from India, but are probably of Tibetan or Chinese origin. To-day they are out of fashion and are rarely worn. All women are eager to exchange them for other beads or even to sell them for a very small price. Red beads of definite types are now much in demand.

In their hair-knots men wear bell-metal pins which are without exception manufactured in the plains. The brass ear-rings of the women, cut from thin brass sheets as well as the metal ear-rings of men are also purchased in the bazars.

Safety pins are universally worn, and are used to pin together the ends of cloths, both imported and local, when they are wrapt round the chest. Previously straight iron pins were used for the same purpose, but safety pins have almost entirely replaced them. The present importance of the safety pin among the Apa Tanis is reminiscent of the role of the *fibula* in the bronze age. Most men wear apart from those actually in use, several large safety pins on a string round the neck.

Just as safety pins have ousted the straight iron pin, so cheap bracelets of white metal, and occasionally more expensive ones of silver have taken the place of the wrought iron bracelets made by Apa Tani blacksmiths.

This list of articles bought in the plains is not necessarily exhaustive, but includes all those thing which have secured a definite place among the Apa Tanis' material possessions, and are purchased regularly and in appreciable numbers.

In the selection of the articles imported from the plains the Apa Tanis evince on the whole extraordinarily good tast. They have rejected everything gaudy and flimsy and prefer either such solid and plain things of superior material as hand-woven silk cloth and substantial, beautifully shaped vessels of bell-metal, or raw materials such as woollen Bhutia blankets which enable them to develop their own crafts.

Since the trade of the Apa Tanis with the plains of Assam is virtually a one-way traffic (the Apa Tanis bringing only negligible amounts of chillies to the plains), the rise in the price of most commodities during the war years has not affected them to any appreciable degree. For the wages with which they buy their trade goods have been raised in proportion, and although an 'endi' cloth may today be four times as expensive as in former years, yet the Apa Tanis need not work any longer to earn the money which will buy it. They realize perfectly well that it is not the value of the goods which has increase but the value of the money which has decreased ; and they express this by saying that money has become 'cheap' The exchange value of the plains goods in their own country has on the whole remained unchanged ; for an 'endi' cloth, for instance, the same amount of rice is paid to-day as it was yesterday.

The lack of certain commodities in the bazaars of the plains, on the other hand, is affecting the Apa Tanis very considerably. Most seriously felt is the shortage of salt. For the Apa Tanis were used to buy in the plains sufficient salt to last them for the whole year and still to have a surplus for trade. Now the sale of salt in North Lakhimpur is restricted and though special arrangements have been made to supply the hillmen, not sufficient salt has been made available to meet all their legitimate demands. While the Apa Tanis themselves have to restrict their consume, the tribes in the interior to whom they used to trade their surplus are even worse off.

Along the trade divide between Assam and Tibet, on the upper Khru and upper Kamla there has always been a zone where salt was scarce, and with the supply which used to trickle through from Assam dried up, this scarcity has become even more severe. If it continues the tribesmen may try to obtain through their northern neighbours more Tibetan salt, but such a re-orientation of trade cannot be effected rapidly.

The shortage of salt in Assam and not a rise in its price, which is controlled, has led to an increase of its exchange value in the Apa Tanis' trade transactions with Daflas and Miris. While in previous years Apa Tanis had, for instance, to pay 12 seers of salt for one small pig, they can now obtain a pig of equal size for 6 seers. Likewise there is a change in the comparative values of salt and cloth ; but I do not think that this has been exploited for any kind of speculation, nor has the exchange value of salt risen as much among the Apa Tanis themselves.

3. *Trade in Tibetan goods.*—Though the Apa Tanis have no direct contact with Tibetans, they use a good many articles of Tibetan origin which reach them by devious routes through their Dafla and Miri neighbours. The employ of such Tibetan articles for ceremonial and ritual purposes points to an old association with Apa Tani culture, and there are indeed indications that in the not too distant past most of the foreign commodities needed by the Apa Tanis came from or through Tibet rather than from Assam. Even to-day there is hardly a respectable Apa Tani who does not possess at least one Tibetan sword, at the time of feasts thousands of Tibetan beads are worn, and bronze plates of Tibetan make are one of the standard valuables used for larger payments. Tibetan prayer bells, known in Assamese as *deo gante*, are not of the same importance as among Daflas, and few Apa Tanis possess famous specimens of high value. But the more ordinary types, such as may cost two or three good cloths, serve also the Apa Tanis as useful barter objects, and Apa Tani traders purchase them sometimes from tribesmen of the Kamla and Khru valleys.

Large beads of conch-shell as well as sky-blue porcelain beads, though pos ibly of Chinese origin seem to have reached the Subansiri area *via* Tibet. While Daflas and Miris wear them on many occasions, Apa Tanis done necklaces of such beads only at special rites, such as the Morom festival and neither men nor women wear them simply as ornaments.

Most women, however, possess strings of crudely cut cylindrical glass beads of dark blue colour and it would seem that these have also come from Tibet. They are quite different from any beads manufactured or known in India to-day, and if they had even been available in large numbers in the plains of Assam, other tribes, such as Nagas, would no doubt have also obtained some. To-day, they are no longer popular, and have indeed very little market value. Their place has been taken by smaller and smoother glass beads of a similar dark blue colour which have for some years been available in the bazaars of North Lakhimpur. This change-over is one of the instances of Apa Tanis preferring machine-made goods to Tibetan articles.

While the Tibetan origin of such objects as swords or prayer bells is unmistakable, we cannot say for certain whether the wool which the Apa Tanis require for many of their embroidered ceremonial cloths came of old from the same source. Apa Tanis greatly value strips of coarse woollen cloth known as ' tonga ', and all the wool used for multi-coloured embroidery is obtained by unravelling such cloth. Very similar strips of woollen cloth reach the tribesmen on the upper Kamla from villages standing in trade relations with Tibet, and it is more than probable that in olden times some such cloth filtered down as far as the Apa Tani valley. But for many years before the war Bhutanese woollen cloth of identical type was available in the bazaars of Assam where Apa Tanis could obtain it much easier than from their tribal partners. Most, if not all of the wool now in use among the Apa Tanis has certainly come from North Lakhimpur, and when during the war years this supply was cut off the Apa Tanis experienced a very definite shortage of wool ; that Tibetan wool was no longer obtainable, is easily explained if the middlemen through whose hands it might have reached the Apa Tanis, had for years ceased to trade wool beyond the Assam-Tibet trade-divide.

But swords and valuables of Tibetan manufacture continue to reach the Apa Tanis, and the high esteem in which they are held guarantees that even should trade with Assam increase there will for many years be a market for such products of Tibet. Tradition surrounds them with an aura of high value and great antiquity ; the bronze prayer-bell is to the Apa Tani (as indeed even more to the Dafla) a work of divine artificers, the Tibetan sword an indispensable requisite at every mithan-sacrifice, Tibetan beads the prescribed ornaments for the priest during solemn acts of ritual. Yet no Apa Tani has other than the vaguest idea of Tibet. A few adventurous men have visited villages near the trade-divide between Assam and Tibet, but within living memory no Apa Tani seems ever to have penetrated into areas visited by Tibetans. I have heard of a Dafla from the Upper Khru who stayed for some time in Duta and told of his journeys to a country, which to judge from his descriptions must have been a part of Tibet. But he was probably an exception and we are safe in assuming that very few of the tribesmen who trade directly with Tibetans have any knowledge of the Apa Tanis, or ever purchase Tibetan goods with the express purpose of serving the Apa Tani market. Most of the swords beads or bell-metal articles of Tibetan origin owned by Apa Tanis, reached them through the channels of casual village to village barter, and only in rare cases did adventurous Apa Tani traders hasten this slow trickle by purchasing trips to the Khru and upper Kamla valley.

Until some years ago Apa Tanis went occasionally to the Khru valley, towards the region of Lebla *via* Licha and the Palin valley. For salt, silk and cotton cloth and *dao* they purchased dried bamboo shoots and locally collected rubber with which to waterproof their baskets as well as Tibetan swords, beads, bronze-bells and plates, obtained by the Khru tribes from yet other tribesmen dwelling closer to the snow-range. But the recent feud between the Apa Tanis and the powerful Licha clan which commands the entry into the Palin valley has blocked this trade route, and for the last few years no Apa Tanis have dared to visit the upper Khru Region.

But though occasionally the hostility of neighbours may deter even the intrepid Apa Tani from visiting his trade-partners in distant valleys, there is yet no other tribe in the Subansiri area which has developed barter and trade to so high a degree as the Apa Tanis. The exchange of goods is a necessity for the elaborate and complex Apa Tani economy, and the Apa Tani evinces as much ingeniousness and persistance in pursuing every possible opportunity for a profitable trade deal as he has employed in developing the resources of his own country.

Trade and Barter among the Tribesmen of the Panior Region

The present note deals mainly with the tribesmen inhabiting the Panior vallev, the area immediately south and south-west of the Apa Tani country as well as the Kiyi valley, all of which I visited this season. Such information as it contains on conditions in the Par valley to the south and in the unexplored country near the upper Khru to the north, was obtained from tribesmen familiar with these areas.

The division of the Daflas into several groups of phratries, each embracing numerous exogamous clans, has been outlined in my "Notes on Tribal Groups in the Subansiri Region" and there I have shown that the old localization of phratries and clans has been obscured by recent migrations. For the purpose of these notes on Trade it will therefore be convenient to use instead of phratry and clan-names geographic terms and speak, *e. g.*, of the lower Panior Region (including the villages of Selsemchi, Potin and Sekhe), the Upper PaniorRegion (including Dorde, Likhipulia and Mengo) and the Mai-Talo Region (including Pei, Pochu, Mai, Jorum and Talo, villages standing in particularly close connections with the Apa Tanis).

The two main pillars of the Daflas' economic structure are agriculture and animal husbandry. Compared to these activities all other means of income are of minor importance, and even the Daflas living nearest to the plains depend for their subsistence on agriculture rather than on trade and wage labour. Except for those of the Mai-Talo Region who are strongly influenced by Apa Tanis and have learnt to build irrigated terraces for rice-cultivation, all Daflas obtain the bulk of their food-supply by shifting cultivation. In the Par and lower Panior valleys, there is no wet cultivation, but in the upper Panior and Kiyi valley as well as in the upper Khru and Panyi Region modest quantities of rice grown on irrigated terraces supplement the produce of the *jhum*-fields.

Most Dafla villages are in normal years self-sufficient for their food-supply. An exception are Jorum and Talo who buy regularly rice from Apa Tanis, and certain foothill villages, such as Selsemchi, who in years of indifferent harvests purchase small quantities of rice in the bazaars of the plains. Daflas eat a good deal of meat ; they are good trappers and hunters, and keep large numbers of mithan, cows, pigs, goats and fowls. Salt, procured partly from Assam and partly from Tibet, is the only item of diet for which all Daflas rely on outside supplies.

Cloth, iron and various implements on the other hand are imported in considerable quantities and some groups of Daflas can no longer do without the wares of Assamese bazaars.

The trading activities of the Eastern Daflas can thus be divided into three categories: Trade with the Plains of Assam, Trade with Tribal neighbours, and Trade with Tibet or populations under Tibetan influence. Least is as yet known of the third category, but there are indications that for certain groups of Daflas on the Panyi and upper Khru, trade in Tibetan articles is as vital as economic relations with Assam are for the Daflas of the foothills.

1. *Trade with the Plains of Assam.*—During the cold weather many Daflas of the Par valley and the lower Panior valley, and smaller numbers of Daflas from the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi valley, visit the plains to earn money by contract and daily labour and to make purchases in bazaars. Some of them sell on these occasions their own products but wage labour is for the Hill Daflas so lucrative that its importance eclipses the small trade done with the plainsmen. On visits to the plains of Assam the hillmen often stay in the villages and houses of Plains Daflas, among whom some of them have friends and relations, and there can be no doubt that they find the Plains Daflas with their knowledge of Assamese and their familiarity with local conditions very useful when seeking employment or marketing their goods. The advantages of this connection are not entirely one-sided, for many Plains Daflas derive certain profits by acting as contractors or as middle-men in trade. In the plains adjoining the Eastern Dafla Hills there are the following villages of Plains Daflas: Rangajan (7 houses), Duluhat (6 houses), Borbali (4 houses), Dibia (3 houses), Nij Laluk (4 houses) and Kolabari (11 houses).

(*a*) *Wage Labour.*—At the time when the tea gardens near the foothills were newly laid out, Daflas from nearby villages were employed for felling trees and clearing jungle, and it seems that during the months when there was little to do on their *jhum*-fields, hundreds of Daflas flocked to this congenial work. The money they earned was of little use in the hills, but it enabled them to buy in the bazaars cloth, glass beads, brass vessels and of course salt, which they could obtained from no other source. What were at first luxuries soon became necessities and the Daflas of such villages as Selsemchi and Potin have become accustomed to a large variety of bazaar products, including *Pan* and betel, the use of which is unknown in the higher hills. While labour for tea gardens may have wetted the Daflas' appetite for many Indian goods, to-day, when the area under tea is no longer being expanded, this field of employment is nearly closed. But other and even more profitable work is open to the hillmen. Sugar plantations owned by Assamese as well as Nepali settlers, are on the increase, and the usual method of the sugar-planters is to cultivate one plot for three or four years and then to take up new land on temporary tenure. The Daflas, expert in cutting trees and tough canes, are offered very good wages for clearing the jungle, a work uncongenial to both Assamese and Nepali. They usually work on contract and the present rate for felling the jungle on one *pura* of land (roughly 1¼ acres) is Rs. 22 to Rs. 25. A man working very hard can cut a *pura* of jungle in ten days, and it is no unusual thing for a Dafla to earn as much as Rs. 100 by working for a month and a half in the plains.

Daily labour is far less lucrative, and consequently not as popular as contract labour. Unlike Apa Tanis, who are the most sought-after field labourers, Daflas do not often engage in harvesting rice ; an exception are the people of Mai, Jorum and Talo, who themselves growing wet-rice, go after their own harvest in bands of fifteen to thirty men to the plains and spend sometimes a month of more in cutting rice for Assamese landowners. In 1945 they received a daily wage of annas 12 *plus* food (which was annas 2 more than the Government rate for porters) or Re. 1 without food.

Cane-cutting is paid by piece work ; a man can earn Re. 1-4-0 a day, and women and boys about Re. 1. Men from the hills who are suited to the heavier and better paid work of felling jungle do not often engage in cane-cutting, but it is a comparatively easy way of earning money for Plains Daflas and people from such foothill settlements as Selsemchi or Joyhing.

It is difficult to estimate the total annual cash earnings of the Estern Daflas, but they cannot be inconsiderable. For most of the salt consumed by the tribe as far as the trade-divide with Tibet, cloth to cloth the etire population of the lower Panior and the Par valley. Numerous iron implements and a great many beads and bracelets and various small articles such as matches, *pan* and betel are purchased with the money earned by the men who work in the plains of Assam.

The motives that induce Hill Daflas and Apa Tanis to seek work in the plains are somewhat different, just as the type of work they do is different. The Apa Tanis with their highly developed weaving industry, their knowledge of manufacturing salt from ashes, and their fastidious insistence on the high quality of all

articles of daily use, are not in the habit of using many of the cheaper bazaar products, but poor men with little or no land of their own need an outside source of income if they want to lessen their dependence on the wealthy men of their village. The goods they buy with their earnings—Assamese silk cloth, bell-metal cups, iron hoes and salt—they barter in their village for rice or trade to their neighbours further in the Hills.*

Among the Daflas, on the other hand, *jhum* land is common property and even the poorest man can find land on which to cultivate and enjoys in consequence a measure of economic independence, even should he have sought the protection and share the house of a more prominent man. The main incentive for earning cash is here the need for a number of plains products, such as the now indispensable bazaar cloth, and it is therefore not only the poor man, but also many a young man of well-situated family who will occasionally work in the plains. The high bride-prices customary among Daflas are another motive to engage in wage labour, but more detailed investigations would be necessary to ascertain the percentage of impecunious young men who save up their earnings so as to be able to buy valuables acceptable as bride prices.

(*b*) *Sale of products in the Plains*.—The range of cash gaining tribal products for which there is a market in Assam is small. The Daflas of the lower Panior Valley and the Par Region sell in the bazaars and to individual shop-keepers such jungle produce as bamboo shoots, palm leaves and incense, as well as chillies, taro, maize, oil seed, brinjals, beans and tomatoes grown in their gardens. But it is only in a few villages standing in constant contact with the plains that Daflas cultivate vegetables with the specific purpose of sale. On their rare expeditions to the plains the Daflas of the interior take only chillies, for which there is apparently always a demand, and dried bamboo shoots, which are mainly bought by tea garden labourers.

Live-stock is but a minor item in the trade with the plains. Occasionally a mithan is bought by Plains Daflas and either used for sacrifice or resold to Muslim butchers. Sale of other domestic animals to plainsmen is a rare occurrence, though a Dafla badly in need of cloth or salt may sell a goat or a chicken in one of the nearby bazaars.

Some twenty years ago the Daflas made handsome profits by collecting and selling wild rubber, which at times was valued at Rs.5 per seer. But the demand for wild rubber gradually decreased and the price dropped so low that rubber tapping was no longer profitable. Of late the industry has been revived, however, by Government initiative and the price of rubber has been fixed at Re.1-8-0 per seer. Yet, only small quantities are being delivered under this scheme. In former years Assam offered also a market for vegetable dyes, particularly madder, but chemical dyes have almost completely displaced these forest products.

We thus see that whereas the Dafla, by acquiring a taste for more and more bazaar goods has become increasingly dependent on the plains, the plainsman has less and less use for the products of the hills. The inevitable result is that the emphasis is shifting from trade to wage-labour, and that the hillman, no longer a producer of goods valued by the Assamese villager, has to sell his own labour if he wants to obtain the products of the plains. The one exception is perhaps the illicit trade in hemp (*ganja*). A fair amount of *ganja* is grown in the hills and sold by Hill Daflas either direct to Assamese and Nepalis dealing in prohibited drugs, or, probably more often, to Plains Daflas, who have their standing connection with dealers supplying *ganja* to tea-garden labourers and other plainsmen.

