

DEMCHOR

Ignorance of history invariably leads to

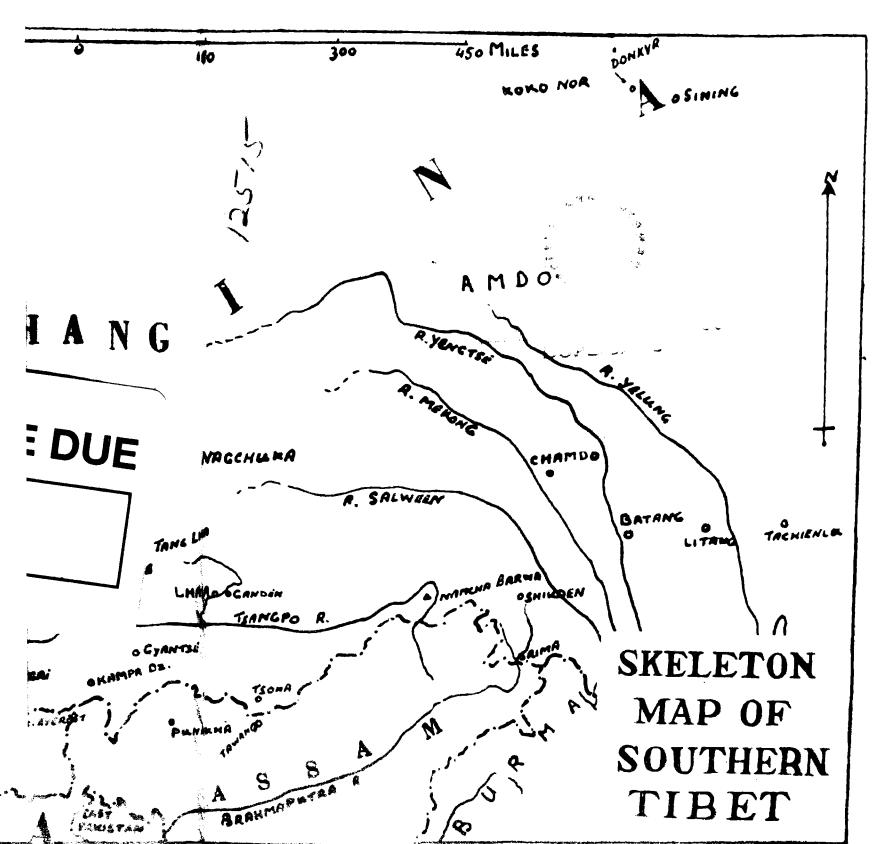
national humiliation and loss of self-respect. A glaring example of this is the Chinese invasion of 1962. When China invaded Ladakh and NEFA we did not know our borderlands and their people. Major Johri has used his 26 years' experience in the Himalayas in describing the social habits, customs, language, religion, economic conditions and administration of the hillmen. His treks and visits from "Leh to Lashio" provide an interesting material for study. The author also deals with Nagaland, Manipur and Burma. His analysis of the Naga trouble is logical and thoughtprovoking. Regarding the India-China border controversy Major Johri has objectively analysed the opinions of foreign experts regarding the invasion and the socalled Chinese voluntary withdrawal. The author's exposition of Chinese intentionspast, present and future—is a very important and unique contribution to modern history concerning India-China political relations.

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OUR BORDERLANDS

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BY

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HIMALAYA PUBLICATIONS KHURSHED BAGH, LUCKNOW First Edition-October 1964

Price Rs. 20

Printed at Hindustani Art Cottage, Lucknow.

Up to the time the Chinese launched their full-scale invasion of India, Indians generally were not well-informed about them and their diplomacy. They were living in a world of their "own creation". The lesson was learnt at a heavy cost. Still Indians need to know their borderlands and their people better. I have made an attempt to acquaint the readers with these forgotten people. I have gone beyond Nagaland-Manipur hills and have described Burma and the Burmese as well. My views and conclusions are based on my personal experiences gained through years of travelling after penetrating into and across the Himalayas. My travels or treks from "Leh to Lashio" and the study of the subject have convinced me that China is a menace to world peace. However, it requires ingenuity in the marshalling of innumerable facts for the erstwhile imperialists to be seized of this naked truth. In their anxiety to woo China they seem to have decided to keep India preoccupied on her frontiers. Their vanguard is working in the east and they are persuding our neighbour, Pakistan, to keep India involved in trouble in the east and west. Further, some extraneous influences are working in Kashmir encouraging a particular section of the (Indian) Kashmiris to make a mockery of the Indian Constitution, while they (the imperialists) themselves are busy in appeasing the Chinese. In spite of this critical situation India is sticking to her policy of co-existence and of settling the boundary dispute through peaceful means, the essence of panchsheel. It is a controversial point whether her present foreign policy is being helpful in the maintenance of world peace or is inviting the expansionists, the political and commercial opportunists to economically dominate this ancient land of Bharat. Indian society has been fighting a defensive battle for more than twenty centuries. Will Indian leaders be able to continue the defensive battle and keep the country united or under stress and strain invite the Balkanisation of 'the Wonder that was India'? Future alone will tell. I have tried to dwell on these questions also. I shall be satisfied if the readers form a correct perspective to appreciate future events in this sphere.

Today news has arrived that (i) the Labour party has won the election in England, (ii) Mr. Khrushchev has been ousted in Russia, and (iii) China has exploded a atomic bomb. The first two items have their own significance, but the importance of the third cannot be overlooked. This news has come as a shock not only to Prime Minister Shastri but to the whole world. It has alerted India and the West about the things to come. India and Japan are directly concerned with the containment of Chinese expansionism. India cannot ignore this fact ; she has a greater responsibility now to confront China than ever before. I hope the West realises this basic truth.

In writing this book I have quoted from various eminent authorities connected with the theme of this book. I pay my thanks to them. I am also grateful to Sri Nirmal C. Sinha, M. A., P. R. S., Director of Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, for his pains in going through the manuscript and giving suggestions on some historical points. He, however, is not responsible for my views and conclusions which are entirely my own. My thanks are also due to Sri K. P. Lal, lately of the U. P. Educational Service, who not only went through the manuscript but also helped me in correcting the proofs, Lastly, I am indebted to Sri R. Misra, M. Com., of the Kanyakubja College, Lucknow, for his friendly advice for making the book easily intelligible to general readers.

I also express my gratitude to Sri S. N. Chaturvedi, ex-Director of Education, Madhya Bharat, for his kind help in the bringing out of this book.

In the end, it may also be noted that the external boundary of India shown in the *Skeleton Map of Southern Tibet* and the *Skeleton Map of Burma* in this book "agrees with the Record/ Master copy certified by the Survey of India" vide their letter No. 10612/62-A-3/195 of the 31st December 1963.

Lucknow }

Sita Ram Johri

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PART ONE

CHAPTER 1

The Indian Myths

"He murmurs, sighs, and frowns, yet he submits; for even the Sepoy Revolution of 1857 would never have become what it was without Mohammedan ringleaders. The Hindu is too indolent for him to excite himself into fanaticism, and he is too indifferent to risk his life for the sake of remedying political wrongs."¹

-Arminius Vambery

"Parade !" roared the Barrackpore Brigade Commander pivoted on a smart white steed.

Suddenly chattering stopped. Every jawan and native officer of the Bengal Army became alert and stiff. His two feet were separate but firmly planted on the ground. The British officers were clad in the full regalia of their rank. They looked grim. Their horses were statue-like still. The whole atmosphere was tense. It was surcharged with hope, despair, suspicion and uncertainty. Everyone waited for the next word of command.

There was no spectator except a couple of old English spinsters who were returning to their deserted quarters after a stroll through the greenery of Barrackpore. The parade was a hush-hush affair.

^{1.} Central Asia and the Anglo-Russian Question; p. 292.

"Parade ! Atten....tion !" again roared the stout Brigadier.

There was deadly silence. Not a single soul did move.

Again came the command from that supreme soul in whom every Indian soldier had full faith.

"Officers stand fast ! Remainder grrrr...ound arms !"

The entire parade, except the officers who were brandishing unsheathed swords, performed the necessary movements in perfect unison. The guns were not loaded and the soldiers had no ammunition on them. The jawan was surprised. He never expected this order to come from the Brigade Commander. He had no time to think. Thinking on the parade ground ! Impossible.

Silence was again broken.

"Parade will advance fifteen paces forward Parade ! Quick March !" After a few seconds there was a sharp thud.

"Unit Commanders ! About turn ! Take charge of your units and march off to barracks !"

The units of the Bengal Army had left their arms in the charge of British sergeants. The Indian soldiers were returning to their barracks unarmed. They had to pass through a wooded area before they could reach their barracks. The British officers before reaching the hateful copse gave charge of their men to their native officers and galloped towards the Officers' Mess to cool their parched throats with a pint of beer. They were intentionally running away from the scene of action. They abhorred to witness the event.

When the columns entered the copse they came under small-arm fire opened on them from all directions. Guns had been trained on them to enact the slaughter. "Thus they (Indian troops) were mercilessly mowed down by a concentrated fire from the Company's guns."¹ This was

^{1.} Desai; p. 14.

the "retribution which in 1824 Sir Edward Paget dealt out to the 4th Native Infantry."¹ Hundreds of jawans were killed and hundreds were maimed for life. None heard the voice of the victims. A report was submitted quietly, in its own time, to Great Britain. This report accused the high-caste Hindu soldiers of the Bengal Army of refusing to proceed to a foreign country(Burma). This notion-"They (high-caste Hindus) objected to such service in areas quite foreign to them, where the exacting requirements of their religion were so difficult to meet."²-became an obsession with British officers.

China had breached the Himalayan wall in 1792 to humiliate the Gorkha. The British were busy in neutralising the political advantages which China had gained from this sudden and unexpected thrust on the northern frontier of (geographical) India. Shortly after the Burmese appeared in the east and drenched the Assam Valley with blood. Intoxicated with the general slaughter of the Assamese men, women and children, the Burmese hordes infiltrated into Cachar. They breached the security and integrity of the eastern frontier of India. The Bengal Army mostly consisting of Indian jawans from the north-western provinces (Uttar Pradesh) advanced to fight the Burmese aggressor. Under pressure from the west the invaders retreated on every front. "Arakan was occupied during the spring after a fight at the old capital in which the British were beaten off in the first attack. It had been intended to send a column over the Arakan Yoma to assist the river column, but the passes were found impracticable for artillery; some of the natives had to be fired on, and sickness was general, so the object was

^{1.} Cooper Leonard; p. 96.

^{2.} Slim; p. 93.

abandoned."1 This was the second slaughter ; it was not due to the refusal of the natives to proceed overseas for service. The cause of these massacres lies somewhere else. When the Indian troops were marching into Imphal, Major-General Johnstone wrote: "....., and when the advance into Manipur was desired, our regular troops were powerless."² It was not the lack of martial spirit which made the Indian soldiers so ineffective. Tt was the lack of training and bad administration of the army authorities which did not arouse confidence among the Indian jawans. They dreaded fighting on the eastern front. "Dalhousie was determined to avoid the mistakes of the first (Burma) war. He tackled the problems of organisation, transport and co-operation with a truly masterly zeal. The measures he took for safeguarding the health of the expeditionary force were so effective that the mortality from disease was actually lower than the peace-time average for the army in India."3 The organisational and administrative shortcomings were rectified and the British campaign succeeded.

The above massacres might have some political or administrative or other significance. Another massacre at Barrackpore in 1857 was, in the initial stages, a routine one, because such massacres were often enacted to teach the native soldier a lesson in discipline. Later with some motive, the incident was deliberately connected with the firing of a shot at Meerut which is said to have started the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857. Probably this was done to cover up the action of the British officers for causing such routine bloodshed.

- 2. Johnstone; p. 86.
- 3. Hall; p. 112.

^{1.} Scott; p. 193.

OVERSEAS SERVICE A TABOO

It was administratively and otherwise also convenient to accuse high-caste Hindu soldiers of some clumsy charge for every act of omission and commission of British officers. But when one reads other accounts, more light is thrown on the Indian attitude towards foreign travels. Aurel Stein¹ during his explorations between Yarkand and Khotan met two dozen and odd Indian money-lenders who had settled in Yangi Hissar; again he met wealthy Hindus in Karghalik. Some may consider that this venture was a recent one; it was due to security brought by the British rule in India and its powerful influence felt in Central Asia. This is wrong. Hindu traders had been going to Central Asia and the neighbouring countries long before Stein's visit. There are many Sindhi families even today living in India who narrate stories which have come down from generations of travels of their forefathers into these areas. Forster during his trek from India to London (1790s) met Hindus in Baku. "Some also travel inland to the Caspian Sea, by the road to Kandhar and Herat." He goes on : "On the 31st of March, I visited Atashghar, a place of fire, and making myself known to the Hindu merchants, who reside there, I was received among these sons of Brimha as a brother; an appellation they used on perceiving that I had acquired some knowledge of their mythology, and had visited their sacred places of worship." Forster gives a vivid picture of the fire-temple in his account. He further writes : "..., he (Hindu) will journey through hostile regions, from the Ganges to the Volga, to offer a prayer at the shrine of his God. Among the Hindus at Atashghar, was an old man, a native of Delhi, who has visited all the celebrated temples of northern and southern

1. Vol. I, p. 130.

India and whom I afterwards saw at Astrakhan."^{1*} The second example is of Lt. A. Burney of Bombay Engineers, who in the 1820s, met an ex-soldier of his unit in Bokhara. The soldier had gone to visit all the places of Hindu pilgrimage located between Bokhara and the western coast of the Caspian Sea. Burney² informs that there were three hundred Indian Hindus (their families were not allowed to reside in the country of Islam so that Hindu population might not multiply) in the town. After Burney, Vambery Arminius trekked into Central Asia-"the foul ditch in which flourish together all the rank vices which are to be found scattered singly throughout the Mohammedan countries of Western Asia"3-incognito. He travelled (in 1863) with caravans as a 'dervish' (a Muslim mendicant) and mixed with every class from the Khan (king) to the Turkoman dacoits, prayed in Muslim mosques and paid homage to Muslim saints. Islam's fanaticism in Central Asia was at its zenith and in the name of religion cruelties and untold miseries were inflicted on slaves who were generally the Kafirs for the true believers (the sunnis) of Khiva, Bokhara, Kohkand and Samarkand. "According to the precepts of their (brokers) religion, unbelievers alone can be sold as slaves ;.... It is only the Jew,....,

^{*}Tod maintains that Multani (Hindu) merchants lived "in the remote parts of Russian Empire". He relies on other authorities and writes that there were 500 Hindu families residing in Astrakhan(p. 421). These colonists were high-caste Hindus; they were not out-castes. Their *prohits* (Brahaman priests) lived in the foreign countries too. The Hindu colonists contributed *charhapa* (money paid or other valuable articles offered to the shrine in homage to the deity) regularly to temples in Sindh and Rajasthan. Tod (1829) confirmed this. According to him the Natwara temple received regular contributions from the Hindu colonists residing between Bokhara and the Caspian coast and also in the far corners of Russia.

^{1.} Vol. II (1808), pp. 256, 257, 262 & 304.

^{2.} JASB, 1833.

^{3.} History of Bokhara; p. xxxv.

that is unworthy of becoming a slave....At an earlier period, the Hindoos also formed an exception. More recently, as they flock by Herat into Bokhara, the Tekke and Sarik began to lay down new rules for their procedure. The unfortunate worshipper of Vishnoo is now first metamorphosed into a Musalman, then made a Shiite, and not until this double conversion has taken place is the honour conferred upon him of being plundered of all his property, and being reduced to the condition of a slave"¹. At Khiva Vambery was with the Khanate treasurer. He "found about a hundred horsemen, who had just arrived from the camp, covered with dust, each of them leading a couple of prisoners, amongst them women and children, who were tied either to the horses' tails or the saddle bows, each horseman bringing with him, besides, a sack which was thrown across the saddle. As soon as they arrived each of them handed over the prisoners he had brought with him, as a present to the Khan (of Khiva)....; then they removed the sacks from the saddles and taking hold of the two sides of the one end they spilled their contents on the ground as one does with potatoes. But these were human heads, the heads of slaughtered enemies, which were rolling at the feet of the official who wrote their number"². Vambery described many instances of a worse kind. It is not only that the Mohammedans of Central Asia were zealous about the conversion of Kafirs into their own fold, they hated the very sight of a foreigner in their country. During such dark days Hindus visited Central Asia and many of them lived there. "These Vishnu worshippers, with the yellow caste sign on their brow"3, travelled with Vambery from Bokhara to Tehran.

- 2. His Life and Adventure; p. 206.
- 3. The Story of My Struggle; p. 426.

^{1.} Travells in Central Asia; p. 192.

At Bokhara he saw Hindus in "great numbers", a confirmation of Burney's observation. In fact in his earliest book-Travells in Central Asia (1864)-he says that there were 500 Hindus in Bokhara. Hindus were not mere passers by, they had grown into a vested interest in the Muslim Khanate. "They have in some wonderful manner got all the management of money into their hands, there being no markets, not even a village, where the Hindu is not ready to act as usurer"². Elsewhere he writes : "In Central Asia, agriculture is exclusively in the hands of the Persian slaves; commerce and business with the Tadjiks (ethnologically of the Iranian origin), Hindoos and Jews''3. Their influence was not only felt in Russian Turkestan, they were also an influential community of Sinkiang. "They dreaded Russ has set himself up as lord-protector in the eastern Khanate of Turkestan :..., and even the wealthier merchants from Mooltan and other parts of India, who once trembled before the Oezbeg power, now whispered delight into each other's ears that the Russians are already drawing nearer, and that Oezbeg lordship and Oezbeg absolutism are coming to an end"4.

These are not the accounts of the 3rd or 4th centuries when the Hindus had a colony in Armenia.⁵ These accounts have been recorded in the 19th century, the period when the massacres at Barrackpore were enacted. The pilgrims pointed out by Forster and Burney must have been men of high caste, because even today the entrance of individuals of low castes into the Hindu temples (openly) is resented by the caste Hindus. It

- 3. Sketches of Central Asia; p. 307.
- 4. Sketches of Central Asia; p. 381.

5. JASB, 1836.

^{1.} His Life and Adventure; p. 206.

^{2.} Travells in Central Asia; p. 372.

means that the Hindus of high caste did proceed to foreign lands not only by land but by sea also as the said old man travelled with Forster to Astarakhan by a boat. Further, the Bengali Brahman had constant social contacts with Manipur across the Cachar hills. During the reign of Gharib Niwas (of Manipur) Brahman influence predominated in the State. "Under Gharib Niwas(1714-1754) its (Manipur's) raids became chronic and far-reaching. The Manipuris had become converted to Hinduism, and were incited by their Brahmins to seek blessedness by bathing in the Irrawaddy at Saigaing"1. It may be argued that the Brahmans did not object to the Hindus visiting Asian countries. They passed strictures against crossing the seas. Probably it was the pollution of food which was supposed to have defiled the Hindu travellers who took it. Such difficulties were obviously faced on the seas and not on land. Even these taboos against overseas travel were transitory and ineffective, because later the Hindu soldiers took part in many of the British campaigns in the Far East without any social stigma. Briefly there is not much evidence to prove that there were religious or social sanctions against the Hindus travelling to Asian countries. Therefore, this myth about 'refusal to proceed overseas for service' concocted to explain away the massacres of Hindu troops at different times was a handy excuse to cover up the shortcomings of the British administration and its possible consequences.

There are some other generally accepted notions which have been deliberately made controversial by vested interests. These need investigation.

NEFA-NAGALAND FICTION

"The Daflas are cannibals", declared a Marwari of 1. Hall; p. 73. Assam. Strange that a man living for years a few miles south of the NEFA boundary was so ignorant about the Daflas as to utter such a ludicrous statement. Then one hears that the tribals of NEFA or the Nagas are a branch of Polynesians or some such ideas. It serves no useful purpose to project our imagination to the times when our forefathers were apes. If the origin of a racial group can be definitely traced to 2000 B.C. then it should satisfy those who are genuinely interested in man and his material or cultural progress.

When the Aryans or the Khasas (a branch of Aryans who had settled down in the interior Himalayan regions during the pre-Vedic era) penetrated into the Himalayas they encountered two peoples-the Kiratas and the Nagas. The former were the inhabitants of the hilly regions while the latter ruled supreme amidst the foothills and the forests of the Terai. The Aryans entered the Himalayan tract from the west and pushed the Kiratas and the Nagas to the east. The latter penetrated into the eastern Himalayas and its foothills. The Nefaites are thus the descendants of the Kiratas and the Nagas depending upon the heights they inhabit, the Kiratas living on heights and the Nagas on the plains; there is admixture of blood on the foothills. The Abors, the Hill Miris and the Mishmis definitely resemble the Kiratas, and the Akas, the Daflas and the Plain Miris have traces of Bodo or Naga origin and the Nagalanders display Kirata-Bodo characteristics. In due course the Aryans migrated to eastern India and penetrated into the hills along the river valleys. This migration resulted in the admixture of blood. The physical features of the Abors and the Mishmis were thus softened. The Western investigators have unanimously declared that the Abors and the Mishmis are 'almost Aryan'ı.

^{1.} Dalton; p. 18.

Coming to the rest of the tribes of NEFA and Nagaland they (the Western investigators) declare that the Nefaites and the Nagas are from the Indo-Tibetan stock. What is this Indo-Tibetan stock? What are the Tibetans?

At a later stage of their development, near about 600 B.C., Aryan princes and soldiers migrated from the Indo-Gangetic plain into Tibet and founded independent kingdoms. There was no sign of the Chinese (in Tibet) These princes with the help of their soldiers ruled then. Tibet for more than thirteen centuries. They continued to have social and political contacts with their parent country, India. In due course the descendants of these Aryan princes and soldiers multiplied and spread throughout Tibet. Therefore, no matter howsoever we stretch our imagination into antiquity we cannot distinctly separate the descendants of the Aryans from the indigenous elements. The admixture of blood has gone so far that it is safe to conclude that the so-called Indo-Tibetan stock is more or less a variety of Indian stock. The Nefaites, if they are not Kiratas and Nagas with a tinge of Aryan descent, are nevertheless of the Indian stock which the foreign anthropologists call the Indo-Tibetan stock. Later through prolonged social and political dealings with the plainsmen their history and culture merged with the history and culture of the Assamese. Thus the history and culture of Assam became the history and culture of the Nefaites. The historical and cultural influence of the Nagalanders runs parallel to that of the Nefaites with the difference that the former, instead of Assam, had Manipur as their cultural and temporal guide. Western investigators tried and are still trying to study the tribes of the northeastern hills in isolation from the rest of the hillmen and some of them have chanced to find some common social habits between the Nagalanders and the Polynesians,

for example head-hunting. But this custom is a replica of human sacrifice which once was prevalent throughout the world (Iran was probably an exception) and more recently in the Himalayan regions. Then why connect the Nagalanders alone with the Polynesians*? Secondly the Polynesians remained cut off for hundreds of years from the main human society while the Nefaites and the Nagalanders always continued to remain a part and parcel of cultural currents which flowed throughout eastern India from time to time. Every tribal chief in the north-eastern hills takes pride in narrating stories which remind him of the glory of the Ahoms or the ruthlessness of the Manipur Kings.

Similarly to talk of the white man's cruelty for exterminating the tribes of Australia or America and to show one's anxiety for preserving the identity of the tribal groups of the north-eastern hills is to exhibit one's ignorance and a deliberate attempt to confuse the issue. The white man could not, on account of colour prejudice, assimilate the primitive tribes he came in contact with. Further, he did not favour the primitive type of communism of the tribals because it interfered with the economic growth taking place in the countries of migration according to the demands of modern science and industrialisation.

^{*}While describing the Battle of Kanua James Tod writes: "Triumphal pyramids were raised of the heads of the slain, and on a hillock which overlooked the field of battle a tower of skulls was erected; and the conqueror (Babar) assumed the title of *Ghazi*, which has ever since been retained by his descendants". (Vol. I, p. 246). Therefore, it was a practice among oriental conquerors to take delight in reviewing piles of skulls of their enemy. Further, Tod gives innumerable examples where a (Rajput) warrior's revengeful spirit was pacified only when his enemy's head was brought and placed at his feet. Head-hunting is not different from such acts which used to be considered glorious by the chivalrous Rajputs.

The white man thus started exterminating the primitives. His fury abated only when the tribals were reduced to an insignificant minority, the minority which could render menial services to their masters without impairing the industrial progress in the West. On the other hand the Indian tribal Communism is not a deterrent to the economic growth of modern India. In fact it is helpful and the Government of India is trying to develop the very Communism itself for the benefit of the tribals. Secondly long before the British arrived in India the people of the tribal areas of Assam and Manipur were being absorbed into the Hindu fold. The British discouraged Hinduism and encouraged conversion of tribals to Christianity. As a result Christianity succeeded in some tribal areas and in others the absorption of the tribals into Hinduism completely ceased. That processabsorption of the tribals into the Hindu fold-may restart if not sabotaged by vested interests. Colour prejudice does not stand in the way of this assimilation. During my sojourn in eastern India I met many individuals of different tribal groups from the surrounding hills and forests living in the Assam Valley and Imphal; I could not distinguish them from the average plainsmen. In fact in eastern India these tribals are much smarter than the plainsmen and I am sure that the latter would very much like to have social relationship with these unsophisticated people from the evergreen hills and forests. Further, there are many tribal or caste groups in which primitive Communism prevails and it will not be considered a bar to social progress in the country. In fact, the Hindu society as a whole, as far as life in the community is concerned, has not advanced much further than the tribal society of Assam and Manipur. Therefore, it sounds odd when Indian leaders talk of preserving the tribal culture free from outside influence ; influence of the Hindu animists: A trait of self-importance ! A primitive people trying to preserve the culture of primitives ! The blind leading the blind !

Therefore, some of the wrong notions pertaining to the Nefaites and the Nagalanders which pervert the public mind must be corrected. The sooner this is done the better.

