

KALIMPONG

A GUIDE & HAND BOOK OF INFORMATION

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KALIMPONG

A GUIDE & HAND BOOK OF INFORMATION

With a foreword by the famous Tibetan Scholar

Mr. D. Macdonald.

Macdonald

BY

D. I. MACDONALD, B. A. (Hons).

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**HIMALAYAN PRINTING WORKS,
KALIMPONG.**

Published by
Himalayan Industrial & Trading Corpn. Ltd.
Kalimpong
(Dist. Darjeeling)

FIRST PUBLISHED

1949

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Printed for the publishers
By **Samaresh Chandra Jain**
At Himalayan Printing Works, Kalimpong.

Foreword

I have great pleasure in writing a foreword for this handbook on Kalimpong written by my son and published by Shri S. C. Jain for the Himalayan Industrial and Trading Corporation, Ltd., Kalimpong. I am not aware of any similar publication dealing with Kalimpong and its Sub-Division, and I am sure the contents of this handbook will be useful to both visitors and residents of Kalimpong.

My first visit to Kalimpong was in 1892. Kalimpong was a small village at the time and Dr. Graham's Homes had not been built nor was there a development area. There was instead a forest known as "Rani Bun," a few acres of which still remain in the development area.

My duties were in Tibet, but from time to time, I had the opportunity of visiting Kalimpong, and on each visit I found that some addition had been made,

and in my opinion, the town is still growing. The main reason for the importance, of Kalimpong, of course, is that it is on the trade route between Tibet and India.

In 1925 I retired from Tibet and my choice of retirement was Kalimpong—a decision I have never regretted. The climate is salubrious and being a frontier town it is the meeting place of several communities and cultures—the whole making a picturesque and colourful pattern.

India has achieved freedom, and Kalimpong with its cosmopolitan community which lives side by side in complete unity and harmony is an important asset to India. May Kalimpong go from strength to strength.

D. Macdonald,

Retired British Trade Agent,
Gyantse and Yatung, Tibet.

Editor's Note

Kalimpong is a small, quiet Hill Station with ample scope for development in all fields of life. Of late it has attracted the attention of all types of people from different places and its popularity as a beautiful health resort is on the increase. Many big and small residential houses in the new Development Area along with the growing number of business houses in the town, testify to its growing nature and now that the country is settling to normal conditions, it is believed that more improvements in the trade, civic and social life of this beauty spot will soon be visible.

The Air service to Bagdogra, the construction of the New Bridge at Rumbhi, which will be completed very soon, replacing the old Suspension Bridge there, will greatly add to the transport facilities both from the point of the trader and the tourist.

I would like to take this opportunity to correct an error about the Tharpa Choling, "Park of Salvation", Monastery at Tirpai, mentioned on page 34 which was brought to my notice by the author after the book had gone

to the press. The Tharpa Choling Monastery was founded by public subscriptions, the chief donars being Rani Chuni Dorji and the late Aithrinlay Gyaimo of Kalimpong. The late Pious Geshe Rimpoche of Tungka Monastery, Tibet, was the first Lama who was requested to preside over the monastery. Since writing this book the Regal Hotel and the Punjab Restaurant as mentioned in page 33 have been abolished. At page 31 it has been mentioned that the Martyrs' Memorial was erected by the Motor Drivers' Association whereas in fact it has been erected by the Kalimpong Taxi Motor Owners' Association.

Every effort has been made to give a complete idea of Kalimpong and the surrounding places in the pages that follow and the tourist will find it a very valuable guide book.

The author, Sri D. I. Macdonald is a born writer having begun to write when he was just a child. He has wandered a lot gathering as he went a store of memories of picturesque characters of the land. Into this experience he dips his pen for the rich colour which will be found in his book you are reading.

I sincerely hope this little book will serve its purpose well.

Suresh Ch-Jain

CONTENTS

PART I

Early History & Development	...	1
Population, People & Religion	...	7
Agriculture & Industries	...	12
Trade & Transport	..	18

PART II

Introduction	...	...	27
Communication & Climate	...	...	41
Residential Facilities	...	...	50
Conclusion	...	...	54

KALIMPONG



THE AUTHOR

KALIMPONG

I

EARLY HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT

The word Kalimpong in Tibetan means 'The Stockade of the King's Ministers' from the two Tibetan words Kalon-King's Minister and Pong-Stockade. Some scholars translate 'Pong' as 'Assembly'; in which case Kalimpong would mean, 'The Assembly of the King's Ministers.'

The early recorded history of Kalimpong is small. The area
Early History. which now comprises the sub-division of Kalimpong originally belonged to the Maharaja of.

KALIMPONG

Sikkim and the original inhabitants were the Lepchas. The Bhutanese took over Kalimpong in 1706 and it remained in their possession till 1865 when by the Treaty of Sinchula the Duars and Kalimpong were ceded to India. The period 1706-1865 is the record of wars, first between the Nepalese and the Sikkim Maharaja, and then between the East India Company and Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan. By a process of adjustment and elimination, the eastern boundary of Nepal was confined to the Mechi river, Sikkim lost the Darjeeling District and the Darjeeling Terai, and Bhutan ceded the Duars and Kalimpong to the Company. The ruins of old Bhutanese forts are still to be seen in some parts of the sub-division, one in the forest above Pedong, 12 miles from Kalimpong.

The area at this time was almost entirely under forest with the aboriginal inhabitants living on the forest produce. Kalimpong was first known as the Dalingkot sub-division of the Western Duars district, and in 1866 it was transferred

KALIMPONG

to the Darjeeling district. The area of the sub-division is 412 square miles, and it is bounded on the north by Sikkim, and on the east by Bhutan. The boundary roughly follows the Tista river upstream to the junction of the Tista and Rungpo river from where it proceeds up the Rungpo, and then the Rishi Chu, to the Richila (10,300'). It is at this point that the boundaries of Sikkim, Bhutan, and India meet. From here the boundary follows the Ni-Chu and the Jaldakha river till it meets the Jalpaiguri district. 'Chu' in Tibetan means 'river'.

The development and growth of the sub-division was rapid from
Development. 1865. People were required to settle in the newly opened country and for this purpose immigration was encouraged. Immigrants were not slow in coming and there was an influx from Nepal and Sikkim. The old system of agriculture which was wasteful and uneconomic was abandoned and the land was terraced and ploughed. New crops such as chinchona, oranges and cardamoms were introduced. It was the cardamom

KALIMPONG

trade which first attracted the Marwari merchants who were useful in supplying the agricultural finance which was badly needed at the time. Tenants required security and in 1882 the first Land Settlement was made.