What goods do the Daflas purchases with the cash earned by labour or received in payment of goods? On the whole the Dafla purchaser is strictly practical and buys in the bazars and from individual plainsmen only articles for which he has an immediate use. His pride of possession, leading to the accumulation of unspent goods, is still confined to the traditional valuables of Tribetan origin, and Indian products are with very few exceptions bought for the sake of their usefulness and not for the prestige their possession lends to the owner.

Cloth, salt and iron rank foremost among imports from the plains. Whereas all Daflas of the interior, *i.e.*, of the Mai-Talo group, the Kiyi valley, the upper Panior valley and the Khru Region, weave their own cloth, either of cotton or of bark fibre (*pud*), the Daflas of the lower Panior valley and the Par Region rely to-day entirely on bazaar cloth. Old men and women still remember a time when cotton was grown and bark-fibre woven into cloth, and there is indeed no reason to believe that these Southern Daflas, many of whom immigrated only a few generations ago from areas to the north and north-west into their present habitat, were always ignorant of the crafts widely practised in their homelands. But the ease with which foreign cloth can be procured, rather than any preference for the imported cloth, has killed tribal weaving south of the Panior and the Daflas of villages such as Potin or Sekhe give at first sight the impression not of independent and yet unadministered tribesmen, but of a population largely detribalized by long contacts with the plains. This impression is incidentally quite erroneous and is created only by the dirty and flimsy machine-made cotton cloth which they wear in place of the strong traditional Dafla cloths. Unlike Apa Tanis who prefer white cloth, Daflas like cloth of dark blue, orange or wine-red colour, but nowadays such cloth is seldom available and most men and women wear white cotton cloth of a cheap quality. Handspun and handwoven Assamese silk cloth is much prized and worn by prominent men but it is too expensive for common use.

Nearly all *dao*, knives, spearheads and arrowheads are manufactured by Dafla blacksmiths. The iron is obtained from the plains, but the quantity of iron imported each year is not very great, broken *daos* and knives being used again and again for fashioning new implements; a few hoes of the tea garden type are to be found in some Dafla villages, but the fieldwork is generally done with moonshaped bamboo hoes which are sometimes fitted with an iron blade. The Daflas say themselves that originally they were unfamiliar with the working of iron, but learnt the craft from Sulu blacksmiths, members of a small and elusive tribe, scattered now all over the hills from the upper waters of the Par as far as the mountains between the upper Kamla and the Subansiri.

Though Daflas buy today a good many beads in the bazaars these modern products of cheap glass are not very highly valued, and even cornelian beads cut to Assamese pattern do not fetch the same price as cornelian beads of Tibetan type. All Dafla women wear bracelets of brass or white metal and some have light metal chains and ear-ornaments bought in the bazaar. But the only Assamese goods considered "valuables", that can be used for ceremonial payments, are hand-woven silk cloths and old Assamese bronze plates.

Indian currency is today the common medium of exchange in nearly all transactions between Daflas and plains people, and in the villages nearest to the plains money is gradually gaining ground even in dealings between tribesmen. But in the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi Valley money is not yet used as urrency and all endo-tribal trade is here on a barter basis.

* Recent developments caused by the opening of a Government shop at Duta are here not taken into account.

2. *Trade with Tribal Neighbours.*—The economic resources of most Daflas are so similar that there is little scope for any large scale interchange of their own products. The Dafla seems to lack moreover the trading spirit of his Apa Tani neighbour, and even men of villages close to the plains seldom purchase Assamese goods with the sole intention of selling them at a profit. When they do act as middlemen it is rather in casual barter transactions with friends, than in an organized system of trade. An exception is the trade in salt of which they do buy more than they can themselves consume, knowing that any surplus will be taken up by visitors from villages in the interior.

There is, of course, a continuous trickle of the products of local craftsmen from every centre of manufacture to the surrounding area. *Dao* made by blacksmiths in the upper Par valley, for instance, find their way into the Panior and Kiyi valley, and cloth woven in the villages on the Panyi River can be seen in Mengo or Licha. Mithan, pigs and grain are bought and sold as the need arises and ceremonial friends exchange a wide range of articles, both locally produced and imported, when they visit each other's villages. Limited as such barter within the tribe may be, it does call for a common system of values by which the price of an article can be roughly determined. This system is nowhere absolutely rigid, and varies in some features from one area to the other, but it does provide a certain standard for the exchange of the most common commodities. In Potin, a village in the Lower Panior valley, the values are follows:—

1 *nielap* = 1 very small chicken (about 3 weeks old)
- or 2 eggs (originally 4 eggs made up 1 *nielap*, but their value has changed),
- or 1½ seers of salt,
- or 1 small knife, such as worn by boys.

The amount of grain valued at 1 *nielap* varies according to the season. 1 *dir nielap* or about 3 seers of unhusked rice is the measure used in the rains, and 1 *dera nielap* or about 4½ seers of rice is the *nielap* measure used in the cold weather after harvest

1 *nielap lobni* = 1 middle sized chicken,
- or 4 eggs,
- or 1 small cotton bazar cloth such as worn by children,
- or 3 seers of salt,
- or 1 knife of Dafla make,
- or 2 *nielap* of rice according to season.

1 *yolo* = 8 *nielap*,
- or 2 hens,
- or 1 pig between 4—5 months' old,
- or 1 goat about 4 months old,
- or 2 cotton bazaar cloths (each about Rs.2-4-0),
- or 1 Apa Tani cloth with broad multi-coloured border,
- or 1 Dafla *dao*,
- or 2 carrying baskets of unhusked rice (each about 18—20 seers).

1 *opu puji* = 1 middle sized pig,
- or 4 cotton bazaar cloths,
- or 1 long Dafla *dao*,
- or 1 Tibetan *dao*,
- or 16 seers salt,
- or 5 carrying baskets of unhusked rice.

1 *opu pukan* = 1 sow,
- or 1 Assamese silk cloth,
- or 24 seers of salt,
- or 8 carrying baskets of unhusked rice.

It is obvious from this list that the values of this system are not completely consistent, and it is indeed very doubtful whether the correlation of the individual values is perfectly clear in the mind of the Dafla.

Licha at the upper end of the Kiyi valley and not far from the trade-divide between Assam and Tibet has slightly different values. A *nielap* is also worth a small chicken or two eggs, but there only ¾ seers of salt, compared to 1½ seers in Potin; the next highest measure is a *bili* worth one hen, or 1½ seers salt, or 1 Apa Tani *dao*, or 1 cotton bazar cloth; a *yolo* equals 3 *bili*, or 1 pig or goat about 4 months' old, or 1 Dafla cloth or 1 simple Apa Tani cloth or 1 small Tibetan *dao* or 1 big carrying basket of unhusked rice. An *opu* equals in Licha 3 *yolo*, or 1 sow or 1 she-goat or 2 Apa Tani cloths with broad multi-coloured border or 1 big Tibetan *dao*, ! Assamese silk cloth or 10 seers of salt, or 3 big or 5 small carrying baskets of unhusked rice.

Thus it appears that in Licha salt and Apa Tani cloth are more expensive than in Potin, but that Tibetan *dao* are rather cheaper and other commodities of about the same relative value. In the higher price of salt in Licha lies the margin of profit for the middle-man and the lesser price of Apa Tani cloth in Potin is due to the availability of bazar cloth which keeps down all cloth prices.

There are, of course, temporary fluctuations in the prices of commodities. A village in the Kiyi or upper Panior Valley, for instance, may be cut off by feuds from all direct connections with the plains and the foothills and may have to pay higher prices for Indian products that have passed through many hands. At present two routes to the plains cross near the confluence of Kiyi and Panior: the people of Licha and Likha, now at enmity with the villages on the lower Panior valley, cross the Panior and take a route *via* the upper Par valley to Nij Laluk, whereas the people of Mengo and other villages on the upper Panior follow the course of the river and reach the plains, *via* Selsemchi and Joyhing. These Daflas of the upper Panior generally bring with them the arrow provision which is to be found in the high mountains between Kameng and Panior and exchange it in Potin and Selsemchi for salt, cloth and bazaar beads.

The exchange of goods is in most cases a corollary to the establishment or strengthening of social contacts. Thus a marriage or a friendship pact sealed by the sale of a Tibetan prayer bell is usually accompanied by the exchange of numerous gifts extending often over a period of years, and in this way Assamese wares flow from the foothills and the Par valley to the Kiyi and upper Panior area, and Tibetan ornaments filter in the reverse direction from the Khru Region southwards.

It is these valuables of Tibetan origin, such as prayer bells (*maje*), bell-metal plates, and beads of semi-precious stones and conch-shell by which—in addition to mithan—the Dafla measures wealth and they play, in tribal economy to some extent the rôle of a currency. They are bought and sold mainly for live-stocks but in the area under review there is no organized trade in such articles. The purchase of a valuable *maje* is a long drawn out affair, wrapped up in ceremonial, and establishes a relationship of mutual obligation between the vendor and the purchaser. In times of stress beads may be sold for grain or for an animal required for sacrifice, but normally they are reserved for ceremonial payments and for the dowries of daughters married with full rites. The fact that these valuables of Tibetan origin have no place in the system of values regulating the barter of common commodities seems to confirm that they are meant for transactions of a higher order.

A situation very different from the economic relations between Dafla villages has developed in the country immediately bordering on the Apa Tani valley, and particularly in the Dafla villages of Mai, Jorum and Talo. Here the recurrent exchange of goods between two complementary economies has not only enriched Dafla culture, but has for all practical purposes welded these Dafla and the Apa Tani villages into one economic unit.

The economies of the two tribes are complementary in so far as the Apa Tanis produce a surplus of grain but very little meat, and the Daflas of these villages rear large numbers of mithan, oxen, pigs and goats, but must, except after uncommonly good harvest, supplement their supply of rice by imports. It is said that the village of Talo alone sells on an average twenty mithan annually to Apa Tanis. They are invariably paid in rice and the price for a mithan varies according to size and sex between 15 and 30 large carrying baskets of rice. Nielom, Licha and Linia, and sometimes even Likha also buy rice from Apa Tanis, but they are probably less dependent on such purchases than Talo and Jorum, large villages whose *jhum* land is largely exhausted while the rice they have learnt to grow on irrigated fields does not cover their requirements. Pigs and dogs, valued both as sacrificial animals and for the sake of their flesh, are also regularly bought by Apa Tanis, who pay for a small pig one and for a middle-sized sow two carrying baskets of rice.

The sale of animals for rice is only one aspect of the economic relations between the two tribes. The Daflas also barter pigs for Apa Tani cloth and Apa Tani *dao* and knives, the Apa Tanis give rice in exchange f r pots, gourd vessels and occasionally cotton, and many Daflas undertake to herd mithan belonging to Apa Tanis.

Particularly close is the interdependence of Daflas and Apa Tanis in the field of cloth manufacture. The Apa Tanis are expert weavers but, having practically all their cultivable land under food-crops, grow no cotton. The Daflas of the neighbouring villages, on the other hand, cultivate a good deal of cotton on their *jhum*, but do not weave enough cloth even to cover their own requirements. Much of their cotton is sold to Apa Tanis who spin and weave it into cloth, some of which is subsequently sold back to Daflas. By an arrangement which results in a yet closer co-operation (and incidentally also in some miscegenation) poor Apa Tani women go to live for weeks at a time in Dafla houses and, helped by Dafla girls, spin the Daflas' cotton, dye the yarn and weave cloth. Their wage for weaving one cloth is a sufficient quantity of cotton for another cloth of equal size and this they take home to their village. These women are fed in their employer's house and during the months after harvest, there are Apa Tani women in nearly every house of Mai, Jo um and Talo.

The Dafla villages of the Kiyi valley (Likha, Nielom and Licha) buy from the Apa Tanis besides rice also salt (both Assamese and salt made locally of vegetable ash), cloth and *dao*. Another commodity which many Daflas obtain from Apa Tanis is the yeast like substance (*she*) used for making rice and millet beer.

Whereas Daflas in need of grain come to Apa Tani villages to negotiate the purchase and usually arrange themselves for the transport, Apa Tani traders visit distant Dafla villages carrying with them cloth *dao*, knives and salt, and buy pigs, dogs, fowls, cotton, gourd vessels, and more rarely ornaments of Tibetan origin. These trading expeditions are essentially different from the casual barter of Dafla with Dafla. Apa Tanis set out with the specific purpose of trading and exchange their wares wherever they can do so advantageously. Such trading enterprise is rare among Daflas and if villages as distant from the Apa Tani country as Mengo do occasionally purchase Apa Tani goods, it is due to the enterprise of Apa Tanis who peddle their wares in far-off areas, and not to that of Dafla traders carrying pigs and dogs to Apa Tani villages.

Both Daflas and Apa Tanis greatly benefit from this regular interchange of their goods, and in any scheme for the economic development of either tribe care will have to be taken not to dislodge, but rather develop and extend this traditional trade. The Apa Tanis specialized on agriculture and certain crafts, and the Daflas specialized on the breeding of live-stock and the production of the raw material for the Apa Tanis' weaving industry achieve by this exchange a valuable adjustment to their somewhat one-sided economies. It is, however, only the Daflas of the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi valley who entertain such close relations with Apa Tanis. Those of the Panior valley trade only very occasionally with Apa Tanis and there is practically no direct trading between Apa Tanis and the Daflas of the Par Region.

Very little is as yet known about the relations between Daflas and Sulus, but it seems that in most contact areas the two tribes live in close symbiosis. The Sulus are a small tribe of hunters and trappers, famous for their skill as blacksmiths and brassfounders, but with little aptitude for agricultural work. Sulus of the high hills near the upper waters of Par and Panior regularly visit Dafla villages and exchange game, arrow poison, *dao* and metal ornaments and pipes for grain and cloth.

In my "Notes on Trade and Barter in the Kamla Region" I have pointed out that Daflas and Miris merge imperceptibly into each other, and that the two names are largely arbitrary. In the contact zone on the Khru there is as much intercourse and casual barter between Daflas and Miris as there is between Dafla villages, but as Dafla and Miri economics are identical—and not as Dafla and Apa Tani economics complementary—these trade relations amount to no more than the—casual exchange of cloth, *dao* and various Tibetan ornaments.

3. *Trade with Tibet or Populations under Tibetan influence.*—All material objects, as distinguished from slaves and cattle, that constitute a Dafla's wealth are of Tibetan origin, and in this respect there is little difference between a Dafla living in the Par valley and regularly visiting the plains of Assam and a Dafla of the Kiyi or Palin valley. His social status is judged by the number of Tibetan prayer-bells (*maje*) and bronze-plates he possesses, the number and value of Tibetan beads he can give as dowry to his daughters, and the number of mithan he can, if necessary, raise at short notice by the sale of these and other valuables of Tibetan make. Assamese goods, even bronze-plates and bell-metal cups not unlike some Tibetan articles, have never gained a similar place of honour in Dafla culture and an old connection between Daflas and Tibet or outposts of Tibetan culture is therefore beyond doubt.

But the Daflas of the Par, Panior and Kiyi valleys know little of the routes to Tibet or the exact nature of the trade by which Tibetan articles reach the tribesmen to the north and north-west. The only village as yet visited where I saw not only Tibetan beads and valuables, which have possibly been for centuries in the possession of Daflas, but also Tibetan textiles of obviously fairly recent make, is Mengo on the upper waters of the Panior. There red and black sashes of Tibetan wool and a few pieces of grey woollen cloth are worn and all these as well as a number of Tibetan ear-ring studded with semi-precious stones, have been brought from villages on the Panyi River, a righthand tributary of the Khru. It was in Mengo too that I met people from the Panyi valley, who spoke of a tribe of as they said, Tibetanized Daflas, known as Borus, who act as middlemen in the trade between Tibetans and the Daflas of the Khru and Panyi valley. These Borus may have an economic position similar to that of the inhabitants of Agla Marra in the upper Subansiri valley, from whence the Miris obtain most of their Tibetan goods. The route from the villages on the Panyi to Tibet or perhaps only an area inhabited by Tibetans, seem to coincide with the route along the left bank of the Khru, which was described to me by Miris of the lower Khru valley. For the names of several villages tally in both accounts ; it seems, for instance, fairly certain that the Daflas on the Panyi follow the river until its confluence with the Khru near villages inhabited by the clans of Richo and Tamchi and that from there the route runs for some distance along the Khru. One of the villages (Lokam) mentioned by a woman of Mengo, lies according to the Miris in the upper Kamla valley ; but as villages are generally referred to by the names of the predominant clan and Khru and Kamla lie so close together it is possible that there are settlements of Lokam clan both in the Khru and the Kamla valley.

What emerges, however, from a comparison of the information gained in Mengo and among the Miris is that a Tibetan influence different from that apparent in the upper Kamla and Subansiri region, reaches the Daflas by a route which follows, at least for some distance, the course of the Khru. The people in Mengo spoke of "Tibetans living on this side of the main snow ranges" and it would seem that in their barter transactions with the local tribesmen these "Tibetans" rely mainly on small and comparatively valuable articles, such as bells, beads, ear-ornaments, *dao* and salt and narrow woollen sashes, but do not dispose of sufficient woollen cloth to displace the Daflas' cloths of bark fibre.* They are said to purchase from the local tribesmen rice, animal skins, cane and dyes. Their need of rice, which is not likely to be transported across the Himalayan main range, would seem to support the assertion of the Mengo people that there are Tibetan settlements at no great distance from areas inhabited by Daflas ; but rice may equally be required by Tibetan traders on monthlong visits to the area close to the upper waters of the Khru. Tibetan currency is neither in use or even known in the areas so far explored.