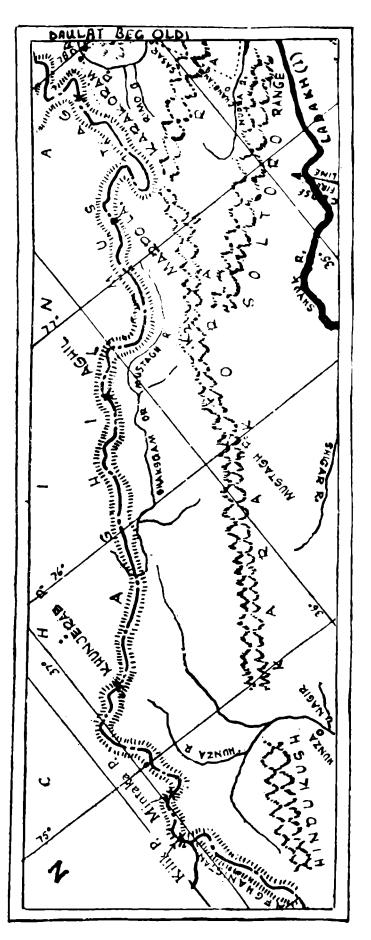
HIMALAYA AS WATERSHED

"We are very often hearing the word 'watershed' in connection with the present India-China border controversy. What actually does it mean"? asked a friend of mine the day China signed the boundary treaty with Burma.

"According to accepted notion a watershed is the height of land or divide from which the natural drainage of a district flows in opposite directions", I replied. "I know the definition. But the blooming word foxes me when I connect it with the current controversy. Your definition is simple. It aptly applies to local watersheds. I am sure this definition does not include all the attributes which are essential for an international watershed specially for a watershed which divides the Indian waters from those of Tibet. Your definition must be broadened to adequately embrace the Indo-Tibetan watershed", said my friend.

"You are right. When we speak of the Indo-Tibetan watershed we actually refer to one of the watersheds of the snowy regions of the Indo-Tibetan border areas. The characteristics of the regions are remarkable and noteworthy. Capt. Herbert¹ has done a great deal of

^{1.} JASB, 1842, No. 26, p. 1.



Kashmir-Sinkiang Boundary

research on the subject. He introduced water-heads to discuss the watersheds of the snowy zones. About the water-heads he writes : "A feature common to all the waterheads that belong to the Snowy Zones is that their situation is always in a comparatively open and level spot, with an accumulation of snow resting against the base of some lofty peaks, from which the embryo stream derives its first supplies". It means that with the inclusion of high peaks and glaciers, Captain Herbert appropriately enlarges the definition of watershed and makes it more specific. For instance some politicians for ulterior motives may argue that the hill dividing the waters of Hunza from those of Shaksgam at the latter's northern bend (in Occupied Kashmir) is the real and international watershed between the Hunza State and Sinkiang. Such an assumption creates confusion between the two terms-the 'local watershed' and 'international watershed'-as applicable to the India-China frontiers. This hill is devoid of high peaks and its importance is local. As such it is one of the thousands of local watersheds which abound in the Indian border areas".

"What about the flow of water of the locality? The Shaksgam river drains the area and carries the water to Sinkiang", pointed out my friend. "Yes, but most of the water of the area flows into India. Moreover, the flow of water is not the only criterion. There are other factors also which must be taken into consideration to decide the issue. For instance Tibet is a plateau. It is drained by rivers which flow into China, Thailand, Burma and India. If we consider the flow of water of these rivers as the only criterion to politically demarcate the boundaries of these countries then Tibet is automatically divided into four regions; each of the regions geographically should be included into its peripheral and contiguous country. Under this arrangement Tibet will be reduced to include Chang Thang (northern plains) only; no river emanates from Chang Thang. Such a truncated Tibet is not economically viable. Hence some arrangement has to be manipulated to clearly define the different watersheds separating Tibet from its surrounding countries. I have no intimate knowledge of other watersheds but I can attempt to define the Indo-Tibetan watershed", said I.

"Is not the Himalayan wall the Indo-Tibetan watershed ?" asked the friend.

"Oh Lord no. At least not in its entire length".

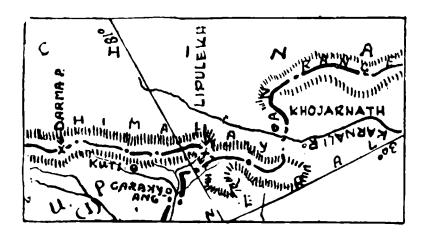
"Do you mean to tell me that the Himalayas do not form the Indo-Tibetan watershed"?

"That 'the Himalayas form the international watershed' is a myth", finished I.

My friend postponed the discussion for some future date, but I pursued the query to its logical conclusion.

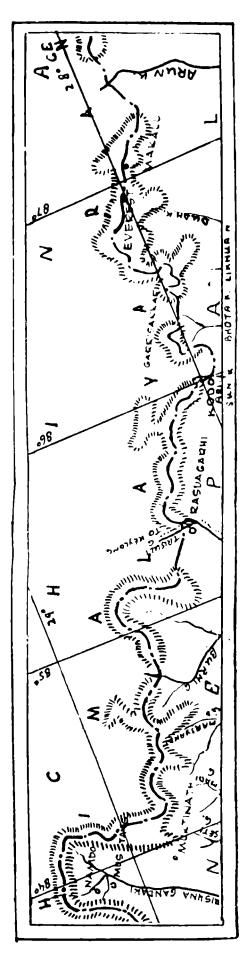
Starting from the west the source of the Indus is in western Tibet. Here historical and political issues outweigh the geographical evidence. Hence one cannot lay down a hard and fast definition of watershed. A textbook definition would entitle India to include the entire course of the Indus in Bharat. Coming to the Para river (a tributary of the Spiti river) one cannot ignore the height of the ridge passing through the Bod Po La and the line of water-heads of the eastern tributary of the Para river itself. This line runs along the northern slope of the Pargyal Mountain. The Bod Po La ridge (after the name of the pass) according to the very definition of the watershed should be recognised as the international water-divide between India and Tibet and not the present ridge running north-south to the west of the Para river. If the proper watershed between India and Tibet is recognised then automatically the entire basin of the Para

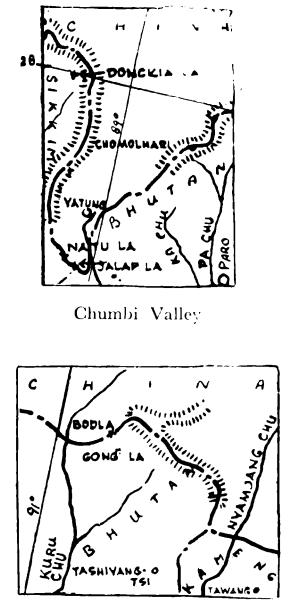
river becomes a part of Spiti (India). At present the political division of Spiti district is un-natural and is full of possibilities. Proceeding further south we notice that here also the Himalayan wall does not separate the waters of the Indian rivers from those of the Tibetan rivers; the upper course of the Sutlej remains, according to the present demarcation, in Tibet. In fact the Kailash range separates Indian waters from those of Tibet. Proceeding



India-China-Nepal Trijunction

east we come to the Karnali river (of Nepal). Here also the same argument applies-to discard the validity of the present boundary ridge as the Indo-Tibetan watershed. Near the Darma pass a high ridge emanates from the main Zaskar ridge. It runs northeast and then east. It encloses the entire basin of the upper Karnali and then merges into the Mandhata group. This ridge is the real and international watershed between India and Tibet. Still proceeding to the east and scanning the Nepal-Tibetan boundary the observer notices that the northern frontier wall of Nepal is breached by rivers or streams at five more places (besides the Karnali breach) and the wall itself is an "ill-defined" watershed. In Sikkim a portion of the Himalayan wall runs through Tibet to the north of the Chumbi Valley. Entering Bhutan the

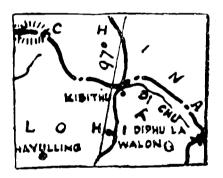




Bhutan-NEFA-China Trijunction.

Himalayan wall is the true international watershed till it reaches the water-heads of the tributaries of the Kuru Chu. Here it is broken through by one of the tributaries of the Kuru Chu and then by the Nyamjang Chu as well. In NEFA the Himalayan wall may be the highest ridge in the

E. r Z region but it does not form the Indo-Tibetan water-divide no matter howsoever loosely we interpret the definition of a watershed. In NEFA the Himalayan wall is breached by the Nyamjang Chu, the Twang Chu, the Subansiri river and its tributaries (in the Mt. Tsari region), the Brahmaputra and the Lohit river. In fact the last river enters India a few miles south



Lohit enters India

of Rima, the height of which is 4680 ft.¹ only. How can the Himalayan wall with these cuts and breaches be considered to be the international watershed between India and Tibet ?

If the above explanation, based on geographical facts, is accepted then the question remains as to which range should be defined as the Indo-Tibetan water-divide embracing most of the attributes of

^{1.} China-Tibet-Assam by Bailey; p. 122.

the international watershed? Considering all the factors the Kailash range provides the answer. During Huin Tsiang's visit "the whole country on the Tsangpo river",¹ including Galden, Shigatse, Lhasa and the Dihong river were a part of India. In any case the commonly accepted notion that 'the Himalayan wall is the Indo-Tibetan watershed' is a myth.

VULNERABILITY OF THE HIMALAYAS

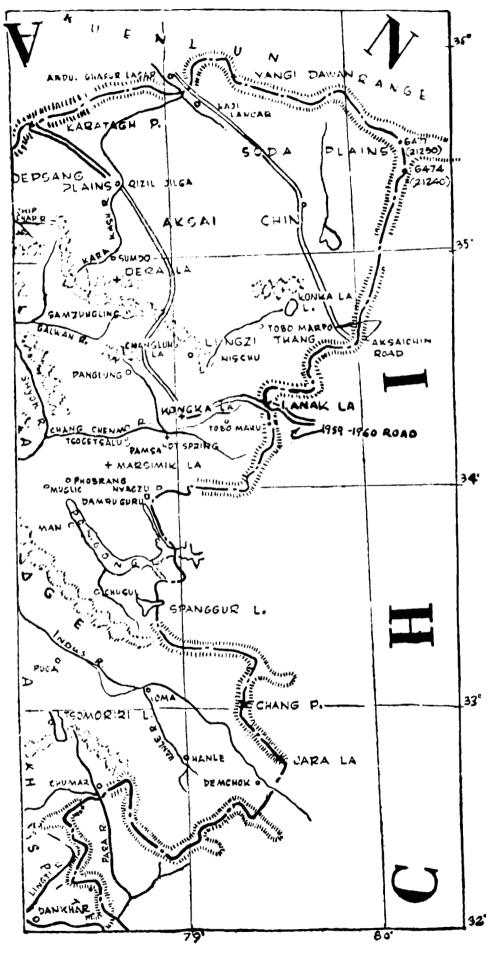
The Himalayas are the abode of Hindu gods and godesses. From local stories it appears that Lord Shiva has built a chain of rest houses for Himself all along the border regions from Kashmir to the Lohit Frontier Division. He along with His consort, Parvati, very often sojourns in these rest houses generally located on barren and inaccessible mountain tops. This is the religious importance of the Himalayas. The scenic beauty of the Himalayas surpasses that of any tract in the country. In fact the Himalayan regions are the best part of the country and those who have not visited the interior Himalayan regions have missed to appreciate the bright side of India. The pity is that the general public today is so much ignorant about these regions that it has fabricated some of the stories which exist in man's imagination only. One such fable is that the Himalayas have always remained invulnerable. This idea did persist in the mind of the leading Indians up to the time the Chinese invaded India in October 1962. The history of the Himalayan districts and states tells a different story.

The western Himalayas have been, off and on, disturbed by soldiers for centuries. In the 120s B. C., the Great

^{1.} JASB, 1848, Pt. II. p. 158.

Yuchi - eastern Tartars -, the then most dreaded raiders, invaded the kingdom of Tsu Ling (Kuen Lun) mountains twice. Once they were accompanied by General Chang-Kiang and the second time by General Kin-Ping. Later in 1523 A. D., Mirza Haider's army crossed the Kuen Lun and the Ladakh ranges to occupy Ladakh. A century and a quarter after the upper Indus valley was the scene of many battles. Here the Tibetans were routed at Bosgo by Indian soldiers. Emperor Jahangir's troops had arrived to teach a lesson to the Tibetans ! Then again in recent times the Dogras created havoc in Ladakh, Baltistan, Gilgit and Hunza-Nagar. They crossed the Himalayan and Zaskar range and fanned out to the east. General Zorawar Singh, their leader, died in Taklakot. Although the General died and his army was destroyed not so much by the Tibetans as by the harsh winter, the Dogras reinforced their garrison in Ladakh via Rupshu and crushed a rebellion of the local Tibetans. In 1862 the Maharaja of Kashmir had to guard the trade interests of his subjects. He used to send a company of Kashmiri troops to Shahiddulla (in Sinkiang) for garrison duties. Then in the 1890s the Indian soldiers rendered military service in Hunza State when the Indo-Sinkiang boundary was delimited. Lastly during the partition (of India) there was hectic military activity on the Himalayan range. The Indian Army used Armoured Fighting Vehicles with good effect in the Zoji La operations against the Pakistani raiders.

The southern portion of Ladakh, though a barren desert like Aksai Chin, also occasionally flared up with military activity. The Tibetan robbers, now and then, would raid Spiti and lift cattle. In Kinnaur, adjoining Spiti, the raids were a two-way traffic. If the Tibetans raided Kinnaur once, as a reprisal the Kinnauris took fire and sword into Tibet several times. It was through the



LADAKH

statemanship of King Kehar Singh who in 1523, concluded the 'Treaty of Perfect Friendship' with the Tibetans that the hostilities between the two people ceased for ever. There is another view about this treaty. As stated above Mirza Haider invaded Ladakh in the same year from the north. Tibet saw the danger and thought it wise to maintain peace on the Indo-Tibetan frontier. She concluded an agreement of friendship with the king of Kinnaur.

In the central Himalayas the Garhwalis, Rautelas to be more precise, marched into Tibet and forced Daba Dzong to pay tribute to the king of Garhwal. The Kumaonis repeated the performance. King Baz Bahadur marched his troops to Kailash and then to Taklakot and compelled the local authorities to recognise the suzerainty of Kumaon. Again up to very recent times, it was a common practice of trans-Himalayan tribes, locally known as Jads, to raid the Bhotia villages. Even today one can visit a hillock about two miles from Chhangroo, a Bhotia village in the Tinkar valley, where once the Bhotia villagers to evade the Jads' depredations took shelter and because of a natural calamity perished. As in Roop Kund (Garhwal) so at this spot one can see scores of dead bodies of men, women and children buried under the debris of a collapsed cave. Then as late as the winter of 1820 the Tibetans crossed the Himalayan range and looted the property of the Joharis* in Milam and its surrounding villages. The most important of such incursions is the Chinese invasion of Nepal in 1792. Historically it is a wellknown expedition which rendered the northern frontier of the Gorkha country (hence of India) vulnerable for all times

^{*} The Joharis are the Bhotias of the Gori Ganga valley. During the winter months they migrate to warmer valleys leaving their yaks and other movable property in villages located near the Himalayan passes.

27

to come. Although the Nepal army crossed the mountains and entered Lhasa in 1856 it could not undo what the Chinese invaders had done in 1792.

In the east of Nepal is Sikkim. The Tibetan armies crossed and recrossed the Himalayan barrier several times to enter this 'Arcadian State'. Sometimes the Tibetan troops were hostile to the Sikkimese interests, at others they helped the Sikkimese against the Bhutanese. This happened before the British arrived in India. During the British rule the Tibetans continued the nuisance. Their last incursion (1902) furnished an excuse for the British. The famous Younghusband Expedition of 1904 was the result. Like the 1792 invasion when 70,000 Chinese troops attacked Nepal the Younghusband Expedition* was also a major operation in which Indian soldiers (mostly Gorkhas and Sikhs) creditably took part in the most hostile terrain.

Proceeding to the eastern Himalayas the story of military campaigns across the Himalayan wall is simple. Bhutan is securely guarded by the Himalayan range. The Tibetans scaled this range several times during the reign of the fifth Dalai Lama without any apparent success. It is historically true that before the advent of the Manchus (1644) Bhutan was a part of the Koch Kingdom. When the Red Hats (followers of the Red Sect) were persecuted

* Some 3,000 arm	ed men and 7,000 followers took part in the	
Expedition. The final e	ntry on the list of the supporting strength is :	
Mules	7,096	
Bullocks	5,234	
Camels	6	
Buffaloes	138	
Riding ponies	185	
Pack ponies	1,372	
Nepalese yaks	2,953	
Tibetan yaks	1,513	
Ekka ponies	1,111	
Coolies	10,000	

by the Yellow Hats (followers of the Dalai Lama), they moved *en masse* into Bhutan and subdued the Koch King. Later the fifth Dalai Lama sent his troops five times to subdue Bhutan, but every time they set foot in the State they were routed by the Bhutanese.

To the east of Bhutan is a hilly tract which is underdeveloped and highly seismic. It presented no incentive to the Chinese and they never raided it. The Digboi-Naharkatia-Morang oil fields are a recent development. Their oil and the surplus rice of Assam have attracted the attention of the Chinese bandits. They have made the beginning - they crossed the Mc Mahon Line in 1962 and came down to the Foothill in the west and to Hayulling in the east. What happens next is worth watching. Therefore, Indians would do well if they, like their northern neighbours, become realists and give up false notions about the Himalayas. They must have correct ideas about the Himalayan tracts. 'A country is known by the people inhabiting it'. Therefore, it is essential that we should know the Himalayan people if we wish to know the Himalayas.

CHAPTER II

Green Hills and Barren Mountains

Down to Gehenna or up to the throne, He travels the fastest who travels alone.¹ —Kipling

I in the company of two other youths approached the outskirts of a village in the Simla hills. Two men – one a local and the other a yellowish fellow – took to their heels. They disappeared in the terraced rice fields. It was the last week of May 1926, very early for the monsoon burst. But in the hills one can never be sure of a downpour. That was a rainy day.

The fugitives did not go far. They were tired and panting for breath. They sat behind a boundary wall and continued their conversation in a suppressed tone. We noticed them. After a bit of fieldcraft we reached the other side of the wall unnoticed. On reaching our destination we suddenly stood up. The men were surprised and flabbergasted. They did not have the time to think and then act or the other way round. We talked to the local. He informed us that his companion was a

1. Songs from Book; p. 64.

Chinese national, a Han. Han is a term which confused most Indians. As we highbrowed Brahmans claim our pedegree from the Aryans, similarly the Chinese - the Homo Sapien with slanting eyes, fair but pale coloured, short statured, snub nosed, with high cheek bones and jet-black hair - traces his heritage from the Han dynasty which is said to have ruled China from 206 B. C. to 220 A. D. The fact is that the Han is relatively a plainsman and he is not a Hun. Our Jats and some of the Rajput clans are Huns. This foreigner whom we encountered was an opium smuggler. He was loafing about in the Indian border areas at the time when it was slowly dawning on the Kuomintang leaders that India would soon attain freedom from the British yoke. As a result of this the Chinese cunning had started playing its nefarious role in the Indian frontier areas.

Next time I met the descendants of the Han dynasty in Lashio. Here they were foreign intruders. Although Lashio is more than one hundred miles from the frontier town of Namkham still the majority of the population of the entire area extending from Psipaw (9 miles south of Lashio) to the Burma – China boundary is of Chinese origin. This human mass has smuggled itself into Burma forcibly. It not only stays there permanently but is every year reinforced by fresh waves of the Chinese deserters who escape from the Communist rule to take shelter in the rich country of Burma. Naturally they hate to return to the mainland of China.

It was December 1955 when I was in Lashio. A Burmese policeman accosted a Chinese who was loitering in the Lashio bazar. There was some argument between the guardian of law and the foreigner. Heated arguments were followed by a show of violence. Within ten minutes a contingent of Burma police arrived. In the meantime a word had gone round the neigbouring villages and multitudes of trucks, buses and cars loaded with Chinese agitators concentrated at Lashio. These trouble seekers were armed with dahs, swords, spears, pistols and guns. They were in a menacing attitude. The local non-Burmese were praying for their lives. The police contingent was inadequate to control the unruly mob. In this confusion the original culprit was forgotten. The police after some time gave way and the crowd melted away.

[2]

In October 1962, I was in Gauhati – Tezpur area. The Chinese had forced their way into Tawang, Bomdi La and finally into the Foothill, a NEFA outpost on the Assam– NEFA boundary. This time they penetrated into India as conquerors. Assam was trembling. Uncertainty was written large on the face of every Assamese. Indian forces had been routed in Kameng and the provincial administration was shaking. The Chinese shook the whole country.

The Indians were ignorant of the Himalayas and the hillmen.

I had been trekking in the Himalayas since childhood. Those were the days when bridle paths were a luxury. Mountain tracks passed through thick forests infested by wild beasts, the most dreaded ones being the bears and panthers. During the winter months the hillman could only travel in day time from 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. After sun-set there used to be death-like stillness in the villages. An indigenous lamp or two would be seen flickering in an unknown village as if cheering up the dead. As soon as darkness descended upon the valleys, only the tormented soul, whether through disease or poverty, would keep awake, others snored to rest their aching limbs. These tired beings mostly consisted of agricultural labourers or ordinary porters who worked on very cheap wages. In fact man was the cheapest animal transport.

Garbhyang is about one hundred miles from Pithoragarh and Gunji is five miles more. Even the hillmen, empty handed, took seven days to reach Garbhyang, the frontier Bhotia village in the Chaudas patti, though five days were enough for one to return to Pithoragarh. The readers can imagine the physical hardships of the porters who carried loads on their back. The scheduled rate for carrying a load from Pithoragarh to Garbhyang or Gunji was Rs. 20 per maund. Young Nepalis to earn more carried one and a half maunds of pay-load. These youths had to buy their own ration for the entire journey. They could just afford to buy wheat flour and salt and they washed morsels of dry chapati down the throat with water. Hillmen in those days did not favour the consumption of tea. After completing the journey they hardly saved Rs. 15 per trip. Obviously they were ill-clad and undernourished. Scores died on the journey. Their relations hardly knew the fate of the deceased.

I left Pithoragarh on the 13th August 1954 for Garbhyang. When I reached Malipa, a dreadful place about seven miles north of Jupti, in the Kali gorge, I found a dead body lying in the pacca kothri (room) locally called the dharamshala (a public rest house). I had to climb up to a cowshed to accommodate myself.

Two Dotial brothers (the resident of Doti, a district of western Nepal) started from Pithoragarh. Each carried one and a half maunds of China tea on his back. They were young and smart. Indian traders were importing China tea from the plains and exporting it to Tibet for the consumption of the Chinese occupation troops in western Tibet. It was a boom year for the Dotial coolies.

These human mules reached Malipa hungry and tired. The younger brother complained of pain in his chest. He could not carry the load any further. He stopped at Malipa to rest. The same night he breathed his last. The elder brother had left for Garbhyang in the evening before the younger brother died. He had to deliver the tea to his master. When he reached Garbhyang the Bhotia trader had left for Kailash on pilgrimage, 1954 being the auspicious year of Kumbh*. The porter could not receive his wages. His reserved ration and cash had finished. He would neither beg nor steal; a staunch orthodox Hindu stricken with poverty. Honesty and poverty marry only in the hills ! The youth died of starvation. Next morning he was being dragged by the Bhotia villagers to the Kali to be thrown into the fast flowing river. A detachment of Provincial Armed Constabulary had been stationed in Garbhyang for frontier duties. The Commander of this force saw the Bhotia crowd dragging a dead body as if it was an animal. He persuaded the villagers to be more humane and generous. The villagers and the jawans subscribed for the cremation and the body was disposed off according to Hindu rites. None cared for the Malipa man. Who to report the casualty and to whom to report? In those days a reporter would invariably involve himself into difficulties. At least he would become a prosecution witness in the case. He would have to attend the court located several miles away from his home village. The case in all probability would

^{*}A special occasion which is observed every twelfth year. A bath in Mansarovar and a visit to Kailash on a particular day during the *kumbh* year is considered very sacred and auspicious by the Hindus.

prolong for years and this unwilling witness would have to attend the court on every hearing. Who would, in his senses, invite this self-inflicted torture and harassment? Only fools and imbeciles took part in such luxuriesreporting an unusual tragedy to the relevant officials. And then whom to report ? A patwari (a petty revenue official) was the biggest gun in the locality and he had gone to Kailash for a sacred bath in the Mansarovar. When I reached Garbhyang the patwari had returned from Tibet. I informed him that a dead body was lying at Malipa in the local dharamshala. Immediately instructions were issued to the cowherd at Malipa. The Dotial, so it is said, was dragged and thrown into the Kali river. Were the parents or other relations informed of the fate of the deceased ? This was the Himalaya and these were the barbarities of man.

In the summer of 1938 I trekked from Mussoorie to Jamnotri, Gangotri and the Panwali plateau, the watershed between the Bhagirathi and the Mandakini. I met a group of Kinnauri pilgrims from the Baspa valley. The party consisted of men only. They narrated the folklores of Kamru and Sangla, two famous villages of the Baspa valley. In those days a trek into the interior of Tehri Garhwal was full of risks. An old lady of a Kanpur family was frozen to death while taking a bath in the Ganges. At Panwali (12, 500 ft.) men died while climbing that plateau. The whole of the Bhilangna valley was wiped out by the scourge of cholera. Parents left their children dying unattended, while children behaved likewise with their dying parents. Those who ran into forests to escape the ill-wind-cholera-were devoured by wild animals. Man could not escape the wrath of Yam Raj (god of destruction). There was no relationship between man and man. He was doomed. There were no doctors,

no sanitary staff and no rest-houses worth the name. Administration was as scanty as it could be. Everybody for his very survival had to stand on his own legs; the local government did not take any interest in the welfare of man. Under these circumstances the economic condition of the people could not be flattering.

My next trek into the interior of the Himalayas was in 1941. This time I carried my bedding on my own back. My servant did the same.

[3]

"What is the latest about war ?" asked a Captain.

"The Germans have occupied Crete", replied I. The Captain was shocked.

"How have they succeeded there ? Crete was well defended".

"Hundreds of German paratroopers descended on that island and wiped out the British garrison with lightning speed. I suppose succour could not reach in time".

The conversation dragged on.

"How is it that in such a lonely corner and so much in the interior Congress propaganda has penetrated? Here every child sings the song of Bande Matram", asked the Captain.

"Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant belongs to this district. Moreover, the Kumaonis are better informed and educated than any other hillmen".

A silence and then again an enquiry.

"Do you know anything about Johar and the Gori Ganga valley ?"

"Yes". I gave him the details of Johar and the Joharis as much as I knew.

"Have you visited that valley?" asked the Captain.

"No. Tomorrow I shall start for Munsiari".

"How is it that you know so much about Johar? What is the source of your information?"