A distinct feature of the settlement was the opening out of the *Khas Mahal*. 'Khas Mahal' means 'Private Estate' i. e. an Estate managed directly so that Government is the sole proprietor with no middleman between the Government and the tenant as often happens in other parts of Bengal. Rents were stabilized, and fixed according to the class of land, and the old Bhutanese system of collecting a poll-tax per head of the population was abolished. The Khas Mahal area was divided into blocks and each block was placed in charge of a Mandal or Headman, who was usually the acknowledged head of the community. The Mandal has various duties, among them the collection and remittance of rent, the reporting of transfers of land and of any crimes that may occur, to see that the roads in his block are kept in good repair,

KALIMPONG

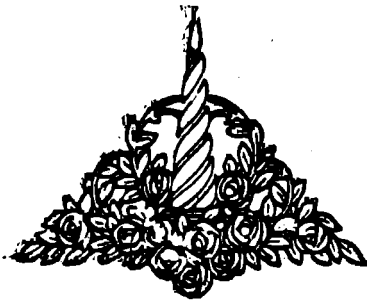
are the main and in return the Mandal is allowed 10% of the gross collection of rent.

It has been mentioned that the sub-division was originally mainly under forest and there are still large areas under forest. Out of a total area of 412 square miles 210 square miles are still under forest. These forests lie mainly along the left bank of Tista river, the southern boundaries of the sub-division, and in the higher elevations around Labha and the Richila. Forest trees include the Paccasaj, Panisaj, Chilauni, Toon and Lampati. Considerable areas are covered by the Tama Bamboo, and above 9,000 feet the Maling Bamboo. Local demand absorbs a small part of the forest produce in the way of firewood, charcoal, timber for building, timber for orange boxes, thatch, and fodder for cattle.

The forests are carefully managed by the forest department as it has been found that indiscriminate felling results not only in damage to valuable timber but it also has a vital effect on soil-

KALIMPONG

erosion. This is a serious problem in the hills and has been taken in hand at an early stage in this sub-division. A good example of erosion and of the good work done by the forest department can be seen at the Dalapchen Slip about three miles from Kalimpong on the Rishi Road. The forest department have planted trees and built revetment walls and so arrested the progress of the slip and consequently saved Government a great deal of money in heavy repairs to the Rishi road every year.



II

POPULATION, PEOPLE & RELIGION.

The development and growth of the sub-division has meant an increase in the population. In 1865 the population was estimated at a little over 3,000 inhabitants, and in the last census of 1941 the population was 79,031 inhabitants. The population of the town has also increased. In 1907 Kalimpong was described as a village with a population of 1,000 inhabitants and in the last census the population of the town, including the Homes, Mission, and Development Area was 11,961 inhabitants.

The town of Kalimpong is cosmopolitan with peoples of all communities.

People. On a market day one sees Nepalese, hillmen from Sikkim and Bhutan, Tibetans, Chinese, Chinese Mussalmans, Mongolians, Marwaris Bengalis,

KALIMPONG

Beharis, and a few Europeans. In the rural areas the people are mainly Nepalese, Lepchas, and Bhutias.

The *Nepalese* are immigrants from Nepal and it is they who have largely contributed to the development and growth of the sub-division by their assiduous and skilful cultivation of the soil. They are hard-workers, vigorous, and prolific. Among the Nepalese are Brahmans, Chetris, Newars, Tamangs, Rais, Mangars, Limbus, Gurungs, Kamis, and Damais.

The *Brahmans* and *Chetris* are of Aryan stock and their language is a form of Hindī acquired from the Brahman and Rajput refugees who fled to Nepal in Moghul times. It is this language or *Khas Kura* (Lingua Franca) which is spoken in the District. *Newars* at one time ruled in the valley of Katmandu but in 1769 they were overthrown by the Chetris, Mangars, and Gurungs. The Newars to-day are mainly traders and artisans. Many of the skilled workers in silver in Kalimpong are Newars. Newars frequently use the surname *Pradhan*. *Tamangs* are

KALIMPONG

of mongolian stock and use the title of Lama. The *Rais*, *Limbus*, *Mangars*, and *Gurungs* are also of mongolian stock. The *Rais* and *Limbus* come from Eastern Nepal and the *Gurungs* are a pastoral people. All make excellent soldiers and it is from these tribes that the bulk of the combatant ranks of the army are drawn. *Kamis* and *Damais* are blacksmiths and tailors respectively and they form a fairly large community in the town.

Among other hillmen to be found in the sub-division are the *Lepchas*, *Bhutias*, and the *Tibetans*. The *Lepchas* are the original inhabitants and they call themselves the 'Rong' or revine-folk. About 300 years ago the *Tibetans* attacked their country and the *Lepchas* were pushed into the lower valleys and gorges. In 1706 the tract which now comprises the Kalimpong sub-division was taken by Bhutan with a further deterioration in the position of the *Lepchas*. Their position has steadily become worse and with the influx of Nepali immigrants the *Lepchas* now

KALIMPONG

number a little over 7,000 in the whole sub-division. The Lepchas are an attractive and honest community and in this sub-division the revenue policy of the government is to try and help the Lepchas (and also the Bhutias) to retain their land in the Khas Mahal area. There are revenue laws which prevent the transfer of land from Lepchas to Nepalese.

Bhutias and *Tibetans* are to be found in the town, and a number of them are concerned with the trade from Tibet. There are also a number of Bhutias in the Khas Mahal Area. Bhutias may be Sikkimese Bhutias, Sherpa Bhutias, or Drukpa Bhutias accordingly as they come from Sikkim, Nepal, or Bhutan.

The majority of the population are Hindus with about twenty per cent of the population Buddhists. Christians number a little over 4,000. There are only 300 Muslims.

The Hinduism practised by the hillmen usually embraces popular and animistic

KALIMPUNNG

beliefs. Demonolatry plays an important part, with rituals for exorcism, and sacrifices to propitiate the innumerable 'Bhuts' or Spirits.

Buddhism among the hill people also has its roots in popular beliefs and primitive animism and could be more properly described as Lamaism. The mystic syllables 'Om, Mané Padme Hum.' 'Hail! Jewel in the Lotus!' symbolises the Buddhist faith and devotion.

Religion plays an important part in the every day life of both Hindus and Buddhists. It often happens that in a village, the dividing line between the two religions loses its sharpness, and one religion merges into the other. A Nepali Hindu will pay his subscription to the village Lama for prayers to protect his crop from hail while a Brahman priest will be called into a Buddhist household to cast a family horoscope. Hinduism is however spreading at the expense of Buddhism.

III

AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRIES.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in this sub-division. There are only five tea estates and all except one are situated in the foothills above the Duars. The policy of Government in the Kalimpong Agriculture Sub-Division is not to lease lands to Tea Companies for the cultivation of tea but to keep the land for agricultural purposes.

In early days the agriculture practised by the aboriginal Lepchas and Bhutias was primitive and wasteful. The system was known as *Jhuming* and it consisted in felling an area of forest, cultivating it for a year or two, and then abandoning it to repeat the process

KALIMPONG

in some other part of the forest. With the opening out of the sub-division in 1865 agricultural methods were changed. The Nepali is a more painstaking and successful agriculturist than the Lepcha or Bhutia. The Nepali uses the plough with effect, and where the land is too steep he is prepared to cut and build terraces. The crops grown include maize (makai or bhutta), millet (marwa or kodo), buck-wheat (pha-phar), and rice. New crops have also been introduced such as cinchona, potatoes, oranges, cardamoms, and they have grown with success. Besides these Kalimpong grows almost everykind of vegetable both indigenous and imported.