In how far the Daflas of the upper Khru region are dependent on Tibetan imports is not yet known, but it would seem that in as far as salt is concerned *the divide between Assamese and Tibetan trade* runs along the hills separating the Panior from the Pugo and Panyi valleys, thence northwards, west of the Palin valley up to the Khru at its confluence with the Pugo, and from there in a north-eastern direction along the high range between Khru and Kamla (formed by Mount Ladu and Mount Rei) until it meets the Kamla at Godak and Rute-Hate (Guchi) (Map) 83 E. D 1). The Daflas of the Palin receive most of their salt from Assam, the men of Licha, some of whom visit the plains, acting as middlemen. Men of Gugi and of Tarran in the hills between Khru and Kamla assert that their salt comes from Tibet and the cloth worn by their co-villagers is *pud* cloth, cotton being unknown and Tibetan cloth scarce.

Conclusions.—Today none of the Eastern Daflas are economically entirely self-sufficient, but the extent to which they rely on the exchange of goods with other populations varies greatly from group to group. For the Daflas of the Par valley and the lower Panior valley trade with Assam and the earning of wages in the plains has become a necessity : it is from the bazaars of Assam that they get practically all their cloth, the iron needed by their blacksmiths, and salt both for their own consume and for barter with Dafla neighbours. The Daflas of the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi valley are less dependent on direct trade with Assam, yet some of them visit the plains to buy salt and iron while others obtain these essentials from friends in the Panior and Par valley or from Apa Tanis. Most of their trade-relations are indeed with their Apa Tani neighbours from whom they purchase not only rice, but a large part of their textiles and many *dao* and knives. The Daflas of the upper Panior valley (*e. g.* Likhipulia, Mengo) and of the Khru-Panyi Region are as yet inadequately known, but it would seem that they are largely self-sufficient for their supply of grain and textiles. Salt and iron are thus the only commodities which they have to import and living to both sides of the trade-divide, they obtain small quantities from both Assam and Tibet.

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*Whether in this area there are really Tibetan Settlement south-east of the Great Himalayan Rage is doubtful ; none of my informants had been to such a settlement, though some claimed to have met Tibetan traders.

Trade and barter among the tribesmen of the Kamla Region

Ever since the Miri Mission in 1911/12 the tribesmen inhabiting the valleys of the Kamla and its tributaries have in official records been described as 'Hill Miris'. In my Notes on *Tribal Groups of the Subansiri Region* I have pointed out that this term is unsatisfactory because no clear dividing line can be drawn between 'Daflas' and 'Miris', and the name 'Miri' is known only to a small minority of Assamese speaking hillmen. But pending a general revision of the official names for the tribal groups of the Balipara Frontier Tract it might be confusing to adopt a new terminology, and in this note the name 'Hill Miri' has been retained and is used for the inhabitants of the villages in the Kamla valley, in the valley of the Persen River (Map No. 83/1; A 2), and the valleys of all other tributaries of the Kamla as far north as the Selu excepting the upper Pein valley (Map No. 83 E. D 2), and the upper Khru valley. There is no marked cultural or linguistic difference between Miris and Daflas, the two tribes intermarrying and merging one into the other, but for the purposes of this note the villages on the left bank of the Khru as far as the Pengyi valley have been included among the Miris, whereas the villages south of the Khru, such as Dora (Mintlat), Toku and those of the Palin valley are considered as belonging to the Dafla group. The inhabitants of the upper Sipi valley (known as Rau), visited this season for the first time, are here provisionally included among the 'Hill Miris'.

In the absence of clear-cut tribal groups we will use here geographical groupings and speak, *e.g.* of South Kamla Miris, as the inhabitants of the villages in the tract south of the Kamla, west of the Subansiri and east of the Pein River, and North Kamla Miris as the population of the villages on the northern and north eastern bank of the river.

The 'Hill Miris' stretch across the borders of Indian and Tibetan spheres of economic influence, and their trading activities thus fall into three distinct categories :—

1. Trade with the Plains of Assam,
2. Trade with Tribal neighbours and Endo-Tribal Trade.
3. Trade in Tibetan goods.

The material for the following note was collected during a tour in March and April 1945, when my wife and I visited villages on both banks of the Kamla as well as the valley of the Sipi River and met a good many people from villages on the north bank of the Khru and some from the Selu valley.

1. *Trade with the Plains of Assam* —The South Kamla Miris have for generations been used to visiting the plains of Assam during the cold season, and they have the tradition that long before the plains tracts adjoining the foothills were inhabited by Assamese peasantry they went there to hunt and to fish for months at a time. There is indeed the strong probability that these Miris in the hills between the Kamla and the plains were practically semi-nomadic and followed a routine of annual migration: they cultivated in the hills during the spring, rains and autumn and spent the four coolest months in their hunting and fishing grounds in the plains, where each clan had its own tract. During these months only old and infirm people and sufficient men to look after the cattle remained in the hill-villages. When Assamese peasant folks, pressing ever closer to the hills, invaded these winter hunting-grounds of the Miris, the hillmen did not altogether desist from their annual migrations, but lived for part of the year in a kind of symbiosis with the new-comers, who seem to have recognized their rights on the soil by paying what might be called tribute or better still rent in kind. This rent was paid by individual plains villages to individual Miri clans on whose land they were situated. The payment of this rent was later taken over by Government in the shape of *posa*. All Miris regard *posa* as compensation for the rights on hunting grounds which they owned collectively just as in the hills they own their clan lands.

Even nowadays many South Kamla Miris visit the plains every cold weather and stay for weeks and even months in the villages with which they have traditional relations. There they still receive some hospitality from the Assamese peasants, who used to pay them rent, exchange a few products and find employment as agricultural labourers. Wherever possible they fish, drying and preserving the bulk of the catch for consume in the hills, and it is one of their main grievances that for the last twelve years or so, they have been excluded from many streams and rivers whose fishing rights have been acquired by *Mauzadars* and where the fishing is now being done by immigrant Doms.

It is obvious that the close contact between Hill Miris and Assamese villagers during several months of the year has led to an exchange of goods and services on a not inconsiderable scale, and the South Kamla Miris are today more dependent on their connections with the plains than any other tribal group in the Subansiri Sub-agency. They not only obtain a large quantity of Assamese goods for their own consumption—besides living in the plains and on plains-products for up to one-third of the year—but they act also as middlemen for almost the entire trade between the North Kamla Miris and the plains of Assam.

This trade is largely one-sided. The goods exported from the hills to the plains are insignificant compared to the volume and value of Indian products imported by the hillmen, and their adverse trade balance is made up mainly by the earnings of the South Kamla Miris in the plains and the money received in the form of *posa* from Government—a total annual sum of Rs. 615. But in the old days, still well remembered, trade with the plains was more evenly balanced, and the Miris sold large quantities of rubber and also a considerable amount of madder which was used as a dye. Then not only South Kamla Miris, but also individual men from villages north of the Kamla, as far distant as Balu and Bidak (near the confluence of Kamla and Khru) used to go to trade in the plains.

Today, however, only chillies, bamboo shoots and few other jungle products are taken for sale to the plains and of these bulky and cheap commodities a man can carry so little over the difficult paths that their total value hardly influences the trade balance. Occasionally a Miri may sell a Tibetan sword or some other valuable in the plains, but such transactions are of little importance.

Money earned by daily labour, mainly in felling jungle, harvesting rice, weeding gardens, building fences and various other odd jobs, is the Miris' principal asset in their economic relations with the populations of the plains. The average daily wage paid today is Re. 1.

The purchases which the Miris make in the plains are manifold. Among the necessities salt ranks first. The South Kamla Miris can obtain it from no other source and even the North Kamla Miris as far as Mingo (Kabak, No. 83 E. D. 1) rely almost entirely on Indian salt. For the South Kamla Miris the salt trade is extremely lucrative, and before the shortage of salt in Assam curtailed their supply, their profits were limited only by their carrying capacity, twenty seers being probably the maximum a man can carry in addition to his provisions on a trek of several days through the uninhabited mountain country which separates the plains from the nearest Miri village.

Hardly less essential than salt to the South Kamla Miris is the cloth which they are accustomed to buy in the plains. In none of the villages of the lower Kamla valley from Tapo (Chemir) on the south bank and Dobom (Yukar) on the north bank eastwards do the women weave, and all cloth has consequently to be imported. Apa Tanis and the villages on the Khru and upper Kamla are a source of supply for a limited amount of cloth, but the bulk comes from Assam and here again the South Kamla Miris purchase not only enough for their own requirements, but enough to trade to their neighbours north of the river. Rich men wear Assamese hand-woven silk cloth, which is now worth Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 and is frequently used for ceremonial payments, but most of the cloth worn by Miris is ordinary white cotton cloth, now worth Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a piece. This cloth is far less durable than the heavy cotton fabric woven by Apa Tanis, Daflas and Miris, and in the Miri country the value of a cotton bazaar cloth is only half that of an Apa Tani of Dafla cloth.

A commodity, equal in importance to cloth, is iron. *Dao*, knives and hoes are purchased in the plains and sometimes traded to the tribesmen higher up the Kamla valley. But though the Miris also buy a good number of *dao* and knives from Apa Tanis, they are not well supplied with iron implements. Proper hoes are very rare north of the Kamla and even in villages such as Dobom, which maintains close relations with South Kamla Miris, the field-work is mainly done with spade-like bone implements made of the shoulder-blade of a mithan.

Besides the essential commodities of salt, cloth and iron, the South Kamla Miris buy in the plains brass and bell-metal cups, brass pins, tin mugs, silver ear-ornaments and bangles, and a great many glass beads, mainly red and blue. Some of these articles are bartered to the Miris north of the Kamla and Indian beads can be seen as far north as Rute-Hate (Guchi No. 83 E. D. 1).

The trade between plainsmen and South Kamla Miris is conducted almost exclusively through the medium of money and in the villages south of the Kamla, as far west as the Pein River, Indian coins are so well known, that they may occasionally even be used in transactions between tribesmen, particularly between *posa*-holders. In this area money is readily accepted as a wage for porters. In the small group of villages west of the Pein River, comprising Rakhe (Dokar Sala) Pemir and Murga, Taplo and in the villages on the north bank of the Kamla as far as Dobom (Yukar) money is known, but very rarely used, and porters much prefer payment in kind. The people of these villages very seldom go to the plains and those that do are generally the slaves of rich men who are sent to work with the express purpose of obtaining cloth, salt and iron for their masters. Here the tribesmen's only chance of using money is to pass it on to friends in villages south of the Kamla. North and west of Rakhe and Dobom money is not in use and is not acceptable to porters.

The rise of prices in the plains has mainly hit the *posa*-holders, who can now purchase only a fraction of what they were used to obtain for their *posa* money. The Miris earning wages as labourers are less touched by the rise in the prices of manufactured goods. For wages have risen in proportion and with a month's earnings a man can buy roughly the same amount of salt and cloth as in former years. This is particularly so since the price of the two important commodities cloth and salt is controlled by Government. The rise in the price of certain other articles, however, is not reflected by a change of their value in the hills, and this is very inconvenient for officers relying on such exchange goods as beads. Red beads, for instance, now perhaps worth Rs. 3, which in peace time could be bought for a few annas, are still considered as equal in value to a small chicken and hardly accepted as a day's wage. Strips of Bhutia cloth, procurable nowadays only with great difficulty and at a price of Rs. 5 each are also considered worth only one fowl, and indeed on the upper Kamla I saw similar cloth of Tibetan origin for which no higher price had been paid. The shortage of salt, cloth and iron implements in the plains is also felt far into the hills, but it has so far not resulted in any connsiderable adjustment in the comparative values of imported and indigenous goods: the exchange rate between salt and pigs, for instance, has remained stable.

Summarizing we may say that trade with the plains of Assam has become an absolute necessity to the South Kamla Miris, and that the Miris as far north as Rei and Rute Hate (Guchi) on the Kamla and as far west as Bindula and perhaps even Teuri on the Khru (83 E.D.1) are dependent on this trade for the supply of salt and many iron implements. If we consider that many of the *dao* and knives found in this area are manufactured by Apa Tanis (who get their iron from the plains) these tribesmen's indirect dependence on supplies of Indian iron is even greater than would appear from the volume of their trade with the South Kamla Miris.

2. *Trade with Tribal neighbours and Endo tribal Trade.*—Trade in articles imported from Assam and—as we will see presently—also from Tibet is only one aspect of the complex fabric of tribal economics. While largely self-sufficient in regard to food-supplies no Miri village produces all essential implements and articles of dress, and between the Miris and their tribal neighbours as well as between the individual Miri villages there is therefore a continuous flow of commodities. A very large percentage of this exchange of goods is not in the nature of trade', *i. e.*, immediate material gain is not the sole motive of the transaction.

(*a*) It is mainly the *Trade with Apa Tanis* which falls into the category of commerce in its narrower sense. No other tribe between the Subansiri and the Kameng is as trade-minded as the Apa Tanis, who not only import regularly goods from the plains of Assam, but are themselves producers of high quality cotton cloth, iron implements and a salty substance gained from vegetable ash. Apa Tanis undertake trading expeditions which take them several days' journey from their own country, and the trade between Miris and Apa Tanis is almost entirely in the hands of such adventurous traders. For Miris seldom visit Apa Tani villages, and the people of places quite familiar with Apa Tani traders may never have seen the Apa Tani country.

The part of the Miri country more or less regularly visited by Apa Tanis comprises the villages of Taplo, Pemir, Murga, Rakhe, Bua, Tapo (Chemir), Ramtegae (Eium) and La (Rube-ya) south of the Kamla, Balu between Kamla and Khru, and Hova (Tago), Dobom and Bidak north of the Kamla. Only considerations of personal safety prevent Apa Tanis from venturing further afield ; while I was camping in Taplo (Chemir), Apa Tanis immediately grasped the opportunity of the temporary security to extend their trade as far as Taya and Gocham on the south bank of the Kamla. The market for Apa Tani goods, however, is not confined to the area actually visited by Apa Tani traders ; Apa Tani cloth can be seen right up to the trade-divide between India and Tibet, and *dao* and knives of Apa Tani manufacture filter even further north along the valleys of the Kamla and Selu and occasionally even as far as the Sipi valley.

Cloth, *dao* and knives and Indian salt are the principal articles sold by Apa Tani traders to their Miri customers. Of minor importance today is a salty substance manufactured by Apa Tanis from the ash of bracken and certain herbacious plants, but before Indian salt was available in large quantities this local salt, still occasionally bought by Miris and Daflas may have been a more important item of their export trade.

Only the Miri villages closest to the Apa Tani country, such as Rakhe, Pemir, Murga, Taplo, Bua and Tapo (Chemir) purchase rice from the Apa Tanis in times of scarcity and in such cases the purchasers themselves arrange for the transport. The difficulty of carriage excludes grain from the trade with more distant villages.

Rice is usually paid for in mithan, and the credit allowed by Apa Tanis to Miri customers who are in temporary difficulties often becomes the source of disputes and feuds. For a young mithan bull Apa Tanis pay approximately ten to fifteen baskets (*i. e.*, 324—487 seers) of paddy, and for a full grown mithan cow twice this amount. But the goods taken by Apa Tanis on their trading trips are almost invariably sold against immediate payment, and the articles bartered for cloths, *dao* and salt, are of a wide range. Pigs rank perhaps first among the goods sold by Miris to Apa Tani traders, who buy only pigs small enough to be carried. Dogs and fowls are sometimes given to round off a payment, but Apa Tanis seldom visit Miri villages with the sole purpose of buying dogs or fowls. Besides pigs, Miris sell to Apa Tanis Tibetan beads and small prayer-bells of minor value, fibre rain-cloaks, fibre rain-hats, plaited cane and grass belts, and occasionally Tibetan *dao*. For a simple Apa Tani cloth they give a piglet or a rain-cloak for a broad-bordered cloth a middle-sized pig, for a large ApaTani *dao* a small pig, and for a short *dao* a rain-hat, a small dog or perhaps a fowl and some plaited cane rings. These rates are only approximate and are the starting point for individual bargaining rather than an accepted tariff in inter-tribal trade. Very valuable Tibetan prayer bells worth several mithan are never bought by Apa Tani traders, but Miris sell them small bells for two, three and four cloths as well as Tibetan beads.

(*b*) *Trade between Miri villages and with neighbouring Daflas* Is generally of an altogether different order. Except for the excursions of the South Kamla Miris to the plains of Assam, where they purchase goods with the definite intention of reselling them, there is very little planned trade for trade's sake between Miris, or indeed between Miris and Daflas. Goods are exchanged and bartered either in a casual way between friends and visitors, or more often, exchanged in the course of the organized and ceremonial payments, when material gain is overshadowed by the social importance of the transaction. In this way cloth, *dao* beads, bronze plates and prayer bells filter from village to village, not along definite trade routes or through the hands of traders, but along the innumerable channels of reciprocal obligations between kinsmen and ceremonial friends. Though the movement of goods is slow, the volume of this exchange is by no means inconsiderable, and there are villages which rely for their entire supply of cloth and salt on this class of barter.

The absence of a recognized medium of exchange excludes the possibility of fixing the value of any article with absolute accuracy, and the price of a string of beads or a cloth is usually described by comparison with that of another commodity such as a mithan, a pig or a *dao*. Yet there is a recognized scale which provides for a rough valuation of most current commodities and varies only in detail in the various groups of villages. A list of the basic measures in the villages on the upper Kamla will give some idea of the relative values of commodities.

Nilap—is the value of one day's wage; it is equal to 3 seers paddy, or 1 very small chicken.

Bili—2 *nilap*; 1 fowl or 6 seers of paddy or ½ seer of salt or 1 knife.

Yelo—9 *bili*; 3 carrying baskets of paddy or 1 small cotton cloth or 1 dog or 1 small pig or 1 small goat or 1 small *dao*.