"First are these sketches. (I spread on the ground the sketches which I had made in my daily diary)". I continued.

"Second are these *biris* (country-made cigarettes)". I took out a bundle of *biris* from my shorts and showed it to him.

"How do these biris help you ?"

"I smoke these *biris* with my porter and the locals whom I meet on the way. These ordinary villagers give me volumes of information if I win their confidence. Smoking in the company of hillmen is very helpful to know him and the hills".

This was the conversation conducted in the Khati Dak Bunglow in June, 1941. The Khati rest-house is about ten miles south of the Pindari Glacier.

I had trekked from Nainital to Lohar Khet (via Almora). At Lohar Khet I hired a Danpuria coolie to carry my luggage. He was a young man of cheerful disposition. He was hardy and had visited his neighbouring villages and pattis, a rare attribute found neither in the Garhwalis nor the Kumaonis. After visiting the Pindari Glacier I had returned to Khati, the next rest-house after Dhakuri from Bageshwar side.

Next day I left Khati. I climbed the mountain ridge separating the Pindar from the Sarju valley. By the evening I was nearing a small village located on the upper reaches of the Sarju river. By the side of a snow-fed stream I encountered a panda. I was surprised to behold this rarity in the Himalayas at an altitude of about 9,000 ft.

I stayed in that village for the night. Next evening I

was in Namik and a day after in Munsiari. In 1960 I again visited Munsiari and I was told that the trek from Khati to Munsiari, even then, could not be performed in less than six days. In my opinion a lateral bridle path or a jeepable track along the route I travelled is a 'must' to link the Pindar valley with Johar.

Munsiari is a collection of eight or more villages and it is the heart of Johar. When I reached the local dak bunglow I found that it was the time for the Joharis to migrate to Milam and its surrounding villages. The final destination of the able-bodied Joharis was Tibet.

The Joharis are a distinguished people. They trace their descent from the Garhwalis of Lobha. Once they had helped a Rajput prince of Gartok against his enemies. As a reward the Lhasa authorities had exempted the Joharis from seeking permission of the local authorities for visiting any Tibetan mandi for trade. They could proceed to any corner of Tibet for trade purposes without any official hindrance or check. Further, whenever there were civil wars in Kumaon for the capture of power and throne the Joharis always co-operated with the ruling prince. During the British regime two Johari notables surveyed the entire plateau of Tibet under disguise. Today the Joharis are again rendering patriotic service to the country. It is surprising and disappointing to note that no Johari has found a place either in the Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha or in the Lok Sabha (Indian Parliament).

When I first visited Johar a local market was flourishing and the Joharis were at peace with the world. Every village had a dharamshala where travellers could secure free accommodation for weeks. I stayed in the Milam dharamshala for a week and was not charged a single anna as rent by the villagers. Of course, I, my servant and the porter expended our energy in fetching fuel from Shandli Kund (14,500 ft.) for cooking. There was no talk of the Chinese then. The Indian traders visited Tibet and faced danger to their life and property. They had adapted themselves to the dangerous ways of living in Tibet and successfully traded in wool they every year brought from there.

After visitng Milam and its surroundings-Surya Kund and the eastern slopes of Nanda Devi-I returned to Munsiari. On account of the epidemic of cholera which was raging in the Askot-Pithoragarh area I had to change my route at Tejam. Here I bade good-bye to my Danpuri porter. From Tejam I again lifted my bedding on my back. Those were the days when an Indian traveller in the Himalayan recesses was a rare phenomenon. The locals were timid and suspicious. They thought that I was a member of the Criminal Investigation Department, a department which was held in contempt by the Kumaonis. I do not blame them because in those days the Kumaoni countryside used to be very often frequented by government officials for fresh recruits for the Indian Army. Soldiering is in Kumaoni blood, but Congress propaganda and Allied reverses in Europe had marred their zeal for joining the Defence Services. However, with my bedding on my back I returned to Nainital on the 22nd June, the day Germany declared war against Russia.

Again I visited Munsiari in 1960. I found that the rich, in spite of the uncertainty of the Indo-Tibetan trade, had stayed rich and the poor had become poorer. The former have become the leading businessmen of Pithoragarh and Almora, while the Government has launched development schemes to help the latter. This time I returned from Johar along the Gori valley. I had heard about the poverty of the Kumaonis but I was not convinced that Kumaon was a deficit district. It is the

Gori valley which revealed itself and I was shocked to see the ignorance and poverty of the villagers of this tract. For ordinary Indians ignorance, primitive ways of living and undeveloped dialects are synonymous with the Nefaites. How wrong they are ! One has to visit the lower Gori valley to know what poverty and ignorance is. He will also learn how man exploits man. The tract is the home of the Rajis and other tribes of unspecified denominations. The valley is red hot. Road construction along the valley is practically impossible. A bridle path along the valley has been in use for centuries and it is being improved to make it safe for journey during the rainy season. This is also very difficult. Regarding the locals they speak a dialect which is hardly intelligible even to the Kumaonis. The only redeeming feature of the valley is the sulphur springs which perfume the Gori waters and render them medicinal. The Provincial government is thinking of exploiting the sulphur wealth of the valley.

[4]

Off and on I penetrated into the Himalayan recesses without realising that one day India would face danger from the north. The occupation of Tibet by the Chinese enhanced the importance of the Himalayas. The frequency of my treks increased. My objectives changed. Now I was more interested in the people of the tract I visited. By 1950 motorable roads had penetrated into the interior. This enabled me to spend more time in visiting the frontier villages and living with the border people. In 1951, I visited Mana and Surahi Thota (the Western Dhauli valley). I returned to the plains via Pana, Irani, Ramni, Tharali and Gwaldam. By then Tibet had been occupied by the Chinese Communists. The Indian public

was ignorant of the possible danger to the security and integrity of India from the north. They had been fed on different propaganda. India was drawing "closer to China¹", so they were repeatedly told. China's misfortune was India's misfortune and her progress was India's "And now the wheel of fate has turned full progress. circle and again India and China look towards each other and past memories crowd in their minds; again pilgrims of a new kind cross or fly over the mountains that separate them, bringing their messages of cheer and good-will and creating fresh bonds of friendship that will endure2," wrote Jawaharlal. But foreigners were very much interested in the Indian border areas. For them a trip to the Himalayas was not only fun but was also political education. They wanted to have a peep into Tibet from the Himalayan crest.

After a night's halt at Ramni I left for Ghat next morning. I met five New Zealanders (in 1951) with an army of porters and a couple of Sherpas struggling along to reach Ramni; they were coming from Ghat. They were young and enthusiastic. They seemed to need rest badly. The sun was scorching. It was most uncomfortable to trek uphill specially at 10 o'clock in the month of June. My day's journey was nearing its end. I had come down from 8,500 ft. to 3,000 ft. Ghat, a small township in the Nandak valley, was visible from the place where I met these mountaineers. After exchanging normal courtesies we talked about the Himalayas.

"Major, have you been to the Mana or Niti pass?" asked one of them.

"No", replied I.

"We are going to these passes to see what the Chinese are doing in Tibet", said one of the New Zealanders.

1. and 2. Discovery of India. p. 139. and p. 192.

It was loud thinking. His foolish utterance embarrassed his companions. They abruptly cut off the conversation and bade good-bye. When I reached the plains I learnt from the press that the foreign visitors were not allowed to proceed beyond Badrinath. They had to content themselves with the application of their art of mountaineering around the Hindu shrine only. Probably the inexperienced New Zealander who had spoken to me gave out his party's fantastic plan and spoiled their chances of visiting the frontier passes.

[5]

I had visited the Manaites and had spent a fortnight with the Joharis. I wanted to visit Chaudas and Vyas in the Kali valley, and then possibly the Kailash-Mansarovar region.

I secured two months' leave in August-September 1954 and proceeded to Mansarovar. I had heard many conflicting stories about the Chinese behaviour and their suspicion towards the Indian visitors. A year before Mr. Rege, an I.C.S. (retired), had been to Mansarovar; he had been harassed and shadowed by the Chinese. He was not permitted to proceed beyond Ghusal Gompa, a monastery on the shore of the Mansarovar Lake. In 1954 I visited Mansarovar. Naturally I did not relish the idea of becoming a Chinese prisoner*. I left my camera

^{*}In 1955, a year after my visit, Sydney Wignall, John Harrop and Damodar Narayan were forcibly kidnapped by the Chinese from inside the Nepal territory. They were subjected to inhuman treatment. Wignall after a brain-wash sitting writes : "God help China, I thought. God help Asia and God help the world. Six hundred millions of them; their number is increasing every day. The radio and press in the hands of a party with no intellectual (Contd. on page 42).

at Pithoragarh. In fact I did not take anything with me which might arouse Chinese suspicion. I even left my shaving kit*. 1954 was the year when there was the Nirpani slip, a most dreadful sight. That was also the year when the Jongpen (equivalent to our District Magistrate) of Taklakot, an Amdoite of Communist leanings, had travelled along the Garbhyang route to join his headquarters. On his way to the Lepu Lekh he or his staff had drawn sketches of the terrain en route in full view of our nationals. Lastly that was the year when the Chinese had decided to import the brick-tea by the Lepu Lekh pass. In spite of the unusual hazards there was activity on the Kailash-Mansarovar route. It had been reported that the Chinese were paying occasional visits to Shangchung, a staging camp two and a half miles south of the Lepu Lekh. To safeguard Indian interests, the Government of India had ordered the Border Police, detachment (from Garbhyang) to move up to Kala Pani, once a flourishing Bhotia village but now denuded of its forests. The Tibetans up to the 19th century used ruthlessly to cut forests and remove timber and fuel to their country. At present Kala Pani is a camping ground about five miles south of Shangchung.

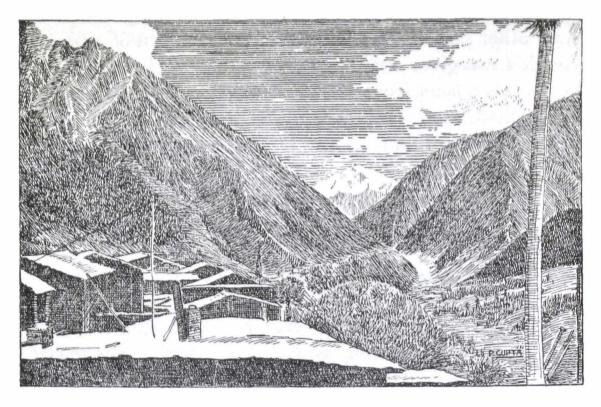
*As a rule the Chinese do not need a shave, hence they are not familiar with the shaving kit. For them a razor blade might appear as an implement of war. A Hindu pilgrim carried a small phial of homeopathic pills. The Chinese Frontier Guards adjudged those pills as globules of gun-cotton.

⁽Concluded)

freedom whotsoever. To think such people had supreme power over the immense area of Tibet. The members of this interrogation committee were in themselves a condemnation of the authorities who had appointed them." He further continues : "At that moment I felt I would willingly sign anything to escape from that nightmare chamber. I looked at their cold impassive faces one by one. They were the most inhuman, cold-bloodedset it had ever been my misfortune to see." (pp. 115, 165).

When I reached Jupti I heard harrowing tales about the journey ahead. I had chosen a wrong season for the visit to Kailash. It was the last week of August when I left Jupti. With determination I crossed the Nirpani slip. When I reached Malipa I was hungry and drenched with cold water. My left leg was affected. Even today I am susceptible to paralysis of the left leg. For the continuity of a story relief must follow crowning pain as crisis is always momentary. As I have said previously, I accommodated myself in a cowshed at Malipa. There were other passengers too. With the kindness of a Bhotia couple I was given a dry corner to spread my bedding. My coolie was a jungli from that notorious village called Jumma near Dharchula. In those days this village witnessed mass murders of families and it was not very unusual for Jumma porters to throw a sick pilgrim into the Kali, specially when they had to carry a patient in a dandy on their shoulders across an obstacle. Actually a mendicant, who was suffering from frost-bite of the toes and was carried by four porters in a dandy (chair), had been thrown into the river a fortnight before I reached Malipa; the porters wanted to cross the Pelsiti Waters, a dreadful waterfall during the rainy season, without any load. My porter was not a criminal type but he was so primitive that he relished even half-baked thick chapatis and half-cooked potatoes. I could not expect any relief from him. There was no shop, no restaurant and no place to light a fire. I needed some nourishment. The Bhotia couple was helpful and generous. They gave me two hard-boiled eggs to eat and a couple of hours later the Bhotia lady prepared dal and chapatis for me. Having taken the much needed nourishment I was at peace with the world. I forgot all the hardships of the journey, and afterwards we talked about Kailash, Garbhyang and the Chinese.

Next day I started for Garbhyang. Luckily it was a dry day and I safely reached my destination. I stayed in the Provincial Armed Constabulary (P.A.C.) camp. The detachment commander was a Kumaoni and had been my student in the Government College, Almora. In spite of my awkward and newly grown beard and exhausted state he recognised me. I spent a few days in Garbhyang and enjoyed my stay with the P.A.C. jawans who were the ex-soldiers of my Battalion.



Garbhyang

I could not enter Tibet as a government official on leave for obvious reasons. I left my clothes at Garbhyang and dressed myself in dirty clothes. I used my dressing gown as a jacket. I looked silly to strangers. That was my intention too. The Bhotias knew my identity but they did not betray me throughout my stay in Tibet. I sojourned in the Kailash-Mansarovar region as a college professor. At Garbhyang I arranged for a guide and two ponies, one for riding and the other for carrying my luggage. The former was of no use and I used it only when I negotiated the Lepu Lekh.

The gradient from Garbhyang to the Lepu Lekh is very gentle. It is quite true that vehicles can be driven up to the pass after expending a little engineering effort in cutting the road. The only difficulty is that the road for a few miles traverses across the Nepal territory. I had no difficulty in reaching the pass. The Lepu Lekh is well protected by mountain ranges from cold winds in the east, north and west ; it remains open almost throughtout the year. On the Tibetan side the terrain is rocky and the gradient very steep. It is because of this that the Chinese never dream of extending their territorial claim over the Lepu Lekh. Further, their disinterestedness is also due to the fact that the pass is not located on the main watershed separating the waters of Indian rivers from those of Tibet; the main Indo-Tibetan watershed, under the present arrangement, is in Tibet. However, I crossed the pass in a snow storm; across the pass there was bright sunshine. After a march of about five hours we reached Taklakot.

There was military activity in Taklakot. An army field-cashier had arrived in the Chinese camp and the Chinese were looking forward to the completion of the Gartok-Taklakot road within the next two 'years. The Chinese officials' behaviour towards the Indian traders appeared reasonably co-operative and easy. The Tibetans ignored them. There was no tension in the country. But to say that the Chinese were not alert to their interests is to deny the reality. The movable property of a Bhotia merchant of Vyas had been confiscated and Swami Pranavananda (of Almora) had to leave Tibet because the Chinese suspected him of espionage. What espionage work could anybody do at that stage? There were no roads. Only about three hundred Chinese soldiers were quartered in the Taklakot fort. They were there to man the frontier outposts. Some of the Bhotias were alarmed, others praised the Chinese who had ushered in an era of peace and security in western Tibet which usually used to be disturbed by Changpa bandits from the north. Anyway the peaceful atmosphere did not last long; the conditions of living deteriorated. In due course they went from bad to worse. Eventually the Bhotia youths stopped proceeding to the Tibetan mandis and now there is no question of Bhotia traders visiting that sacred land of Kailash. Tibet is a part of China now.

Mahatma Gandhi died in 1948. In the same summer two parties left for Mansarovar. The first party reached Mansarovar via the Niti pass and the other by the Lepu Lekh. The latter was lead by Pt. Hargovind Pant, a Congress Neta (leader) of Almora. The party carried the Mahatma's ashes for immersion in the Mansarovar Lake. There were a few Joharis in the party. Among them Thakur Jagat Singh, a leading personality of Johar, was a prominent figure. On their way to Mansarovar Th. Jagat Singh told Pt. Pant (a friend of Govind Ballabh Pant) that the Kailash-Mansarovar area was a part of India and it should not be allowed to slip away into the hands of any other power. At that time Mao's troops were nowhere near Tibet. "We are not empire builders and we never snatch away the freedom of any nation", was the prompt reply. Of course later, we watched the rape of Tibet, our neighbour, disinterestedly. There is no wonder that the Chinese occupied Tibet with the least possible difficulty. The Indian Bhotias lost their places of worship and the Hindus can no more aspire to immerse the ashes

of their dear and near ones in the sacred lake. They have to humour the Han for a permission to visit Tibet. And suppose a Hindu gets a permission for immersing the ashes of his relatives in the Mansarovar and he proceeds to the lake then can he be sure that the Chinese would not take the ashes as nuclear powder? No wonder the ashes of Rajendra Prasad, a devout Sanatanist and the first President of India, could not be immersed in the Mansarovar Lake! For all practical purposes Lord Shiva resides in China. He was forced to change His nationality from Aryan to Han. To the descendants of Aryans. Shiva is a foreigner now !

Some of the Indians, specially the so-called intellectuals and progressives who belie tradition and take pride in being opportunists prophesied an era of plenty and progress of every conceivable nature in the enslaved Tibet! For them the Chinese were the liberators of mankind appointed by their demi-gods-Marx and Lenin. Many of the leaders of the present Chinese ruling clique are the ex-bandits of the pre-Communist era. "If you look through Chinese history you will find that some of China's ablest patriots were at one time or other labelled bandits. The fact is that many of the worst rogues, scoundrels and traitors have climbed to power under cover of respectability, the putrid hypocrisy of Confucious maxims, and the priestcraft of the Chinese classics-though they have very often utilised the good strong arm of an honest bandit in doing so-and all this is more or less true to-day"1. Tang confirms this. "There he (Mao) managed to bring into his ranks certain gangs of local bandits...he (Mao) was a 'bandit' and consorting with bandits''2, writes he. I suppose banditry is one of the tenets of the Chinese

^{1.} Edgar Snow; p. 27.

^{2.} pp. 50, 74.

brand of Communism. In the beginning of the Communist rule the Chinese suppressed the minor incidents of harassment of the locals by the Changpas, but later on they (Chinese) themselves were practising cruelties on the Tibetans on a much larger scale. "Tens of thousands of our people have been killed, not only in military actions, but individually and deliberately. They have been killed, without trial, on suspicion of opposing communism, or of hoarding money, or simply because of their position, or for no reason at all, but mainly and fundamentally they have been killed because they would not renounce their religion. They have not only been shot, but beaten to death, crucified, burnt alive, drowned, vivisected, starved, strangled, hanged, scalded, buried alive, disembowelled, beheaded. These killings have been done in public; the victims' fellow villagers and friends and neighbours have been made to watch them ; eye-witnesses described them to the Commission (International Commission of Jurists, Geneva, 1959 and 1960). Men and women have been slowly killed while their families were forced to watch; small children have been forced to shoot their parents"1, writes the XIV Dalai Lama. I wonder what the Han sympathisers have to say for this act of genocide in Tibet by the Chinese. Neither the Bhotias nor the Indian pilgrims escaped the baneful effects of the Chinese rule. The former have lost their age-old profession-the Indo-Tibetan trade-and the Hindus have become foreigners to the land where on Mt. Kailash Shiva expounds the philosophy of life to His consort-Parvati.

During the Kailash-Mansarovar trek I had met Swami Pranavananda at Thokar Mundi and had come to know about the 'Inner Line' and the 'Inner Line Regulations' which restrict the entry of foreigners into the border

l. p. 199.

regions. In Jammu and Kashmir the administrative line separates Ladakh from the Kashmir Valley; in the western and middle sectors it separates the districts of Lahul-Spiti, Kinnaur, Uttar Kashi, Chamoli and Pithoragarh from Kulu, Mahasu, Tehri, Pauri, Almora and Nainital respectively. In the eastern Himalayas it segregates the entire hilly tract from the Assam Valley. Here the 'Inner Line', since 1873, restricts the entry of even Indians into the area officially known as NEFA. NEFA reminds one of NWFP, though the two have nothing in common between them. The terrain, the climate and the people of one are as different from those of the other as the camel from the dromedary. I decided to visit this wonderland, the land where man is patronisingly treated as a child and kept segregated from the "corrupt influences" of modern civilisation. A vain practice though still in vogue.

[6]

"Yes, I love the country. It is like Malabar. Here I can grow coffee, citrus fruits, cardamom and cashew nuts. In fact I have already instructed the Noctes and Tangsas to raise citrus plantations all along the Margherita-Khonsa road", proudly said Lt.Col. K. A. A. Raja, the Political Officer of Tirap, in December, 1958. He enthusiastically told me about the entire scheme of development that was being carried on in his Division – Tirap. He also gave me complete freedom and adequate facilities to visit every corner of his Division. Lt. Col. Raja's outstanding achievement was reflected in the construction of roads (in Tirap) purely with the voluntary help of the locals. I knew that this was against the accepted policy of NEFA Administration. "Sir, don't you think that the construction and opening of new roads will increase the chances of tribals coming into contact with the so-called corrupting influences of the modern civilisation ?" "Johri, I am a soldier and I tackle every problem in that spirit. I do not want to keep this Division devoid of reasonably good roads and village tracks. A mistake was committed in the past. I do not want to repeat it", said Col. Raja.

In NEFA I found that all the POs who were ex-army officers were patriotic, zealous and generous. They had a genuine respect for the locals. They were bold and welcomed non-official visitors. They took pride in helping the visitors to see the pioneer work they so laboriously had completed. The unhelpful attitude of the POs who had no opportunity to serve in the Defence Services can never be fully appreciated unless one comes into contact with them.

From Tirap I went to the Lohit Frontier Division where Lt. Col. U. Sharma, the PO, was busy in bettering the lot of the Mishmis and the Khamptis. He was exploring the possibilities of establishing ply-wood and bamboo factories. He spent most of his time in visiting the interior area at great risk.

Lohit Frontier Division is very well-known to outsiders. Thousands of pilgrims every year visit Parasram Kund located in an elephant infested area. It is not an unusual sight to witness a long chain of elephants crossing the fast flowing Lohit. One afternoon I saw more than one hundred elephants stampeding on the river bank in full view of the administrative camp. A noticeable thing in the foothill forests of Lohit is that elephants seldom destroy tribal huts. Lohit is densely forested and sparsely populated. It is after a march of about fifteen to twenty miles that one comes across a hut or two inhabited by a single male surrounded by many wives. These solitary souls carry on their normal work unconcerned. Elephants do not seem to interfere with the tribal bashas or life. It is not that the Mishmis are extra ordinarily brave. They know the ways of elephants and have adapted themselves to the jungle. Once I, in the company of a Mishmi interpreter, was returning to Roing from Rukmaninagar. On our way back we were informed that a rogue elephant was roaming on our route. I had never met a wild elephant in my treks through forests. The news fell flat on me. I did not react at all. But the Mishmi guide became alert and cautious. He became soft-footed and paced the ground as if a cat was prowling noiselessly. He was tense and scanned every corner of the wood. Thank God ! We did not encouter the rogue. We escaped the rigour of doing a quarter mile sprint.

From Tezu I went to Roing where landslides are a common occurrence. Here I saw the devastation which nature wrought off and on; hill ridges appear as if a gigantic razor-blade had cut them clean. Geologically there is tension on the earth's crust. This tension creates depressions and elevations. It is a slow process, but it is there. In due course the loose soil of elevations is washed down into river-beds by rain or wind. It silts them and forces water to overflow the river-banks. Thus even small streams have very wide and changeable courses. Rain water also fills isolated depressions. Water stagnates and kills trees. Thus beautiful tracts of forests have become a riot of stumps telling the tragic tale of the geological failings of the Lohit Frontier Division.

In Tezu I had observed that the Miju and Digaru Mishmis, in spite of being labelled by Western administrators and writers as cruel, dirty etc., identify their interests completely with India and the Hindus. The Dibong valley is the home of the Idu Mishmis. About 3,000 Padams (great) also live in this sub-division. The Idu Mishmis were the priests of the Shakta temple of Kacha Khati (eater of raw flesh), the Kamakhya of the east. Obviously the Idus were influenced by the Hindu *tantrism* and civilisation. Many of the ruins found in Roing sub-division confirm this. The Idus did not permit the Tibetans to migrate into the northern fringes of their territory. Thus their border areas, unlike Siang and Kameng, remain free from the people of the Tibetan stock. On account of this warlike spirit* and sensitiveness the characteristics of the people who lead a segregated life, the Idus may lose balance under the Chinese propaganda and prove difficult for NEFA Administration. Social contacts with outsiders will soften their sense of isolation.

Next to Lohit is the Siang Frontier Division. It is inhabited by the Adis(Abors), a stalwart and well organised people. The river valleys of this Division are productive and at places surplus in food. Formerly the Abors inhabited the district of Pemako, the area of the Brahmaputra Bend. From the middle of the seventeenth century the Tibetans under the instigation and pressure of the Chinese emperors have been migrating to the south. The Abors¹ could not stand the pressure and their territory contracted. The Monbas and the Khambas of the Tibetan stock infiltrated into the northern fringes of the Siang Frontier Division. I visited Pasighat and its vicinity. I wanted to trek from Pasighat to Along, the seat of the

^{*}It is a phenomenon worth noticing in the Himalayas that the people who have been influenced by the *tantric* (or Shakta) doctrine are warlike. This was evident in Tibet also. As long as the Tibetans professed the Bon Po religion, a variation of Shaktaism the Chinese could not get a foothold on the plateau. Buddhism brought slavery to the Tibetan Shangrila. Charles Bell in *The Dalai Lama* (p. 31) and Goullart in *Forgotten Kingdom* (p. 89). confirm this.

^{1.} No Passport to Tibet by bailey ; p. 73.

Divisional headquarters. For four months I tried to secure permission for the same but failed. Even though the Deputy Adviser at Shillong gave me permission to visit Siang, I could not finally succeed in my mission. In fact I failed to arouse the PO at Along even to write a small chit to me. I was an unwanted non-official visitor ! I might have excited the locals to revolt against the administration ! From Siang I went to the Subansiri Frontier Division.