Maize along with rice is the staple food of the people. It does not require any particular kind of soil and is grown at elevations from 1,000 feet to 7,000 feet. The land is ploughed, and the seed is sown from February to April, and the grain is harvested in September or October. The average yield is 4 to 10 maunds per acre depending on the fertility of the soil.

KALIMPONG

There is a Government Demonstration Farm about a mile below the town where experiments with seed and crops are made and where a variety of vegetables and fruits are grown. Advice is given free to cultivators. The farm is under the charge of the District Agricultural Officer.

Cinchona. The plant was first discovered in Bolivia and Peru in South America and was introduced to Europe in 1639 by the Countess Cinchon, the wife of the Viceroy of Peru, and was consequently called cinchona. In Bengal the first experiments were made in 1861 and in 1900 a plantation was opened out at Munsong in the Kalimpong Sub-Division. Munsong is 14 miles from Kalimpong. The plantations cover over 8,000 acres of which 3,500 acres are under cinchona. The plantations are divided into the divisions of Kashyem, Munsong, Bermiak, and Sangser. The bark of the cinchona tree is extracted and dried and sent to the factory at Mungpoo where it is processed and quinine and its bye-products

KALIMPONG

obtained. Mungpoo is in the Darjeeling Sub-Division and is seven miles above the Rungbee Bridge in the Teesta Valley. The labour population of the plantations is over 4,000.

There is not much in the sub-division at present in the way of Industries. manufacture and industries.

No factories have been built or projects worked to exploit the raw wool from Tibet. A certain amount of wool is used in knitting blankets, stockings, and pull-overs, but their demand is small and purely local. A small attempt has been made in the south of the sub-division to mine coal but so far without any great result. The mine is about 4 miles to the north of the Bagrakote railway station.

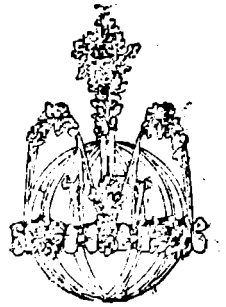
Though there are no large scale industries worth mentioning Kalimpong has an *Industrial School* which engages and teaches the local people a number of useful arts and crafts. The school is situated in the Mission compound, a

KALIMPONG

little way from the junction of the Kalimpong and Melli roads, where the roads meet in the bazaar. The School meets a great need of the people by training and employing them in useful occupations such as tailoring, carpentry, embroidery, weaving, carpet-making, leather-craft, knitting, and fabric printing. The School was started in 1897 by the wife of the late Rev. J. A. Graham, D. D., C. I. E., with the purpose of teaching the hill women lace-making to help them to supplement their income. From small beginnings the school has expanded and there are now twelve departments where useful crafts are taught. There is no distinction of class or creed and every apprentice receives a wage from the day he takes up instruction. In 1924 the School was registered as the Kalimpong Mission Industries Association and a capital of Rs. 75,000/- was raised which was mainly given back to the School by the debenture holders. All profits made by the School are used for further expansion of work. Since 1925 the superintendence has been given honorarily. At present the School

KALIMPONG

is training a number of ex-servicemen in the various departments. In the town there are a number of shops where good quality leather bags and leather goods are to be had at competitive prices, and these have been started by men who have passed through the School.



IV

TRANSPORT & TRADE.

Kalimpong is the terminus of one of the pack-mule routes from Tibet, and it is therefore placed in a favourable position for trade with Tibet. The other alternative route is via the Natu La pass to Gangtok and though the route is about 20 miles shorter, and a better road than the road via the Jelap La pass to Kalimpong, due to the high cost of transport between Gangtok and Siliguri the bulk of the trade passes through Kalimpong, and this position is expected to remain the same for some time.

The main difficulty with regard to trade is transport. In the sub-division

KALIMPONG

a railway, trucks, bullock-carts, ponies, and coolies, all are used. From Kalimpong a ropeway descends to the Teesta Valley and it has been of great use as it cuts off 18 miles of road, the distance between Kalimpong and Ryang Railway Station in the Teesta Valley.

Kalimpong Ropeway. The ropeway was built in 1928 by the Kalimpong Ropeway Co. Ltd., with an authorised capital of Rs. 5 lacs which was increased to Rs. 20 lacs. The managing Agents are Messrs, Gillanders, Arbuthnot & Co. Ltd., Calcutta. The ropeway consists of an upper and a lower section (1) Kalimpong (4,100') to Kamesi (2,500'), a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles and (2) Kamesi (2,500') to Billi (near Ryang Station), distance of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Loads are carried on trays which are suspended and clipped to a moving rope. Each carrier takes a load of 8 maunds and are released at intervals of 3 minutes. The rope is propelled by two engines of 72 h. p. each, one at Kalimpong and the other at Kamesi. Outward traffic includes baled wool, oranges, and timber. Inward

KALIMPONG

traffic is mainly foodgrains, brick-tea, cloth, and building materials.

The main items of trade with Tibet are wool, musk, yaks-tails, and furs. There is a little trade with Bhutan in lac and bristles, and with Sikkim in oranges and cardamoms.

Wool. Wool is the main item of trade with Tibet. In the early days an import of 500 maunds of wool a year was considered large. Nowadays there is an import of over one lac maunds of wool annually. The wool was previously sent to Calcutta where it was sorted and baled but this is now done in Kalimpong. The main market is America. The trade is mainly in the hands of Tibetan and Marwari merchants who supply the capital for an annual turnover of about 50 lacs of rupees. Next to wool the *Musk* trade is the most important. Musk is obtained from the musk deer in Tibet and it is used as a base for perfumes and for medicine. The trade is mainly in the hands of Nepalis who buy in Tibet and distribute

KALIMPONG

in Kalimpong. Musk is exported to France and America. Trade in *Furs* is in the hands of Tibetans and Kashmiri Mussalmans who buy the pelts of fox, lynx, stone-marten, and snow leopard from the Tibetans and the furs are exported to England and America.

Yak-tails are exported to Madras for the manufacture of wigs. Two other items of trade which deserve mention are **Cardamoms and Oranges**. Cardamoms require warmth, shade, and irrigation, and are usually grown on the sides and in the beds of streams. The annual output of the sub-division is 10,000 lbs. The price per maund fluctuates with demand and supply and of recent years the price has been good and the crops profitable. Oranges are of the Sikkim variety and the season for the orange business is from November to January. Every year at this time buyers from Calcutta arrive and make their headquarters in the Tista Valley at Ryang, Tista, and Rungpo. At this time in the valley one frequently meets with lines of bullock-carts loaded

KALIMPONG

with boxes and baskets of oranges, all moving towards the nearest railway station. The bulk of the oranges are exported to Calcutta where they find a ready market. The crop is usually sold on the trees and is collected by the buyer at the time of despatch.