(in the villages on the lower Kamla I *yelo* is equal to 5 *bili* or 2 carrying baskets of paddy or 1 white cotton bazaar cloth or 1 simple Apa Tani cloth or 1 small pig or 1 small goat).

Opu—2 *yelo*; 1 big Dafla cloth with dark narrow border or 1 Apa Tani cloth with broad multi-coloured border or 1 middle sized pig or 1 full grown goat or 1 *dao*.

Puni—2 *opu*.

The amount of grain equal to these strandard values varies according to the season, and in the rains when food is short as little as 1 or 1½ carrying baskets of paddy may be equal to articles reckoned as 1 *yelo* worth.

Among the Miris a full grown mithan is worth approximately 10—12 *opu* (usually paid in the form of 50—60 carrying baskets of paddy and 1 pig), but when Miris have to buy paddy from Apa Tanis in times of scarcity they may get only as much as 30 carrying baskets for a full grown mithan cow.

The most important items of endo-tribal trade are, besides goods of Assamese and Tibetan origin[e] hand-woven cotton cloth, other articles of dress such as cane-hats, rain-shields, gauntlets of bear skin and plaited cane, *dao*, knives, spear heads, as well as domestic animals and grain. Whereas the two latter items are sold and bought only within the radius of comparatively small economic spheres, cloth is often bartered to villages many days' journey from the place of manufacture, passing from hand to hand, and reaching the most distant point slightly battered after having been worn by several owners.

It has been mentioned that neither the South Kamla Miris east of the Pein River, nor the Miris on the north bank east of Bidak weave any kind of cloth. Those south of the Kamla wear mainly Assamese cloth and to a lesser extent Apa Tani cloth, but on the north bank one sees a good many cloths woven in villages of the Khru and upper Kamla valley. It seems that a steady supply of cotton cloth with a particular type of narrow dark border filters down the Khru valley; it is taken up by those Miris who have no weaving industry of their own and is paid for mainly in salt and iron implements. Cloth of a very similar type though with lighter coloured borders is manufactured in the upper Kamla valley and from there reaches the tribesmen in the Sipi valley who, neither weaving nor growing cotton, rely entirely on such cloth and imports of Tibetan woollen cloth.

There are only a very few blacksmiths among the Miris and their output is hardly sufficient to meet local requirements. Shortage of raw material is the main limitation to their productivity; Tibetan *dao* are said to be unsuitable as raw material for their process of forging, and their craft is thus dependent on broken *dao* and knives of Apa Tani and Assamese origin*.

Trade in *dao* and knives of Miri manufacture is consequently only of local importance.

The same applies to ornaments of brass and bell-metal which are made by a few Miri craftsmen from broken prayer bells and bronze plates of Tibetan and sometimes Assamese origin.

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*It would seem that Tibetan *dao* are made of laminated steel whereas Assamese and Apa Tani *dao* are forged in one piece.

Although some villages have a limited export trade in such articles as cloth and pots to areas where weaving or pot-making is not practised, there seem to exist no monopolies on either the manufacture or sale of such commodities, nor have I heard of any taboo on the manufacture of cloth, pots, *dao* or other articles preventing certain villages or clans from producing their own requirements.

Trade blocks may occasionally occur owing to local feuds barring the one or other route to the members of individual villages or tribal groups traditionally linked by social and economic ties. But among the Miris. I have not come across any example of a permanent trade block created by villages which, anxious not to lose their middle-man's profits keep a route closed in order to prevent producers and consumers from getting together.

All that has been said of the trade and exchange of goods between Miri villages applies also to the trade between Miris and Daflas. There is no clear line between the two tribes ; the people in the contact zone are not conscious of any essential difference such as between Miris and Apa Tanis, and the dialects change gradually from village to village. Casual barter transactions and the organized, ceremonial exchange of gifts occur freely across the arbitary line drawn between the two tribal groups. Miri villages such as Balu, for instance, entertain relations with Dafla villages south of the Khru and trade with them in the same manner and on the same terms as they trade with their Miri neighbours.

3. *Trade in Tibetan Goods.*—Articles of Tibetan origin can be seen on any Miri visiting the plains of Assam, necklaces of large beads made from conch-shell, white stone, blue porcelain, and yellow stone ; discs of bell-metal strung into women's belts, Tibetan swords and large tufts of yak's hair that form part of the fantastic head-dresses. It can thus be said that the market for Tibetan goods extends right up to the foothills and the Inner Line. But though the South Kamla Miris value Tibetan ornaments as much as any of their northern neighbours they lie outside the sphere of direct Tibetan trade influence, and have indeed only the vaguest ideas of the channels through which these articles reach their trade partners to the north. As one moves upstream along the Kamla valley, the incidence of Tibetan articles increases ; whereas, in Dobom (No.83 E. A.1) for instance, nearly all cloth worn is of Miri, Apa Tani, Dafla or Indian manufacture, in Mingö (Kabak) and Rute-Hate (Guchi) (No. 83 E. A.1) 10 miles to the north-west, about half of all cloth worn is of Tibetan origin. Here the Tibetan and Indian spheres of economic influence overlap and one day's march more brings one to Göba which relies for imported goods almost entirely on Tibet. Even more noticeable is the Tibetan influence in the villages of the Sipi valley, where Tibetan cloth is the common type of dress.

In the Miri country the *Trade-divide between India and Tibet* runs through the villages of Rute-Hate and Sibing-pa (Guchi-Sojam) and Gibe (Godak) on the Kamla and along the watershed between the Kamla and the Sipi River. Up to that line most of the salt consumed comes from Assam, and beyond it Tibetan salt is in common use, but whereas Tibetan ornaments and valuables are traded across it and reach every part of the Miri country, Indian goods filter only very occasionally and in isolated instances beyond the trade divide into the country under Tibetan economic influence. The line running through Rute-Hate and along the hills south of the Sipi River must therefore be understood as the boundary of *predominant* Tibetan influence, comparable perhaps to the lower Kamla as the northern boundary of the predominant Assamese trade influence. The belt lying between these two boundaries is served by tribal trade bringing in Tibetan and Indian goods in approximately equal quantities and it is in this area, equally remote from both sources of supply that salt is scarest and most highly prized.

In this belt Tibetan articles are socially important as the traditional medium for ceremonial payments but their exclusion would not result in immediate economic distress. North and north-west of the trade-divide, however, Tibetan salt, cloth and *dao* are absolute necessities and the area between this line and the Himalayan main range is economically dependent on Tibet.

Little has so far been known of this area. The Miri Mission became involved in hostilities on its threshold and had to withdraw without being able to gather much information. This season I crossed the trade-divide and, visiting the Sipi valley, got a first hand impression of villages within the Tibetan economic sphere. Moreover, I met tribesmen from the Selu valley, who entertain trade-relations with villages beyond the snow-range separating Kamla and Subansiri, villages lying in the Subansiri valley that are regularly visited by Tibetans. The information received from them and the Miris of the Sipi valley draws a picture, which—in the absence of maps—may not be entirely accurate as far as topographical details are concerned, but is sufficiently clear as to the broad outlines of economic conditions.

From Tumr (Tumir, Map No. 83 E. A.1) at the confluence of Kamla and Selu, a path runs *via* Noyi, Lyublia and Haki to Eru Sorong, a large village lying in the hills between the Kamla and the Selu. By the path through the Selu valley Eru Soreng is three days journey from Tumr, but there is a different and longer route *via* Tali. The people of Göba often visit Soreng, whereas they have few connections with the villages higher up the Kamla. The people of Soreng cultivate like other Miris, but wear exclusively Tibetan woollen cloth and through them many Tibetan goods reach the Miris of the Kamla valley. From Eru Soreng it is only one day to Hai, a village lying close to a range of mountains, covered in snow summer and winter—obviously the 12·000—13·000 feet range between the Kamla and Subansiri.

By a path crossing this range one reaches in two to three marches the Subansiri valley. There on the right bank is the village of Tachi and on the left bank, connected with it by a cane suspension bridge, the village of Tape. These and neighbouring villages in the Subansiri valley are collectively known as Agla Marra.

The people of Eru Soreng, whose tribal name is Risi-Mashi, often go to Agla Marra, and I have met Tumr men who have repeatedly made the journey in their company. The people of Agla Marra are apparently of the same racial stock as Miris, but are to some extent Tibetanized. They speak a language known to some Soreng people, but not understandable to the Tumr men, wear exclusively Tibetan clothes, cut their hair and wear woollen caps and boots. They have guns and double-edged swords. Their houses are like those of Miris and they cultivate in Miri fashion. But besides mithan, they keep yaks and a few sheep, as well as dogs, "so fierce that they must be kept on iron chains." The yaks are kept both for the sake of their meat and for carrying loads. There is a track along the Subansiri between Agla Marra and Eru Marra, and from there it is five days to Nime Na along a track passable for yaks; along a shorter and more difficult path which leads across high mountains it is three days.

Agla Marra is regularly visited by Tibetans who come to trade, and Agla Marra people and even some men of Soreng go to Nime Na, which is apparently in Tibet proper.

A large part of the Tibetan articles that reach the villages of the Kamla valley come by the Selu route through Soreng and Agla Marra. It is the route best known to the Miris of Rute-Hate, Göba and Nöyi, and though the path from Soreng to Agla Marra is sometimes under snow it is described as not particularly difficult.

The route *via* Soreng is not the only one by which Tibetan goods reach the Kamla Miris. In the Sipi valley I was told of a route leading through the Möngö valley and from there across the hills between the Möngö and Subansiri. Beyond that there are many villages, and one of them Sheke, is regularly visited by Tibetans. The Möngö River is the Menga of the map (Sheet No. 83 L. A.4), but is said to flow into the Sipi, and not into the Subansiri.

What is the nature of the trade between Tibetans and the tribesmen of Agla Marra and other area of the Subansiri valley.

The Tibetans and such tribesmen as go to Tibet bring woollen cloth and made-up woollen coats and caps, salt of reddish colour, swords, ornaments of various kinds, such as ear-rings, bracelets and metal discs worn on belts, beads of conchshell and semi-precious stone, plates of bell-metal and prayer bells.

It is woollen cloth, salt and swords which form the bulk of the imported Tibetan goods. In exchange for these commodities the Miris give skins of monkey, bear, tiger, fish-otter, barking dear. serow python and other snakes, as well as cane-ropes, sago pith, madder and other dyes. The people of Agla Marrya systematically collect these exchange goods against the arrival of Tibetan purchasers and in the Sipi valley I saw dried skins hung up under the rafters ready for despatch.

All this trade seems to be by barter and Tibetan coins are not known to the Miris of the Kamla valley as far as Göba and Tumr and of the Sipi region. Miris of the Kamla valley who are not in direct touch with Tibetans, but deal through middlemen of Sorang, gave me the following rates at which they exchange skins for Tibetan goods. For one serow skin they get 2-3 seers of salt; for a complete otte-skin with legs and tail 1 sword and 1½ seers of salt ; for a whole tiger skin 2 swords and 1½ seers of salt; for 4 bear skins one large woollen cloth about four by two arm-lengths in size.

Animal skins are apparently easy to come by and not accorded a high value. For the the Miris of the Sipi, Selu and upper Kamla valley barter Tibetan cloth at surprisingly low rates. Strips of woollen cloth usually striped in several colours, approximately 54" long and 10" wide are sold for one or two fowls; sashes of red and black wool for one fowl ; coats of grey wool with half sleeves that reach below the knees for one middle-sized pig. Only big tailored cloaks or coats of a closely woven material (resembling broad-cloth) usually of purple or carmine colour, are highly priced. and on the periphery of Tibetan influence as much as one small mithan may be paid for such a coat.

In comparison to the low price of textiles, Tibetan salt is expensive. A middle-sized pig buys about 2 seers of salt, a big hen about ¼ seer.

For a Tibetan sword of superior quality one big sow and one small pig are paid, for a sword of average quality one big or middle-sized pig or one full grown goat.

There is the general, and no doubt well founded belief, that most Tibetan textiles, and particularly the multicoloured stripes of woollen material are imported by the Selu, Kamla and Sipi route, while along the Subansiri a thick, long-haired black cloth is traded down, and most valuable objects such as prayer bells, bell metal plate, conch-shell beads, beads of lapislazuli, carneol; blue procelain, white soap stone, jade, and other semi precious stones reach the Daflas and Miris by a route following the valley of the Khru, a route along which there is very little trade in Tibetan textiles.

The importance of these valuables for the social and ceremonial life of the Miris cannot be easily exaggerated. Tibetan prayer bells (known in Assam as *deo-gante* and among the tribesmen as *maje*) are treated with the reverence and care accorded elsewhere to objects of art, and are almost considered animate beings, being given names and referred to as male or female ; a *maje* of high class may be valued at ten mithan (today equal to about Rs. 1,000!) and more, but there are *maje* of all grades down to those worth only one or two cotton cloths, valuation being according to metal and design. The sale of a valuable *maje* is as serious and consequential an undertaking as a marriage and creates between purchaser and seller a tie similar to that between kinsmen. Plates of bell-metal, valued up to one or even two mithan, are also used mainly for ceremonial payments and there are various other bell-metal objects, such as heavy armlets, which are accorded a similiar sentimental value. Tibetan beads too are highly valued and indispensable for certain ceremonial exchange of gifts. There are more than than a dozen classes of beads and it needs the experience of a connoisseur to accord to every bead its correct value. Some wealthy men collect beads one by one composing through the course of years strings of great beauty and worth as much as one or two full-grown mithan.

The difference in the quality of Tibetan goods reaching the Miris by the Khru route and those coming by the Kamla-Selu route is puzzling, and our knowledge of conditions in the area of the upper Khru is still so scanty that no entirely satisfactory explanation can be given. Pending further exploration I venture, however, the following hypothesis : .

There is evidence for the existence of at least five routes leading from the Kamla Region to areas under Tibetan economic influence :

1. The Kamla-Selu route to Agla Marra, which is best known to the Miris of Rute-Hate, Göba and Tumr and which has been described to me by men in the habit of using it.
2. A route from the Sipi valley *via* the Menga (Möngö) to the Subansiri valley. This route is likely to connect up with a route coming from the Tsari area or Mygyitun.
3. A route leading along the north bank of the Kamla as far as the snow-range and then across. The names of the villages on this route have been mentioned to me, but my informants knew little about the area to which it leads.

   Along these three routes mainly textiles, salt and swords reach the Miris.
4. A route that, following the left bank of the Khru as far as Pisa village, turns north to pass through Tarram (between Khru and Kamla) and emerges at Lokam in the Kamla valley where it joins route 3. It can be taken as established that the upper courses of Khru and Kamla lie so close together that the tribesmen can cross from one valley into the other in two marches (probably four marches for porters).
5. A route following the left bank of the Khru as far as its source on the snow-ranges. This route seems to be used by the Dafla's of the Panyi valley and the Lebla area, and is said to lead to Tibetant lements on this side of the Himalayan main-range.

The information on these routes obtained from the tribesmen of the Kamla Region seems to tally with the findings of explorers such as Kingdom Ward and F. Ludlow who approached the upper course of the Subansiri from the Tibetan side. True, none of them succeeded in descending for more than a few miles along the Chayul Chu or the Tsari Tsu into the area known to us as Agla Marra, but they encountered both at Lung on the Chayul Chu and at Migyitun on the Tsari Chu tribesmen described by the Tibetans as Lobas who are unmistakably close kinsmen of the people I met in the valleys of the Kamla and Sipi.

A Loba photographed by F. Ludlow at Migyitun is in every detail of dress and appearance identical with tribesmen of the Sipi valley, and it would thus appear that route 2 leads across the Subansiri valley to Migyitun on the Tibetan border. Route 3 leads probably to the Kashong La, a pass which seems to connect the Chayul Chu valley with an area not far from the source of the Kamla. Tribesmen described by Ludlow as 'Lobas from the Kashong, Lashow all the the typical features of Miris from the upper Kamla*

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* 1. F. Ludlow, 'The Sources of the Subansiri and Siyom', *The Himalayan Journal*, Vol. X, 1938, Illustration 6.

The area known to the Kamla tribesmen as Agla Marra and reached by them *via* route 1, is no doubt the upper Subansiri valley, visited according to Ludlow at least once in twelve years by Tibetan pilgrims, and the fact that it lies on a recognized pilgrim's route lends credence to the information regarding a track along the Subansiri said to be passable for yaks.†

Route 4 leads most probably also to the Kashong La or one of the nearby passes such as the Lha La but exploration on the Tibetan side of the Great Himalaya Range provides no clues as to the locality at which route 5 may strike the Tibetan settlements.

The tribesmen on the lower Kamla believe that most of the valuable Tibetan ornaments in possession of Miris and Daflas have come along the Khru but that very little Tibetan cloth reaches them by that route.

I have found that the tribesmen in the Sipi valley wear mainly Tibetan cloth and do not weave, and there is no reason to doubt their statement that in the Möngö valley and in the Agla Marra area along the upper Subansiri exclusively Tibetan cloth is worn. In the Khru region on the other hand neither I nor anyone else has crossed the trade divide between India and Tibet. Though in Mengo I came perhaps close to the outer limit of predominantly Indian trade influence, no area comparable to the Sipi valley in its proximity to Tibet has there been visited.

But we know that the Daflas on the upper Khru and on its tributary the Panyi and even the villages between the upper Khru and the Kamla have a developed weaving industry, and use not only cotton, but also a bark fibre (*pud*) for their textiles. Both cotton and *pud* cloth are occasionally sold to villages on the lower Khru and across the watershed between Khru and Panior to Mengo. It is unlikely that the tribesmen may they be Daflas or Miris, on the upper Khru would go to the trouble of spinning bark-fibre if woollen Tibetan cloth was available to them cheaply and in sufficient quantities. In Mengo I was shown a few samples of woollen Tibetan cloth brought from villages on the Panyi, but their owners treated them as something precious and unusual and there can be no doubt that woollen cloth, though known and valued, is on the Khru, at least in the area up to its confluence with the Panyi, not the predominant type of clothing.