Subansiri, unlike Siang is not homogeneous in its population. Here live the Plain Miris and the Hill Miris; the Daflas inhabit the hill slopes ; the Tagins are crowded in the upper valley of the Subansiri river. The Tagins lead a very segregated life. They are administered from Daporijo. The Apa Tanis flourish on the plateau drained by the Kale river. In addition a new people, the Tibetans or the Chinese may become the permanent residents of the Subansiri Division. The Longju tract, recently, has been declared a disputed area and in due course the locals may be pushed south to make room for the new intruders. The story of Kameng and Siang may also be repeated in Subansiri Frontier Division. This Division is unfortunate in the fact that it is adjacent to the district of North Lakhimpur. The latter has already been invaded by the surplus population of Pakistan (Mymensinghias). A time may come when the people of the Subansiri Division may be sandwiched between the Chinese Communists and the Bengali Muslims from the south. If that happens then all the attempts to preserve the tribal culture intact will fail miserably.

Previous to the introduction of the NEFA Administration the Apa Tanis invited the envy of the Daflas and the Hill Miris. But like the Hans, the Burmese and the Aryans, the Apa Tanis culturally, socially and economically influenced the surrounding hill tribes so much that the Daflas inhabiting the vicinity of the Apa Tani plateau took to terrace cultivation. The nerve centre of the Division is Ziro on the plateau itself.

Like its heterogeneous population the terrain of the Subansiri Division is not very uniform. The source of the Subansiri is located deep within Tibet where it flows from west to east. Near Longju it takes the southerly direction eventually to merge into the Brahmaputra. Most of its tributaries within or without the Division flow from west to east. The river valleys, which are many, in the Division are thickly wooded and are very unhealthy. Heavy rains, spread almost throughout the year, have added to the woe of the Division. The Division is blessed with pieces of open and level ground which can be colonised with a little effort.

The composition of Subansiri population and its terrain have created many problems for defence and administration. The main watershed of the region, in the Longju tract, runs in the north of the so-called McMahon Line thus exposing the Division to the Chinese bandit raids and armed incursions. There was a time when the tribes of Kirata or Naga origin - Daflas, Tagins and Hill Miris --- populated the Tsangpo valley. The Manchus came to power in China (1644) and forced the Tibetans to migrate to the south. The new arrivals were supplied with implements of war. The unarmed tribes could not resist the en masse migration of the Tibetans aided and abetted by the Chinese troops. They withdrew. They are still withdrawing. Previously whenever the Tibetans came to Mt.Tsari on pilgrimage they were escorted by troops. Now the boot is on the other leg — the locals when visiting the disputed area (Longju) have to be provided protection by the Government of India! Since 1962

the Indian Frontier Constabulary has been shy in using force against the Chinese intruders. The Chinese have become bold. They want to grab the entire region of Longju. The recent sojourn of the Chinese troops in the south of Longju on the 17th April 1963 is a pointer to the future plans of the aggressor. It is most unfortunate that Longju* has been declared a disputed area. The aggressor has taken advantage of this generosity of the Government of India and is in occupation of a portion of the Subansiri Frontier Division.

To get an idea of the administrative problems one has to visit the Divisional headquarters. Here the political officer's court is invariably crowded with Dafla litigants. In its vicinity the Divisional schools are packed with Dafla children who have been disclaimed by the parents. Hospitals in an undeveloped area should be a redeeming feature, but Subansiri is unfortunate in this respect also. Indoor patients come there seldom; hospital beds remain unoccupied most of the time. If sometimes the beds are occupied then the patients are generally the progeny of the interpreters and other local juniors who on account of their better economic conditions take pride in keeping an army of wives. Lastly, in the dark recesses of the Division slavery flourishes, slaves being the working units of their masters. Recently Indian Social organisations have established ten welfare centres in NEFA. One of them is in Reru, one of the seven villages of the plateau. These

^{*}The Chinese have extended their claim over Longju, Bara Hoti and Aksai Chin. To avoid an armed conflict the Government of India have declared these as disputed areas. If this trend persists then very soon the entire Himalayan region may be declared a disputed area! Historically this is the first example of our country's generosity towards her enemy. The danger is that Pakistan may copy the Chinese. She has already refused to rely on the Radcliff Award in East Bengal.

social organisations are doing useful work. Besides, roads and air-fields are being constructed and the Division is being opened up for cultural, social and other contacts with the Assam Valley; but Subansiri will, on account of its broken and low frontier wall, remain a risk for Assam, and consequently for the country, for all time to come. About one hundred years ago the Assamese trekked to Mt. Tsari on pilgrimage and now the Han is staring down the Subansiri from the Tsari ridge with a malicious eye. This is the danger facing the Division from the north. In the south the Mymensinghias (Pakistanis) are eagerly waiting to colonise the foothills of the tract.

On my way to Ziro, because of heavy rain, I had to stay at Kimin for nearly a week. The incharge of the local administration had been admitted into one of the hospitals in the plain. In his absence an ordinary clerk was administering the base headquarters. He being at the tail-end of the administrative chain became the incharge of the camp. This was resented by local medical officers. It is not that the clerk was inefficient or the local doctors were obtuse. It is the system which keeps specialists like doctors under an LDA (lower division assistant) that is resented.

The south-western corner of Subansiri is a dark region. Its virgin forests extend quite deep into the Kameng Frontier Division. From this forested area debouches the Kameng river. Even the wild Daflas dare not enter this sinister region to hunt the famous Assam bison. It is presumed that this tract was not properly surveyed up to March 1959. However, after a long detour along the North Trunk Road I reached Balipara and Charduar, an outpost of NEFA Administration. Here the local authorities made arrangements for my entry into the sanctuary of the Kameng Frontier Division. Eventually I reached the Chakoo camp from where I trekked to Nikma Dzong, a village on the southern slopes of the Se La Ridge.

"What is beyond the snow-covered mountain?" enquired I pointing towards the north-east of the village.

"Sahib ! One of our sacred places", replied a Monpa youth.

"Do you go there on a pilgrimage?"

"No. Before the occupation of Tibet by the Chinese we used to cross the mountain. We used to perform puja (worship) at the shrine once a year. Since the arrival of the Chinese we have been debarred from visiting that place. Now we know nothing as to what is happening there", finished the youth.

The Chinese cordoned off the area which was sacred to the Monpas of Kameng. They built roads behind the mountain curtain; they moved troops and established outposts manned by Chinese conscripts, their so-called frontier guards. They prepared themselves for the intended invasion of India. From 1950 to 1962 they had ample time to cut roads and spread anti-Indian feelings among the locals in the area. Here they also established stocks of ration and ammunition to be used in an emergency. From this direction came waves of Chinese hordes in vehicular transport to Dirang Dzong in 1962. They isolated the Se La Ridge from Bomdi La. There was confusion and the Indian troops had to retire. Within a week of the fall of Bomdi La the Chinese troops rolled down to the Foothill, a frontier outpost on the Assam-NEFA boundary.

After crossing the Se La Pass and the ridge which was under six feet of snow I reached Jang and the next day entered Tawang. The same day the Dalai Lama stepped into India. I stayed in Tawang for three days. The day I was leaving the administrative township the Dalai Lama was approaching it from the west. I had no clue about this historical event. The secret was well kept by the government officials. I heard the news of the Dalai Lama's entry into India when I returned to Dirang Dzong.

Western Kameng is dry and quite different from its neighbouring territories of the east and west. The tract is well developed and the Monpas of Tawang, Dirang Dzong and Rupa Valley are Buddhists and fairly civilised. In eastern Kameng live the Daflas, Akas, Mijis and Khawas (meaning slaves). The north-eastern part of the division or the north-western portion of Subansiri is the home of the Sullungs, locally called the Chulbus; the last are considered and treated by the Daflas as slaves. It is in the Sullung area that a tragedy was enacted on the 31st May 1963 at Chayangtajo. Twelve persons—1 Base Superintendent, 2 Central Reserve Police jawans, 1 peon, 1 interpreter and a member of the Auxiliary Labour Corpswere murdered by the aggressive Daflas who resented interference in their nefarious custom of lifting cattle and kidnapping men, women and children of the Sullung community. The slaughter of government officials is an old story. The tribals of NEFA and Nagaland have enacted such ghastly tragedies several times. The notable thing about the Chayangtajo slaughter was that the murderers surprised the policemen and used semi-automatic fire-arms. The people who only up to October 1962 were scantily clad and could only shoot arrows at their adversaries handled in May 1963 small-arms against an armed party of officials af the well organised government with effect. The people who were supposed to sip 'orange juice' yesterday, barely after about eight months, could act as expert bandits ! Who trained them in handling fire-arms? Who provided them with semi-automatic weapons? Where were these marauders trained and for

how long? These are questions which will remain unanswered for a long time. At present it is enough to know that most of the bandits have surrendered to the NEFA Administration. The culprits are being tried in the NEFA court.

[7]

My sojourn in the NEFA divisions interested me in Bhutan and Sikkim.

Bhutan, a state once riddled with civil war, witnessed the murder of its Prime Minister, Kumar Jigme Dorji, on April 5, 1964. The Prime Minister was playing a game of cards in the local guest house when a Drukpa (Bhutanese national) shot him from close range in the chest at 20.20 hrs. The Prime Minister expired soon after. Before the British era Bengal and Assam Duars (Terai plains) attracted the Bhutanese robbers for plunder. The leaders of these gangs were the Tongsa and Paro Penlops (Governors). Very often these Penlops used to fight among themselves over the distribution of the booty. After the annexation of Duars by the British, no incentive was left for the Bhutanese bandits to raid the Terai plains. Eventually the frequency of mutual strifes decreased. However, in recent times money flowed into the State for developmental works. The repercussions of this inflow of external aid are obvious in the towns of Bhutan today. Naturally the ruling families of Bhutan were the main beneficiaries. Jealousy developed among them. The presence of the Chinese occupation forces across the northern frontiers of Bhutan is another serious factor which creates complicated problems for the State.

Whenever in the past there was a violent quarrel between the two Penlops, the Chinese invariably interfered. In 1884 Paro Penlop and Tongsa Penlop revolted against the Deb Raja. The Chinese interfered. Paro Penlop committed suicide and the Tongsa Penlop decided to make a humiliating peace with the Chinese Amban (Minister). "The Amban, moreover, managed to acquire through this crisis some measure of control over the appointment of Deb Raja and the Penlop"¹, writes Alastair Lamb, the well-known British admirer of the Han.

As a legacy of the Han interest in Bhutan the Chinese espionage activities seem to have shifted from Kalimpong to Phuntsholing in the last two years. Some Chinese with Kuomintang leanings were definitely located at Phuntsholing on April 5. Whereever Kuomintang sympathisers are found Chinese communist agents are bound to be lurking around. Bhutan runs a parallel with the Shan States which I visited in 1955. In the latter there were Kuomintang agents as well as communists; the local Chinese ran their business apparently unconcerned and the Shans played for time and tried to squeeze political concessions from Burma as much as they could. Bhutan being a frontier state was unconsciously playing a similar game with India. India had no alternative but to keep Bhutan gratified. India has been footing the heavy bill for the development of Bhutan.

The problem State has suddenly sprung to life. Phuntsholing appears unusually alive with hectic activities—"Here everyone seems to be in a terrific hurry". Here are located the headquarters of road construction organisations. Phuntsholing, an erstwhile village, has become a district headquarters and a busy centre of trade. Indian visitors come here to buy consumer goods free of duty and local youths, mostly drivers or transport officers, by smuggling rations and other stuff, make huge profits, to be spent in Druk Hotel (the only hotel in Bhutan) on

^{1.} p. 178.

Bhutan whisky. There are rumours that Bhutan is rich in minerals. The future will tell the truth. However, the Bhutanese entertains high hopes and swaggers a great deal about his recent realisation of Bhutan's independence.

Previous to the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet the most commonly used land route from India to Paro was through the Chumbi Valley. For obvious reasons new roads are now in use to reach the heart of Bhutan. These routes are :—

	Name of the route	Details	Base rail-head
1.	Chumarchi-Paro	mule track	Banarhat.
2.(a)	Phuntsholing-	jeepable, length	n Hasimara.
	Chhumdozam-Paro	107 miles	
(b)	Phuntsholing-	jeepable,	"
	Chhumdozam-Thimpu	length 108 mile	es
		Chhumdozam	at
		miles 90	
3.	Dewangiri*-Tashigong	jeepable,	Rangiya.
		length 118 mile	es
4.	Hathisar-Paro	jeepable,	Bongaigaon.
		completed length	
		about 40 miles	

Thimpu is connected by a mule track with Punakha, situated at the confluence of Mo Chu and Punakha Chu. The path crosses the Daghla Mountain at Do Chu La (11,000 ft.). A bridle path connecting Punakha and Tongsa with Tashigong runs laterally. It crosses the Black Mountain at Pale La (11,000 ft.). The Black Mountain, besides other mountain ridges running north-south, is the

^{*}Dewangiri was in Assam. According to Article 4 of the treaty between India and Bhutan (1949) the former returned to the latter about thirty two square miles of territory in this area known as Dewangiri.

highest range dividing the State into eastern and western Bhutan.

From the defence point of view western and northeastern border districts of Bhutan are sensitive areas. Through these areas pass bridle paths leading into Tibet. Paro and Tashigong are, therefore, two important track junctions. The tactical and strategic importance of Paro, because of its being in the neighbourhood of Chumbi Valley cannot be over-emphasised. Tashigong also, after the Chinese invasion of 1962, has acquired equal importance.

The capital of Bhutan is at Thimpu where His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo (Maharaja of Bhutan) resides. Previously he used to shift his seat of government to Wangdi Photang, a few miles south of Punakha (4,500 ft.), but now he permanently stays at Thimpu (8,800 ft.). His secretariat is located in winter at Samchi a border town accessible from Banarhat railway station, and in summer at Paro. A portion of this secretariat is permanently accommodated in the Bhutan House, Kalimpong. Prime Minister Jigme Dorji with his personal secretariat stayed for a considerable part of the year at Calcutta. Government of India's representative for Bhutan and Sikkim, called the Political Officer in Sikkim and Bhutan, stays at Gangtok (Sikkim) and very rarely visits the Bhutan capital. Mr. N. K. Rustomji I. C. S. is the Adviser to the Bhutan King and assists his Durbar.

An Indian does not need any special permission to visit Gangtok and its surroundings. This is, however, not the case with Bhutan. A non-official visitor whether Indian or of any other nationality needs an entry permit from the government of Bhutan. Invariably a non-Indian finds it easier to obtain such permission. I was unlucky that a day after my arrival at Phuntsholing Prime Minister Jigme Dorji was assassinated. I had to retrace my steps from Phuntsholing. However, my impression is that the common man of Bhutan is loyal and patriotic. He is religious and contented. He is not amenable to the Communist propaganda, anyway not in the present state of economic development of Bhutan. The intellectual or the higher class of the Bhutanese comprises the rulers, administrators and lamas. These high dignitaries are interested in their profession and are fully aware of the Chinese treachery and cruelty towards the smaller nations whom they (the Chinese) happen to govern. They, for their own comfort and self-interest, may not be attracted towards Communism but their luxurious ways of living may attract Chinese intelligence agents to Bhutan as contractors, gamblers, speculators and political or cultural advisers. The Bhutanese may also fall a victim to the charms of the well trained and selected Chinese beauties and may take them as private secretaries, mistresses or house-wives. Calcutta may prove a venue for political intrigues. In fact the gambling dens, drinking bars and posh hotels of Calcutta are more dangerous to the security of Bhutan than monasteries, the family quarters or the villages of the the State. What China needs at this stage is the vital information about Bhutan and not an uprising within. To this end she has planted her secret agents in the mountain kingdom. These agents are sending messages to China on transmitters, well hidden from government officials. These messages have been at various times intercepted by the Bhutanese government but the Chinese secret agents remain untraced. The investigators themselves might have, ignorantly, extended shelter to these foreign agents.

The Bhutanese are thoroughly satisfied with the present Indo-Bhutanese political relations. They fully realise that Peking can never be as near to them as Calcutta. They will never prefer to drown themselves in the advancing sea of the barbaric Chinese expansionism. Briefly, if China succeeds in Bhutan she will do so through her agelong treachery and cunning. Whether the ruling class of Bhutan is adequately equipped to cope with this, future alone will tell.

The defence of Bhutan is the responsibility of India but Bhutan is the sole judge to decide whether her territorial integrity and sovereignty is threatened and whether she needs Indian Army contingents to defend her frontier against an invader. She may, however, be late in coming to a right decision.

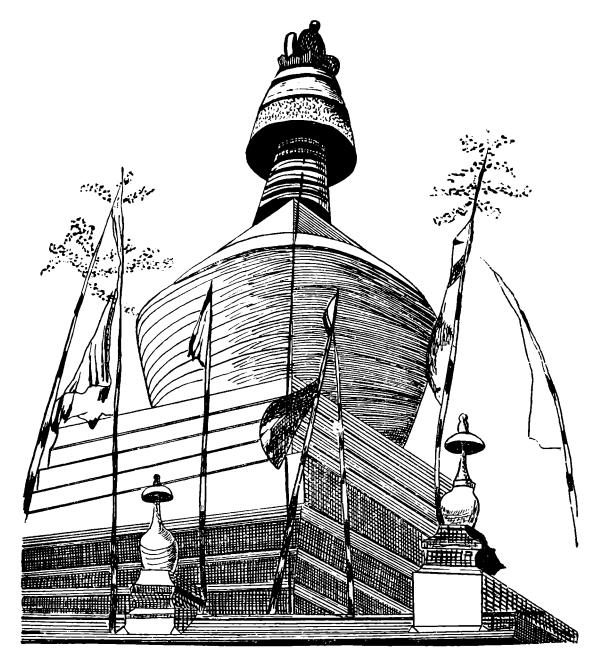
Sikkim is a different proposition. The defence of this kingdom also is India's responsibility and Indian troops are guarding the mountain passes leading into Tibet and the Chumbi Valley. This makes Sikkim primarily a sensitive area. The Chinese do not like any contact of their army with Indian soldiers. They may incite their troops to initiate armed conflicts. On the pretext of avoiding these skirmishes they are quite capable of demanding a disengagement zone within the Sikkim territory*. They have done it in Ladakh and in NEFA and they may repeat the same performance in Sikkim also. In fact they have already started this mischief. The present king of Sikkim is married to an American lady. Naturally American officials and tourists are welcome here. These visitors are likely to enjoy facilities to visit any corner of the State. Nathu La being nearest to Gangtok frequently attracts these foreign visitors. Recently (1963) the USA Ambassador visited the pass. The Chinese, as was expected, started exploring the possibilities of creating a basis for further aggression. Once the Chinese cross the

^{*}They will press their claim over Sesa La-Donkya La-Sabu La ridge in North Sikkim very shortly.

mountain passes of Sikkim they can easily roll down into the plains of Bengal.

Bhutan is a theocratic State. Sikkim is not. Here common men are comparatively well informed and are more conscious of their political rights and privileges. The Bhotia-Nepali controversy has seeped into the Sikkimese blood. This anti-Bhotia or anti-Nepali feeling may provide a spark to the Chinese to kindle a fire of internal trouble. The aristocracy of Sikkim traditionally hates Chinese domination. Naturally it is interested in maintaining peace within the State. It has willingly invited India's help for combating the poverty and economic backwardness of the Sikkimese. Briefly, in Sikkim as everywhere else in India, the bulk of the Sikkimese population offers an easy target to the Chinese propaganda. As long as the common man is well looked after there is hardly any chance for an internal explosion. Obviously the main aim of the Chinese in Sikkim is to denounce the Sikkimese royalty and to incite the Sikkimese masses for internal revolt. The king of Sikkim and the Government of India are fully alive to the danger. Sikkim's economy is being rapidly developed. Gangtok is connected by road with Chungthang, Nathu La and Singtam. Jeepable tracks connecting the mountain passes have also been constructed.

I have visited Sikkim several times and have found it on the whole marching towards progress — material and moral. Its young Choggyal, Polden Thondup Namgyal, is a man of ideas. The development plans are under phased implementation. A People's Consultative Committee organises funds and supplies to meet the requirements of the Indian soldiers in Sikkim. A recent feature is the arrival and settlement of Tibetan refugees. A large number of them is employed in road construction. Many refugee boys undergo a general course of instruction (in English, general knowledge and the like) at the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, founded in 1958 to study Tibetan literature and art.



Chorten in the Namgyal Institute compound

There is no direct highway connecting Sikkim with Nepal. The Nepal-Sikkim border terrain is mountainous. Moreover, eastern Nepal is not much developed. It does not attract tourists to enter the Gorkha Kingdom from the east. There may be a political reason also for continuing to keep the entry through the eastern gates of Nepal or the western doors of Sikkim restricted for foreign tourists. The Nepal-Sikkim border areas are populated by the Limbus of Kirata origin. Before the advent of the present dynasty's rule in Sikkim in the east and Prithiwi Narayan's occupation of Kathmandu Valley in the west, the Limbus were a free people; they ruled the state of Limbuana in-between. If the Limbus of the two states are allowed to mix freely they may aspire to unite into a single state. Embarrassing to both – Nepal and Sikkim.

Nepal, geographically and politically, occupies a peculiar position; its frontier is tactically favourable to Tibet and its people have an unbreakable bond with India. The majority of the Nepalis are Hindus. A Hindu Kingdom under the constant threat of Chinese invasion ! Naturally foreigners are interested in Nepal's potentialities. Various Himalayan peaks and the imaginary 'Yeti'-the abominable snow-man—provide a valid excuse for outsiders to visit Nepal. From Nepal's point of view foreign visitors are a source of income; they are welcome guests to the country. Indians are sometimes an exception to this rule. Nepalis' treatment towards them is determined by local jealousies and political considerations. From Birganj to Kathmandu, a journey of 12 hours by bus, my personal kit was opened at least at six places for a thorough check-up. Nepal's petty government officials look upon Indian tourists with suspicious eyes. The lower the rank of the official the more arrogant was his behaviour. This was not confined only to the Kathmandu Valley; it prevailed throughout Nepal. I experienced it at Pokhra, Tribeni (on the right bank of the Gandaki opposite Bhaisalotan) and in the entire district of Doti.

NEFA is notorious for the absence of good roads and bridle paths. Nepal is no exception to this shortcoming. No wonder that the calf-muscles of the Nepalis, specially of the Rais, Limbus and Tamangs, like those of the Daflas, are well shaped and developed. Nepal, at least a portion of it astride the Narayani river, would have been another "human sanctuary" but for Prithiwi Narayan Shah's timely efforts in uniting the country under one government. When the British were extending their administration into NEFA and isolating it from the Assam Valley, in Nepal Prithiwi Narayan's messiahs were busy in bringing the Kusundas and the Chepangs into the Hindu fold. Thus while in the twentieth century the Gorkha completed the assimilation of the so-called tribals, the NEFA Administration speaks of emotional integration and treats the tribes to doses of "orange juice". When I visited the wild areas of Nepal the Chepangs were a distinguished 'varna' of Hindu society and one of the Chepangs (in 1962) was a minister in the Nepal Cabinet. Only a few hundreds of Kusundas have yet to be assimilated in the common culture of Nepal. King Mahendra does not need a specialist to advise and guide him in this humanitarian work ! In due course the Kusundas will be absorbed in the Hindu fold without losing their identity. After visiting the forested districts of Nepal one is surprised at the futility of isolating the Nefaites from the Vaishnav religious influence which already counts thousands of the tribals of Assam in its fold. Evidently some extraneous influences are working in NEFA which could not secure a foothold in the Gorkha Kingdom.

The advocates of the policy of segregation and isolation, as applied in NEFA, may argue that the problems of NEFA differ from those of Nepal. It may be true. In India no two communities are identical in their cultural and religious outlook and these differences multiply manyfold when we consider the innumerable communities in the country. If we dwell long on these differences we can never frame a unified policy for the amelioration of the Indian masses. Further, has any race or nation written its history on the dissimilarities of its members? It is observed and common sense shows that human groups are formed and kingdoms organised on common traits and interests nascent in various people. *Appreciation* of this basic fact is very essential for integrating the iribals of the Assam hills with the people of the valley. The tribals of NEFA are the nationals of India. They are not social guinea pigs for pseudo-anthropologists or pseudo-nationalists to experiment upon.

It is a pity that the negative policy of segregation and isolation has also been extended to embrace the Himalayan border districts of India. Chinese incursions were the familiar excuse for imposing frontier entry restrictions against the Indians. On the 1st June 1962, the Indians became foreigners in their own mother-land! The entry of Indians into the border areas has become a harassing experience. Another excuse to justify such regulations is to restrict the entry of Communists or their influence from the south but what about their entry from the north? Thousands of Chinese entered Ladakh and polluted the peaceful local atmosphere. It is true that they withdrew to the 'line of actual control' but what is the guarantee that they have not left their fifth columnists in the desolate parts of Ladakh like Rupshu and Zaskar and the dark corners of NEFA? It is an accepted fact that the Chinese had stocked reserve ammunition and rations with some of the tribal groups residing in the north-east of the Kameng Frontier Division before they launched their notorious invasion in 1962. Again is it wise to expect that

Communist propaganda would not infiltrate into the border areas since the CPI is allowed to function here? It is not in the national interest to keep the border areas sealed off from our own nationals who wish to visit them without dancing attendance upon the local officials. If the frontier entry restrictions are kept in force for long there is every possibility that the 'Inner Line' may freeze for all times to come. This will be damaging to the future generations of India. On one side India desires to inculcate an adventurous spirit in her youth while on the other her administrators are closing down areas which provide a great inspiration to the young to undergo hardships and face risk for risk's sake. A visit to Anand Bhavan (Allahabad) and Konark temple may arouse pride and respect for our culture in the Indian youth but what the treks into the Himalayan recesses can do is beyond the imagination of those who never had the privilege of availing such opportunities in their young age.

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My treks into the Himalayas nearly finished by 1st June 1962. The only trek which I undertook after this date was a visit to Nachar (Kinnaur) and Lahul. My pocket and patience did not allow me to hunt and wait for the local abour to help me to visit the interior of the districts. Since the inauguration of developmental activities in the border areas local labour has become scarce and prohibitively expensive; without government support trekking in the Himalayan border areas has become very troublesome.