The general administration is conducted by a Sub-Divisional Officer **Administration.** who is assisted by a 2nd Officer and a Khas Mahal Officer. The Sub-Divisional Officer is usually a member of the Indian Civil Service, or Bengal Civil Service, and he exercises the powers of a first class magistrate. There is a Superintendent, a member of the Bengal Civil Service, who is in charge of the Development Area. The Sub-Divisional Office is situated about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of the bazar. It is a substantial concrete building and replaces the old kutchery building which suffered damage in a storm in 1933. The criminal and civil work in the Sub-Division is light but the revenue side is most important.

KALIMPONG

Sub-Jail. The Sub-Jail is situated a little below the Kutchery and can be recognised by its high walls. It is only meant for under-trial prisoners and those serving a sentence up to two weeks imprisonment.

Police. There is no serious crime in the Sub-Division. The Sub Division is divided into two circles (1) Kalimpong Circle, and (2) Gorubathan Circle. Each Circle is under the charge of a Circle Inspector who is assisted by Sub-Inspectors, Assistant Sub-Inspectors, Havildars and Constables. There are Frontier Police Outposts at Rungpo and Pedong on the Sikkim frontier and at Kumai on the Bhutan frontier. Kalimpong is a frontier town and as such one of the duties of the Police is to keep a watch on movements of suspects who may cross from one State to another.

Forest. The Sub-Division is under the charge of a Divisional Forest Officer who is assisted by Forest Rangers, Deputy Rangers, Foresters, and Forest Guards.

KALIMPONG

The Sub.Division is divided into six ranges (1) Kalimpong (2) Pankhasari (3) Chel (4) Neora (5) Jaldhaka and (6) Reclamation. Valuable work has been done by the department in the problems of afforestation and reclamation. The Divisional Forest Officer's house and office are built on one of the best sites in Kalimpong about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile above the Kutchery. The buildings are modern and of concrete.

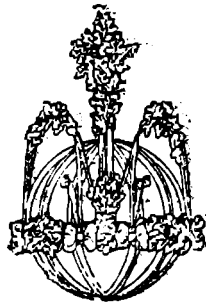
Communications and Works Department. The office of the Communication and Works Department is below the Kutchery. The department maintains several roads in the Sub-Division, the most important being the Tista Valley Road. The Public Works Department of the Central Government maintains the 15 miles of road between Tista bridge and Rungpo, a small town on the Sikkim frontier.

Excise. The hill people are fond of liquor and the two main kinds are (1) *Pachwai* which is brewed from rice and (2) *Marwa* which is brewed from millets. In the rural areas Pachwai up to 12 seers

KALIMPONG

may be brewed without a licence but any in excess requires a licence fee of Rs. 2/- per year. In the town no free brewing is allowed and for 6 seers a licence fee of Rs. 2/- is required.

Veterinary There is a stationery Veterinary Assistant Surgeon at Kalimpong who treats non-contagious diseases, and accidents and wounds of all kinds. There is also an itinerant Veterinary Assistant Surgeon who is responsible for the prevention and control of infectious diseases in the Sub-Division. These officers and the Kalimpong Branch of the Darjeeling Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, do good work in the Sub-Division.



Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

.KEATS.

PART II

INTRODUCTION

Kalimpong compares favourably with other hill stations in India. In fact she has advantages over most with her mild climate, residential facilities, good water supply, schools and hospitals, and her magnificent views of the Himalayas. The best vantage points are two hills, Deolo (5,590') and Durpindara (4,500'), a short distance to the north and south of the town. From here the visitor sees, the spurs and ridges of the lower hills, rise and merge with the massive block of Kanchenjunga and the peaks of North Sikkim. As the eye travels towards the north, there are seen in order, the Singalilla ridge with the peaks of Sandakphu (11,911') and Phalut (11,790'), Kabru (24,002'), Kanchenjunga (28,146'), Simvu (22,369'), Siniolchu (22 600'), Lama Amden (19,250'), Kan-

KALIMPONG

chanjau (22,700') Black Rock (17,500'), Natu La (14,400') and Jelep La (14,390'), names which are of Tibetan or Lepcha origin, and as mysterious as the mountains. Down below in the valley, flows the river Tista, the river of moods. In the winter it is as blue as the skies above, and in the rains it is swollen, a torrent that brooks no interference or delay. The Rungeet is to the east, a river that has its source in the Singalilla, and which joins the Tista 2 miles above Tista Bridge. On the west is the Rilli, a silver stream that flows below Kalimpong, and which joins the Tista a mile above Ryang, on the opposite bank. Looking out over this panorama of valleys, hills and mountains, seeing the dazzling whiteness and immensity of Kanchenjanga, and the sentinel aloofness of the northern peaks, one feels a certain awe and humbleness, a spirit of which the poet has written:—

“A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all
thoughts
And rolls through all things.”

KALIMPONG

Kalimpong town itself is the headquarters of the sub-division of the same name. The town is not packed or concentrated but scattered along a ridge from an elevation of 3,933' to 4,650'. The bazaar is in the seat of the saddle, to the north are Dr. Graham's Homes, and to the south the Development Area. The bazaar has been built in a haphazard manner, on either side of the main road, for a distance of 2 to 3 miles. Walking down the main road from the Police Station, the visitor will find on both sides, shops dealing in general stores cloth, hardware, photography, flowers, radios and footwear. The shops are well stocked and there is very little that cannot be supplied. Continuing down the main road, we come to the 10th mile. Here there are shops run by Tibetans and Chinese, and the visitor can buy curios, chinese brocades, or any small trinkets which he may fancy. These shops extend for about half a mile, a road branches off from the main road, turns, and comes through the lower portion of the bazaar.

KALIMPONG

On the lower road are many small and large shops stocked with various kinds of things, all to catch the eye of the Tibetan trader who buys cotton and woolen cloth and other merchandise in huge quantities to be exported to Tibet on mules.

About half way along the 10th. mile lower road, the visitor will notice a number of sheds built on concrete plinths, and with corrugated roofs. This is the Kalimpong hat, a bazaar which is held twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The market is a busy one and the visitor can buy everything he needs in the way of foodstuff. Local rice of a very good quality is available, and a variety of vegetables and fruits. On a market day the town looks busy and colourful. A mixed community of Tibetans, Chinese, Mongols, Nepalis, hillmen from Sikkim and Bhutan, Marwaris, Bengalis, Beharis, and a few Europeans, can all be seen, going about their business. The road then joins the motor stand.

KALIMPONG

The motor stand was built in recent years for the convenience of the taxis which ply in and outside Kalimpong. There are several taxis and the visitor will usually find a number of them parked on the stand. Each taxi carries a schedule of rates for all distances. On the motor stand there is a monument, surmounted by a flag staff, which has been built and dedicated by the Motor Drivers' Association to the memory of patriots in the district who gave their lives in the cause of freedom. The names of the patriots are inscribed on a brass tablet.