How is it that the tribesmen on the Khru obtain only small quantities of Tibetan cloth, while on the Subansiri, Selu and Kamla they can buy at very modest rates sufficient to meet their needs? The fact that most of the valuable ornaments and *maje* come through the area on the Khru excludes the possibility that here contacts with Tibet are insignificant. The obvious explanation would seem to be that contacts are neither fewer nor more numerous but of a *different order*. The type of Tibetan goods imported by the Kamla, Selu and Subansiri tribesmen is suggestive of the broad and manifold contacts of two peasant cultures. Here populations in frequent and fairly intimate touch seem to exchange large quantities of the products of their own labours, the Tibetan sheep-breeder bartering his home-spun cheap textiles for the furs of the Miri hunter and trapper, the blacksmith his swords for cane ropes and the vegetable dyes required by other craftsmen. But in the Khru area little woollen cloth seems to reach the Dafla or Miri. Instead valuable beads, prayer bells, ear-ornaments studed with semi-precious stones and other small and comparatively costly articles are acquired by the tribesmen. In Mengo on the Panior I heard rumours of Tibetans who lived on this side of the main snow range in large stone houses, and if a monastery proved to exist somewhere in the region of the upper Khru it would not be astonishing if the monks used objects easily brought from Tibet proper to purchase supplies of grain and other foodstuffs from the local tribesmen. The passes across the main range may here be difficult and preclude any free exchange of bulky textiles.

But the assumption of the existence of Tibetan settlements in the area of the source of the Khru cannot easily be reconciled with the fact that none of the explorers who travelled along the route from Tawang to Chayul Dzong ever mentioned a pass used by Tibetans to cross the Great Himalayan Range somewhere east of Karta. We must therefore reckon with the fact that the Daflas speaking of Tibetan stone houses were referring to settlements north-west of the main-range, where indeed it would not be out of place to find monasteries. Tribesmen living in the high valleys near the source of the Khru may be to some extent Tibetanized and it is not impossible that while using woollen clothes themselves they find trade in prayer bells, beads and other ornaments more profitable than in such commodities as cloth and iron. This would be particularly understandable if they had to carry all the wares purchased from Tibetans over routes more difficult than the yak tracks leading from Tibet into the upper Subansiri valley.

Conclusions.—There must have been a time, although it may lie back many centuries, when the Miris were as little dependent on outside economic resources as other tribes on the borders of Assam. What exactly their material outfit was at that time is a matter for conjecture, but the still prevalant use of bone and bamboo implements for agricultural work tends to indicate that iron was then not as essential for their economy as one would suppose from its place in tribal culture today. The first more advanced civilization with which they came in contact seems to have been that of Tibet, and it is safe to assume that they entertained trade-relations with Tibetans long before they began to purchase goods from the Indian inhabitants of the plains of Assam. The rôle of Tibetan prayer bells, firmly anchored in the ceremonial of friendship ties, the value attached to Tibetan bell-metal plates, the custom of using Tibetan beads as ritual payments at marriages, are all proof of a very ancient connection between Miri culture and the civilization of Tibet. Even today when a good many Assamese products find their way into the hills, they are generally considered as second rate, mere substitutes for or imitations of the "real" Tibetan articles. Thus an Assamese bell-metal plate, intrinsically in no way inferior, is accorded a much lower value than a Tibetan plate of the same size. Assamese beads, even those of such stones as cornelians, fetch only a fraction of the price of Tibetan beads, and Assamese *dao* are much less prized than Tibetan swords. This attitude towards Assamese goods is almost comparable to that of the European who buys and uses Japanese wares but regards them as inferior to, say, English, Swiss or Swedish products.

The preference for Tibetan goods is neither entirely irrational nor merely traditional. The Miri has a sound feeling for quality and aesthetic merit, and most Tibetan goods that reach him are the solid and aesthetically satisfying products of rurul craftsmen. The textiles are not only durable, but many of them have patterns of very attractive colour combinations. The ornaments are heavy, of simples, unsophisticated shape and intrinsically valuable material. None of the goods in the North Lakhimpur bazaar whether they come from Bombay cotton mills or Czechoslovakian glass factories can rival the products of Tibetan craftsman in the eyes of the tribesmen.

There is as yet another reason why in the foreseeable future goods imported from India are not likely to replace the Tibetan wares used by the tribesmen of the Kamla Region: the goods which the Miris barter for salt, swords and cloth are highly priced by Tibetans, but have today practically no market value in India. Vegetable dyes cane ropes, roughly cured skins are bought up by Tibetans, but it would be extremely hard to dispose of them in any quantity in Assam, even should communications gradually improve to allow of the freer transport of goods. And as those Miris who do not receive *posa* or earn cash by work in the plains of Assam can obviously buy only from such populations as will purchase their products, there can be little doubt that the tribesmen in the valleys of the Upper Kamla, the Selu and the Sipi will for a long time to come depend on trade with Tibet.

† *Cf. The Himalayan Journal*, Vol. IX, 1937, p. 146.—The name Marra or Marrang is known also on the Tibetan side F. Ludlow heard near Langong of 'Marang Lobas' who in the autumn come across a pass to Langong. (Loc. cit. Vol. X, p. 18).

Problems of Administration and Culture-Change in the Subansiri Region

The development of the tribal populations of the Subansiri Region presents the anthropologically minded administrator with unique opportunities. Here, in a tract of largely unmapped mountain country, wedged in between the modern, rapidly changing civilization of the Indian plains and the ancient, conservative culture of Tibet, dwell barbaric, warlike tribesmen, many of whom entertain no direct contacts with the outside world. But in an era when elements of machine-age civilization penetrate even the last refuge areas of primitive humanity, such isolation is not longer practicable, and the Government of India has recently initiated a programme of exploration and scientific research preparatory to opening up the country and drawing the tribesmen into economic and political relationships of a wider community.

Such a policy will undoubtedly lead to a gradual transformation of tribal culture—a process which calls for careful guidance if it is to benefit the hillmen. The value of a scientific approach to the problems arising from the impact of advanced civilizations on primitive populations is today widely recognized. Experience in many parts of the world has demonstrated that the anthropologist's knowledge of the realities of indigenous cultures is indispensable for planning the transition to new social and economic systems. Without such detailed knowledge it is impossible to avoid mal-adjustments,—mal-adjustments which can easily lead to a rapid disintegration of tribal life. Too often, however, the anthropologist's rôle has been that of a physician called in to diagnose a disease when it has progressed beyond hope of cure. There are very few instances in the history of territories inhabited by primitive races where scientific investigations of the social and economic order have *preceded* the establishment of trade, business enterprises and an administration serving the interests of others than the tribesmen. As a rule the early administrators had to grapple with day-to-day problems long before they had gained an insight into the culture and norms of behaviour of the population they were called upon to control. It was hardly their fault if they ignored or misjudged indigenous institutions and disrupted the social order by an ill-considered and haphazard interference that was guided by principles outside the comprehension of the tribesmen. Though by trial and error they gradually accumulated experience, the very pace of culture-change was generally too rapid to allow of a righting of earlier mistakes. As for the scientific investigator, his advice was seldom sought until mal-adjustments threatened to culminate in friction or widespread distress.

The hill-tracts of Assam have in this respect been more fortunate. Inhabited by tribes far less tractable that the aboriginals of Peninsular India and offering few opportunities for business or industrial enterprise and even fewer for farming on a commercial scale, they have—until the Japanese invasion of 1944—never suffered from encroachment and exploitation by outsiders. The policy of the Government of India *vis-a-vis* hillmen such as Nagas, Abors and Daflas was for long primarily precautionary, *i.e.*, it was aimed at preventing the tribesmen from raiding and molesting the Assamese peasantry of the plains. In some areas a first superficial control developed gradually into full-scale administration ; the stages were slow and there were no vested interests to divert the administration from a genuine solicitude for the welfare of the tribesmen. But even in such areas as the Naga Hills, which are today considered a model district, wrong assessment of the tribesmen's temper has in the past resulted in occasional clashes. While today we have an extensive literature on the habits and customs of the various Naga tribes, the early administrators lacked reliable information on tribal affairs and were forced to rely largely on their own intuition.

In the Subansiri the position is different. No attempt has yet been made to establish administrative control over the hill tribes outside the provincial boundary of Assam. It is only since 1944 that the country beyond the so-called 'Inner Line' has been opened up and a steady political influence has been brought to bear on such hitherto independent tribes as Daflas and Apa Tanis.

The problems facing us here are consequently fundamentally different from those in other backward areas. Here we have not to deal with the results of modern culture contact or economic penetration ; the vast majority of the tribesmen has indeed no direct contact with any outside force. Tribal culture is still in its pristine stage, and the field is open for *any* type of policy the Government of India may see fit to adopt in relation to the tribal population. There is no legacy of error and neither loyalty nor hostility is supported by tradition. Except in a very few places the officer entering this tribal territory finds it a *tabula rasa* in so far as relations between the tribesmen and the *Sirkar* are concerned. His reception may resemble that accorded to Captain Cook on some of the Pacific Islands, but he is in a far stronger position than any early colonial administrator in that he can draw on an extensive store of knowledge of the mechanism of culture contact and the reaction of primitive races to modern civilization.

Moreover the problem of how to co-ordinate the interests of the tribesmen with those of a resident non-tribal population does not arise, for there can be no intention to deprive the tribesmen of part of their territory for the benefit of new settlers. The crucial question since the inauguration of political and economic penetration, is how best to organize tribal society and tribal economy in such a way as to create a stable basis for these intensified contacts with the outside world. Sudden and uncontrolled contact with advanced civilizations has often spelled the doom of primitive races. But to assume that the Dafla or Apa Tani tribesmen can derive no benfit from the accumulated experience of the rest of humanity would amount to a negation of modern civilization. In the fields of medicine, agriculture, cattle-breeding and various tenchniques he can obviously utilize the knowledge and benefit by the skill of more advanced nations, and the establishment of a stable peace (if it is not the peace of the grave-yard of his national character !) has many advantages over an eternal sequence of feuds.

Indeed it is the obvious drawbacks of unrestricted tribal warfare, slave-raiding and other 'savage' institutions, which might tempt the administrator, armed with superior force and allowed in the use of that force a good deal of discretion, to establish a social and political order purged of all those elements which appear incompatible with a more civilized existence. Therein lies a danger. A new set of values cannot suddenly be imposed on a people without disorganizing their whole social structure, and the enforcement of principles which are incomprehensible to the tribesmen is likely to meet with opposition.

All plans for the development of a tribal area under the guidance of an outside agency must therefore reckon with the cultural and political realities, the character and mentality of the tribesmen, and above all, the resources in personnel and material which will be available for deployment in any given area. The last point ought to be clarified first, for the tempo of development and the extent of economic and political penetration must obviously depend on the machinery with which Government intends to operate. To establish [illegible] limited period in any tribal area an influence which cannot be maintained may, by disrupt- [illegible] without providing permanent alternatives, do more harm than good.

In the Subansiri Region there would, for instance, be no point in embarking on schemes the realization of which would necessitate the employment of an army of administrators and specialists and the expenditure of crores of rupees. India suffers from a shortage of trained personnel even for ordinary rural reconstruction work, and the tribal areas are so poor in taxable resources that for many years to come the cost of the administration and of any measures for the education and economic advancement of the tribes will have to be met from the revenue of other parts of the country.

It can be taken as axiomatic that the existence of a contented, prosperous and friendly tribal population on one of India's vital frontiers is in the highest interest of the country, and that Government's policy in the tribal areas must aim at creating the basic conditions for prosperity and a stable peace. But financial considerations set a limit to all plans for the administration of the Subansiri Region, to the opening up of the country by a network of roads, to the establishment of schools and medical services, and to the development of the tribesmen's economy from subsistence agriculture to production for outside markets.

COMMUNICATIONS

The *conditio sine qua non* for any closer contact with the tribesmen of the Subansiri Region (be it in the form of administrative control or economic penetration) is the all-weather maintenance of essential lines of communications. At present most of the paths linking the Apa Tani country as well as many of the Dafla and Miri villages with the plains of Assam are impassable during the rains, and even village-to-village traffic is often interrupted by flooded streams. The tribesmen do not know the use of pack-animals and indeed none of the existing routes could be negotiated by mule or pony. All loads have to be transported on the backs of porters, and even in good weather the steep gradients and general difficulty of the terrain place a heavy strain on porters. The foot-hills are sparsely inhabited, and porters proceeding from the plains into the interior have to carry their own rations, which means that for every two men carrying loads on a six days' journey another man must carry provisions.

The cost of constructing roads suitable for wheeled traffic would be excessively high. If even the Ledo Road had to be abandoned soon after completion because the cost of maintenance would have vastly exceeded its economic value in peace-time, there is no likelihood that the limited commercial intercourse of a small tribal population would justify the construction of motor-roads and permanent solid bridges in one of the most difficult mountain countries in the world. Bridle-paths such as have been built in the Naga and Abor Hills, on the other hand, though they too would involve considerable initial expenditure, would serve present needs and could be maintained by the tribesmen themselves.

Bridges are essential on all-weather tracks, and in most places suspension bridges of cane would suffice. Improvements on the indigenous pattern and the use of iron ropes (which could be dropped by air) should make it possible to build bridges on the main routes strong enough to allow of the passage of pack-animals. Some rivers, such as the lower course of the Kamla can be crossed by ferry, and the construction of rafts or boats big enough to take one pony or mule at a time should not meet with any great difficulties. Such ferries could, of course, be used only when the rivers are not in flood and would have to be pulled up on the bank before the onset of the monsoon, when light cane-bridges would serve the porter-traffic.

As in other sparsely inhabited countries—such as Central New Guinea—where the cost of road-building in mountainous tracts is out of all proportion to their economic value, air-communications might solve some of the transport problems. Planes could probably land in the Apa Tani valley, and a strenous trek of six days would thus be reduced to half an hour's air journey. But potential landing-grounds are extremely few, and I doubt whether any exist between the Kamla and the Great Himalayan Range. Air-droppings, however, would be very useful in supplying isolated outposts, for official parties proceeding on foot. But the difficulty of the terrain would seem to exclude the use of air-transport for the economic development of the country.

Security.—With the improvement of communications will arise the question of security for travellers using the newly built bridle-paths. At present no tribesman feels safe outside the territory of his own village or group of allied villages except in those areas where he has friends influential enough to protect him or, at least, to effect his release in case of capture. Even the Apa Tanis, who are accustomed to taking risks in the interest of trade gains, confine their trading trips to areas where they have traditional ties of friendship. They not only avoid the territory of Dafla villages which are actively hostile, but hesitate even to pass through the land of villages where they cannot hope for definite protection. Before 1944, for instance, when I opened the route through the Dafla villages of Selsemchi, Potin and Mai, all Apa Tanis going to and returning from the plains used a far more difficult track over mountains more than 7,000 feet high which was impassable throughout the rains. They were not at war with Potin or Selsemchi, but because of an old feud they did not trust the Daflas of these villages sufficiently to venture in small groups into their territory. The large porter convoys which subsequently passed along this route gave them, however, a feeling of security and many Apa Tanis working temporarily as porters made friends with individual Daflas, and before long the route was considered safe even for single Apa Tanis travelling to the plains on private business. This shows that an increase in traffic, and particularly the use of a route by porters carrying for Government and enjoying, therefore, a certain immunity, creates gradually an atmosphere of security. I had the same experience in the Miri country, south of the Kamla, where individual Apa Tanis could travel and trade safely in the wake of my porter columns, though at that time I would have been quite unable to afford them concrete protection.

While we can assume that the construction of bridle-paths and their use by officers of Government will make for safer travelling along these main-routes, there can be little doubt that at first tribal feuds will not automatically stop short of the new traffic, and that there will be occasions when tribesmen will be ambushed and captured on paths built by Government. Unless and until Government establishes complete administrative control over an area the possibility of such incidents cannot be completely excluded, but it may be practical policy to warn the tribesmen that any attack on travellers using a Government path on peaceful business will be considered an unfriendly act towards Government irrespective of the quarrel or feud which may have preceded the act of violence. The consequences of such an 'unfriendly act' must depend on the resources of the Administration which at this stage cannot assume all the function of a police. But the principle of considering any capture or assault on a 'Government' path as an act against Government will be easily understood by the tribesmen, who themselves resent, and if necessary, revenge, an attack on visitors to their village or territory, though they may remain indifferent if the same persons are captured or killed outside the area under their immediate influence ; thus a 'Government path' along which all may travel in peace and safety would soon become a recognized institution. Difficulties may, however, arise if escaping slaves or run-away wives try to profit from the inviolability afforded by such Government paths. Until the problem of slavery is solved as a whole, it would be neither wise nor practicable to burden an institution which is to serve commerce and peaceful

travel with the function of an asylum for escaped slaves or for offenders against tribal custom. Any attempt to ban the recapture of slaves travelling on Government paths would almost certainly be disregarded, and would be considered contrary to tribal law which prescribes that anyone sheltering a slave must compensate his master by paying him the full market value.

METHODS OF GOVERNMENT

The avowed aim of the political control over the Balipara Frontier Tract, which includes the Subansiri Region leaving its northern border undefined, was until recently the protection of the plains of Assam against tribal raids. Occasional tours of Political Officers with armed escort into the foot-hills have served to convince the tribesmen of Government's ability to move freely in tribal country and, if the need should arise, take action against a village guilty of raiding the plains. Beyond the provincial border of Assam, however no attempt was made to establish any kind of administration or to interfere in disputes between individuals or villages in the tribal area.