The district of Kinnaur is full of folklores which go back to the Mahabharat period. The story of Krishna's marriage with Rukmani and the love episode of Aniruddha and the daughter of Bana are narrated by every Kinnauri with pride. It is surprising that the same stories are told by the Assamese, as if these very dramas were enacted in their country. Sarhan of Kinnaur and Tezpur of Assam both claim to be the Sonitpur of Mahabharat. Krishna seems to have operated in Kinnaur as well as in Assam. Who was the real Krishna of Mahabharat? However, if the local legends are to be believed, Kinnaur was the district where the Pandavas, the famous five brothers of the epic, passed the best part of their life. The Kinnauris are stated to have inherited polyandry from the Pandavas. Kinnaur is also the home of Shiya and Parvati. Even today, according to the Kinnauries, the Divine Couple occasionally sojourns in Kinnaur. The beauty of the Kinnauri women, the ruggedness of snow-covered mountains, and forests of Kinnaur where apricots, grapes and chilghosa (pine fruit of a special variety) grow wild, definitely deserve the admiration of visitors. No wonder that gods and goddesses, in ancient times, decided to migrate en masse into Kinnaur. These attributes of Kinnaur and its highest range, Shrikhand, are equally matched by the smartness of the colourful Dogras and the undulating terrain of the Kulu Valley.

LADAKH

A man who has been under the spell of the inner Himalayan rivers, valleys and ranges cannot be suddenly divorced from that sanctuary. I got an opportunity to visit Ladakh. For obvious reasons trekking in that frontier area was out of the question. I had to be satisfied with a motor-journey. I was, therefore, mostly on the four wheels throughout my sojourn in the country of broad valleys and sandy mountains sparingly studded with shingle splinters. By no means the motor-journey was a pleasant drive. It was extremely tiring but certainly rewarding.

"Yes, I come from Ladakh. Thank God, there are no germs, no snakes and no poisonous flies. One is never troubled by a drizzle; the idea of torrential rains as experienced in NEFA does not come into the mind at all. Days are warm and sunny. It is terribly cold at night. But this cold is preferable to the muggy atmosphere which is said to be the bane of the eastern front. Moreover, the army has provided us with all the equipment necessary to make life comfortable during the beastly winter months", said a Doctor Major. He took a sip of water from the glass the bearer had put before him prior to bringing the vegetarian lunch for both of us. The major wanted to talk and I was keen to listen. I let him continue. "In Ladakh one never puts on summer clothes. It is after many months that I am putting on this OG (olive-green uniform worn during the summer months) shirt and trousers. I am feeling awkward. It is damn too hot here !"

"Where were you during the 1962 operations?" enquired I. The major was a little embarrassed. I understood him.

"I don't want the exact location. If you could tell me the name of the sector I shall be satisfied", said I reassuringly.

"I was somewhere in the Shyok-Nubra sector. I have completed more than two years' service in Ladakh without a break." smilingly said the major.

"Haven't you availed of your annual leave ?" asked I. "During the operation I was too busy to think of leave. As soon as the conditions returned to normal I applied for leave and got it. It was the month of February 1963 when I proceeded to my home. I was a hero then. Wherever I went the people were wonderstruck •struck. They used to whisper, 'he is coming from Ladakh'. It appeared as if I alone had won the battle. Really it was a hero's welcome at every place I visited", proudly said the Doctor Major.

"Certainly the Indian Army fought a winning battle in Ladakh", said I encouragingly.

"Yes, in a way it was our victory. Our soldiers had gone to man pickets in small parties. The Chinese in those days progressively kept on occupying the semiadministered areas. Our government thought it wise to establish regular administrative posts in the forward areas of Ladakh. These posts needed protection; therefore, our troops were sent there for police duties. An additional duty was to arrest the infiltration of the Chinese in small parties into our territory. Probably our government never dreamt that the Chinese would ever launch a fullscale attack against our thinly held posts. But they did attack with the full fury of the mechanised force. Our Jats, Ahirs*, Gorkhas and Ladakhis gave a heroic account of themselves. They had to yield some ground but they did it after inflicting heavy losses on the enemy in men and materials. These brave sons of India did not permit the Chinese hordes to break through the forward defence line of Ladakh. They (our soldiers) held it intact. The result was that there was no panic among civilians, and our supply columns, in spite of tremendous difficulties, continued to function round the clock efficiently. That is why I say that our army fought a winning battle in Ladakh", finished the major.

This was the conversation I had with an AMC (Army Medical Corps) officer in Pathankot. He had come from

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Thoise. There was (and is) no road-link between Leh[•] and Thoise. All traffic to the latter was by air. The officer was happy, alert and anxious to return to his place of duty; to him duty was honour. His morale was high. Victory had acted as a tonic !

In the meantime our meal arrived. We changed the topic and discussed pleasanter things of life. Having finished our meal we departed as old friends. I returned to the tourist's bunglow and prepared for the impending journey to Ladakh.

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Politically Ladakh begins beyond Zoji La, the dreadful pass which has been commented upon adversely by Forsyth, Stein, Sven Hedin and others, but climatically it extends up to a few miles to its south. The height of Zoji La is only 11,578 ft. and naturally one does not feel much difficulty in breathing here. When free from snow a visitor wonders what could be wrong with this broad and low pass walled on the east and the west by high mountains of sand or soft earth. He doubts the statements of those travellers, and government officials who in their normal routine braved the rigours of Arctic and the mortal danger of avalanches sweeping down the surrounding mountains with a momentum unequalled anywhere in the Himalayas. I had the good fortune of crossing the pass when it was free from snow and also when it was heavily snowing over it. Although it was the first snowfall of the season my convoy with difficulty could cover only two miles in three hours across the pass. When only 6 inches of snow could delay the convoy for about three hours one can imagine the difficulties of keeping it open during the winter months when the pass

is reported to be choked with 60 ft. of snow. Previously the pass used to remain closed for all vehicular traffic for nearly seven months, but now the army engineers have shortened that period tremendously. Companies of border road builders are stationed on the pass itself. These stalwarts work with machines, tools and sometimes with their own hands and try to clear, in the minimum time, road-blocks created by avalanches on the pass. Nevertheless the Zoji La remains a headache to the engineers. A tunnel cannot be cut underneath the pass because the mountains are soft; the roof being weak the tunnel will collapse in no time. A ropeway may be possible but it cannot be kept working during the winter months when its functioning would be considered essential. Foreign experts have visited the pass and they have declared their inability to devise means to keep the pass open during the winter months. Science and ingenuity have, so far, failed to subdue the Zoji La.

Beyond the pass stretches the district of Ladakh. Because of its barren mountains and sparseness of population it never held any attraction either for the Chinese bandits or the Turk adventurers from the north and north-east to annex it to their empire. Ladakh, therefore, enjoyed an independent status up to the Mughal period. In China the Manchus, one of the worst expansionists known in world history, came to power in 1644. Since then things started moving fast in the peripheral countries of the celestial empire. The Manchus intrigued and instigated the Tibetans to expand their territorial limits to the west. The Tibetans invaded Ladakh. They succeeded and stayed put in the Indus valley. The Ladakhis could not drive out the invaders from the valley for three years. The king of Ladakh asked for military help. Jahangir, the Mughal Emperor of Hindustan, agreed to despatch

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military aid to Ladakh. Thus Mughal troops entered Ladakh and inflicted a crushing defeat on the invaders in 1650 at Bosgo. Since then Ladakh remained a tributary state to the paramount power of North India – the Mughals, the Pathans, the Sikhs and then the British. After India's independence Ladakh became a frontier district of Jammu and Kashmir State.

After crossing the Zoji La the Srinagar road runs along the Dras valley. The monotony of the drive is broken by Karghil, the biggest town of Ladakh, so the locals claim. Here the road leaves the Dras valley and enters the Wakha valley. Soon it reaches Mulbek, the last village where a microscopic minority of Muslims resides. Here the road again makes a diversion to the east and after passing through Bod Kharbu ascends to the Fotu La (13,432 ft.) and then runs down to reach Khalatse (locally known as Khalse) in the Indus valley. After a drive along the broad valley of the Indus for about 75 miles the road enters the outskirts of Leh and then the town itself. The road continues. After passing through Ubshi and Chematang it reaches Dungti, more than 120 miles from Leh. Demchok is connected with Dungti by a bridle path of about 22 miles. From Dungti the road takes a turn to the north and after passing through Chushul and Darbuk climbs to the Chang La. Again it drops down to the Indus valley thus completing its circular course. The troops have named this road as the 'ring road'. The terrain throughout Ladakh resembles that of western Tibet. Because of the absence of hard rocks and huge boulders road building is as easy as in western Tibet. The presence of numerous rivers and streams, the valleys of which are studded with green plantations and well-populated villages, gives a wrong impression. The traveller has heard that the tree line in Kashmir or Ladakh

ends at 10,200 ft., but contrary to his expectations he sees plantations of poplar and willow flourishing on river banks (poplar provides timber while the latter fuel to the Ladakhis) up to almost 14,000 ft. It means that this greenery owes its luxuriance to loamy soil and crystal clear water oozing out of mountain slopes or small glaciers formed by the sliding of snow from the crests of high mountains. The visitor also notices that the local inhabitants have made the best use of the water and have dug a net-work of channels for irrigation (these works are of local importance). These channels irrigate the parched land of Ladakh. Nature seems to be considerate towards the Ladakhis. This bounty of water lasts for a few months though. The water of these very streams and rivers remains frozen from December to February, so much so that heavy vehicles run over the frozen surface of the Indus river. Thus the Ladakhis raise only one crop during the year. They plough their fields in April-May with yaks, dzos and horses and reap the crop in September. Husking finishes in October. The practice of agriculture is carried on up to 14,000 ft.; in Phobrang, a village north-east of Pongong, agriculture is carried on even up to 14,500 ft. Having finished with the crop they prepare themselves for the harsh winter --- they collect grass, fuel and other items in October. The idle season starts from November and lasts till March. Occasionally the streets of Leh are enlivened by the Zaskari traders who bring butter, wool and animals to be bartered for consumer goods, tea, sugar and cloth in the Leh bazar. These are imported from Srinagar by the commodities Hoshiarpuris who generally run retail shops in Leh and the surrounding big villages. That is how the Ladakhis spend their time in the Indus valley. Sometimes they proceed to Puga and the area surrounding it (Rupshu) or

Chushul or Shyok-Nubra valley to fetch wool to be spun during the slack season.

· Ladakh is a land of high ranges-the Himalayan range, Zaskar, Ladakh, Karakoram and Kuen Lun-which more or less run parallel to each other from the northwest or west to south-east or east thus dividing the country laterally into regions of varying characteristics. North of Leh runs the Ladakh range which guards the Indus valley. The range is crossed by many passes well-known among them being the Chang La, Digar La, Kardung La, Nila La (this pass provides a passage to the aircraft proceeding to the Shyok-Nubra region) and Chorbat La. North of the range are the Shyok and Nubra valleys, each separated from the other by the Soltoro range, an offshoot of the Karakoram range. Then in the north and west of the Shyok river runs the Karakoram range itself. In the Hunza-Nagar sector, north of the Karakoram range, the Mustagh Aghil range separates India from Sinkiang ; the Karakoram Pass is its famous depression through which passes the Indo-Sinkiang trade route. Daulat Beg Oldi, named after Daulat Beg whose convoy perished to a man and beast in a snow-storm, is at the foot of the mountain from where the ascent to the Karakoram Pass commences. The last but not the least important is the Kuen Lun range or Tsu Ling the crest of which forms the Indo-Sinkiang boundary in the Aksai Chin sector. The study of these ranges is very interesting and important; this is more so if one wants to study the people of Ladakh and their social customs. For instance Muslims abound in-between the Himalayan (of which Zoji La is the depression) and the Zaskar ranges (Fotu La is the depression of the latter). Buddhists populate the Indus valley. The nearness to Tibet and the social intercourse with the Ladakhis has kept Islam away from

the Shyok valley and from the villages the animals of which used to graze in the Chang Chenmo valley. Similarly the religion of Sinkiang and Pakistan on one side and the Buddhism of the Shyok valley on the other have affected the religion of the people of the Nubra valley. Here followers of both the religions reside. The mountain ranges also divide Ladakh into economic regions. Thus the Muslims of the Dras valley are poor, while inhabitants of the Indus valley are comparatively prosperous. The nomads of Rupshu used to be economically contented, but after the advent of the Chinese in Tibet their fortune has suffered; more than one thousand Changpa families have migrated from Tibet into their plateau thus creating shortage of pasturelands. The next door neighbours of the Rupshuites are the Zaskaris who in their own way are economically well off. But the most prosperous of the Ladakhis are the inhabitants of the Nubra valley. Though they live a segregated life they are happy and prosperous and are contented with their lot. They, in addition to crops of wheat and other cereals, own fruit-plantations. After the cessation of rade with Sinkiang dry fruits of Nubra are much in demand in Leh.

The Ladakh ranges also create varying climatic regions. The Himalayan range stops the moisture-bearing winds with the result that the countryside between the Himalayan range and the Ladakh range is bone-dry. The mean annual rainfall of Leh is about 4 inches which is equivalent to 40 inches of snow. Beyond the Ladakh range there is no question of moisture-bearing winds penetrating into the Shyok-Nubra region. Evidently there is not much rainfall in Ladakh. Whatever snow one notices on the crests or high peaks of Ladakh is the precipitation of clouds locally formed out of the water flowing in the rivers and streams. Thus the Nubra valley receives more snow than the rest of the district. In the Chang Chenmo valley the local moisture changes into heavy mist during the early months of winter. At places lakes also affect the local climate. The evaporation in the Pongong Lake causes humidity in the region which eventually results in a comparatively heavier snowfall in the area.

Unlike the climate, there is not much variation in racial groups. The Ladakhis are generally from the Aryan stock. There is some evidence of admixture of blood among the people living in the north of the Ladakh range, specially in the Nubra valley where a slight resemblance to the Turkish physical features is noticeable among the locals. Apart from the physical features which are almost similar, the height of the Ladakhis varies according to the economic conditions of individuals ; the more prosperous the individual the taller he is; the tribesmen who are generally poor are short in stature. They resemble the tribesmen of the Lebanon hills*. The region of Rupshu offers a diversion in this general trend. The Rupshuites are of Changpa stock ; they are tall and stoutly built people. They are recent immigrants from western Tibet.

The mountainous terrain of Rupshu attracted their Tartar forefathers from Changthang (northern plains of Tibet) and they migrated into this neglected tract of Jammu and Kashmir. This migration still continues. It has possibilities; one day it may jeoparadise our security.

^{*} Lawrence (of Arabia) writes about the Muslim hillmen of Lebanon : "On the higher slopes of the hills clustered settlements of Matawala, Shia Mohammedans from Persia generations ago. They were dirty, ignorant, surly, fanatical, refusing to eat or drink with infidels ;¹". I very often used to meet these Muslims in the Lebanon hills. They were ignored and despised by the prosperous Lebanese Christians. The Gujars and Bakarwals or other hill tribes of Ladakh remind one of the Lebanese Muslim hill tribes.

^{1.} p. 339.

The Lahulis who are economically and culturally connected with the Ladakhis entertain such apprehensions. That is why they are demanding that Rupshu should be opened for outside trade and good roads should be built to connect Kulu with Leh. Probably the latter may not materialise because the Rohtang pass offers similar difficulties as the Zoji La. Like the latter the Rohtang pass remains closed during the entire winter season. The alternative route through Dalhousi, Chamba, Pangi and Keylong may prove successful. This road if constructed will connect Amritsar with Leh. This new road has already been completed up to the Bara Lacha pass of the Himalayan range in the region. It is believed that the Survey Department of the Government of India has submitted a report on the feasibility of constructing a motorable road across Rupshu. The old bridle path comes out of the wilds of Rupshu at Dening and then connects it with Ubshi. The Government of India is expected to give its final decision soon. In fact, Rupshu, because of its tactical and political importance needs more than one road. At the same time the claim of Zaskar in this respect cannot be ignored.

In the Chang Chenmo valley and the Aksai Chin desert the former is a good pastureland where the animals of Tangtse and Phobrang once used to graze, while the latter provided salt and borax to the Ladakhis. These regions also provide one of the best hunting grounds in India. These regions 'where not a blade of grass grows' are under Chinese occupation. Why are the Chinese so particular about the continued occupation of regions which virtually have been declared by some Indian leaders as good for nothing ? In other words, in spite of the Indian leaders' declaration, the importance of Aksai Chin-Chang Chenmo region to India is beyond question.

Aksai Chin is adjacent to Sinkiang, the hotbed of

political intrigues. In Sinkiang Russian and Chinese interests clash. Thus through Aksai Chin India is in contact with the happenings in Sinkiang; she remains posted with the latest Chinese and Russian political trends. Aksai Chin in the hands of China will certainly keep India in the dark about the political convulsions endemic in Sinkiang. This ignorance of political happenings across the Kuen Lun may very well jeopardise the security of Ladakh. When the security of Ladakh is seriously threatened the independence of India becomes doubtful. It is more than that. Through Aksai Chin runs the Sinkiang-Gartok road. This road is the main artery for carrying supplies to the Chinese army of occupation in western Tibet. As long as China is in possession of Aksai Chin-Chang Chenmo region she will continue to keep her troops in western Tibet 'in a state of readiness' for an invasion of India in the middle sector also. Obviously this danger was not visualised by Indian administrators in 1959, but now it is dawning upon them slowly but surely. That is why the Indian Army has gone to Ladakh to defend the Indian interests and to repair the territorial losses which China has so far (treacherously) inflicted upon India. But in realising this aim there are impediments; there are tactical and other difficulties both for the army and for the jawan. The former will be discussed later on.

On higher altitudes (more than 11,000 ft.) one experiences breathing difficulties. This is a common characteristic of the inner Himalayan regions. One expects it. This difficulty is gradually conquered. Slow penetration into the region enables the physical system to adapt itself to the new environment (defence personnel proceeding to the east of Leh are detained at the capital for three days under medical advice to acclimatise them to the new conditions). In Ladakh higher

altitudes have combined with comparatively higher latitudes and the combination causes bitter cold. In the rest of the Himalayas right up to 14,000 ft. ordinary woollen clothing with some extras is adequate to keep one warm during the winter months; but in Ladakh on equal heights snow clothing is a must for every soldier if he wants to keep his limbs properly functioning. Then the addition of dry atmosphere introduces new factors in the high latitude-altitude combination. The atmosphere makes the sun very bright and the rarified air intensifies radiation. Thus days become hot and the variation in day and night temperatures becomes very wide. During the first week of October I noticed at Bod Kharbu a variation of nearly 108°F—22° at night and 130° in the sun. Further, the dryness in the atmosphere causes dehydration in the physical frame, the skin becomes leather-like if oil is not applied to the exposed parts of the body. To crown all this sand storms, off and on, suddenly appear with full ferocity of Khamsin (of Sahara or Senai deserts). They demoralise man. To combat all these physical discomforts government has adequately equipped the soldier and he is fighting fit in this frontier district.

Ordinarily in the Himalayan regions soldiers are provided with five blankets but in Ladakh they are supplied with a sleeping bag in addition. They are also issued a pair of *perka* (fur) coat and *perka* trousers (made of cotton-thread and stuffed with cotton or fur). Lastly they are issued with different types of boots suitable for regimental duties and the terrain. For accommodation, if not living in well-dug and properly reinforced bunkers, the jawans have Arctic or Mongolian huts; a special type of Arctic tent is very popular. Unit langars and Officers' Messes are accommodated in such tents. This tent is made of special material and it costs Rs. 16,000.

or more. Then at the top of it all the unit tents used by the soldiers are kept warm with kerosene stoves, each stove consuming about four gallons of kerosene in twelve The army takes care that a sufficient quantity of hours. the liquid is stocked in Ladakh so that the troops may not suffer from the want of it. The soldiers are also issued with two ozs. of free rum every evening. According to medical opinion rum activitates the system generating a slight heat in the body; the jawan feels warm and enjoys a sound sleep. On high altitudes its use is not proving beneficial. I lived at 12,500 ft. for five days and I did not relish Scotch whisky (popularly known as the "gold water" in the army) even. Dehydration upsets the stomach and alcohol enhances the agony. Therefore, the army in the Western Command may restrict its use in the near future. Similarly smoking is also proving injurious to the jawans. Its free rationing may also be stopped on heights above 11,000 ft.

Cold does not deter the jawans from enjoying their hot bath for which every unit has arrangements to provide facilities twice a week. Of course during the summer months all the water-points from which the army draws its drinking water are crowded with jawans, each jawan waiting for his turn to occupy the clean, level and shady piece of ground on the bank of a fast flowing stream.

Coming to food rations are issued according to a special scale. Walnuts, almonds, pistachios, chocolate, toffee and Horlick's milk are some of the items that are consumed by the soldiers every day on higher altitudes, or in the snow-bound areas; north of Sonamarg the entire area is entitled to this privilege. Although fresh vegetables and meat on hoof are regularly supplied there is not much urge for solid food. To compensate for this indispensability an extra ration of tea, sugar and milk is drawn by units in Ladakh. Liquid diet is a good antidote for neutralising the effects of dehydration.

In addition to providing suitable food, clothing and accommodation the army takes care that in cases of illness the patient is evacuated to the plains without the least delay. A sufficient number of helicopters is reserved for this purpose. In spite of all the care the government takes of the jawan cruel nature does perform her work. After a time deterioration in the jawan's health sets in. That is why the tenure of duty in the snow-bound areas has been limited to two years only. Some of the politicians may look askance at this reduction of the period of field service in Ladakh; and they may say—in fact they do express such ideas in private conversation—that the Chinese conscripts serve in these areas for three years without the facilities enjoyed by our jawans. Firstly, these advocates of *ahimsa* and such saintly

Firstly, these advocates of *ahimsa* and such saintly ideas do not know about the Chinese soldiers at all. They may not be aware of the difference between the Chinese (Han) conscript and the Chinese regular soldiers. They do not know that the latter are generally from Manchuria and North Korea; anyway they are a selected lot as confirmed by Edgar O'Ballance : "....., conscription exists and up to 50 million draftees are available each year, so the required number for the regular forces is chosen by a form of selective service. The old muddles have been sorted out and the conscription system regularized, when the Conscription Law came into effect in July 1955, embracing all males. The conscript is called up to the age of eighteen and serves for three years. Volunteers are accepted but their precise proportion is not known". Further the politicians may not be knowing that the Chinese regular soldier is very well looked after and adequately paid. Again I quote Edgar O'Ballance : "Bodily the regular soldier is cared for quite well. He has two uniforms, a padded one for the winter, and another of lighter material for the summer. He has sufficient food, and is well fed by Far Eastern peasant standards (There is apparently a peasant saying in China now that, 'if you want a good meal, join the army.'). His rations were cut slightly in the economic drive of 1959, but were soon restored, as the rulers of Red China believe that they must have a contented regular army behind them. In barracks and camps he eats two meals a day, of rice or millet, depending upon what part of the country he is in, with occasional fish or meat to make it more balanced...., and when his various compulsory savings deductions have been made, he spends the remainder on cigarettes, sweetmeats and cheap trinkets. The conscript is not allowed to marry.1" Tang is specific :"..... The Red Chinese soldiers has been well-fed, well-clad, and well-disciplined.2" It is true that our jawans can undergo hardships, but these barbarians from the north are hardier in this respect and can undergo much severer hardship under the whip. The Indian jawan is the citizen of a democratic country and he wants to be treated as a man and not as a beast as the Chinese soldier is treated in the Communist army. Further, it is an accepted fact that the nearer the man moves to civilisation the softer he becomes. Naturally, the Chinese soldier is hardier than his Indian counterpart. Why blame only the soldier? This is true throughout the country and in every walk of life. It means that the Chinese will always have physical superiority over the Indian jawan and as a logical consequence the latter will

^{1.} pp. 211-212.

^{2.} p. 355.

never be able to overpower his primitive* adversary. Neither there is anything new in this idea nor there is any novelty in the idea of war between a civilised nation and a barbaric race. Such wars have been fought for centuries and it is not true that the former always fared badly. Their sharp intellect and downright realism evolved tactics which brought them victory. When it has happened time and again in the past why can it not happen today? India, therefore, to beat the Chinese barbarians, will have to use diplomacy to her advantage in her political dealings with the Han or with other foreign powers, and on the battle-field the physical and numerical deficiency of our army will have to be made up by a tremendous increase in the fire-power of our Defence Forces. Briefly a better and aggressive diplomacy in the political field and a substantial increase in the fire-power of our Defence Forces will make our troops superior to the Chinese in the field. If that is done then our victory over the Chinese is partially assured. There are other factors too, which if properly exploited, guide to complete victory.

^{*}During the Tai-ping revolution Chinese imperial troops fought against the rebels. Nganking was under siege for three years. "In November 1861 Nganking fell They (the locals) had been reduced to the last extremity, for human flesh had been sold as their food at 40 cash per catty, or one penny per pound, and it is worthy of note, almost at the same time the imperialists besieged at Hangchow were reduced to the same dreadful extremity", writes Andrew Wilson in his book-Ever Victorious Army-on page 74. The same author continues that at Liyang very few Tai-ping followers survived. "The few who were yet alive watched one of their comrades dying, so as to obtain food off his dead body" (p. 219). Has such an extremity ever arisen in India? Yes, it has. India has experienced many famines of a disastrous nature; the recent one was the Bengal famine of 1942. None touched human flesh ! It is impossible that an Indian in his normal senses will ever act en masse in such a beastly manner as to be dubbed a cannibal. Do not these examples of Nganking, Hangchow and Liyang indicate that comparatively the Chinese is more barbaric and primitive than the Indian? Naturally as a logical consequence (explained in the main text) the Chinese is capable of enduring more hardship, under ordinary circumstances, than the Indian jawan.

CHAPTER III

Journey's Eastern End

"....there was such a hysteric desire to do anything rather than incur Chinese hostility....."

"This touching confidence in China's friendliness must have been rudely shaken when, shortly afterwards, the representative of the Flowery Land essayed to keep his Lordship (Lord Salisbury) to the strict letter of his after dinner speech, by demanding that England should acknowledge her vassalage to China by the payment of decennial tribute as—he alleged—did Burma, in whose relative position she now stands"¹

-McMahon

"About the year 1250 A.D., a large Chinese force invaded the country (Manipur), and was signally defeated, all who were not killed being made prisoners. These taught the Manipuris silk culture, and a number of them were settled at Susa Rameng in the valley where they have still descendants".²

-Johnstone

The Chinese were a disturbing element for Burma. They also once knocked at the eastern gates of India. I twice visited this eastern tract which holds a potential danger from the Han.

NAGALAND

"Yesterday our convoy was late. It ought to have reached Dimapur at 6 p. m. It reached at 11 p. m. instead. It was delayed because of Miss Phizo. She had

l. p. 4.

^{2.} p. 80.

gone to Imphal to collect funds for the maintenance of her father in England and mother in Shillong. She was returning by our convoy in the company of an escort. Her escort was searched by the police. This took some time. A lot of time was wasted in Kohima probably to complete official formalities, I suppose", said the manager of a firm in Dimapur. This gentleman arranged for my journey to Kohima.