Near the monument is a gate which was built to commemorate the historical and notable date of 15th August 1947. It is of a pleasing design with a statue on top of Mahatma Gandhi in a thoughtful and pensive mood below which is an inscription in Hindi, एकता, प्रेम, सेवा, ('Unity, Love, Service').

Below the Motor Stand is the Mela Ground. The ground is the centre of the town's physical activities. It is used for

KALIMPONG

ceremonial parades, public meetings, sports, and in the season for football matches. The ground gets its name from the Mela which used to be held every year, but which has been discontinued during the war. The Mela included a livestock and agricultural exhibition, a handicrafts display, national dances, sports, and a Gymkhana, and lasted three days. It is hoped that in the future the Mela will be revived.

To the south of the ground is Bagdhara, 'Ganges of Kalimpong', a spring from where the people in that area draw water for their needs, bathe and worship and it was here that Mahatmaji's last funeral ceremony was performed.

The town has a cinema, 'The Novelty Cinema', which is at present in a temporary building situated at the North-East corner of the Mela Ground. A new building is however under construction.

There are six hotels and three restaurants. The hotels are the 'Himalayan Hotel', 'Hillview Hotel', 'Tripti Hotel',

KALIMPONG

'Hindustan Hotel', 'Central Hotel', and 'Regal Hotel'. The 'Himalayan Hotel', caters for European and Indian guests and the other hotels for Indian visitors. The hotels are comfortable and the charges moderate. Mrs. Gompu's Restaurant, is at the junction of the Kalimpong and Melli road, and the visitor is served with good tea, coffee, cakes, and biscuits. The restaurant has a licence to serve drinks. The 'Shanghai Restaurant' is on the Motor Stand and English and Chinese dishes are available. The Punjab Restaurant, on the New Market Road, serves fine Indian dishes.

There is one bank only, the Central Bank of India Ltd.

The town also has a weekly newspaper, printed and published in English by the 'Himalayan Industrial & Trading Corporation Ltd.' The paper was started in 1947 by the enterprise of Mr. S. C. Jain, B. A., M. R. A. S., the present Editor. The paper publishes articles of general interest, news items of the district, and

KALIMPONG

it usually has an informative editorial of high standard.

A monthly Tibetan Newspaper is published by Mr. G. Tharchin from the 'Tibet Mirror Press,' Kalimpong and the paper has the distinction of being the only Tibetan newspaper in the world. Weekly and monthly publications in Nepali and Hindi are published by the 'Mani Press', and the "Himalayan Printing Works", Kalimpong.

There are two monasteries in Kalimpong, and one at Pedong. The smaller of the two monasteries in Kalimpong, and the monastery at Pedong, belong to the Druk-Pa sect of Monks, while the other monastery at Kalimpong was founded by the late Pious Geshe Rimpoche of the Tungka Monastery in the Chumbi valley, Tibet. A visit to the monasteries is worthwhile. The smaller monastery is situated a mile beyond the bazaar, below the Rishi Road, and is in charge of a Lama. The larger monastery is situated below the Tirpai, a small settle-

KALIMPONG

ment which has developed on the upper Tibet road at the junction of the road with the Tarkhola road, a distance of about a mile from the bazaar. The monastery accomodates 30 monks and visitors are welcomed. The best time to visit the monastery is in the mornings. A Lama will show the visitor around, and later present a donation book, to which a contribution should be made according to ones wish. The monastery has 108 small prayer wheels on the outside of the building and it is auspicious to walk with the right hand towards the wall, touching the prayer wheels and setting them revolving. At the entrance of the monastery the visitor will see the Wheel of Life, depicting the various stages in man's life, and showing the seven hot and seven cold hells. There are also paintings on the walls of the four Guardians of the four directions. Entering the monastery the visitor steps into a cool and slightly darkened room. Down the centre are placed a number of seats on which the monks sit during religious ceremonies.

KALIMPONG

In front is the altar, with a large image of Lord Buddha and his Two Disciples; on either side are cupboards, with 'pigeon holes', in which are placed 100 volumes of the Kangyur, the Buddhist Commandments.

In front of the altar burn a number of lamps and the whole atmosphere is religious and sacred. Upstairs are the 1000 images of Lord Buddha, and in an inner room, the Cho-Kyongs or Guardians of Buddhism. Outside the monastery is a small courtyard where religious ceremonies and plays are held from time to time. There are several out-houses in which the monks live and a kitchen which is also worth a visit. The visitor will usually find Tibetan tea brewing, a mixture of tea, soda, and butter, boiled and mixed in a churn, and served several times a day.

On leaving the monastery the visitor may pay a visit to the Lama Oracle who lives a little above the village of Tirpai. The Oracle has a number of

KALIMPONG

ceremonial dresses of great interest and he can be consulted on appointment and after payment of fee.

Below Tirpai, the visitor will notice two white chotens, religious monuments built by Buddhists. Here is a small hermitage in which lives a solitary Lama. Nearby is the cremation ground of the Buddhists.

Visitors to Kalimpong are advised not to overload themselves with unnecessary clothes, innumerable blankets, hotwater bottles, and several cases of food stuffs. The climate is temperate, and eggs, milk, fish, fruit, vegetables, ghee and bread, are readily available. Rice is obtainable on a ration card, and local rice of a good quality is available on market days. If the visit is in April or May the bulk of the clothes should be light, and in September or October, summer clothes should be supplemented by warm clothing. In the winter, an overcoat and a warm suit will keep the

KALIMPONG

cold out, and at night three warm blankets are ample. In the rains an umbrella or waterproof is essential. A camera is always handy to make record of ones holiday.

Those who wish to visit the Sikkim hills will find Kalimpong a convenient point from which to start, and arrangements can be made for tours of all descriptions. Tours suggested are to the Natu La (14,400') and Jelap La (14,390'), the two passes into Tibet, the trip taking a week or ten days, or a visit to Northern Sikkim via the Lachen and Lachung valleys, taking about two to three weeks. Short excursions may be made for the day to Pedong, Dalapchen, Rissisum, and Munsong. There are well furnished Bungalows on the routes, belonging to the Forest Department, Communication and Works Department, and to the Darjeeling Improvement Fund, and passes may be had on application from the Divisional Forest Officer, Executive Engineer, and the Deputy Commissioner, respectively. The forest bungalows are

KALIMPONG

free, the charges for the C. & W. D., and D. I. Fund bungalows are Rs. 3/8/- and Rs. 2/- per head per day.