With the establishment of closer relations with some of the tribes and the maintenance of an out-post and trade-depot in the Apa Tani country during the open seasons of 1944 and 1945 this attitude has changed, and the influence of Government has become a factor in tribal politics even in areas which previous to 1944 had never been visited by officers or other outsiders. Such 'influence' must not be confused with effective control. So far the tribesmen have only learnt that it is unwise to interfere with Government parties, and that if Government officers choose to take sides in a dispute they can exert considerable pressure on one or both of the opposing parties in order too achieve a settlement. The methods which Government has employed resemble those familiar to the tribesmen : an arrest is in their eyes hardly distinguishable from capture, and the punitive burning of a village is to the Dafla only a variation of a raid. It did not take the tribesmen long to realize, however, that while Government's intervention in tribal disputes cannot be openly resisted, its effects can be largely countered by a policy of procrastination, elusion and temporary withdrawal from the threatened area. The superiority of arms of the Assam Rifles, that furnish, when necessary, escorts for Political Officers, is recognized and incidentally vastly overrated *, but the tribesmen's awe of fire-arms is largely off-set by the realization that Government parties cannot move fast, that they cannot maintain themselves for long in forward camps without receiving regular supplies on lines of communications which are dependent on the recruitment of tribal porters, and that it is consequently easy to elude them without risking more than the loss of a few wood and bamboo houses and some temporary inconvenience. It is only the Apa Tanis, the most civilized and settled of the Subansiri tribes whose attitude towards Government cannot be guided by such considerations. Dwelling in large permanent villages and dependent on the uninterrupted cultivation of their small, carefully tended homeland, they must come to a *modus vivendi* with any power which establishes itself for any length of time in their country. Peaceful cultivators and resourceful traders the Apa Tanis can but profit from a policy of pacification and a clash of interests might occur only if there was any attempt at economic exploitation by outsiders or interference with their customary law and the established social order.

The Daflas, on the other hand, shifting-cultivators without attachment to permanent village-sites or ancestral land, warlike, independent, and scattered in small groups over a vast mountain-country that is slashed by precipitous, pathless gorges, will offer many a problem to future administrators. Only the most vital national interests of India, such as a threat to its northern border or the occurrence in their country of oil or other mineral resources essential for the economy of the sub-continent, would justify the enormous cost of establishing a direct, effective administration over all the turbulent tribes between the Brahmaputra Valley and the Himalayan main-range.

A system of Indirect Rule is, therefore, the obvious method of exerting political influence on the tribes and of opening the door to trade-relations and the advantages of civilization without undertaking the responsibilities of day-to-day administration. Indirect Rule, as a system of Government, based on indigenous institutions and the existing tribal authorities has proved its worth in many parts of Africa, not only in places where the old order has never been disturbed by more direct methods of administration, but even in those parts where tribal institutions have long been disregarded and have had to be revived by newly investing with powers the old legitimate rulers. "The motives", to quote from Malinowski's posthumous work †, "which move a European administration to introduce Indirect Rule are partly those of expediency and efficiency and partly enlightened liberalism. It is cheap, it is practical, and it promises to produce a minimum of friction and dissatisfaction, for it involves rule with the consent of the majority of those governed, and the maintenance of as much as possible of the Native authority instead of its destruction."

While similar principles will be to the credit of any administration in the Tribal Areas of Assam, there are several features which distinguish conditions in these borderlands from those of Africa. Here we have to reckon neither with non-tribal populations nor business interests and there is no indigenous system of hereditary chieftainship. If it has been said of Africa that the meaning of Indirect Rule cannot be summed up in the phrase, "Find the Chief", this is doubly true of Assam where most of the hill-tribes have no chiefs in the strict sense of the word. Authority may, as among the Apa Tanis, be vested in a plurality of clan representatives or as among the Daflas the joint-family may for all practical purposes be an independent political unit. No hard-and-fast rules can be laid down as to whose authority should be recognized ; conditions vary from village to village and even the principle that every *de facto* power must be built into a system of tribal self-government will not free the man on the spot from many a doubt as to where the *de facto* authority lies.

Let us first consider the Apa Tanis. In my notes on 'Village Organization and Tribal Justice among the Apa Tanis', I have described the system of *buliang*, representatives of all important clans, including "slave" clans, who direct the affairs of the tribe through informal village-councils. Though the exact powers of these *buliang* are not laid down in any code of law, they are yet capable of maintaining internal peace and tribal solidarity. Minor disputes may be allowed to run their course, but ultimately it is the *buliang*'s responsibility to restore the social harmony ‡.

A system which saves from internecine strive a community of over 20,000 tribesmen who live crowded together in a valley of hardly 20 square miles, obviously fulfils a very valuable function in tribal life. The aim of Government must be to strengthen this system and to avoid any course of action which might detract from the influence and authority of the *buliang*. At the same time it would not be practical politics to deal with the Apa Tanis only through the senior *buliang*, recognizing each one of them as "village-headman" authorized to represent the community. Theoretically all *akha buliang* have the same position and enjoy equal privileges, but in pactice it is usually two or three *akha* or *yapa buliang* who wield

* Many tribesmen believe that a rifle-bullet will find the intended victim even though he may not be within sight of the man firing the rifle.

† Bronislaw Malinowski, *The Dynamics of Culture Change*, New Haven, 1945, p. 138.

‡ For the respective duties of *akha buliang*, *yapa buliang* and *ajang buliang*, see the above notes.

the influence in a village. And administrative arrangements must be based on the *de facto* position and not on the fiction of the equal authority of all senior *buliang*. Many of these *ak'a buliang* are very old men who, though consulted in important matters, no longer take an active part in the day-to-day administration of the village. It is rather the middle-aged men of more than usual wealth or particular strength of character who sway public opinion and can, therefore, speak at least to some extent for the village-community. To invest such men with a visible symbol of Government's confidence, such as the red mantle of office so popular among the village-elders of the Naga Hills, would mean to create a valuable *liaison* between the officers of Government and the mass of the tribesmen.

There is, however, the danger that once a man has thus been recognized as representative of a clan or village, Government officers will attribute to him an authority and influence which he does not possess. Even the most prominent *buliang* cannot give *orders* to his co-villagers ; however much we may try to increase his prestige he will never become a chief. To force him into such a role, for which there is no precedent in Apa Tani tradition, would only overburden and thereby ruin an implement which judiciously employed can become a valuable factor in Government's relations with the tribe.

The realization that there is no individual chief nor any tribal council of manageable size which exerts authority over all Apa Tanis and which can be invested with the responsibility of carrying out a certain policy, may be unpleasant for the administrator, but nothing can be gained by ignoring the fact that among the Apa Tanis law and order is maintained by a complex, yet extremely well balanced system of social forces, which cannot easily be harnessed to an administrative machinery ruled by concepts of individual authority and responsibility.

The old system has proved perfectly adequate to the task of maintaining internal peace and justice. But the Apa Tanis' helplessness in the face of the attacks of numerically smaller groups of Dafla demonstrates its main weakness—the lack of effective leadership—and contact with the forces of the civilized world will no doubt show up other defects. Indeed the establishment of this contact with all its concomitants has already created a situation to which, as the Apa Tanis themselves realize, the old system has no effective answer. The mechanism to deal with this new situation cannot be imposed on the tribe ; it must be evolved from within by gradual adaptation to changed conditions. Such a development, if understood and closely watched. can perhaps be helped and speeded up. There is, for instance, the possibility that those *buliang* who in view of their personal qualifications are invested with the symbols of Government's trust and friendship will grow in importance and form in years to come a kind of council of action, which at first will deal mainly with problems resulting from the Apa Tanis' political and economic contacts with Government and the plains of Assam. And this may ultimately become the nucleus of a fully fledged tribal council recruited from among the most capable *buliang* and entitled to speak with authority for the whole tribe.

Even today the *buliang* represent most sections of the population. Besides the *buliang* of patrician class, who are in the majority, there are also *buliang* belonging to *mura* clans, and though these men of 'slave-' descent cannot speak for the domestic slaves who are under the control of their masters, they do to some extent represent the large class of freed slaves and descendants of slaves.

With the many new problems created by the contact with outside forces and the intensified trade relations with tribal neighbours the responsibilities of the *buliang* will increase. As the leaders of the tribe they will have to undertake new tasks in addition to fulfilling their old functions, and there can be no doubt that many of them will be able to adapt themselves to new conditions. Leadership among the Apa Tanis is not a petrified institution based only on hereditary privilege, but is a flexible system under which personality and talent have full scope to assert themselves.

The Apa Tanis with their quick eye for economic advantage can be relied upon to enter in good faith into partnership with the Government of the plains people—and to do their bit to make it a success. But being justly proud of the prosperity and peaceful order which they have established in a valley surrounded by restless, warring tribes, they are extremely sensitive to any interference in their internal affairs. Any suspicion that the people of the plains might try to assume the rôle of 'masters' would arouse violent resentment. They are determined to run their own affairs, and while every officer camping in a Dafla village is inundated by people complaining against each other, Apa Tanis have never appealed to me—nor as far as I know—to any other officer—to intervene in any of their internal disputes. Only in the course of their feud with the Dafla village of Licha did they solicit the help of Government, but even then they had merely the idea of gaining a powerful ally, not of relinquishing their independence by placing themselves under the *protection* of Government.

I do not think that at this stage anything can be gained by interfering with the Apa Tanis' administration of justice. With the gradual growth of collaboration and increased contacts with the outside world the Apa Tanis themselves may feel the need for a more regular procedure, and they may then be persuaded to form a court consisting of selected councillors from all the seven villages, which would try all cases of serious crime.

Government, in the rôle of senior partner and protecting power, could fulfil a useful function by establishing and supervising a machinery for the arbitration of disputes between Apa Tanis and other tribes. Today such disputes often lead to raiding and prolonged warfare, and it would be very much in the interest of all parties concerned if in such cases Government could use its prestige to initiate negotiations on neutral ground, with a Government representative as arbiter and adviser.

This brings us to the problem of Government's policy *vis-a-vis* the tribesmen commonly known as Daflas and, in a limited area on the Kamla River, as Hill Miris. Their position is fundamentally different from that of the Apa Tanis. While the latter are a closely knit community with a pronounced feeling of tribal solidarity, the Daflas are split into innumerable independent groups which do not follow any common line of action and are often at war with each other. To appreciate the difficulty of establishing security and peaceful co-operation in an area inhabited by Daflas or Hill Miris we must realise that here it is the house-hold rather than the village which forms the principal social and political unit. Though as many as thirty joint family houses, each containing anything from three to twelve hearths, may stand on one village-site, the inhabitants do not necessarily constitute a political unit with common interests and a joint system of defence. Each family has its own network of friendships and alliances, and is often indifferent to the fate of neighbouring families. It is no unusual occurrence for one or two houses of a village to be attacked and burnt by a hostile raiding-party, while the other villagers make no attempt to come to their assistance. Similarly there are cases of the men of one household raiding a co-villager's house perhaps a few furlongs away and capturing the inhabitants with a view to obtaining satisfaction of an economic claim.

The clan is no more a political unit than the village. I have come across numerous feuds between members of the same clan, and it seems that the capture or killing of a clansman is considered in no way different from a similar act of violence directed against a member of another clan.

In the absence of chiefs or any authority comparable to the Apa Tanis' *buliang* the Dafla is used to take the law into his own hands and to press any claim if needs be by force. Many a Dafla is captured and kept for months imprisoned in his captor's house for no other reason than that one of his kinsmen has failed to repay a debt. His captor may have no personal grievance against him, but uses him merely as a pawn until the debt is paid in the form of the captive's ransom. Sometimes there is surprisingly little ill-feeling between captor and captive, and it is not uncommon for marriage-alliances to result from the intimacy developed during such periods of captivity.

Warlike as the Daflas are, unlike Nagas they do not raid for the sake of gaining the glory of a head-hunter, nor in order to obtain for their village the soul-force of a victim. The lure of loot and the hope for rich ransoms are certainly powerful motives for raiding, but a good many Daflas raid merely in order to obtain compensation for real or imagined damage, and there are few quarrels that cannot be settled by negotiation and the payment of indemnities. Men who have raided and slain each others' kinsmen will discuss a settlement in quite an amicable fashion, and once losses have been made good by suitable payments, they may become the best of friends.

A special ritual involving the sacrifice of a mithan accompanies the conclusion of a friendship-pact (*pakhe*) between former enemies, and just as individuals conclude *pakhe*-pact, so villages establish peace-treaties, called *dapo* which at least in theory are binding on all inhabitants of a village. Indeed the observance of *dapo*-treaties is one of the few outward manifestations of a certain germinal village-solidarity.

This usage of the Dafla to terminate even the most serious feuds through negotiation and the ultimate conclusion of friendship-pacts suggests the means of bringing about a restriction of raiding and ultimately perhaps the pacification of the whole area. To encourage and facilitate the conclusion of *pakhe* and *dapo*-pacts between as many individuals and villages as possible is the surest way to the consolidation of peace ; here too we must realize that the absence among both Daflas and Miris of any recognized authority makes the establishment of any type of Indirect Rule or even of a stable system of partnership and economic influence extremely difficult, true, some powerful and wealthy Daflas command a certain following even outside their own homestead, and the influence which Government exerts at present in a limited area is mainly based on good relations with such prominent men. To extend and consolidate this influence it will be necessary to study and map the net-work of alliances and ceremonial friendships between the more eminent tribesmen. For among both Daflas and Miris the political set-up is based on such personal alliances between individual householders, alliances which are established and periodically strengthened by elaborate exchanges of valuables, mithan and daughters given in marriage.

The strong man, wealthy enough to surround himself with a circle of business friends and relations-in-law (some Daflas have as many as seven or eight wives) may attain in this way a certain measure of security, and can often indulge in raiding without running any great risk of retaliatory action. But the small man, without powerful allies, must steer precariously through the currents of the feuds and enmities of the great ; it is he who would gain most from the establishment of a stable peace.

How is it possible to replace a rule of force, the fear of raids and the uneasy peace overshadowed by the claims and threats of litigants by a rule of law under which even the smallest hamlet can enjoy security ? Short of policing the country with large military forces—an obviously impracticable solution—nothing is likely to change Dafla temperament and the Daflas' habit of securing what they consider legitimate claims by physical force within the span of a few years. Time for gradual adjustment must be allowed if the Dafla is to be weaned from unrestricted warfare and accustomed to the peaceful settlement of disputes. Improvement of communications, economic advantages resulting from an expansion of trade, and contact with a power standing above tribal politics, will of themselves have a stabilizing effect and counteract *stimuli* to war. There exist, moreover, indigenous institutions serving the maintenance of tribal harmony, and by encouraging such institutions Government may be able to accelerate the process of pacification.

The Dafla's most effective mechanism for re-establishing friendly relations between hostile parties is the *mel* or tribal council, an informal gathering attended by the two disputing parties and a number of mediators and spectators. Usually such *mel* are held with the object of settling one specific dispute and are preceded by the long drawn out negotiations of go-betweens ; but it should be possible to institute periodical *mel* where prominent men enjoying the confidence of both their fellow-tribesmen and of Government can meet regularly to discuss current affairs and such disputes as may have occurred in their area. Not every dispute brought before such a regional council will necessarily be settled, but the opportunity of personal contact, in an atmosphere of temporary security, may help many opponents to come to terms.

At first it may be expedient for Government to confine its part to guaranteeing freedom of passage to all those attending the council's meeting. It would be impracticable to reserve to officers attending a *mel* as observers a right of veto, and even more so to commit Government to enforcing the decisions of any tribal council. The recording of cases and decisions will be invaluable for any future codification of the Daflas' customary law, but at this stage direct intervention in tribal quarrels is inadvisable for more than one reason : it must often remain ineffective owing to the immobility of the small forces at the disposal of officers, it is likely to encourage litigation and prejudice the chances of compromise, and last, but not least, at a time when little is as yet known of Dafla custom it would be difficult to be sure of assessing the right and wrong of every case.

For the prestige and ultimate influence of the 'Senior Partner' it is far better to allow a tribal council to take a wrong decision than to associate Government with any course of action which runs counter to the tribesmen's idea of justice. The aim must be to instil into the Daflas a sense of joint responsibility, and this can be achieved only by allowing the tribal councils to work according to their own lights. The initiative for the establishment of tribal councils or periodical *mel* must, however, come from Government. What then shall be the area from which the members of each council are to be drawn ? In view of the Daflas' political tendencies this area cannot be large and individual river-valleys or parts thereof suggest themselves as primary local units, *e. g.*, men of the villages in the Kiyi Valley may meet in one council, people from the lower Panior Valley in another, and representatives of the Daflas of the Par Valley in a third. In case of disputes between members of two such areas mediation may be attempted by inviting senior members of both councils to a joint meeting. We should not assume, however, that a rule of law, consultation in place of direct action, a feeling of tribal unity in place of violent individualism, a spirit of compromise in place of intransigeanec and greed can be created by a stroke of the pen. Many will be the tribal councils that break up in disagreement, many times will individual households or even whole villages flaunt all talk of peace and yield to the lure of war and adventure.

In extreme cases when groups of outstanding warriors attempt to terrorize weaker neighbours, restraining action by Government forces may be the only means of re-establishing peace. But any such action must remain an exception, for at this early stage Government cannot possibly shoulder the

gigantic task of policing the whole roadless and largely unexplored mountain country between the foothills and the Great Himalayan Range. Even the limited influence which Government can wield through the organization of tribal councils must, for the present, be confined to the explored country south of the Kamla and Lower Khru. In this zone Government will do well to institute the system of paid tribal interpreters and to invest prominent men with the red mantles of official recognition.* Nearly all the Hill Miris and Daflas who receive *posa*-payments live in this area and they can be relied upon at least not openly to oppose Government's policy. Beyond lies a zone which can be visited only occasionally and at considerable cost, and where friendly relations with individual prominent men, strengthened by *dapo*-pacts, must be the immediate aim. But this zone does not extend further than fifty miles into the hills, and beyond lie unexplored regions where even the name of Government is little more than a vague rumour. Consolidation in the first zone is essential before friendships with individual prominent men in the middle zone can be developed into concrete influence ; without secure lines of communications, dependent on such influence, penetration into the unexplored country on the upper courses of Khru, Kamla and Subansiri will be hazardous for small parties and impossible for arge expeditions.