"The Government of India has been very generous to let Mrs. Phizo and her children live a free life in Shillong. It is not that the Government of India wants to stop the collection of funds meant to be expended for the maintenance of either Phizo or his family. I suppose the police wanted to know the names of those who clandestinely help Phizo", added he.

"Is it difficult ?" I asked surprised.

"Yes. No Angami—Phizo is an Angami—likes to come forward to give information which may lead to the arrest of Phizo's collaborators. Either it is the fear of the hostiles or the group loyalty which stops the Angamis to co-operate with the government. I think it is the former", said the manager.

It is true that since April 1956 the Government of India has handed over the responsibility for operations against the hostiles to the army. At the same time the army has been instructed to function strictly in aid of civil power and the civil administration. The governments—the Government of India and that of the State itself—are pursuing a humane policy in dealing with the Naga people as is evident from the following incident.

In February 1961 the railway cashier left Lumding by the morning train for disbursement of the monthly emoluments of the rail-road workers. By chance a detachment of Railway Protection Force was also travelling by the same train. The policemen were not on duty. The train was ambushed between Langting and Mopa, a few miles from Lumding on the Hill Section at about 11 a. m. The hostiles opened fire. As a result the engine fireman was seriously wounded. The RPF havildar took initiative and returned the fire. The marauders retired without being able to loot the mobile treasury. They took advantage of the terrain and escaped. A police enquiry followed. Who supplied the exact information to the hostiles about the movement of cash? It was suspected that the Naga rail-road workers supplied the relevant information to the hostiles. In the absence of direct evidence the police was helpless. Mere suspicion was not considered enough to challan and prosecute a suspect. The investigation was dropped.

[2]

It was the 2nd October 1962, when I reached Manipur Road—railway station of Dimapur—at 9 p. m. The railway journey between Diphu and Manipur Road during the hours of darkness was not safe. In November 1955 I had passed through Nagaland on my way to Burma by the overland route. Although Phizo and his followers had launched the campaign of hatred and violence in the spring of 1955, yet the hostilities had not broken out on such a large scale as to make the journey—by rail up to Dimapur and by bus up to Kangpokpi, 30 miles short of Imphal—risky. Within a few years things had changed. In 1955 a convoy used to leave Dimapur for Imphal under the escort of a detachment of the Assam police. This was done as a precautionary measure hence there were no elaborate army or police camps on the route. A traveller never felt that he was moving under strict convoy discipline.

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Halts were not many. The convoy would halt at Nichu Gad for routine checking and issue of permits to those who had none; government permission was required to pass through Nagaland. The year 1962 was different. Entry into the town of Dimapur was restricted—Dimapur had become a part of Nagaland. The SDO Dimapur issued permits for entry into Nagaland. The army was responsible for escorting convoys.

Next day I went to the SDO's office. The SDO was a Manipuri and his Base Superintendent a Cachari.

"Yes, once we the Cacharis ruled Assam. The Ahoms defeated us and we were forced to shift our capital to this place—Dimapur. They again attacked us. Dimapur was razed to the ground. The capital again shifted to Meybong and some of the Cacharis also migrated to the southern region of Lumding. From that day, I suppose, the Cacharis were divided into two clans-the Mechs and the Dimars. I am a Dimar. We are about 7,000. Now we are the nationals of Nagaland", said the Base Superintendent without showing any sign of resentment. "I suppose this has been done for the greater unity of India", he added with pride. I had marked this feeling of patriotism and nationalism among the Assamese as well. I believe that the growth of nationalism is natural and inevitable when an advanced section of a people is faced with the consequences of fissiparous tendencies born of the demands of their aggressive neighbours. Nationalism under disintegrating circumstances brings unity.

"What is the medium of instruction for your children in schools, and in what script ?"

"Assamese in the Assamese script".

"What script is in vogue in Nagaland?"

"Except in the Tuensang district, the Roman script". "Where do you go for higher studies ?" "There has been no change in our tradition for receiving higher education. We still join different colleges of the Gauhati University. I suppose we shall continue to do so till Nagaland has its own university."

The Base Superintendent took me to a Cachari village. I took refreshment with a farmer's family. I also visited a few other Cachari families. The Cacharis are the indigenous Assamese and they have adapted themselves to the culture evolved during the Ahom rule. The Cacharis are well located to bridge the gulf separating the Assamese from the Nagas.

The same evening I met a police havildar who had been in the Naga Hills for three years. He knew Nagaland and the Nagas, in his own way, well.

"Yes, about 75 hostiles surrendered to us voluntarily with their arms. My platoon took charge of those obsolete and rotten fire-arms of different makes. To prove their bona fides the hostiles surrendered a sprinkling of good pieces. There were only two serviceable rifles. The whole affair of surrendering arms is a farce", said the havildar. "How is it that so many hostiles have surrendered ? Do they really repent for the commission of crimes against their own people and government"? "Oh, no. They have come over on purpose. Sir, you know that to maintain the military training of young soldiers at a certain pitch a certain percentage of trained soldiers are compulsorily sent on reserved list and new recruits are enlisted instead. The same thing seems to be happening among the hostile ranks. The rebel leaders deliberately allow their old, infirm and emaciated men to surrender and they enlist new recruits to fill up the vacancies." He continued : "There may be some young people among those who have surrendered, but these youths undoubtedly return to the hostile camp after accomplishing their

allotted task. These volunteers are a nuisance to administration. They usually surrender at a minor administrative headquarters. The officer-in-charge reports their names to his superiors, and at the same time he arranges for their rehabilitation. Usually lucrative jobs are found and provided to these erstwhile rebels. After some time these young volunteers quietly disappear. The local incharge of administration obviously, to save his own skin, does not report the desertion to his seniors. Sometimes the old deserters reappear and the local administration again rewards them with cash and food-16 maunds of rice is the custom. This has become a habit with many Naga youths who join the hostile camp and then return to their villages whenever they like. Every time they come back they receive financial and other material help. In every way they are gainers. The entire drama of surrender and rehabilitation of the hostiles is not more than a farce".

Next morning the havildar saw me off to Kohima, now the garrison town of Nagaland.

[3]

The entire population of the Nagas is not more than eight lakhs—about 50,000 in Tirap Frontier Division, 125,000 in Manipur and about 500,000 to 600,000 in the Nagaland territory, out of which 350,000 live in a compact area. Nagaland has been constituted into three districts— Tuensang, Mokokchung and Kohima.

The Naga-Hill Tuensang Area of 1960 is now the present Nagaland. The name of this territory is neither Indian, nor Assamese nor tribal. It suggests, and correctly too, foreign influence. It is tucked in the eastern corner of India separated from Burma by the

Patkoi range. Nagaland is literally a barren land. Nature is not kind to the people. There is hardly any ridge of appreciable length here. There are detached knols at the top of each of which is perched a Naga village. The Naga villages are usually big; some of them have more than 1,000 houses, each house accommodating a large family of more than five members. Nagaland valleys are clothed with tropical forests. They are hot, humid and unhealthy. There is nothing romantic about them. Even the Nagas avoid them. These valleys have always served as natural barriers to social contacts between man and man. This isolation segregated one group from the other. In the long run a village community multiplied and then divided into sub-communities. Each new community had to seek accommodation elsewhere and then again the same process of multiplication, migration and segregation was repeated. That is how the Nagas came to be divided into various tribes though their ancestors were of the same clan. Outside the Naga-Hill Tuensang Area i. e., in NEFA there is Tirap where the Noctes, Tangsas and the Wanchoos live, and in Manipur live the Tangkhul and the Kabui Nagas (called Ziliangs or the Kachcha Nagas) divided into more than 30 tribes, then the AOs (50,000), the Semas (48,000), the Angamis (30,000), the Chakhesangs(31,000), the Sangtams (20,700) the Lohtses(23,500) and others complete the population of Nagaland. Nagaland was fortunate that it did not come within the jurisdiction of the 'Inner Line Regulations' and here the British introduced regular administration and established the district headquarters at Samargoodting in 1866. It was not that the Nagas were brought under proper administration for their welfare. It was because the Dimapur-Imphal-Tamu road had to be constructed to: connect Manipur and Burma, the two British possessions,, with India. The road passed through the Naga Hills. Its security was essential and the people living astride it had to be controlled. Frontier constabulary and the missionaries helped in the work of pacification unhindered by the rest of the Indians (entry into the Nagaland for Indians was always restricted). In short Nagaland could not be a reserved area, at the same time it could not be freely opened to the political and religious influences of the "perverted" Indians—the heathens. Therefore, it was called the semi-reserved area — neither the zoo nor the countryside of the civilised people.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the pre-British era the history of the Nagas was linked with that of the Ahoms and of Assam on one side and with Manipur on the other. Whoever was stronger was the sovereign or suzerain of the Nagas. the Ahom3 had been eliminated the Nagas After preferred to render allegiance to Manipur. For the Nagas firmness was strength and certainly Manipur did not lack "Even up to the Naga Hills campaign of 1879-80, in it. the Nagas regarded Manipur as the stronger of the two, because her conduct was consistent, if she threatened she acted"¹. The earliest contact which the British had with the Nagas was in 1832 when Manipur troops escorted two British officers-Capt. Jenkins and Lieut. Pembertonthrough the Naga country to Imphal. The officers' aim was to reconnoitre the ground for the feasibility of constructing the Dimapur-Imphal road. After that the British had to send punitive expeditions in 1839, 1843, 1844 1846 and so on to curb the Angami predatory habits."

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1. 1.1.1

^{1.} Johnstone p. 23.

Ultimately British patience was exhausted and they took strong action. They despatched a strong force to Kohima. On February 11, 1851, Kohima was destroyed and more than 300 Nagas were killed. After this tragedy the British slackened armed activity in the hope that the Nagas would improve their behaviour. "Slaughter and withdraw" constituted the British frontier policy. The Nagas interpreted this as weakness of the British. They intensified their violence until in 1856 the rulers withdrew their force from Dimapur. Naga activities still increased. Impelled by the necessity of keeping the Dimapur-Imphal road secure the British again took firm action. This time they established the 'Naga Hill' district headquarters at Samargoodting and annexed the district to the province of Assam. Later on the headquarters was shifted to Kohima.

The British started playing and using one tribe against the other to maintain law and order. They recruited Naga coolies for the Abor Expedition in 1912. The Nagas took some heads of the Hill Miris and brought them home as souvenirs. In 1918, the British again used Naga troops to supress the Kuki revolt. Here also the Nagas indulged in head-hunting without any remonstrance from the British officers. In 1931 the Kachcha Nagas (the Nagas who have settled down between Lumding and Halflong) took part in the national movement. They were mowed down by the Kuki volunteers. The Nagas of the Naga Hill district and the Kukis, sometimes the former and the Tangkhuls, used to wage a miniature warfare among "In 1893 the Naga village of Sewmi was themselves. raided by the Kukis, who professed to have been incensed at the failure of the Nagas to compensate a Kuki chief for an alleged theft of rice. The attack was delivered at dawn, and 99 men and 187 women and children were put

to the sword"¹. This used to happen when the British had banned head-hunting ! At present similar occurrences are not uncommon in Nagaland. Once, as a retaliatory measure, the Nagas of a village of Konyak group brought 48 heads of the Naga hostiles. A recent story of such atrocities was narrated in the Lok Sabha (Indian Parliament). The Deputy Minister for External Affairs, Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, told the House that "on November 9 last (1960) some persons from the border villages of Tuensang district in Nagaland carried out a combined raid on Makwara village in Burma and returned with fourteen heads"².

The Nagas are unmindful of danger and are revengeful. The British exploited these propensities and recruited them in the Pioneer Corps in World War I. They despatched 3,000 Naga pioneers to France. During the Second World War the Japanese fought the Indian troops. Their objective "was the disruption of the communications of the Fourteenth Army in Assam and Bengal and, if successful in securing a foothold on the Indian soil, to create panic in the country and exploit its political situation against the British"³. The British met with some reverses, "...., perhaps the greatest factor in the defeat of the Allies was the complete apathy or even hostility of the local population, which was believed to be assisting the Japanese"4. This happened in Burma. The Nagas did not lag behind. Their loyalty towards the Paramount Power (Britain) was doubtful. "In May there had been some 'incidents' between the troops and the Nagas which had led to ill-feelings. Moreover, at that time the prestige

^{1.} Imperial Gazetteer of India (Manipur) Vol. XVII; p. 189.

^{2.} The Pioneer.

^{3.} The Reconquest of Burma; Vol. I p. xxiv.

^{4.} The Retreat From Burma; p. xxxiii.

of Japan was high in the eyes of the local people, some of whom were unwilling to co-operate with the 'losing' sidebut gradually as a result of the Japanese failure to follow up the retreat of the Burma Army, and the appearance of the Royal Air Force in the sky, the attitude of the local population both in the hills and in the Manipur plains, began to change. Another factor which probably led to the improvement of relations between the troops and the people was the fact that large amounts of money were being spent by the military which enabled the merchants to reap good profits"¹. Briefly the Nagas, like any other frontier people, helped the winners and the British were the winners at the fag end of the war; the Nagas in the end proved loyal to the Paramount Power. The British officers and the missionaries combined and made the Nagas believe that they were different from the Indians and should try for a separate and independent state. The Nagas under the leadership of Phizo, who is said to have accompanied Subhash Bose to the Indo-Japanese front, sincerely believed that independence for the Nagas was beneficial and possible. Independence came to India and the Nagas demanded more seats in the Assam Assembly. Probably they would have been satisfied with a little more political concession had their hot-headed leaders been given some responsible appointments under the Central Government. This was not done. They remained resentful. Their demands increased. The Naga National Council (NNC) which had been formed in the early forties under official patronage negotiated with the Government of India. Phizo was the chief spokesman. A nine-point agreement between the two parties— Government of India and the NNC-was concluded (1950).

^{1.} The Reconquest of Burma Vol. I. p. 47.

The Naga Hill district was taken out of Assam, and was annexed to Tuensang Division to form NHTA (Naga-Hill Tuensang Area) in 1957. In addition the Nagas were given the right, if they so desired, to negotiate for constitutional adjustments after ten years. The Government of India's intention has always been that the Naga Hills will remain an integral part of India. Unfortunately Phizo and his associates interpreted the agreement as it suited their whim. They wanted independence ! Nehru granted an interview to Phizo in 1952. Phizo agreed to give up violence. He broke his promise. The Naga National Council went underground and started the orgy of bloodshed against those who were either moderate or co-operated with the NHTA Administration. In 1955 some of the Naga nationals were disgusted with the cruelties and the wanton destruction of life among the Nagas themselves. They resigned from the NNC. Sakhri was the leader of the dissidents. He was kidnapped and killed in January 1956. After this cold-blooded murder an All-Tribes Naga People's Convention was held at Kohima in August 1957 and the hostiles gave a tacit support to it. The Naga People's Convention had two more conferences and finally in July 1960 the Convention passed a resolution supporting the creation of Nagaland under the aegis of the Foreign Ministry of the Government of India. Negotiations followed and the Government of India agreed with the resolution. The hostiles resented the reforms. They committed another murder. On August 22, 1961, they shot Imkongliba Ao. the President of the Naga People's Convention, in the abdomen at Mokokchung bazar. He succumbed to his injuries on August 25, 1961. The deceasd was succeeded by Shilu Ao who became the first Chief Minister of Nagaland on the 1st January 1963. However, in 1961, an advisory body to help the Governor representing the President of

the Union of India was formed. The Governor with his staff and with the help of the advisory body carried on the administration of Nagaland-on the 1st January 1963, Nagaland became the full-fledged sixteenth state of India, and the advisory body was transformed into the State Assembly. Phizo escaped to foreign countries with foreign help. Eventually he landed in England. At present his host is Rev. Scott. During the absence of Phizo the leadership of the NNC passed to Sema tribe. Old inter-tribal jealousies still exist and Phizo has lost his influence in Nagaland, but he is supported by Scott and a few other (so-called) liberals in England. Michael Scott was one of the peace marchers who began the peace march* to Peking on the 1st March 1963. The aim of the march was to persuade India and China to settle their differences through non-violence and peaceful means. It is strange that Scott hoped to persuade China, a votary of violence, to give up the cult of war, and yet failed to elicit a declaration (up to July 1, 1964) of faith in non-violence from Phizo, his own guest.

Nagaland is more than one hundred miles away from the tri-junction of India, China and Burma boundaries. There is no danger that the hostiles may seek the active support of the Communists. The country between Burma and China is covered with dense forests. Hence the smuggling of arms is always a possibility here. The hostiles are mostly Christians and are helped by some of the foreign missionaries in their demand for a separate Naga state like that of Bhutan or Sikkim. As such they are not supposed to be inclined towards Communism. This is after all a supposition, a weak supposition too. Weren't

^{*}The march terminated its much advertised jok: in January, 1964. The Chinese did not permit the organisers of this farce to enter their country.

the Russian Communists Christians? Further a drowning man is apt to do anything to save himself from the impending disaster. And it is true that Phizo or his lieutenants are in contact with the Chinese Communist leaders. The contact might have been made possible at the initiative of the Chinese. Lastly, a few arms from the Chinese Communists or disgruntled elements of Burmaand there is no dearth of such elements in the country of pagodas—is a possibility that cannot be wholly ruled out. Recent happenings in Nagaland have led authorities strongly to believe that arms are being supplied to the hostiles by Pakistan. It is not surprising that foreign missionary elements may be working in collaboration with some anti-Indian organisation in Pakistan. It is most unfortunate to note that immediately after the death of Verrier Alwyn, Scott has been allowed to visit Nagaland and interfere in India's internal affairs.

The creation of Nagaland has upset the political balance in Manipur State. The Tangkhul Nagas and the Kukis who were being absorbed in the Manipur society linguistically and socially have started agitation for a separate hill state after the Nagaland pattern. Other tribes of Assam have joined the agitation. Nehru promised 'Scottish Type of Union' to the hillmen of Assam. This type of political unity has proved successful in Great Britain where the British people have been receiving education in democracy for the last six hundred years or more. Will Scottish Type of Union succeed in the hills of Assam where the child is still a working unit in the family and not allowed to attend the day-school by his parents ?

THE NAGAS

My convoy left Dimapur at 7 a.m. and reached

Kohima at 11 a. m. on the 5th October 1962. Next day I visited an Angami village. The village was filthy. Fowl and pigs, a common sight in the eastern hills, were the only scavengers which kept the village as clean as their number allowed. I saw a few Naga youths smartly dressed in shorts or trousers and shirts. Some of them were going to school. They were Christian. Christianity in the Naga Hills is the hall-mark of civilisation. Non-Christians, who are very few in the Kohima district, are heathens for Christians and reactionaries for the Communists. There is a big church in this village. Just in front of the church I saw an Angami sitting in his courtyard warming himself in the morning sun. He did not need much clothing except a langoti, a small piece of cloth to cover the private parts. He was under the influence of rice beer.

"When did you drink lao pani?" asked I.

"At breakfast time", was the prompt reply.

"When will you take your second dose ?"

"At lunch time, say at about noon or immediately after".

The foreign missionaries who were the spiritual leaders of their herds have left the Naga Hills and there is none to guide the erring soul. The rural Christian population of the Naga Hills has reverted to its old and carefree way of life.

[2]

"The main reasons of the origin of the Naga trouble were two. In those days there was a widespread feeling that the Nagas were racially and culturally different from the rest of the Indians. Some agencies were propagating this notion among our masses. India did not take any step to neutralise the effects of this propaganda. Secondly when the country was celebrating its independence we did not feel that independence had come to the Naga Hills. We felt neglected. These reasons convinced the Nagas that they must have a separate and independent state of their own. In due course better counsel prevailed and we realised the futility of cutting off political connections with India. We decided to remain an integral part of India. We have partially achieved our aim. Our success will be complete the day we have held free general elections* in Nagaland. We are working to that end. We are contacting the masses", said Mr. Shilu Ao, the Chief Executive Councillor (now the Chief Minister) of Nagaland (October 1962).

"How can you convince the masses when you yourself move under an armed escort, while the hostiles have free access to the villager ?"

"I don't need an escort when I address a crowded meeting. However, at present this is one disadvantage. The time is not far when the people will realise the futility of violence and will come to the right path. They are realising their mistake. You might have read in the press that 75 hostiles have recently surrendered to Nagaland Administration. It is a good sign", said Mr. Ao happily.

"Mr. Ao, don't you think while 75 hostiles have surrendered more have gone underground? This is a regular feature of the hostiles. They allow a few to surrender and replace them with fresh enthusiasts," said I.

"Some may return to the hostile camp and some recruits may become out-lawed but we have been gaining ground for a long time and we hope to counterblast the hostile propaganda finally, very shortly", emphasised Ao.

^{*}General elections were peacefully held in Nagaland in January 1964.

"Mr. Ao, now I want to know your views on the entry of outsiders into Nagaland. I believe you are in favour of such restrictions. Are you afraid of economic or cultural exploitation? Or do you really believe that outsiders will permanently settle down in the Naga Hills and will dispossess the Nagas of their lands and forests?" "We are not afarid of any exploitation. We have imposed entry restrictions because we don't want that outsiders should come and meddle in the internal conflict in Nagaland. Any sympathy with the hostiles will be as damaging to the internal peace of the state as opposition to them. We shall open the gates of Nagaland the day the hostile activities cease".

Various lame excuses have been put forward by officials and vested interests to justify the 'Inner Line' restrictions. Shilu Ao's justification of continuing the restrictions was genuine and reasonable. The third question which I asked Mr. Ao concerned the language. Nagaland is not a self-sufficient province. It derives its revenue from house-tax and forests amounting to about $5\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs while its expenditure which is mostly incurred on development-excluding road construction mainly meant for defence-is more than 4 crores of rupees. Naturally either the size of Nagaland has to be expanded or it has to join a federation. The former is out of the question because at the most Ukhrul may be annexed to Nagaland. Even then the state will remain a deficit one. Nagaland joining a new federation is a greater possibility. In case this happens the language will offer a difficulty in the smooth working of the federation.

"In Nagaland the teaching of Assamese is discouraged while in the neighbouring states the Assamese (with variant dialects) and Assamese script is commonly in vogue. What will be the common language of this federation?" "I suppose by the time a federation is formed a common language which may be understood by all may evolve by itself", replied Ao after a little hesitation. The answer was not convincing.

It was very kind of Mr. Ao to spare more than an hour for me. We also talked about other subjects concerning the Nagas. Mrs. Ao joined us. After light refreshments I left my esteemed hosts and returned to my place well informed about the Nagas and their problems.

My impression is that the present Naga trouble is entirely a game of power politics. In the beginning Phizo wielded power. After he had left India Kaito Sema of Chedema village became the leader of the hostiles. He also left for England. The leadership of the hostiles is still in the hands of the Semas, though no outstanding personality has emerged in such bandit operations amidst the Naga Hills. The hostiles are virtually operating without a strong centralised leadership since Kaito left the Naga Hills.

When the struggle for leadership was raging within the hostile camp the Aos realised the futility of violence as a means to secure political concessions from the Union of India. The Aos are the next-door neighbours of the Assamese and in the veins of many runs the Assamese blood. They are in a majority and their percentage of literacy in Nagaland is the highest. They are comparatively progressive and most of them are Christians. They are co-operating with the Government of India in the development of their state with a crusader's zeal. They were also in a majority in the 45 member advisory council of which Shilu Ao was the leader. Phizo is out of power. Like an ousted Congress leader, Phizo is fighting a losing battle with his adversary, Shilu Ao; he is doomed to fail. Did not Nariman, Subhash Babu, Purshotam Das, Acharya

Kriplani, J. P. Narayan and Ram Manohar Lohia meet their political death at the hands of their opponents? There are no exceptions in the political game and Phizo is the victim of circumstances. He is blamed for his violent crimes against his own people. In Indian states political controversies are settled diplomatically and the winner is not blamed for the manoeuvres in effecting the downfall of his adversary. In Nagaland the law of the jungle is till in vogue and the murder of a political opponent is not condemned in the Naga society. Here political controversies are settled with blood. Keeping the analogy of the Indian states in mind there is little justification for blaming Phizo for his violent and primitive crimes for which he must also be feeling sorry. As all those ousted Congress leaders suffered much for their country similarly the sacrifices of Phizo for Nagaland cannot be decried. In fact it was due to Phizo's violent activities that Nagaland attracted the attention of the Union Government. The more the Nagas accelerated the intensity of violence the more the Government of India allotted funds for developmental activities in the Naga Hills. Probably Phizo would have been impressed by the latest developmental activities and would have come to terms with the Government of India but for Scott and his associates both in Enland and in India. The day Scott's interference, whether direct or indirect, is completely neutralised there is every possibility that Phizo will realise the barrenness of his policy of carrying on a canard against the organised government of his country. There is no doubt that a sober and compromising Phizo will be a valuable asset for the peace and prosperity of the new state. Phizo might have realised that Scott* and his associates are a spent force in India.

^{*}From the time Pandit Nehru fell ill there had been a tendency (Contd. on page 107)

If Phizo has any good of Nagaland at heart he will give up the creed of violence and may co-operate with the government in bringing peace and prosperity to Nagaland.

MANIPUR STATE

The Imphal convoy did not leave the Kohima stand at the scheduled time. It waited. The truck carrying the military escort had not arrived. Such delays are usual in Nagaland. Passengers became bored. They left their vehicles and started strolling on the road. Small groups of individuals were formed. Idle gossip was the favoured pastime. I also joined one of these groups.

Our discussion centred round the hillmen of eastern India.

"Johri, we are different from the Hindustanis", said an officer of the Assam Regiment.

"How ?"

"Look at our eyes, nose, stature etc. We are quite different from you. Racially we are much nearer to the Gorkhas. Really we are Mongoloids. We might have migrated to India from Mongolia or its vicinity", maintained the army officer. A Manipuri gentleman was attracted by our conversation. He emphasised that the eastern tribes of India were the indigenous Indians. According to him these tribes were pushed eastward by

*A term losely used for the people who hail from the Hindispeaking states of India.

⁽Concluded)

in the country to settle all the outstanding political issues. Scott who had always been refused permission to enter Nagaland was allowed to lead a peace mission into this problem state. It appears that Scott was anxious to extract as much concessions for Phizo from the Government of India as possible during the tenure of Pandit Nehru as Prime Minister.

the Aryan hordes. In the end he taunted "The Hindustanis are pure Aryans." We laughed away the remark. At that time the escort truck passed us. We dispersed and went back to our vehicles. The convoy was ready to move. A whistle, and the convoy started moving sluggishly. We reached Mao (October 1962) the township through which passes the Nagaland-Manipur frontier.