For those interested in shikar, good sport is to be had in the forest and rivers. In the forests at lower elevations are tiger, sambhur and cheetal deer, pig, and among game birds, jungle-fowl and pea-fowl. At higher elevations are serow, ghoral, bear, barking deer, and among birds, the kalege and monal pheasants. There are several varieties of fish in the rivers, the most notable being the Mahseer (*Barbus Tor*), the record being a 54 lb. Mahseer and an 84 lb. Goonch taken out by rod and line at Ryang a few years ago. A guest permit to shoot and fish costs a visitor to the district Rs. 10/- for one week, and the permit may be had from the Sub-Divisional representative of the Darjeeling Shooting and Fishing Club. Full membership fees for those resident in the district and in West Bengal, is Rs. 30/- for the year, with an additional deposit fee of Rs. 10/- which is returned after a member sends in a

KALIMPONG

list of game shot, and applications should be made to Mr. J. R. Johnson, Honorary Secretary, Darjeeling Shooting & Fishing Club, 'Greenshields', Takdah P. O., Darjeeling District.

The pleasures which Kalimpong offers are quiet, healthy, and homely. The walks are easy with good views of the mountains and valleys. There is a park for recreation and picnics. Another good picnic spot is in the Tista valley about an hour's run from Kalimpong by car, the junction of the Tista and Rangit rivers, 2 miles from Tista Bridge, and 12 miles from Kalimpong. A mela lasting 3 days is held every year at the *Tribeni*, sometime in February, depending on the date on which *magh sankranti* falls.



COMMUNICATION & CLIMATE

The visitor from Calcutta to Kalimpong can be up in Kalimpong **Communications.** in 14 hours. He leaves Sealdah by the Darjeeling Mail in the evening and is in Siliguri early next morning. At Siliguri he can either take a taxi and go right through by road to Kalimpong, a distance of 42 miles, or he can travel by the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, Tista Valley Extension, to Gielle Khola, a terminus station, and 30 miles from Siliguri, and from Gielle Khola he can take a seat in a bus or a taxi to Kalimpong, a distance of 12 miles. A taxi from Siliguri is Rs. 32/- for whole car or Rs. 8/- per seat. The first class rail fare from Siliguri to Gielle Khola is Rs. 5/12/-. A seat in a bus or taxi from Gielle Khola is Rs. 3/- per seat. There is no bus service from Siliguri to Kalimpong as there is a suspension bridge over the Rumbee river at Rumbee, 21 miles from Siliguri, over which only light cars are allowed to pass.

KALIMPONG

Trucks have the tedious business of unloading and loading when crossing the bridge. There is a proposal to build a new bridge over the Rumbee and it is expected to be put through in near future, and this will allow heavier traffic to move up and down the valley. The present alignment of the road was made in 1901 and the road has a metalled surface which makes for smooth and comfortable running.

The Siliguri-Kalimpong road goes on to Pedong, 12 miles from Kalimpong and on the Sikkim frontier, and eventually to the Jelap pass (14,390'), and into Tibet. The road from Kalimpong to Pedong is known as the Rishi Road and it is along this road that the mule caravans come down from Tibet. Kalimpong is also connected with Darjeeling, a distance of 28 miles, and with Gangtok, the Capital of Sikkim, a distance of 48 miles. The road to Darjeeling goes via Peshok, and as the gradient is steep in parts, the road is more suitable for jeeps and small cars. The

KALIMPONG

road to Gangtok runs along the Tista valley, crosses the frontier at Rungpo, follows the valley again till Singtam, from where it branches off to follow the Rani Khola with a final climb to Gangtok. The journey to Darjeeling takes a little over two hours and the journey to Gangtok between three and four hours. Europeans who wish to visit Sikkim must secure a permit from the Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling, before they cross the frontier. The permit costs eight annas.

The journey from Siliguri to Kalimpong may be made either by road or by rail. The road journey is 2½ hours shorter, the rail journey is more picturesque and interesting.

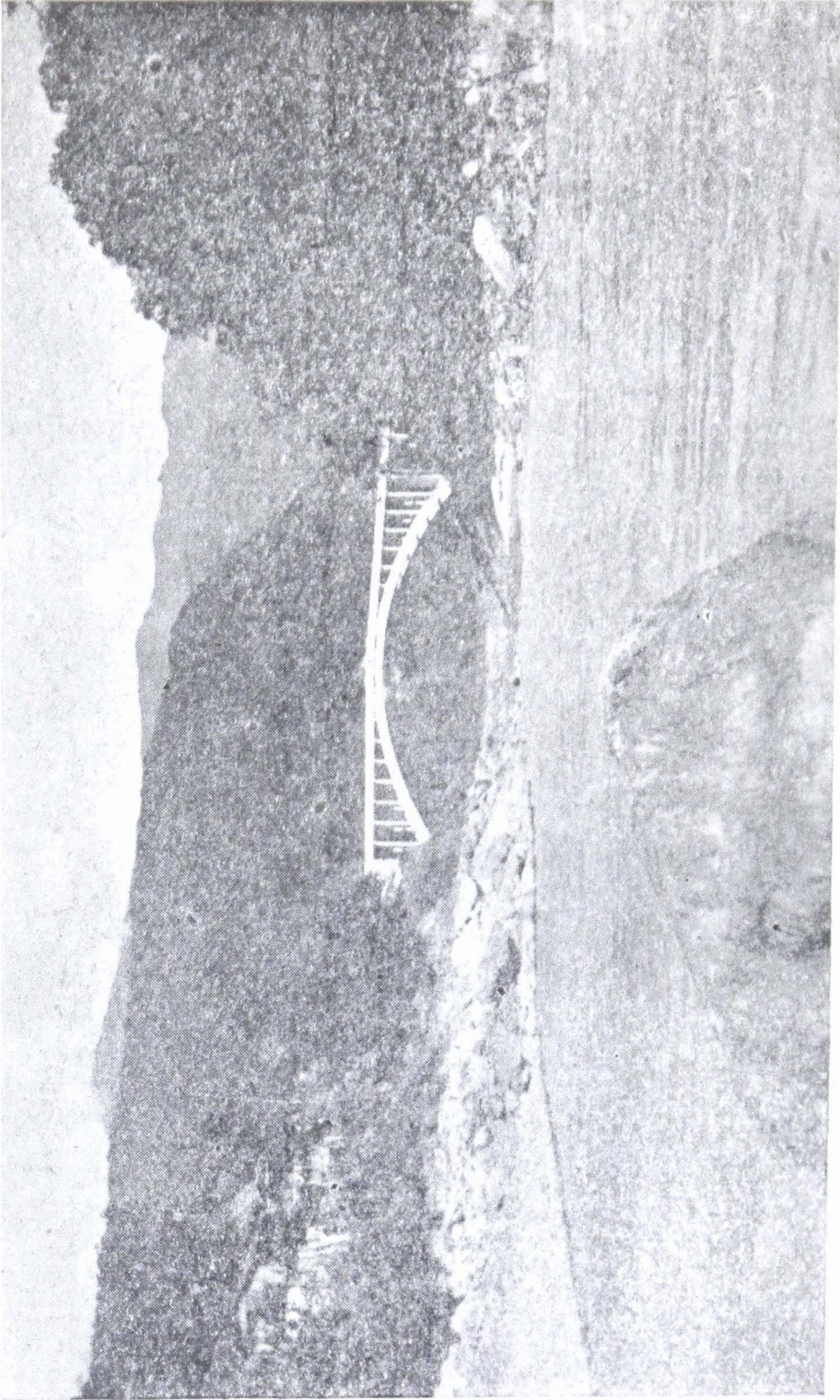
Journey by rail:— The 'Darjeeling Mail', arrives at Siliguri at 6 a. m. and the train for Kalimpong leaves an hour later. On arrival, the visitor's first problem is to steer his family and luggage through the crowd of passengers, coolies, and Railway officials, from one train to the

KALIMPONG

other. The contrast is striking. On one side is a full sized train running on tracks 5' 2" wide and on the other is a miniature train with a track only 24" wide. When accomodation is secured, there is a time to go to Sorabjee's Restaurant for a cup of tea and toast, or an early breakfast.