Whatever methods Government may adopt to extend its influence over the Subansiri Region penetration can thus be achieved only by stages. Just as the Naga Hills were for long divided into the fully administered Naga Hills District, a 'controlled' zone and the completely independent tribal country along the Patkoi Range, so will the Subansiri Region fall naturally into several zones in each of which Government influence will be of varying degree.

Whereas in the foothills it may be possible to put a stop to inter-village warfare within the next five years, much time will elapse before Government can exert any effective check on tribal feuds in the regions of the Upper Khru and Upper Kamla. And the principle of progress by slow stages will apply not only to the area to be controlled, but equally to the intensity of that control. Prevention of full scale raiding may be achieved long before it is possible to banish the use of force from all tribal affairs. The practice of attaching by force the movable property or even the person of a defaulting debtor will persist as long as there is no impartial tribunal which will confirm a man's legitimate claim and which commands the means of enforcing sanction against those disregarding its verdict.

Any outside power establishing itself in the rôle of such a tribunal will only foster the Dafla's tendency to litigousness. Institutions destined to pave the way to organised self-government must be anchored in tribal tradition and embody tribal conceptions of right and wrong ; they must be worked by the tribesmen themselves and derive their sanction from a public opinion gradually adjusting itself to modern conditions.

How are we to translate this principle into practical policy ? The first task of the administrative officer must be to organize manageable units consisting of a very limited number of villages which stand already in close economic and social relations. Within each such unit of perhaps four or five villages men must be selected to fulfil the tasks of interpreters, village-representatives and porter-foremen. The interpreter, who should have a working knowledge of Assamese as well as a good status in his own community, must be a paid Government servant. He is to be a 'man of Government', who not only interprets for officers, but keeps Government in touch with local affairs, conveys messages and, protected by his official position, acts as mediator in disputes between members of his own group of villages. The village-representatives who are invested with red mantles as sign of Government's confidence, must be prominent men commanding influence within their community and willing to co-operate with Government. But unlike interpreters they must not be regarded as Government servants ; their main function is to represent their fellow-tribesmen *vis-a-vis* the outside world, and their position in the tribe would be undermined if they were under the orders of any outside power. Nor must they be expected to administer justice or to enforce tribal law. It must be remembered that they are not "Chiefs" and that the idea of authority vested in any one man is foreign to Daflas. In this first stage they can be no more than a recognized link between Government and the tribesmen, but the outward symbol of their position is likely to create a spirit of fraternity between all red-cloth holders, so that gradually a community of interests grows up amongst the most prominent men of several villages and develops into a stabilizing influence. The red-cloth holders will *ipso facto* be members of the regional councils, whereas the position of Government interpreters will be that of "Secretaries"—albeit at first illiterate—with the duty of communicating important decisions to Government.

Finally there are in the zone so far covered by exploratory expeditions young men of intelligence and efficiency, who have proved capable of managing gangs of porters. Where tribal porters were employed over longer periods, these men became automatically the gang-leaders (*sirdar*) ; they showed a considerable sense of responsibility in conveying—often without supervision— valuable loads across difficult country. If Government intends to consolidate its influence these porter *sirdar* might, with advantage, be accorded a recognized status as foremen for all public works, and be remunerated by small annual retaining-fees in addition to such wages as they earn when working full-time for Government. Their services will be invaluable not only for the recruitment and management of porters, but also for the maintenance of tracks and bridges.

Interpreters, red cloth-holders and gang-foremen will be the three pillars on which Government's influence will rest for a considerable time to come. Success or failure of Government's policy will largely depend on the choice of these men and on their personal relations with the officers of Government. To the tribesman Government is not an abstraction but the concrete power standing behind the officer with whom he comes in contact. The nature of this power is judged by no other criteria than by the officer's behaviour and attitude, and Government will, therefore, be considered a friendly power only if the officer succeeds in evoking sentiments of friendship and mutual trust in the hearts of the tribes men.

SLAVERY

Successful co-operation between Government and the tribesmen depends on a measure of agreement on certain basic principles and aims. In the economic field such agreement is easily reached because Government's efforts to increase trade and improve communications are fully consistent with every Dafla's and Apa Tani's wish to increase his wealth and improve his standard of living. Similarly the organization of tribal councils and the gradual substitution of arbitration for force in the settlement of disputes meet the individual householder's desire for security of person and property, and there are indeed few Daflas and even fewer Apa Tanis who consciously prefer war to mutual adjustment by negotiation. Differences between Government and tribal opinion relates in these spheres rather to method and detail than to principle. But in the attitude to slavery an institution deeply anchored both in Dafla and Apa Tani Society, there is from the very out-set a deep cleavage between Government's and the tribesmen's point of view. To the tribesman

*In the Naga and Abor Hills village headmen and interpreters are given cloaks of red cloth as symbols of office.

slavery is one of the foundations of personal wealth, an institution hallowed by tradition and supported even by eschatological beliefs, whereas to Government it is a custom contradictory to the elementary rights of man and banned by a number of inter-national agreements. But while in territory not under the direct control of the Government of India, the provisions of the Geneva Convention may be only of academic interest, the welfare of the many Dafla and Apa Tani slaves cannot remain a matter of indifference to the officers representing Government in tribal country. The problem is then how their interests can best be served without alienating tribal opinion and jeopardizing the good relations with Daflas, Miris and Apa Tanis that have been built up during the last few years.

It has for long been the accepted practice that any slave who crosses the boundary between the Tribal Area and the Province of Assam and invokes the protection of Government automatically gains his freedom and is allowed to settle in one of the Dafla villages of the plains. The tribesmen though at first resentful, have reconciled themselves to the existence of such an asylum for slaves ; they recognize the overwhelming material power of Government in the plains, and regard an escaped slave under the protection of Government in the same way as a slave who finds refuge in the house of a Dafla neighbour strong enough to resist the original master's demands for compensation.

But despite the existence of this safe asylum in the plains, hundreds of Apa Tani and Dafla slaves annually visit the bazaars of Assam without availing themselves of the opportunity of gaining their freedom. All but an insignificant fraction are content to return with their purchases and earnings to the hills and their masters. This alone seems to suggest that a slave's position in tribal society is on the whole not as unenviable as might be assumed. Among the Daflas and Miris a slave can rise to the status of a fully privileged member of his former master's clan, while many Apa Tani slaves enjoy complete economic independence with nothing reminding them of their one-time servitude but certain ceremonial obligations. Even those slaves who live in the houses of their masters are often hardly distinguishable from the free members of the family.

It is the fate of prisoners of war or casual captives, torn from their familiar surroundings and fettered for long months to prevent escape only to be sold as slaves to distant villages, which on purely humanitarian grounds calls for the suppression of slave-raiding. This again can be achieved only by stages together with the general pacification of the country.

But what attitude should Government take *vis-a-vis* existing slaves ? A realistic approach, free of sentimentality born of an entirely different social background, is essential for a practicable solution of this problem. It is obvious to any one familiar with the Subansiri Region that slavery cannot be abolished merely by a decree of Government. There exists as yet no machinery to enforce such a decree throughout the tribal area and any attempt to free slaves in a limited number of villages, say of the foothills, would have the most unfortunate results on the slaves in other areas. For there can be no doubt that the abolishment of slavery in the foothills would prompt many slave-owners of the villages further in the interior to forestall Government's action by selling their domestic slaves to tribesmen in distant areas. Perhaps on the upper Khru and Kamla well outside the range of Government's influence. This is what happened when slavery was abolished in the administered parts of the Naga Hills, and little imagination is required to visualize the sufferings of such slaves suddenly torn from an environment familiar to them since childhood and dragged, probably by a sequence of purchasers and sellers, to far off villages of different custom and language.

Thus any drastic action which may benefit a few slaves in villages close to the plains would almost certainly be prejudical to the welfare of slaves in other areas. Restraint on the part of Government will, therefore, be in the interest of the slave-population as well as of Government's relations with the upper strata of Dafla and Apa Tani society. With the opening up of the country and closer contact with the outside world slavery will gradually die a natural death. We have seen how in recent years Apa Tanis of slave-class bettered their economic status by wage-earning and trade in the plains, and their opportunities for earning cash will multiply if Government consolidates its influence in the hills. The maintenance of trade depots and communications, the building of tracks and bridges, and the transport of the loads of Government officers will all depend on local labour, and it has been the general experience that slaves are the first to enlist as porters or labourers. Though sometimes they have to hand-over part of their earnings to their master, they are as a rule allowed to use their wages to buy goods for trade or for their own use.

It might be possible to introduce a system whereby slaves can " purchase " their freedom by handing over to their masters part of their wages or trade-gains until their original price has been refunded and their masters grant them the status of free members of their clan. But even without such a system the position of slaves earning wages is bound to improve, and I have little doubt that within a generation slavery will in many areas have assumed the character of domestic service. It is probable that rather than fend for themselves many Dafla slaves will prefer to remain under the protection of powerful and wealthy masters. Among the Apa Tanis the social distinction between patricians and the descendants of slaves will long persist, but the economic differences between the two classes will gradually be levelled.

LAND TENURE AND AGRICULTURE

Experience in other parts of India inhabited by tribal populations has amply demonstrated that a clarification of the rights of land-tenure should be undertaken as early as possible. In most Indian provinces land-allienation Acts have come too late to protect the aboriginals from dispossession by outsiders, and the reservation of forests (however necessary in the wider national interest) has ridden rough-shod over the older rights of jungle-tribes. In the interest of the frontier tribes' future it is, therefore, essential that their inalienable rights on their homeland are recognized and secured by laws that leave no loophole for the infiltration of outsiders, be they cultivators or exponents of big business. For the pacific action of the tribesmen will deprive them of their natural defence against adventurers and land-grabbing settlers, and preventative legislation must replace the weapons of tribal warfare. The development of the hills of the North-East Frontier must be for the benefit of the local population, which ought never to share the fate of so many other primitive folks and be reduced to the position of landless labourers on the soil which was their fathers' and forefathers'. Nor will anyone seriously advocate the South African method of squeezing the tribesmen into congested ' reserves ' in order to gain settling-space for immigrant populations. Such surplus land as may be found in some areas will have to be preserved towards eventual expansion of cultivation necessitated by the increase in population, which is likely to result from the suppression of raiding, the introduction of medical services and improvements in agricultural technique.

Among the Apa Tanis the ownership of land is seldom subject to doubt. There is a clear distinction between pasture-land and hunting grounds owned communally by clan or village, and the privately owned gardens and rice or millet-fields. The preparation and regular maintenance of a record-of-rights would meet with no great difficulties, and the usual methods of surveying and registering cultivated land would require only minor adjustments. The Daflas on the other hand, who are mainly "jhum" cultivators, do not as a rule recognize permanent individual rights in land. Whoever fells a piece of jungle gains by virtue of his initial effort the right to cultivate the cleared land for the next period of cultivation, which extends rarely to more than two or three years. When the land reverts to jungle this right lapses, and there exist consequently no permanent proprietary rights in land except in those villages near the Apa Tani country where Daflas, obviously inspired by their neighbours, have taken to wet cultivation on carefully constructed terraces. These terraces are cultivated permanently and are the property of individuals.

The main issue is how to safeguard in perpetuity the Daflas' title to land which they are accustomed to cultivate in irregular rotation without themselves recognizing any permanent rights of individual families. There is the generally accepted belief that by inhabiting a tract of land a clan or group of clans establishes a title to the territory, and the boundaries of such tracts are known to all neighbours. If such a group is driven out by warring immigrants the latter gain a right to the land by virtue of conquest, but if a clan abandons its land voluntarily new-comers settling on the vacant land are expected to pay the former inhabitants a nominal fee and thereby they acquire rights of occupation. This, however, does not apply to families joining existing villages ; as soon as they are accepted and allowed to settle they automatically gain the right to cultivate on the village-land.

The most obvious solution might be, therefore, to vest titles to the soil in the village-communities as a whole, but there arises at once the difficulty that, unlike Apa Tani or Naga villages, Dafla villages are not stable units. Sites are changed every generation or so and the composition of villages changes almost year by year. Another obstacle in the way of vesting permanent communal rights in the village is the fact that very few Dafla communities can indefinitely find adequate subsistance within the limits of the land now claimed as theirs. Either local conditions of soil and climate do not permit a system of shifting-cultivation whereby the fertility of the soil is retained through regulated periods of fallow, or the Daflas are less skilful than Nagas in judging when a particular piece of land may again be cleared of forest-growth and taken under cultivation. Without a very careful study of soil-conditions it is impossible to discover the causes for the difference in the results of shifting cultivation in the Dafla country and, for instance, in the Konyak Naga Hills. But the fact remains that the land around many Dafla villages is almost completely exhausted and denuded of forest-growth, and that the many recent movements and migrations of Dafla clans have obviously been motivated by the necessity of finding new cultivable land. Large areas, such as the tract round Talo and Jorum have already been transformed into grassland unsuitable for cultivation, and in the Upper Panior Valley, virgin forest has receded to the steepest slopes along the crests of the hills. The large forest-areas in the foothills, where villages are as yet only small enclaves in unbroken stretches of virgin forest, still offer opportunities for the settlement of colonists from the interior ; but periodical movements of tribal groups in search of land do not make for economic and political stability, and that a point may come when deforestation and deterioration of soil will endanger the very foundations of Dafla economics.

No greater service could be rendered to the Daflas than to instruct them in methods of cultivation where by soil-fertility could be preserved. Terracing, with or without irrigation, would seem the most obvious way of preventing erosion and impoverishment of the soil, and the example of the Dafla villages in touch with Apa Tanis shows that Daflas are capable of learning new methods of agriculture even if they involve strenuous labour of a novel type.

Within the system of *jhum*-cultivation there are also ways of minimizing the dangers of erosion, permanent deforestation and soil-exhaustion. Narrow belts of trees left standing between individual blocks of cultivation, as it is customary among Miris of the Uper Kamla Valley, greatly facilitates the regeneration of forest, and it is very probable that scientifically guided rotation of crops, perhaps accompanied by a variation of the Burmese *taungya* system of planting trees together with the last crop, would be helpful in retaining permanently the fertility of the soil.

The use of animal-traction and ploughs, on the other hand, which in most countries has revolutionized agriculture, has little future in an area where it is often difficult to find within a radius of several miles any level space big enough even to pitch a tent. Dafla agriculture must always be mainly cultivation on hill-slopes where hoe and digging-stick cannot be replaced by the plough. But the types of implements wielded by hand can, of course, be improved ; spades made of the shoulder-blades of mithan will in time give way to iron tools.

Conditions in the Apa Tani valley are very different. There a most highly developed system of agriculture is already in being, and I doubt whether there are many places in India where so much care and labour is expended per acre of cultivated land.

This does not mean, however, that there is no scope for improvement. Improved varieties of rice, for instance, may yield even richer crops or at least a grain of superior flavour. But whether such newly introduced types would thrive as perennials like some varieties of Apa Tani rice is a question which only experiment can solve. New vegetables and larger fruiting potatoes, tomatoes and fruits will almost certainly benefit the Apa Tanis and my experience in 1945 when I distributed large quantities of vegetable seed has shown that they are keen on trying out new varieties.

A more difficult problem is the advisability of introducing the plough into the Apa Tani country. While on the comparatively small and irregularly shaped rice terraces the use of the plough would not necessarily increase efficiency, on the open stretches of dry land it would no doubt save a great deal of human labour. The cultivation of these dry lands where now many a poor man can raise a crop without any great outlay of capital, would thus become more profitable and there is the danger that the rich man, who would be the first to have plough cattle, would try to monopolize these lands and thus close one of the last openings for the independent enterprise of the poor. Moreover, the introduction of the plough would throw out of employment many poor men and women, who now make a living by working for men with large holdings. Since not labour but land is limited, the rich men in possession of ploughs could not increase production to any great extent by enlarging the area under cultivation, but they could cut down the cost of production, and, no longer obliged to feed and pay large numbers of labourers, could raise their sales of more cheaply produced rice to Daflas and thereby increase their wealth in mithan. It is obvious that this would upset the distribution of the food-supply within the Apa Tani community and lead to an increase in the rich man's rice exports at the expense of the landless poor.

It may be that now the Apa Tanis' isolation has been broken and wealthy men who were never used to go to the plains are now coming in contact with plains Daflas and other outsiders familiar with ploughing, the plough will, with or without Government encouragement, find its way into the Apa Tani country. Such an innovation may, however, gravely disturb the harmony of Apa Tani society unless it is preceded either by an enlargement of the area under cultivation or by the establishment of new industries and village-crafts capable of absorbing the displaced labour.

In the Apa Tani valley there is little scope for any large scale expansion of cultivation, but with the pacification of the country and the exclusion of danger from raids, it might be possible to encourage colonists from the Apa Tani country to settle in adjacent valleys. There are opportunities for such colonization in the swampy dales between the south end of the valley and the Pangen River, and in the Pein Valley, six miles to the north of the Apa Tani country, there is enough flat land suitable for plough cultivation and irrigation to support a considerable population. Some of the surrounding slopes are used for *jhuming* by a small Dafla community, but the flat bottom of the valley lies fallow and Apa Tanis, if given security, might be able to create here and elsewhere islands of civilization on a smaller scale, of course, than in their nearby homeland, but based on a similar type of cultivation. Far from harming the few Dafla families whose houses and cultivation lie on the hills high above the valley bottom, the example of the Apa Tanis may ultimately encourage the Daflas to similar efforts as it has so successfully done in such villages as Mai.