I had passed through Mao in November 1955. Here the convoy was broken up and the vehicles vied with one another to reach Imphal first. This time it was different. Every outsider passing through Mao, a district of Manipur, had to be in possession of an entry permit. When I reached Mao the district had been declared a disturbed area. Further, the army escort had to conduct the convoy up to Kangkokpi and a fresh escort had to relieve the Kohima escort here. All these formalities took time. Immediately before the convoy started Sri Sivo Larho came and took his seat beside me. His bearing and khadi clothes indicated that he was at least a Congress sympathiser if not a Congress man himself. On enquiry I came to know that he was the chief Congress *neta* of Mao community. We talked and talked for some time. Sri Larho got down at a small village a few miles short of Imphal. I give my impression gathered from the conversation with the Mao leader.

The Tangkhul Nagas are trying to secede from Manipur State and join Nagaland. The Maos have made common cause with the Tangkhuls. The Manipur Nagas are certain of their success. They visualise that ultimately the Indian National Congress will yield to the demand of the hillmen and may agree to form a hill state comprising the hill districts of Assam, the tribal sub-division of Manipur State, Nagaland and NEFA. Tripura and Manipur may join this federation later. In this federation the Tripurians and the Manipuris will be in a minority. The hillmen will have a better chance for development. Assam may join this federation on equal terms.

I deliberated whether these ideas were feasible with the declared policy of the Congress for the emotional integration of the tribals with the rest of the country. After the declaration of Goa as a separate state one feels convinced that Sivo Larho's ideas were correct. The possibility of the formation of a hill state as mentioned above may become a reality and it would not be long before this federation is put on the political map of India. Already signs have appeared on the horizon. There is one snag however. Will Assam join the federation as an equal or as a junior partner? I looked for the origin of this idea of creating small states on the eastern frontier of India. I found its roots in the past. It was Robert Reid who introduced this idea. "..., and if control is ever decided upon in the future it may well be that a scheme for establishing a number of small states may have to be considered". It is being considered by independent India! At present (July 1964) the idea of forming small states is gaining ground. Tacitly the claim of those who advocated the formation of a hill state around Assam is being recognised. The British empire in India is dead. Nevertheless, British Imperialism is lurking here and there as much in the so-called backward and tribal areas as in the metropolitan quarters and parliamentary circles. The visits of British dignitaries — humanitarians, clergymen, sociologists and diplomats — are not unoften connected with Balkanization of India. Since Lady Mountbatten is now dead her eminent husband Lord Mountbatten is now making himself available for advice to independent India.

1. p. 159.

[2]

Manipur is named after the 'radiant stone' (mani) of Ananta, the serpent god of the valley. Manipur, like Nepal, was once a lake. Shiva made a dent in the mountain and the lake was drained off by the Manipur river and its tributaries leaving a fertile valley of about 8,456 square miles. Loktak lake of about 8 miles by 5 miles dimensions still reminds visitors of the previous lake formation of the state. Here Shiva is supposed to have performed his dance for a week. Ananta placed the 'radiant stone' of his hood on the ground to light up the valley while he himself watched the dance. Thus the state attained the name of Manipur, and even today snake worship is prevalent here. "The Raja's peculiar god is a species of snake called Pakhungba, from which the royal family claimed descent"¹. The snake, according to local reports, appeared and was coaxed to sit on a cushion and then worshipped. The Manipur Valley is also known as 'Meithai Laipak', the country of 'Meithai', the tribe which is supposed to have been originally in occupation of the valley. Manipur is a hilly state with an average elevation of 2,500 ft. Its annual rainfall ranges from 70 inches to 100 inches. Its climate, therefore, is equitable and pleasant and its dense forests offer the sportsman a good shikar spree.

The Manipuris are a gay people. They love dancing; every man and woman is familiar with this art. At least with the women it is an essential and desirable qualification to have. Even in this age of economic competition and industrial activity Manipur is well-known for its number of festivals, each of which is accompanied with Manipur dances. The Manipuris are of Lushai

^{1.} Fytch Vol. 1; P. 31.

Kabui¹ stock with a fair amount of Aryan blood runnig in their veins. They are short, agile and intelligent. In former days they were expert horsemen. Their language is Meithai (Manipuri). It is akin to the Burmese but its alphabet is the same as that of Assam or Bengal.

Nearly 35 per cent of the Manipuris are tribal people of whom the Tangkhuls and the Kukis are the main tribes. The former are concentrated around Ukhrul in the north-east and the latter around Tamenglong in the north-west and west of the state. The southern fringes of the state are also peopled by the Kukis. It is generally believed that the Tanghuls were the early arrivals while the Kukis were still moving north from south when the British arrived.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest mention of any tribe of eastern India by a western observer is in the account of Marco Polo. He writes about the "manner in which the Grand Khan effected the conquest of the Kingdom of Mieu and Bengal"². No Chinese soldier had ever set foot on the soil of Bengal before 1913. In 1913 the rump of Chinese troops in Tibet was repatriated through Bengal to China. After 30 years again the Chinese soldiers had occasion to sojourn in Bengal. During the Second World War the Kuomintang troops were being trained at Ranchi and to reach Ranchi they had to pass through Calcutta. Apart from these isolated instances there are no other references of Chinese soldiers ever coming to Bengal. Besides, there is no evidence of Kublai Khan ever conquering Bengal or Assam. It is one of those absurdities which are invariably inserted in official records by

^{1.} Urshula Graham; P. 8.

^{2.} Marco Polo; P. 144.

foreign adventurers and courtiers to please their royal masters and it is also interesting to note that such absurdities appealed to the Chinese emperors. However, I tried to ascertain this fact from the locals in Imphal. They did point out the 'Rani Bridge' in the Imphal bazar which is supposed to have been built by the Chinese and they also told me that Raja Gambhir Singh repaired two pillars which had been built by the Chinese but they showed their ignorance about Susa Rameng a village where the Chinese, after being routed by the Manipuris, were supposed to have settled down (1250 A.D. vide supra p. 88.). I met Sri Ibboo Mohol, retired sessions judge of Manipur State. Sri Mohol is a historian and is well versed in the history of Manipur. He said : "It is Susa Kameng and not Susa Rameng as has been recorded by Johnstone. It is a printing mistake." I visited the village. All the Chinese relics had been removed and transported to Indian museums; nothing of the Chinese now is left there.

Apart from the casual observation of Marco Polo Manipur has been in obscurity for the western writers, though it was known to the Aryans. Arjuna is said to have married a princess of this state. Babhruvahan was born of this princess. According to local tradition Babhruvahan was brought up in the valley. Being a small state it escaped notice. But its art, culture, social customs and the very physical features of some of the Manipuris easily connect them with the Aryan era. It is certain that the Manipuris, though good soldiers never shone as a military power. They came into prominence when King Bhagya Chandra (1714-1754) son of Charie Rongba took fire and sword into the very heart of Burma. Ava, the capital, just escaped the fate of being razed to the ground. Bhagya Chandra raided Burma several times and it is said that the doors of one of the pagodas in upper Chindwin still bear the marks of his sword.

King Bhagya Chandra was born in 1697 and brought up in Tangkhul area. Some historians aver that he was a Tangkhul himself. Whatever may be the case, he had a soft corner for the tribals of Manipur. He actually introduced certain Naga customs in the court to be observed on special occasions. He was proud and brave. He is said to have given shelter to Muslim refugees from East Bengal; and hence he was also called Gharib Niwaz. During the reign of Bayinnaung (1550-1576), the Burmese king, Manipur temporarily became a tributary state of Burma. Later it regained its independence. Gharib Niwaz extended his kingdom far beyond Chindwin. After Gharib Niwaz's death misfortune overtook Manipur. In Burma a national movement started under Alaungpaya. He came to power in 1754 and immediately afterwards raided Manipur and caused unprecedented havoc. He massacred thousands and deported as many to Ava court. From this time onwards the astrologers at the Burmese court were Manipuri Brahmans, while other Manipuris there formed a cavalry regiment in the Burmese army known as Cassay Horse (the Burmese call the Manipuris Cassay). As in modern times the Manipuris join the Burmese army as well as the Indian Army, so in the past the Ahom and the Burmese armies had cavalry regiments.

Manipur was again raided twice during the reign of Hsinbyushin (1763-1776) and his successor Singu (1776-1778). Both the times thousands of Manipuris were deported to Ava. In the last campaign the Manipur Raja was also deposed. He was replaced by the nominee of the Burmese. The Burmese army raided Manipur a fourth time in 1819 and drove its king to Cachar. Manipur had established contacts with the British in 1762. In 1823 the Manipur raja appealed to the British for military aid. The British on account of the intractable attitude of the Burmese in violating the sanctity of the Indian frontier and later their intransigence in not coming to terms and concluding any agreement had already decided to liquidate the Burmese empire in India. Therefore, the British readily agreed to extend military aid to Manipur. The Burmese hordes were expelled and the kingdom with its legitimate boundary was restored to the Manipur king. When the king returned to his capital he found only 2,000 people carrying on a miserable existence. Before the Burmese occupation it had a population of about 600,000. Imphal has never recovered from this depletion of population.

Manipur has been an Indian state with special privileges as enjoyed by frontier kingdoms since 1835. After India's independence (in 1947) it was administered by a commissioner. The commissioner was either from the 'Indian Frontier Administrative' cadre or from the 'Indian Administrative' service. The Manipuris agitated for a separate state and succeeded in their demand. From the 1st July 1963 Manipur has its own Chief Minister assisted by two other ministers; it has its own Legislative Assembly also. But the trouble is that its tribal population is aspiring for complete separation from the state. Manipuris because of their bigotry and sectarianism were not able to assimilate the tribals in their social order in time and now the very outcastes are showing their resentment against their erstwhile oppressors. The recent political concessions and reforms may soften the attitude of the Manipur tribals or time may heal the wounds of injustice inflicted on them by the more fortunate plainsmen.

"Only the last week fifteen thousand rupees were distributed in such and such a village as development loans. The day after the Tangkhul hostiles visited the village and collected more than twenty thousand rupees as subscription for their cause. We give loans for development but the villagers willingly or unwillingly pass on that amount to the insurgents", said one Manipur official disappointedly.

A week after the said raid I visited Ukhrul—'disturbed area' at the time. In Manipur the District Commissioner, on account of hostile activities, very often declares the tribal areas as 'disturbed areas'. In those days the wheel of tribal migration was running anti-clockwise; the Kukis were withdrawing to the south. Those who were desirous of staying back in the Ukhrul region were being concentrated in groups of small villages. These colonies were provided protection by the state. There was tension between the Nagas and the Kukis.

Ukhrul is hilly and decidedly the best part of the eastern hills. Its valleys are fertile and forests bordering Burma yield valuable timber. The Japova (10,000 ft.), the highest peak of the Naga Hills, dominates the landscape of the region. Ukhrul has given many administrators to the state. Mr. Reichang Keisang M. P., and Major R. Khating, of the Indian Frontier Administrative Service, hail from Ukhrul.

On my return from Ukhrul I met a Tangkhul Christian worker. He was an employee of some missionary organisation and his main job was to look after the moral and mental welfare of his co-religionists. He was a sort of inspector of churches. More than 200 churches comprised his jurisdiction. "We are not Indians", defiantly said the youth.

"What are you then ?" enquired I.

"We are Mongolians, akin to the Mongolian races. We must have migrated to the Naga Hills from Mongolia or its vicinity".

"You are not Mongolian. Mongolia was never flooded with population so as to spare crores of people for migration to these hills. You are the indigenous Indian, the real Indian."

"We may not be Mongolians, but certainly we are not Indians. Further, the present eastern India was not, before the British era, a part of Hindustan. It is the British who forced the eastern districts to join India. Our union with India is artificial", said the youth. "India was always a geographical unit. It was a political entity since times immemorial. The Mauryan Empire covered most of the present northern India. Will you believe Huin Tsiang? When he visited this country Assam was an integral part of India. Will you believe Gaite¹ who said that the Kubo Valley was annexed to the Manipur State in 1475 and the Manipur King paid tribute to the Koch King in 1550 ?"

"I do not know that. Anyway the Naga Hills, the valleys and the forests surrounding them might have been a part of India, but we are not Indians. Our elders tell us that we came from Malaya", said he with assurance. I was amazed to know that the youth considered himself anything but an Indian.

"Suppose the people of India tell you that as you have come from Malaya now you go back to your country. What will you do ?"

"But why should they tell us so ?"

1. pp. 51, 263.

"As you Tangkhuls are pushing out the Kukis to the south from where they are supposed to have migrated to the Tangkhul area, similarly the Indians applying the same analogy may demand your expulsion."

"We will fight. These hills and forests belong to us. We were here when our Lord Jesus Christ was preaching the Gospel in the west. He has exhorted man to defend the land which was his when He was born. We will defend our land", asserted the youth with the zeal of a religious fanatic. It was wise to change the topic, which I did. We talked about other pleasant things and not the Nagas or the Naga Hills. Later we departed as friends. Anyway I was happy to notice two things; the youth had a fanatical attachment to the land and forests of his ancestors, secondly his group loyalty was dynamic, it had expanded to embrace the Naga community in its fold; it had not come to a dead end. I am convinced that in due course the youth's loyalty will develop to include India. It was a happy sign. Further, he was not bitter against the Manipuris; in fact he avoided the mention of the Meithais indicating that the Tangkhuls and the Manipuris would resolve their differences amicably. This feeling was reciprocal throughout the state. One highly placed Manipuri said : "We have been cultivating the fields in the plains and forests. Now they (tribals) want to come down and till the land. It is a natural reaction. But they will not separate from us if they are not misguided by outsiders and vested interests".

There is another side of the story also. This assertion that "hills and forests belong to us" is proving detrimental to the public interest. "The main difficulty in developing scientific management of forests is the traditional belief of the tribals that all forests which are in the hills are their property. Unless they are weaned from their deep-rooted belief, it will be difficult for the Government/Administration to effect scientific management of forests to the extent necessary in the public interest. Above all a solution to the jhoom problem is a prerequisite for the scientific management of forests."¹ As in NEFA, jhooming is the bugbear of Manipur. It has denuded the Manipur hills and has created conditions favourable to erosion.

From the very name of Manipur the state should be the home of the king cobra. *Ipso facto* it should predominantly be a densely forested state. In actual fact it is not so. The hills are denuded of forests. The following figures may be of interest.

Total area of land				—8,630 sq. miles								
Area under reserved forest				3 88	,,	,,	4.5%	of	the	total	area	
,,	,,	protected "		857	,,	"	9.9 ,,	"	,,	,,	"	
"	,,	unclassed "	<u> </u>	,080	,,	,,	12.5 "	,,	,,	,,	"	
Total	area	under forest	2	2,325	,,	"	26.9 "	,,	,,	,,	,,	

The terrain of Manipur State is mountainous and the Government of India's policy of maintaining land under forest is that "60% of the total land area (in the hills) should be kept under forest"²—20% has been recommended in the plains. Further I understand that a larger portion of forested land should be under reserved and protected forests. This inadequacy of land under forest and that too under protected and reserved forests has created a serious situation. The erosion of soil is reaching its peak. The soil of the land has become loose. It is unfit for bearing the impact of heavy weight or vibrations of high intensity. In June 1962 the power house of Leimakhong Heavy Electric Project collapsed. Erosion of soil was said to be the main cause.

^{1.} Loknathan. P. 4.

^{2.} National Forest Policy. P. 34.

[4]

"I am working in the Central Information in Imphal. I may give up the service and take to politics", said a Gangte (Kuki) youth. This young man had come to Chura Chandpur to preside over the annual union of the Gangtes.

"What will you do as a politician ?"

"Oh, I will lead my men. I may contest in the general elections."

"You may not secure enough votes to ensure success", said I casually.

"Hasty conclusion ! I am sure it is a hasty conclusion !" I was amused. During the course of our discussion this young man was accusing the British for their repressive and sometimes insulting* treatment of the Kukis, yet he was aping them in his speech. "Shrugging of shoulders" was often performed. There was not a sentence in which remarks like—"I am sure I don't know", "hasty conclusion" and "I am sure" etc.—were not used. He appeared a bit restrained in his talk. He was hiding something. I provoked him to throw off the airs he had assumed. He relaxed.

"We are a broken circle. I am trying to join that circle. In other words I am trying to unite all the sub-tribes of the Kukis** of Manipur State into a whole." He continued, "Mizos are also of Kuki stock and so are

^{*}The British tried to recruit the Kukis in the Labour Corps during the First World War. The Kukis resented. Eventually they revolted in 1918.

^{**}In the eastern hills each major tribe is divided into sub-tribes or clans. Thus the Mizos are divided into 49 sub-tribes. Out of these 29 sub-tribes are concentrated around Chura Chandpur; Gangtes (6,000) are one of them. Similarly the Manipur Nagas are subdivided into 16 clans.

the Chins (of Burma). In the long run we might unite with the Mizos and the Chins."

"For what purpose ?"

"I am sure I don't know. I am sorry I can't predict the future. It all depends on the endeavours of the Mizos and the Chins." The youngman did not commit himself yet it was apparent that he was dreaming of uniting all the clans of the Kuki stock probably under a Kuki state independent of India and Burma. Manipur is full of such politicians most of whom are Christians. They have received free education in missionary schools and some of them are high-school passed. They evade manual work. Nearly all of them hunt for white-collar jobs. If some fortunate ones happen to secure some jobs they find that the remuneration is inadequate to meet the expenses caused by the newly acquired urban habits. They take to politics !

"What is the source of your income?" I asked a youngman who was clad in well starched and pressed white clothes. He was smoking a Capstan cigarette. I had met many youngmen of this type in the state. "No other source; I have my own business", defiantly said the youth. On my insisting he added, "I do business".

"What type of business?" No answer was forthcoming. With difficulty he admitted that 'business' meant the smuggling of gold and consumer goods from Burma.

"Aren't you detected by the police ?"

"No. The border region is too vast an area and too open to be manned by the customs or the police. The terrain is hilly and densely forested. It is impossible for the local authorities to stop the smuggling" narrated he.

"Is it in the knowledge of the authorities?"

"Must be. But what can they do? There is a frontier customs post at Chura Chandpur. Chura Chandpur itself is about 40 miles from the Indo-Burmese boundary. Secondly there is no customs post between Morey (on Palel-Tamu road) and Chura Chandpur (on Imphal-Tiddim road), a distance of more than 80 miles."

I met the customs officer of Chura Chandpur. He confirmed the truth of what I had heard. As long as the difference between the official and black market exchange rates of the Burma currency is such that the Burmese goods of a certain category yield substantial profits if sold in India this 'business' will continue to flourish in Manipur State. In 1955 officially the Burmese rupee was at par with the Indian rupee but in the black market one could openly and easily buy 168 Burmese rupees for one hundred Indian rupees. If the customer was enterprising and was prepared to take a little risk he could obtain 200 Burmese rupees for a hundred Indian rupees in Burma itself. In 1962, the gap between the black market and the official exchange rates narrowed down appreciably leaving very little chance for the smugglers to make profits. The 'business' decreased. The recent 'gold control rules' in India might have further decreased the margin of profit. Evidently the so-called 'business' will cease in the near future, if it has not already met its natural death. But there is the smuggling of arms which fetches tremendous profits to smugglers. Smuggling of arms is quite independent of the exchange The customer pays any price for a piece of arm. rate. Therefore, depending on other conditions, the smuggling of arms will continue to flourish. This kind of smuggling is carried on across the eastern border districts of the state. On account of their mountainous and tropical dense forests, these regions are smugglers' paradise. Further, the smugglers of arms are a different people. They are healthy, mature, enterprising and love out-door life. Most of them are ex-soldiers.

In Manipur the usual custom was that women performed soft jobs and men did hard work—cutting of forests and preparing land for jhoom. Hunting and fighting was man's pastime. The women are still performing their traditional vocations—cooking the meals and attending the village market. For man there is very little to do. There are no forests and fewer wild animals to be chased and killed. Law and order in the modern sense has come to stay in the state leaving very little opportunity for Meithais to initiate violent trouble. Farming is the only occupation left for men to follow. They work in the rice fields.

"What do you do in the rainy season?" I asked a Manipuri ex-soldier.

"I go out for business", replied he.

"What business?"

"Only buying and selling of articles".

"What articles ?" After my repeated questioning he came out.

"I smuggle arms. One or two rifles fetch me good profits which are sufficient to meet my annual expenses".

"Is it not risky ?"

"Not much of a risk. The frontier terrain is favourable for our profession".

"Were you ever suspected of smuggling?"

"Yes, twice. Both the times my house was searched, but nothing suspicious was recovered. After all who are the local policemen? They also come from our villages", boastfully he said.

That is how smuggling of arms continues unabated in the state. It is impossible for any government to post policemen at every fifty yards to detect smuggling. Only a general awakening in the healthy and enterprising section of the Manipur rural population will discourage this illegal and unpatriotic trade. But this will take time.

BEYOND MANIPUR

"Burma is like India. It is hot and humid. What attracts you to Burma ?" I asked a panwala (betel seller) at Psipaw.

"Sahib, there are three things which attract us to Burma. Firstly the country is rich and the Burmese require foreigners to exploit its riches. They detest hard work. Therefore, there is both-money and work. In Burma even a syrup vendor fetches more than Rs. 15 a day. Sensible Indians take to business. Only foolish and unfortunate ignorants take up government service. Secondly, the Burmese are socially very liberal. There are few social taboos in the Burmese society. Life in Burma is free. Thirdly, it is not difficult to secure a wife here. The Burmese, specially the Shan wife is loyal and faithful. Besides, she does not stick to her husband like glue for the whole life. If she or her husband feels that they should separate they do so without the least trouble". In fact the third reason has been a very potent temptation for common Indians to elect to stay in Burma permanently. When I started from Tamu to Kalewa in a 3 ton truck there was with us a very good-looking young woman. She was Burmese and her two companions were Chittagonians. This woman had been given in mortgage to a man in Tamu. After paying the debt the Chittagonians had bought her freedom and were taking her to Kalewa. One of them was supposed to be her husband. In Mandalay I met many children whose mothers were or had been Burmese and their fathers Indians. At Psipaw I came across a Kumaoni bus driver who was lying ill. He was being nursed by his Burmese wife. From Psipaw to

Tongking I travelled with a Sikh contractor. Like a sailor he had a wife at every halt. These wives took their status very seriously and genuinely. Sardarji was welcomed at every halt by his local wife. Nearly all of his wives were devout Buddhists and maintained a family temple dedicated to Lord Buddha. The polygamous husband maintained his Burmese wives financially according to local customs and needs. I am sorry to write that Indians, in many cases exploited the liberal social customs of the Burmase. During the British regime many Indians went to Burma as high officials. They had been married and maintained families in India. They again for their own convenience took Burmese wives. After retirement from service they left Burma and their Burmese wives, some of them overburdened with children. In most cases they made financial arrangement for the maintenance of their families but beyond this they ceased all connections. When theirs children grew up they realised the cruelty of their fathers towards their mothers. They started hating the Indians (Hindus). This hatred became an obsession. They revolted against society. Most of the present rebel leaders in Burma are of Indian origin.

Coming back to the conversation with the panwala I noticed another customer who was eager to talk to me. I welcomed the opportunity.

"Sahib, have you been to Arakan ?"

"No, are you an Arakanese?"

"Yes, I am an Arakanese Muslim", proudly replied the customer.

"Why not simply Arakanese?"

"My grandfather migrated to Arakan from Chittagong district. Our relations still reside in Pakistan. We have become Arakanese but we have not forgotten our religious ties with Pakistan. We Arakanese Muslims generally do not identify ourselves completely with Burma or the Burmese. The Burmese have forced themselves on us." Arakan is the monument of Burmese imperialism.

ARAKAN

Arakan is a coastal district, geographically separated from Burma by the Arakan Yoma in the east and from Pakistan by the Naaf river in the north. A few islands also fall within the area of Arakan. Arakan's coastal strip along the foothills of Arakan Yoma is very fertile and the country is a surplus area in rice. Arakan is covered with forests which yield valuable timber.

In ancient times the people of the Coromondal Coast of India migrated to Arakan. They were also joined by the Bengalis and later on by the Arabs. Thus the Arakanese are a mixture of these nationalities or races, but they have a close affinity with the people of Cachar and Tripura. In the mediaeval period Arakan was a Hindu state and had social, political and cultural ties with Bengal. Its kings were Hindus who ruled this powerful kingdom extending from Chittagong in the north to the Irrawaddy delta or even beyond it in the east. During the early centuries of the Christian era Buddhists were persecuted in India. They, specially from Orissa and Andhra, migrated to Arakan. They introduced Buddhism in the country of their migration. It is not certain whether the new arrivals brought the Mahamuni's image of brass from India or the people of Arakan made one. Arakan happens to have a very large image of Buddha which remained the envy of the Burmese. Thus Buddhism and Hinduism flourished side by side in Arakan in the early centuries of the Christian era. In the middle of the 4th centuary A. D. the Chandra dynasty was founded

and their capital was called Vaisali. There was close contact between Arakan and the mainland of India at the time. The Hindu kings ruled Arakan for a long time till the Burmese started interfering with the succession to the throne of the coastal state. The Burmese King Anawrahta (1044-1077) crossed the Arkan Yoma and forced Arakan to accept his suzerainty. He tried to carry away the huge image of Mahamuni from Akyab to Burma, but failed. Arakan declared her independence in 1283. For more than a century Arakan enjoyed undisturbed peace. In Burma the Shans had taken possession of the throne in 1368. Again a Burmese king invaded Arakan and drove the raja of Arakan to Bengal and placed his own son-in-law on the Arakan throne. The fugitive sought help from the ruler of Bengal which was readily granted. Narameikhla, the exiled king, returned and was reinstated as the vassal of the Mohammedan king of Gaur (Bengal). His Mohammedan followers built a mosque in the capital at Mohraung. From this time the Arakanese kings, though Buddhists, added Mohammedan titles to their names. "They even issue medallions bearing the Kalima, the Mohammedan confession of faith."¹ The connection between India and Arakan became more pronounced after the occupation of Chittagong by the Arakanese in 1495. Arakan enjoyed complete independence afterwards.