The train whistle blows, the people on the platform stand back, and with a hiss of steam and a laborious pant, the train pulls out. The miniature carriages strangely enough afford comfortable sitting accommodation, though if there are loads of luggage, as sometimes happens, room becomes cramped.

The first 6 miles are through cultivated fields with the usual scenery of fragmented holdings and the ubiquitous paddy birds, and the next 6 1/2 miles is through a dense forest to Sevoke. The 'toy train' achieves a respectable speed, bituminous smoke from the funnel of the engine streams backwards, and the carriages jolt



THE TEESTA BRIDGE
GATE WAY TO KALIMPONG

KALIMPONG

and sway, in their effort to keep up with the exertions of the gallant engine.

The next 5 miles is to Kalijhora, the station taking its name from a stream which joins the Tista here. The stream becomes a dark colour after a shower of rain as there are traces of a coal deposit at the headwaters of the stream. Seven and a half miles from Kalijhora is Ryang, and another five miles beyond, Gielle Khola, the terminus of the railway.

The journey throughout is unrivalled for its riverine scenery. The railway follows the river, about 50' to 100' above it. The forest, on both sides, comes down to the edge of the river, and each bend reveals a fresh picture. To the newcomer the journey is not without thrills. The train weaves its way along the valley, twisting and turning, the flanges of the wheels singing on the rails. There is no danger whatsoever of the carriages overturning, as they are specially built with a low centre of gravity.

KALIMPONG

The journey from Siliguri to Gielle Khola takes 3 hours and 20 minutes.

Journey by road:— The journey by road has the advantage of being 2 hours quicker than by train. The road follows the railway line 100' to 300' above the river. The stages on the journey are 12½ miles to Sevoke, 5 miles to Kalijhora, 7½ miles to Ryang, 5 miles to Gielle Khola, 2 miles to Tista Bridge, and 10 miles from Tista Bridge to Kalimpong, a total distance of 42 miles.

Between Kalijhora and Ryang is Birik from where the road makes a detour, crossing the Ryang and the Rumbhee rivers, and the road enters the valley again above Ryang Station. Birik is 4½ miles from Kalijhora and the bungalow is commonly known as the 'Honeymoon Bungalow.' The bungalow belongs to the C & W Department and the story goes that in days gone by a Burra Sahib of the Department had the bungalow specially built for the reception of his bride. At Rumbhee is a suspension bridge over

KALIMPONG

which passengers have to walk as laden cars are not allowed to cross. Fifty yards ahead of the bridge is the road to Mungpo, the Cinchona Plantations and Cinchona Factory. Mungpo was a favourite resort of Gurudev Tagore in his later years.

Between Sevoke and Tista Bazaar there are two concrete bridges which span the Tista, the Coronation and the Tista Bridge. The bridges are modern and of magnificent design.

The road from Tista bridge to Kalimpong is a series of sweeping bends which rise from 800' to 4000'. At the 7th mile, good views of the Rangit and Tista valleys are to be had. There is a last short climb, and then the road runs into Kalimpong. Turning a corner, the visitor sees Kalimpong, the bazaar nestling on the saddle of the ridge, and the residential buildings spaced out on the hillside. Behind in a half circle are the enigmatic hills of the Himalayas.

KALIMPONG

The climate of Kalimpong is mild and temperate, and this is one of the main attractions of Kalimpong as a hill station. At an elevation of 3,933' the visitor from the plains does not find it too high to be uncomfortable and it is suitable even for the most delicate. The seasons are equable and generally follow the seasons on the plains.

	March-April	Spring.
	April-May	Summer.
Seasons.	June-September	Rains.
	October-November	Autumn.
	December-February	Winter.

The advent of spring in March is evident to the most casual observer. Trees which have been without leaves for the winter now put on buds, and the flowers in the garden bloom and in a few weeks there is a profusion of colour. Birds which have been away for the cold weather are back in their familiar haunts. At this time, a minor drawback is that the atmosphere is not as clear as it

KALIMPONG

might be, blue haze hangs over hills and valleys, as a result of the smoke from innumerable fires that the villagers light to clear their fields before ploughing and sowing their crops. The haze does not last long as this is also the time for an occasional shower of rain. The actual rains break in June. The first news is of the monsoons breaking over Ceylon, then over the Bay of Bengal, and within a fortnight the rains break over the Darjeeling Hills. The rainfall is distributed according to the configuration of the land. Kurseong which stands on a ridge overlooking the plains at an elevation of 4,929' gets a fair deal of rain while Kalimpong which is more sheltered has a moderate rainfall. Below are rainfall figures for the three major towns in the Darjeeling District, and for Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim.

Average Rainfall for the year.

Darjeeling altitude	7,376'	126.42'
Kurseong	" 4,929'	161.26'
Gangtok (Sikkim)	" 5,669'	135.11'
Kalimpong	" 3,933'	86.20'

KALIMPONG

A unique feature of the residential facilities is the Development Area. This area was specially set aside for residents when the idea was conceived of developing Kalimpong as a hill station.

The area comprises **Residential facilities** 1,83,363, acres of land to the south of the bazaar on an elevation from 3,400' to 4,650'. The area was surveyed in 1928/29, and in 1942, and divided into Part I and Part II, and plots were offered for sale to the public. The demand was great, and in a few years almost all the sites in Part I were disposed off, and the intending purchaser must now mostly take his selection from plots in Part II. The building regulations are of a high standard and no building is allowed till the plans are scrutinised and passed by the authorities. All sanitation must be waterborne. With these regulations, and careful supervision, the Development Area is clean and the buildings are well spaced out. During the war, due to a shortage of building materials, the building programme was held up and the shortage

KALIMPONG

still continues. The Development Area is under the charge of a Superintendent who is usually a Senior Deputy Magistrate of the Bengal Civil Service

Health and Water Supply:—Taken by and large the health of Kalimpong may be considered to be very good. There are no serious diseases which are endemic to the place and what ills there may be are in the category of the usual everyday ailments. Malaria and kalazar are met with only in some of the lower valleys.