So superior is the Apa Tanis' agricultural technique compared with the crude ways of Dafla tillage that a planned economic development of the Subansiri Region should offer the Apa Tanis ample scope for employment as agricultural instructors. Just as now some of the poorer Apa Tanis supplement their income by working every year for several weeks in the plains, so they would no doubt be prepared to demonstrate superior methods of tillage to their Dafla and Miri neighbours provided that Government remunerated them and guaranteed their safety while on 'foreign' soil.

TRADE AND LOCAL INDUSTRIES

Even with the present primitive methods of cultivation the Subansiri Region is practically a self-sufficient unit in regard to food supplies. There is a good deal of interchange of foodstuffs between Apa Tanis and the neighbouring Daflas who barter grain for sacrificial animals, but apart from their regular purchases of salt the tribesmen do not rely to any appreciable extent on the imports of food from the plains.

This self-sufficiency does not however extend to all spheres of life. Besides salt, the tribesmen of today stand in greater or lesser need of two commodities: iron implements and cotton cloth. The main sources of supply and the centres of distribution for these two imports are, as they are for salt, the plains of Assam for the Southern tribesmen who sell their labour to gain the necessary purchasing power and the highlands of South-East Tibet for the northern tribesmen who barter the wild products of their hills and forests against their needs ; a subsidiary centre of distribution is the Apa Tani country where a type of black salt is reduced from vegetable ash, iron implements are manufactured on a commercial basis from iron procured from the plains and cloth is woven from cotton grown by local Daflas. The divide between the two major spheres of trade influence runs in a north-easterly direction, roughly midway through the Subansiri area.

In the contact zones of Tribal and Assamese and Tribal and Tibetan culture the tribesmen have grown to regard imported salt, iron implements and cloth, cotton and silk in the south and woollen in the north, as essentials. But the peoples inhabiting the country to either side of the trade divide are pitiably short in supply of salt, use bone and bamboo agricultural implements and in some areas dress for the most part in skins, fibre fabrics and grass skirts.

While it would seem that the extent of Tibetan infiltration has remained static for several decades, the intensification of trade in Assamese products due to the expansion of wage-earning possibilities in the plains and the added stimuli of the last two seasons' earnings on Government's works in the hills has resulted in a deepening penetration of Assamese goods. It would not be practical politics to try to revert to total self-sufficiency in tribal life, for the acquisition of modern implements and more effective techniques are the surest way of raising the standard of living. Nor is there any need for a radical change in Dafla economics which rest on the secure foundation of agriculture and animal husbandry. Seasonal wage-earning in the plains, though it exposes the tribesmen to diseases against which he has no resistance and to fluctuations of the Assamese labour market over which he has no control, serves as a healthy corrective of extreme differences between rich and poor. Rather should it be Government's policy to direct the tribesmen's labour potential into the hills for the development of his own homeland, to ensure the supply of those products which will help him to raise his standard of living without allowing him to exhaust his purchasing power on tawdry goods and to encourage the production of goods for export so that the tribesmen's trading transactions need not for all time be based on the one-sided purchase of commodities but will gradually develop into an exchange of goods.

Let us first consider the avenues open to the Daflas and Miris whose economic status and level of culture are very similar. South of the Panior and Lower Kamla the tribesmen obtain practically all cloth from bazaars in the plains ; weaving is here not practised, and used to cheap machine made bazaar cloth, the tribesmen have largely lost the appreciation of the durable and æsthetically far superior Dafla cloth. Only a slump on the labour market and consequent difficulties of earning cash might induce them to consider a revival of their own weaving industry. Yet encouragement of the cultivation of an improved type of cotton and of weaving on an experimental scale in selected villages might be worthwhile, particularly if the scheme were started in villages where there are several women who come from areas where weaving is still practised as a tribal craft. Likewise an increased supply of iron would automatically encourage the local blacksmiths to greater effort, would stimulate inter-tribal trade and make available to a wider circle the improved tools necessary for a larger crop outturn.

The introduction of new vegetables and certain cash crops, such as cardamons, in the hills would almost certainly meet with success. Oranges and other citrus fruit, which grow well in the Miri Hills south of the Kamla and are to be found wild on the banks of the Upper Panior, would probably thrive in the Par valley and where villages are only one or two days' march from the plains the fruit could be marketed without difficulty. The same applies to vegetables : the Daflas are used to taking considerable care over the fenced-in garden plots near their houses and there is no reason why with a little instruction they should not succeed in raising vegetables which, grown at an altitude of 3,000 or 4,000 feet, might have certain advantages over the vegetables grown in the plains.

An entirely new industry could perhaps be created by instructing the Daflas in the curing of hides. The skins of wild animals trapped and shot, and of the even more numerous sacrificial mithan, pigs and goats are not put to any great use and are indeed often cut up and eaten together with the flesh. Hides are sometimes used as mats, or fashioned into belts and bags, but Daflas know only how to dry and not how to tan skins. They have none of the Hindu's prejudice against leather-work and there can be little doubt that with a little guidance the animal skins at their disposal might be turned into a valuable exchange article if cured in a manner not inferior to the methods of the ordinary Indian village tanner.

The Dafla's aptitude for animal husbandry could also be turned to profit. In the areas where deforestation has become a problem, such as the large hillocky treeless tract between the Panior River and the ridge of Mai, Jorum and Talo, a tract no longer suitable for 'jhum' cultivation, an experiment in sheep-breeding might be worthwhile. If sheep can be bred successfully by the Mönbas of the Dirang Dzong area, they may also thrive in the Dafla Hills and just as the Daflas now sell cotton to Apa Tani weavers, they might dispose with even greater profit of wool.

The case of the Apa Tanis is rather different. Although they are far less dependent on trade with the plains than the Daflas of the Par valley or the South Kamla Miris their diligence and skill in various industries has enabled them to profit most from the developments of the last 50 years and they have used their new contacts for the extension of their inter-tribal trade. Their weaving industry is so highly developed that they produce cloth not only for home-consumption but also for export. But while they can barter cotton from neighbouring Dafla villages, they have no other way of obtaining wool than by buying Bhutia woollen cloth in the bazaars of the plains, where, however, it is not always available. It is doubtful whether sheep could be successfully introduced into the Apa Tani country ; the rolling hills fringing the valley though likely to provide pasture are perhaps too damp, but if the Daflas to the south took to sheep breeding Apa Tanis could buy the wool for rice and their women might be taught to spin woollen yarn and weave light woollen cloth which would rival the Assamese silk cloths now valued for their softness and warmth, but which only the rich can afford.

At this stage, when the closer contact with outsiders offers the Apa Tanis the opportunity of obtaining without great effort a wide range of novel articles, it may be difficult, however, to persuade the Apa Tanis to embark on the learning of a new craft. Their year is meticulously divided into periods of specific activities and additions to their programme of work may not altogether appeal to them. When in 1944 and 1945 hundreds of Apa Tanis worked for Government as porters and earned thereby thousands of rupees in cash, they were mainly anxious to purchase white machine-made cotton cloth, not because they preferred it to the æsthetically far superior indigenous cloth, but because it could be obtained with comparatively little effort: by working for ten days a man could purchase four cloths while a woman takes hardly less than ten days to weave one cloth. Apart from its greater æsthetic value, however, Apa Tani cloth is at least four times as durable as cheap mill-cloth and in the long run it will pay the Apa Tanis to maintain their own weaving industry. Government would only do them a disservice by encouraging the purchase of goods which are likely to displace the products of the local craftsmen, products which have served the Apa Tanis well in the past, and which will still serve them in years when they may have no opportunity of earning cash by work for Government or plainsmen. In the meanwhile it might be as well to make available at the local trade-depôt suitable cotton yarn rather than bazaar cloth, for at present it is the scarcity of cotton which limits the output of the Apa Tanis' weaving industry. Likewise the shortage of iron prevents the Apa Tani blacksmiths, whose wares are in demand right up to the Assam-Tibet trade-divide, from increasing his output of implements, and a steady supply of iron would greatly help in developing the Apa Tani country as a tribal manufacturing centre of the first order.

Good craftsmen, hard workers, and daring traders the Apa Tanis seem predistined to play a leading rôle in the economic advancement of the whole Subansiri Region and by stimulating their industries and trade Government can help to better the condition of populations beyond the range of its direct influence.

Finally we may ask ourselves how the closer economic relations of Apa Tanis, South Kamla Miris and the Daflas of the Par and Panior Regions with Government and the population of the Assamese plains are likely to react on the tribesmen in the areas which are at present under the influence of Tibetan trade. With larger quantities of Assamese goods such as iron and salt available in the hills south of the Khru and Kamla, and the impetus thereby lent to the activities of Apa Tani traders, increasing supplies of salt as well as swords, *dao*, knives and hoes will reach the tribesmen to either side of the old trade-divide, where they may eventually displace some of the articles of Tibetan origin. But in view of the difficulties of transport and the uncertainty of communications it is for many years to come unlikely that the trade-divide will recede northwards by more than fifteen or at the most twenty-five miles. Even less probable is it that Assamese or Apa Tani cloth will within any measurable time be able to compete with the warm, durable and extremely cheap Tibetan woollen cloth which is universally worn in such areas as the Selu and Möngö valleys. Cotton cloth is unsuitable for these attitudes and any woollen cloth coming from India would be prohibitively expensive. Even if sheep-breeding is introduced among those Daflas now in contact with Assam the output of wool will for a long time to come meet only local requirements. But there is a yet more cogent reason why the trade of the tribes on the Upper Khru, and the Upper Kamla, the Selu and the Upper Subansiri is not likely to be diverted from Tibet. The exchange-goods which these tribesmen have to offer—vegetable dyes, cane ropes, roughly cured skins and various jungle produce—are highly prized by the Tibetans but have no or little market value among Apa Tanis and Southern Daflas and could never be disposed of in the plains of Assam. Indeed Apa Tanis and South Kamla Miris will only be interested in extending their trade further north into the region of the Upper Kamla and its tributaries, if through the tribesmen of that area they can obtain more of those Tibetan goods valued for their æsthetic qualities and traditional associations. Thus the expansion of trade in the zone under Indian influence, which will provide such tribes as the Apa Tanis and Hill Miris with a supply of exchange-goods for trade with the tribes further to the north, will not replace, but rather stimulate trade with Tibet by encouraging the tribesmen along the trade-divide to acquire more Tibetan goods with which to barter articles obtainable only from Assam. If thereby the scarcity belt, where at present people do not obtain sufficient quantities of salt and iron either from India or from Tibet, can be gradually narrowed and perhaps ultimately eliminated, economic penetration in the Subansiri Region will have brought concrete benefits to a very considerable population to both sides of the present Indo-Tibetan trade-divide.

EDUCATION

If the tribesmen of the Subansiri Region are to adapt themselves and their style of living to closer contacts with the outside world, a measure of education is indispensable to make this process a success. Only literacy and a knowledge of Assamese can enable Daflas or Apa Tanis to deal in equal terms with the people of the plains. Ignorant of the *lingua franca* and even the simplest accounts they have to rely, in their economic relations with the outside world, on the tutelage of Government. And though Government as the 'senior partner' will for many years have to continue to protect the hillmen as far as possible from economic exploitation, it is in the interests of both parties that the tribesmen shall be educated to attain as soon as possible a reasonable degree of self-reliance, not only in the administration of their own affairs, but also in their relations with other populations.

But what type of education is most likely to give to the Dafla and Apa Tani self-reliance and equip him for the manifold contacts with outsiders which the opening up of the country will inevitably involve ? There can be no reasonable doubt that acquisition of a working knowledge of colloquial Assamese must be the first aim of any educational effort. Relations with officers of Government as well as with the population of the plains would at once become easier and smoother if a number of prominent tribesmen were able to converse in Assamese. At present it is mainly men of low status and little importance who have picked up a smattering of Assamese while working for wages in the plains. The prominent men, on whose judgment the attitude of whole villages depends, have, as a rule, no knowledge of Assamese. When I first visited the Apa Tani country the relations between this important tribe of 20,000 and Government depended almost entirely on one Dafla interpreter, Kop Temi, who was the only person familiar with both Assamese and Apa Tani. The presence of a Government party in the Apa Tani country in 1944 and again in 1945 enabled several young Apa Tanis of good status to pick up a little Assamese, but even at the end of the second season none of them could interpret any difficult conversation, while the clan-heads and older councillors knew no Assamese whatsoever. Among the Daflas of the Par Valley and the South Kamla Miris one meets individual men and women who through frequent visits to the plains have acquired a certain fluency in Assamese, but as one moves northwards through the Kiyi Valley into the Khru Region or along the Kamla river Assamese soon loses its usefulness as a medium of intercourse, none of the tribesmen knowing even a few words of the language.

Where even mutual understanding with adults is still difficult, education and particularly education of children cannot follow orthodox lines. At the present stage it would be futile to open schools for Apa Tani or Dafla children. Neither parents nor children would comprehend the usefulness of such schooling and the teachers who would have to be imported would have no means of communicating with their pupils.

The initial approach will have to be different. Small groups of selected young men should be taught colloquial Assamese in an informal way and this would create at least a nucleus of people who realize the advantages of learning a foreign language. At first the teaching should be purely vocal, and only when the students have understood that to every word in their tribal dialect corresponds a word in Assamese, should they be taught the link between the phonetic sound and a written symbol. An adaptation of Laubach's Method of Adult Education will probably be the most successful, but the difficulty is at present that no one capable of reducing a tonal language to writing has as yet a sufficient knowledge of Apa Tani or any of the Dafla dialects. The printing of charts and books will, therefore, have to wait, but specially chosen teachers from other hill tribes, *e.g.*, Nagas under the guidance of an officer experienced in, and original education could start experimental teaching straightaway. There can be no two views as to the script which should be used in writing the tribal dialects. Assamese is the obvious choice, for Assamese is the language through which the tribesmen will have to communicate with the outside world.

Once the idea of the written word—today utterly foreign to the majority of tribesmen—has gained ground and a few adults are able to put their knowledge of writing to practical use it will be time to begin with the education of children. By then the teachers who have worked among adults should have learnt enough of the local dialects to use them as media of instruction and with their help educationalists should be able to compose simple primers in the tribal languages.

While for adults the acquisition of a second language and the ability to read and write it will be an extraordinary achievement and indeed as much as adult education can be expected to impart in the circumstances, child education cannot be divorced from the question of values. The Assamese school-books which are likely to be used are based on certain cultural values, and if these—as may well happen—run counter to those accepted in tribal society, there arises the danger of a conflict of ideas. Any discrepancy between the values taught in school and those assimilated by the child at home and in the village must lead to mal-adjustment and disharmony. I am not at all sure whether detribalized Nagas or Khasis working as teachers among Apa Tanis and Daflas can always be relied to base their general teaching on the social and ethical values of the tribesmen. Close supervision and guidance by an expert is here indispensable. That schools can become local points of tribal culture, as well as centres of progress, I have been able to show in the Gond schools of Hyderabad, and I am convinced that an anthropological approach to the planning of education can achieve similar results elsewhere. The school and the school-books must stand in close relation to the actualities of tribal life, and children must be imbued with respect for the tribal institutions which sustain the social existence of the community. Instruction in improved agricultural methods and useful arts and crafts is of course, also desirable, but even more important is the general orientation of school-education. It must not lead away from the tribe, to a world where a clerkship in an office appears as the crown of an 'educated' man's career ; it must lead into the heart of tribal life with ambition directed towards service on village and regional councils, in schools, trade-depôts and the other local institutions. It will be difficult however, to inculcate such a spirits in the school-boys until young men *of the tribe* have been trained as teachers. The primary aim of any educational system should, therefore, be the training of intelligent tribesmen for the post of teachers in the first village-schools. Progress will no doubt be slower than among the Gonds, who, though without a written language of their own, were fully alive to the advantages of literacy. But the ultimate fate of Apa Tanis and Daflas too will depend on their ability to assimilate the techniques indispensable to present-day civilization, and the attainment of literacy will be an important stepping-stone to an organized tribal self-government based on traditional values but utilising the modern requisites of an ordered administration.

CONCLUSIONS

[illegible] these notes I have attempted no more than a statement of problems, an assessment of the [illegible]ialities of culture-contacts in the Subansiri Region, and a rough outline of a course of action which [illegible] lead to a satisfactory and mutually beneficial co-operation between the populations of the plains and [illegible]dependent tribesmen of the hills. The policy which will govern their relations in the years to come [illegible] still to be formulated and until a decision has been reached on matters of principle, it is impossible [illegible] out detailed plans or foretell future developments. The anthropologist familiar with the tribesmen [illegible] conscious of the great and vital values in their culture, can only hope that Government's policy will [illegible] be based on respect for the tribesmen's undeniable right on their country and its resources, and [illegible] determination to develop and improve, but never to destroy tribal institutions and a social order [illegible] has stood the test of time. The tragic mistakes committed by the representatives of advanced [illegible]tions in the treatment of the primitives races of the South Sea Islands and North America must [illegible] repeated in the Eastern Himalayas. We can learn both from those mistakes and from the more [illegible] policies which aim at remedying some of their results. A pronouncement of John Collier, Commis[illegible] of Indian Affairs in United States, which aptly characterizes the present American attitude [illegible] the remnants of the Red Indian race, could be applied almost verbally to the policy which should [illegible]e India's relations with the primitive tribal folks on her north-eastern borders ; "On the purely [illegible]al side, only sheer fanaticism would decide on further destruction of (Red) Indian languages, crafts, [illegible] music, ritual, philosophy, and religion. These possessions have a significance and beauty which [illegible] patiently through endless generations of a people immersed in the life of nature, filled with imaginative [illegible] insight into the core of being. To destroy them would be comparable to destroying the rich [illegible]ultural heritage of the Arvan races—its music and poetry, its religion and philosophy, its temples and [illegible]ments.........The new Indian policy seeks to preserve these unique cultural values through the Indian [illegible]ls and otherwise.........But while protecting the Indian culture from violent up-rooting, the new [illegible] seeks also to give the (Red) Indians the full advantage of modern education and of science, and thus [illegible]m for modern life".

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