There is an excellent hospital in Kalimpong and several qualified doctors with independent practices. The hospital is known as the *Charteris Hospital* and was opened in 1893 and it is managed and maintained by the Church of Scotland Mission. There are separate blocks for tuberculosis and dysentery and for surgical and medical cases. Private patients are accommodated in a wing of the surgical block. The hospital provides for the

KALIMPONG

training of Nepali, Lepcha and Tibetan girls in General Nursing and Midwifery and prepares them for the Bengal Nursing Council Examination. The staff consist of 3 European and 2 Indian Doctors with 3 Nursing Sisters. The services of 2 Sub-Assistant Surgeons are given free by Government.

The sources of water supply are springs situated about 18 miles from Kalimpong at the headwaters of the Rilli river which flows to the east of Kalimpong. The water is conducted by masonry conduits to Sangser, above the cinchona plantation by the same name, where it is chlorinated. From here it is taken by 6" pipe to a large reservoir on the top of Deolo hill. The reservoir has a capacity of 3,000,000 gallons of water. From this reservoir the water gravitates to the various supply tanks which in their turn give water to the various house connections and street taps. The average estimated supply of water to Kalimpong is 210,000 gallons a day. The supply is operated by the Engineering branch of the Public Health

KALIMPONG

Department and the scheme was first put through in 1922. A further project is at present being carried out to build an auxiliary reservoir with up-to-date filter beds. Sometimes visitors on a first visit to the hills experience stomach trouble but this is usually due to a sudden change of diet and not to the water.

Electric Supply. Electricity is supplied to the town and to the Development Area by the Kalimpong Electric Supply Co., Ltd. After due consideration the idea of generating electricity by means of water power was rejected and the present supply is generated by oil driven engines. The company's capacity to earn has been limited during the war on account of a shortage of electrical equipment and oil with the result that the rate is rather high at -/8/- per unit.

The pioneer work of education in this district has been done by **Education.** missionaries, particularly the Scots Mission. Credit for the present educational development must

KALIMPONG

go mainly to them. Kalimpong is in a position to offer first class education for both boys and girls and the most notable institutions are Dr. Graham's Homes, St. Joseph's Convent, The Scottish University Mission Institution (Boys' High School), and The Girls' High School.

Dr. Graham's Homes. Scattered on the lower slopes of Deolo hill may be seen the various buildings, which go to make the Homes. It is a small township in itself with its cottages, school buildings, staff houses, administrative buildings, chapel, hospital, bakery, workers' club, holiday home, and swimming club. It was founded in 1900 by the late Very Rev. Dr. J. A. Graham, D. D., C. I. E., with the object of providing for Anglo-Indian and European children. The estate covers an area of 611 acres. The pupils include both boys and girls who live in the cottages under the charge and care of a house-mother and house-aunty. In the cottages there are no servants and all work is done by the pupils.

KALIMPONG

Education of a high standard is given from the infants to the Senior Cambridge and for the Board of Apprenticeship Training. There are 450 pupils in the Homes.

St. Joseph's Convent. Kalimpong was selected in 1922 as a sanatorium for Sisters teaching in the plains who needed a rest and from small beginnings the Convent has been built. In 1926 the Convent first started as a Boarding School under the Sisters of the Congregation of St. Joseph de Cluny. The School has accommodation for 140 boarders and also takes in over 50 day scholars. Pupils are taught up to the Senior Cambridge and are prepared for the Trinity College Music Examination. Under the Convent is also attached a M. E. School for Hill Children where nearly 130 students are studying at present. 13 Nuns and 15 secular teachers form the strength of the teaching staff. The Head of the Institution is Rev. Mother Philip Neri.

Scottish Universities Mission Institution. (Boys' High School). The school is situated

KALIMPONG

a little above the Charteris Hospital on the upper road leading from the town to the Homes. The school was opened in 1887 and education is given from the infants to matriculation. A college department has been added and pupils are prepared for the Intermediate Examination of the Calcutta University. Teachers are also trained for primary schools. There are over 1200 pupils on the rolls.—Rev. W. M. Scott, M. A., is the Principal these days.

Girls' High School. (Scotts Mission.) The Girls' High School is situated above the bazar in the Mission compound. There are over 712 pupils on the rolls and education is given up to the matriculation standard. The medium of instruction in the lower classes is in Nepali and in the higher classes English is used. There is also a hostel for about 60 boarders.

Blind School. The school was founded in 1940 by the Hon'ble Mary H. Scott and it is managed by her. It is situated

KALIMPONG

a little below the cart road a few hundred yards from the Police Station. The pupils are housed in cottages and are in charge of a master. They are taught Braille, handicrafts, and music.

Jubilee Middle English School. The school was established in 1934 and meets the need of the Hindi and Bengali speaking children of Kalimpong. The medium of instruction is in Hindi and Bengali. The school has 170 pupils on its rolls and is gaining popularity every year. Mr. S. Chatterjee is the Headmaster.

Chung Wha Sho Shau:—The Chinese community have a school $\frac{1}{4}$ mile along the Bong Road. The school started in 1941 and from small beginnings today there are 74 pupils with a staff of 5 teachers. The present school buildings are modern and substantial and cost Rs. 80,000/-, the funds being raised by subscription from residents of Kalimpong. The medium of instruction is Chinese. English is also taught, and it is hoped to have a Hindi section as soon as more funds are

KALIMPONG

available. The school has also a hostel which at present accommodates 10 boarders. The headmaster is Mr. F. M. Shen.

Town H. E. School:- This school was founded as a Night School in the year 1925. It began with about a dozen pupils and the classes were held in a rented room.

From this modest beginning, the school has now grown to its present status and since 1934 it has been housed in a small building of its own.

It has recently been raised up to IX standard and the High School section is separately housed in the "Morning Site" donated for the purpose by Rai R. P. Saha Bahadur. Headmaster of the M. E. School is Sri G. Bhandari and that of the High School section Sri T. R. Sharma, B. A., B. T.

Conclusion

The prospects for the hillstation of Kalimpong and the Sub-Division is bright. With the removal of controls and the availability of consumer goods trade will be revived. Kalimpong is an excellent point of contact between Tibet and India and its importance is sure to grow as more intimate relations are established between the two countries. More and more Tibetan officers are coming down to visit India and a trade delegation was recently sent abroad, all of which augurs well for the future.

Kalimpong had its first municipal elections on the 8th March '48 and the electors have expressed their will by electing a body of men who have proved themselves to be public servants of the highest integrity and the town now looks to its Commissioners to take a lead in making further improvements.

KALIMPONG

This is possible and given the goodwill and co-operation of all communities, there is no reason why Kalimpong should not be the premier hillstation, and a refuge for all those who seek respite from their labours in the plains.



PRINTED AT
HIMALAYAN PRINTING WORKS,
KALIMPONG.