After the occupation of Chittagong the Arakanese developed great skill in both sea and ravine warfare. They and the Chittagong sailors combined with Portugese freebooters. These marauders had settled down at Dianga, a port opposite to Chittagong, and lived by raiding the Ganges delta. For more than a century and a quarter they remained a threat to the security and

1. Hall P. 32.

integrity of Bengal. They proved a drain on the prosperity of the Mughal province. Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor, was alarmed and annoyed. Another reason for his annoyance was the treatment meted out to his brother-Shah Shuja. Shah Shuja after his defeat in the war of succession escaped to Arakan. The king of Arakan had assured him that within a reasonable time the Mughal prince and his family would be helped to sail to Mecca. But the king of Arakan seeing the wealth of the Mughal refugees wanted to rob them of their riches. On one pretext or the other he postponed the promised arrangement. Shah Shuja rightly suspected the dishonest intentions of his host. He revolted. Eventually he and his entire family were treacherously massacred. When Aurangzeb heard about the end of the family and the manner in which the massacre was brought about, he planned to take revenge. In 1666 the governor Shayista Khan dismantled the freebooter's hive and annexed Arakan to the Mughal Empire.

After Aurangzeb's death the Mughal Empire declined and Arakan seemed to have slipped out of it. This time Arakan's subjugation came from the east. In February 1785 King Bodawpaya (1782-1819) overran Arakan. The Arakan king, Mahasumda, his queen and a number of Brahman astrologers were taken prisoner and despatched to Burma. Not content with this Bodawpaya also deported more than 20,000 Arakanese to Burma. Mahasumda died in captivity and Arakan became a Burmese province to be administered by a governor. This time the invaders succeeded in removing the Mahamuni's image to Pegu. The Arakanese made attempts to regain freedom, but every time they revolted the Burmese suppressed the revolt with a heavy hand. The Arakanese in thousands left the country and took shelter in the district of unadministered northern Arakan. Eventually, in 1824, after the defeat of Burma, the British annexed Arakan and fixed the Naaf river as the boundary between Bengal and Burma. In 1826 the Treaty of Yandebu was signed according to which Arakan and Tanasserim were ceded to the British. When Burma was separated from India on April 1, 1937, Arakan also went with it.

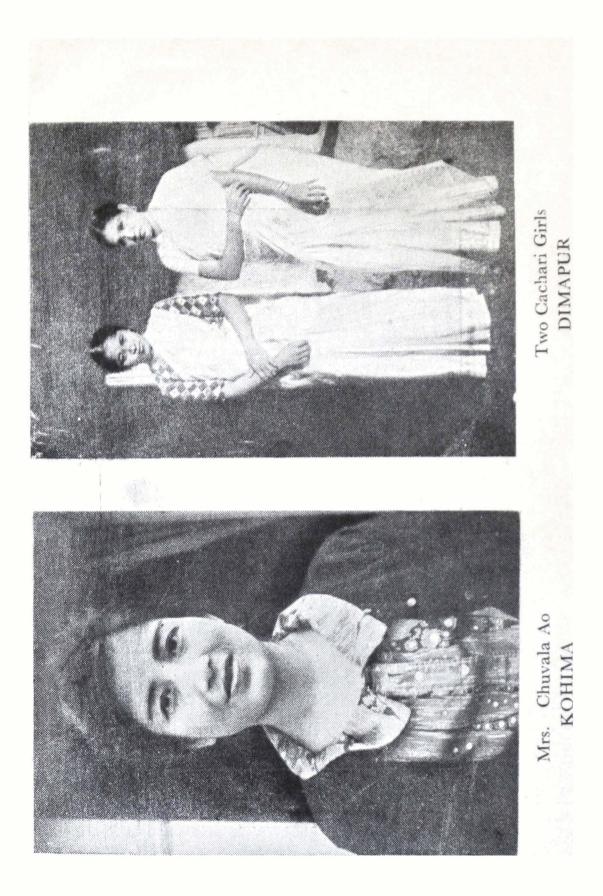
In the present-day Arakan the Buddhists predominate only in the urban areas. In the rural areas almost the entire population is composed of Mohammedans, specially in the north near the Pakistan-Burma boundary. This has made Arakan the minority problem of Burma.

BURMA

"Whichever stone you touch in the Shan States you will find it is impregnated with one mineral or the other", said an Indian (of Burmese nationality) capitalist at Kalaw. This is a true statement of facts. Burma is not only rich in minerals but is also one of the leading exporters of rice and teak in Asia; India is her chief customer.

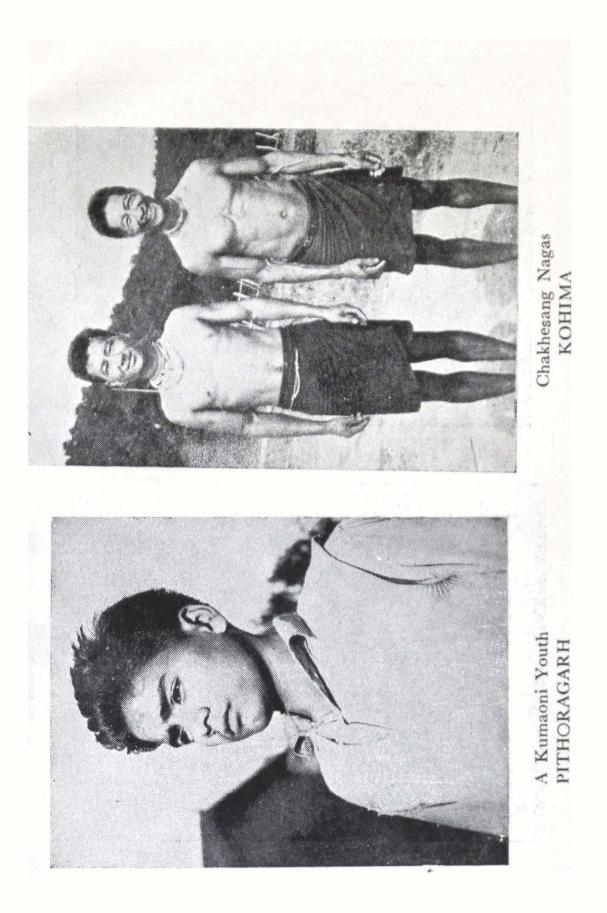
Burma occupies an area of about 261,000 square miles with a population of about 17 millions. In India the density of population is 300 per square mile; in Burma it is less than 66 per square mile. With mineral and forest wealth, vast rice-fields of the alluvial central plains and with a scanty population the Burmese are a happy and prosperous people. "Yet of all the peoples of the earth the Burmese are probably the happiest", writes Scott O' Conner. George Scott remarks: "There is probably no place in the world where the population is

1. p. 39.





Manipuri Dance IMPHAL





so generally well off as in rural Burma". The standard of living of the Burmese is high, and because of this their general health standards are higher than those of India. Economic prosperity has made the people spendthrift. There is not a single fair or weekly bazar in which the bulk of the Burmese visitors does not indulge in gambling and drinking of country liquor. The common belief that 'in Burma none saves except the women' is quite true. Because of these attributes the Burmese national has been fondly called 'the Irish of the East'. He is fond of dramas and he will march miles in the sultry heat of the rainy season through drenched forests, mud and slush to witness a dramatic performance. He is carefree and loves a hearty laugh and at times he loses control over himself and passes into wild out-bursts of brutality or knavery. In this exuberance his conduct is unpredictable and defies reasonable explanation. He is a Buddhist yet he killed General Aung San and five other ministers of Burma in July 1947 in the Parliament. If he is an agitator he joins the Burmese rebels and commits atrocities on legitimate travellers and when he is arrested or when he thinks it wise he surrenders and pleads before the Burma public that he is their child misguided by the Communists, invariably he is let off. In case he is fortunate enough to be one of those who hunt the Burmese rebels he shoots his enemies and then collects their heads to decorate his barracks. It is good that the Burmese government issued a circular in the first week of June 1961 prohibiting this primitive way of expressing their sense of achievement. The Burmese are basically good soldiers, but they seldom take to soldiering. Recently they have started serving as commissioned officers in the Burmese defence forces. The Burmese are intelligent but

1. p. 88

incorrigibly lazy. They prefer white-collar jobs; hence they are seldom seen as manual labourers. In spite of all the good qualities of the Burmese, one has to be alert in political dealings with them. When the British were withdrawing from Burma in the Second World War, they welcomed the Japanese in the hope that Japan would declare Burma an independent and free country. In this hope many of the Burmese leaders co-operated with the Japanese administration. After Japan's rout, General Aung San sided with the British and the Burmese slaughtered thousands of the retreating Japanese soldiers. When independence was dawning on Burma Aung San, the national hero, was shot dead by a Burmese national. In 1958 Prime Minister U Nu invited General Ne Win to form a national government. The General ruled the country for 22 months. A couple of years later he captured power on March 3, 1962, and ousted U Nu. At the same time he allowed the Burmese political parties to function normally; very often sought their co-operation. At present Ne Win is introducing radical reforms to achieve the aim of 'state socialism'. Already he has nationalised banks. He has liquidated many big business concerns with a view to nationalising them. But it is certain that Ne Win has given up the pacifist means to achieve his aim of 'state socialism'. In short Ne Win and his political leanings are unpredictable.

Besides the Burmese there are in Burma the Arakan tribes of the coastal strip—the Chins, the Kachins, the Kakus and the Was of upper Burma. In addition to these there are the Shans of the Shan States and the Karrens (white and red) of the southern foothills. In the plains of Burma are the Chinese and the Indians who have monopolised trade and other minor professions. In the Ziawaddy district around the sugar mill within

a radius of about 30 miles the Bihari zamindars have settled down and are peacefully cultivating the land. It is surprising that the majority of the rebel leaders in Burma are of Indian extraction. They are energetic, enterprising and intelligent. The Gorkhas have also migrated to this land of pagodas. The Nepali villages are generally seen in the Shan States. Their hotels are well-known for general cleanliness. They also keep cows and buffaloes for milk, a commodity not favoured by the Burmese. In the British days Burma was administratively divided into Excluded, semi-Excluded and regularly administered areas. The inhabitants of the Excluded areas were those who culturally and politically were quite different from the Burmese, and who in due course were expected to form their own autonomous units. The inhabitants of the semi-Excluded areas were classed as those who after development would be merged with the people of Burma proper. The Shans and the Karrens were included in the former; the rest of the tribal districts of Chins, Kachins, Was etc. were bundled into the semi-Excluded areas. Both of these tribal reserves formed 43 per cent of the Burmese territory. These areas were governed by the Governor of Burma under the direction of the Governor-General of India prior to April 1937. After separation from India, Burma remained under the same Minister of the British Cabinet i. e. the Secretary of State for India. In addition to looking after India this secretary was also charged with the control of the Burmese affairs; for this task he was given a deputy secretary. After independence, U. Nu respected the political identity of the tribal areas. Now General Ne Win is trying to assimilate all the backward tracts in the Union of Burma.

With such a variety of population Burma is in a

similar position as Assam with the difference that it is a country by itself and the government of Burma can deal directly with the Burmese minorities and can implement decisions beneficial to the country, while in Assam the Chief Minister is not free to act in matters pertaining to the tribal people. The Government of India is the sole authority to implement measures beneficial to the tribal people in the Assam hills.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Burma attracted the attention of China after the establishment of the powerful kingdom of Namchao in 649 A.D. Burma then was split up into small principalities. The fall of the Namchao kingdom synchronises with the rise and unity of Burma. King Anawratha (1044-1077) was the first king to organise Burma into a strong unitary state. His capital was Pagan. According to tradition the date of its foundation is 849 A. D. Anawratha was also the first of the three great kings of Burma who adorn the history of the country; the other two being Bayinnaung (1551-1581) and Alaungpaya (1752-1760). Narathihapate is the king in whose reign (1254-1287) the Chinese raided Burma thrice. In one of these campaigns the Chinese armies marched down to Bhamo. This invasion is attributed to the refusal of the payment of tribute by the king of Burma to China. The second version is that Ceylon had attacked Burma. The latter had asked for help from Namchao. With the combined force Ceylon's invasion was repulsed. After the campaign the Chinese claimed that since Namchao was their territory, Burma owed obligation to China. The fact was that Namchao was an ally of Burma. However, like the wolf and the lamb, China overran Burma and in 1287 destroyed Pagan.

Bayinnaung (1551-1581) was the greatest of the kings of Burma. He captured Pegu and conquered Ava in 1555. He also raided Manipur. Most of the Shan princes accepted his sovereignty. He is known to have raised the height of Shwe Dagon Pagoda after the earthquake of 1564. After the death of Bayinnaung the Arakanese and the Mons raided the Burmese capital, Pegu. They looted the town and removed vast wealth to their countries. The Arakanese took away the king's daughter and a white elephant in addition. The dissolution of the Burmese kingdom was temporary. Other princes retrieved the loss. One of Bayinnaung's sons, Nyaungyan, rose to power in the north and restored the prestige of his dynasty. He established his capital at Ava. His son Anakpetlum, reconquered all that his grandfather had lost. He shifted his capital from Ava to Pegu. He was succeeded by Thalum. The notable event during the reign of Thalum (1629-1648) was that he abandoned Pegu and moved his capital to Ava in 1635. After Thalum the remaining kings of his dynasty were non-entities, each weaker than his predecessor. The Mons again raised their head. They invaded Ava in 1752 and the heir apparent, Einsbemin, lost all hopes of defending the capital-Ava. He left the town. But Alaungpaya (1752-1760), the son of a village chief, who claimed royal descent, organised resistance against the Mons. He routed them; he pursued them and drove them off from Prome. Eventually the Mons recognised Alaungpaya's supremacy. Alaungpaya raided Manipur. He repulsed a Chinese invasion and occupied a portion of Yunnan. The defeat was too much for the Chinese commander. He committed suicide and sent his pig-tail to his emperor. Alaungpaya also attacked Siam twice. In the last of these campaigns he was seriously wounded. While he was being brought to his capital he expired.

The fifth successor of this line of kings was Bodawpaya (1782-1819). During his reign the capital was shifted from Ava to Amarpura in 1783. Bodawpaya extended his kingdom up to Bengal in the west. He conquered Arakan and Manipur and occupied the entire territory of Assam. In 1824 the first Anglo-Burmese war started and the Treaty of Yandebu was signed in 1826. In 1852 the second Anglo-Burmese war was fought and in 1885 the third war put an end to the Konebaung dynasty. King Theebaw and his queen Supayalata were deported to Ratnagiri. The king died in 1916 and Supayalata was allowed to return to Rangoon. She died in 1925.

During the British period there was intensive political activity in Burma specially vis-a-vis China. "Burma's geographical isolation and her frontier protection have been vital factors in her historical development, and remain prime considerations in her politics today".1 Now, as the Sino-Burmese treaty has been concluded for the settlement of the boundary between the two countries in 1960 and transfer of several border regions has been completed on June 5, 1961, it is of no importance to describe the political activities of the Chinese or the British in the pre-independence era. According to the treaty China has received a few villages and Burma practically the same number but Burma had to give up some area of tactical importance to China. Before the treaty China had claimed about 12,000 square miles of the Burmese territory right up to Bhamo. She had made her claim on the strength of Kublai Khan's conquest in the 13th century. Of course the Burmese claim over Yunnan on the strength of victories over the Chinese during 1776-1779 was vetoed by the British as outdated

^{1.} Christian John Le Roy p. 9.

and obsolete; the British trade interests prevented the British from annoying the Chinese.

This was Burma and I entered this country on the 25th November 1955 by the overland route.

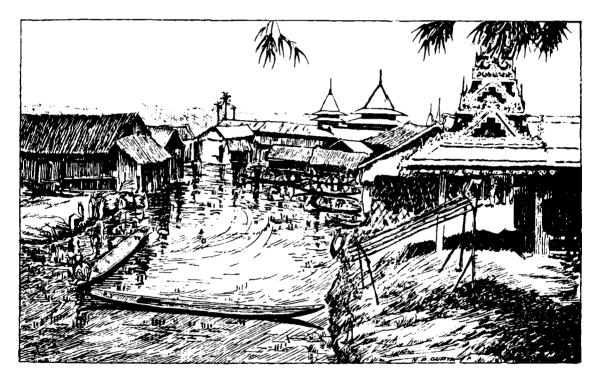
MY SOJOURN

Morey is the last Indian frontier post on the Palel-Tamu road. Tamu is hardly one mile from the Indo-Burmese boundary and it was the first town where I spent a night in the local dak bunglow. Next day I started in a truck carrying merchandise to Kalewa. There were, besides myself, twelve more passengers. We made ourselves as comfortable as possible. The truck passed through the Burmese villages at the 11th, 37th and 57th mile stones. The canopy of forest all along the road was so thick that there was very little space for wild animals to frolic about in search of food. Consequently very few wild animals are seen in the Kubo Valley forests. At one place I saw from a distance two naked children playing on the deserted road. They were quite oblivious of the deadly silence prevailing in virgin forests in which were creeping cobras, kraits and pythons. Our truck reached the spot; the children had disappeared. They had run into the nearby thicket. The driver on request stopped the truck. We got down and followed the direction in which the children had disappeared. We had hardly advanced 15 yards when we noticed a hut tucked under a giant tree the trunk of which was thickly covered with ever-green creepers. We entered the hut. An old man was seen sitting inside the hut. Age or poverty or both had conspired against the old man who was a mere skeleton. This emaciated frame was covered with wrinkled skin. He was dark and practically naked-he

had covered his private parts with a langoti. He was scraping some fried or burnt solid from an aluminium frying pan, the only utensil in the hut. The children were swallowing that fried stuff. Once I had witnessed a similar sight of poverty in a reserved forest of Chota Nagpur in 1942 near Rakha Mines, but the sight of this old man and the children was shocking and horrid. The old man was probably deaf. We could not converse with him. I realised how in the beginning of civilisation man must have lived in the forests. Some of the Burmese tribes are living in a pre-historic era indeed ! I had another occasion to see some tribal people clad in black. They were returning to their hide-outs in the dense forest in the Shan States. They were uncared for by the government.

We drove through the Kubo Valley, once the territory of Manipur, for two days. We reached Kalewa, our destination. The same evening we witnessed a drama attended by Burmese men, women and children of the surrounding villages. Most of the visitors, irrespective of age, were smoking the famous Burmese cigar, virtually a giant biri. From Kalewa my travel whether by steamer or by bus or by railway was performed with convoys under military escorts. My steamer was fired upon twice by the insurgents. None was injured. When I reached Ziawaddy I got down from the train. Two miles after Ziawaddy the same train was blasted by mines. Next day I was to leave for Rangoon by the morning train. The train had been ambushed a few miles before Ziawaddy. It did not arrive. The railway authorities arranged for a relief train. I had to march about three or four miles to catch this train. In those days the rebels were haunting the countryside. Still Premier U Nu treated them like misguided children. Everybody had a good word for the Prime Minister.

From Kalewa I reached Mandalay by steamer. At Mandalay I secured a seat in a station wagon proceeding to Lashio. I passed through Maymyo, Gokteik and Psipaw. The last was to remain my head-quarters for a week. I visited Lashio and returned to Psipaw the next day. From Psipaw I took a bus for Loilam and finally I reached Taunggy. From here I visited Yawnghwe on the Inle Lake. A small motor boat took me round the villages built in the lake. No doubt the Shan States are the best



A water-town on the Inle lake

part of Burma but the beauty of this lake plays a prominent role in making this tract so attractive. The patience of the villagers surprised me. I had heard about Venice and Bangkok but I never knew that Burma is also blessed with water-villages, the lanes and bye-lanes of which are regularly maintained by the public works department of Burma. Every villager had a canoe of his own to visit the local market, his friends or relations. The inhabitants are not bored with the monotony of their surroundings. Taunggyi is the nerve-centre of the Shan States. Here live hundreds of Indians; there are mosques and temples. The Sikhs have built a Gurudwara and maintain a dharamshala. The atmosphere in the town was peaceful. It is a pity that in later times the Shan States turned into a hotbed of agitators. The Shans are agitating for the formation of a separate and independent state. The Han is said to be watching the drama from behind the curtain.

From Kalewa, a military headquarters, I boarded a train which took me to Thazi on the main line. I caught the Rangoon Mail. In those days train services functioned during the hours of light only. At 5 p. m. the train reached Pynmina and stopped for the night. Burmese vendors were selling cooked food but I could get parathas—fried chapaties—in a Gorkha hotel in the town.

Burma could not stay peaceful for long. Ne Win has taken over the reigns of government. At last Burma, under the force of circumstances, is also on the march; socialism is its goal. Is it national socialism or Mongolian racialism? The recent nationalisation of wholesale and retail business throughout Burma under the garb of 'national socialism' is an expression of 'Mongolian racialism'. On account of this so-called socialist measure thousands of Indians have become unemployed. Up to April 1964 more than 40,000 Indians have returned to this country and more are on the way. The Burmese government has taken over Indians' property valued at more than Rs. 15 crores. "To prevent the flight of capital and outflow of gold from the country on a large scale during the current exodus, the Burmese authorities have imposed stringent restrictions which do not allow emigrants to take their savings and jewellery with them. This has caused severe hardship to returning Indians", wrote *The Times of India* 17 April 1964. Moreover thousands of small businessmen rendered unemployed and idle have been stranded there either for want of funds to pay their passage home or for want of accommodation on boats bound for India. Will the Burmese government in co-operation with the Government of India endeavour to alleviate the plight of the Indian business community of Burma?

Sardar Swaran Singh, Foreign Minister of India, visited Burma in September 1964. He discussed with the Burmese government the question of the property left in Burma by the Indian refugees squeezed out of that country suddenly and unexpectedly. India expects a just and honourable settlement of the matter. The refugees have reached India penniless. Some of them had to be given financial help by the Government of India to enable them to board the ship sailing for their homeland. These refugees have been expelled from Burma on the pretext of national or 'state socialism'. The fact is that the Han has not at all been affected by this queer measure. On the contrary he has been benefitted; he has taken over the business and industry left by the Indians. No Chinese colonist left Burma. The government of Burma dare not disturb him.

As a result of this expulsion of foreigners the Indian population in Burma has been reduced from seven lakhs to four lakhs. The time is not far when no Indian will be left in Burma. This is a victory for the Han.

PART TWO

THE PEOPLE THEIR SOCIAL HABITS AND CUSTOMS

CHAPTER IV

Social Habits and Customs

"There is not much to be gained from a closer study of these tribes, even in scientific point of view. Once the fact is established of their mutual relationship and their connection with the Tibeto-Burman family, the minor differences in language and customs are not worth noting; for man in savage state is not a pleasing object, and his observation is only useful to us when it affords data to science."¹

-Forbes

"Do you return to Bazpur (the village where I lived for four months in 1961) alone ?" asked a Bhotia friend of mine.

"Yes, what is the harm ?"

"Aren't you frightened ?"

"Why should I?" I replied. The gentleman kept quiet. I did not understand the worry very often expressed by my friends for my returning late to the village—Bazpur a mile south of Chamoli. I could not understand them because in the Garhwal hills so far there has been no report of highway robbery or murder of a traveller. One day in June 1961, a passenger bus loaded with 36 souls, for no apparent reason fell into the Alakhnanda river leaving no trace, the driver and the cleaner jumped out

1. P. 260

of the bus in the nick of time and saved their lives. They were completely shaken. I along with some of my Bhotia friends, who were educated and were serving in government departments, visited the site immediately after the tragic accident. One of the Bhotia youngmen happened to say that the thirty-six souls would become ghosts; their spirits would be a discontented lot and in their vile mood they would haunt and harass travellers in the hours of darkness. Only on that day I came to know the reason of their (my Bhotia friends') anxiety for my safety ! On further enquiry I was told that the spirits of those who do not perform rites according to the customs, what the people of NEFA call 'neeyam', of the community during their life-time or who meet death from unnatural causes like accidents, snake-bite or an epidemic etc. are transformed into ghosts after their death. Bachelors are considered to be the worst offenders. They would be the ghosts of the vilest type.

MARITAL RELATIONS

Marriage is the most important event in the life of a hill-man, be he a Nepali, Kumaoni, Dogra, Kinnauri, Ladakhi, Sikkimese, Bhutanese or Nefaite. It is important not only because it liberates the spirit from post-death misadventures but it also perpetuates the name of the family, the unit round which the life of an individual revolves. I remember meeting a Tibetan in the Dalai Lamas camp at Dharamsala who would not accept a lucrative government appointment, because the work required him to live away, temporarily though, from his family consisting of his wife and two children. He preferred hazards of free rations to a permanent appointment. Marriage in the Himalayas assumes different forms from state to state. Once in Lansdowne I asked a married Nepali : "How long have you been in Lansdowne ?"

"I have been living in Lansdowne for the last 20 years and during this period I have never been to my home."

"Are you married here ?"

"Yes, I am married here and I have children. I am happy and contented", he replied cheerfully.

"Have you another wife in Nepal ?"

"Yes", emphatically said he.

"What about your Nepali wife? Has she also married another man?"

"No she cannot. She is a married woman and her husband is alive".

"Then how shall she see her husband?"

"Oh, if she is lucky she will have the benefit of 'darshan' (a glimpse of a god or godly person) of her 'patidev' (husband-god)."

The replies were given in utter ignorance and there was no reason for me to laugh at the true and frank admission. On the other hand one finds prosperous spinsters and old bachelors among the Darmaites, Chaudasis and Vyasis. Let us go furthereast to Burma. There marriage is neither a civil contract nor a religious sacrament. If a man and a woman live together openly and publicly they are regarded as husband and wife. Of course the occasion (marriage) is celebrated with all the pomp and show which the couple can afford, and invariably, in fact as a rule, married life in Burma is a success. Burma provides a unique example of marriage in Asia. Here marriage is neither defined legally nor is it bound by any religious sanctions. Yet the Burmese women are among the most faithful wives in the East. Such phenomena cannot be fully appreciated by orthodox individuals if the word

'marriage' is used. This word 'marriage' is restrictive in its application and rigid in its usage. Therefore, another term, 'marital relations' has been used here.

Cent per cent fidelity is a customary rule of law in the hilly and mountainous frontier regions of India. There might have been laxity in sexual relationship before the marital bond but none afterwards. That is how the tribal life has been free from family anxieties. No matter how long and how far the husband is away from his home, he is certain that his wife does not live with other persons. The modern plainsman is devoid of this confidence. The word jealousy is seldom used in the tribal society. This is the peculiarity in the marital relationship of man and woman in the hills.

Among the Chins it is the right of a man to claim his cousin on the father's side as his wife, and if he happens to be the eldest son he must marry the youngest daughter of his father's elder sister (such marriages are common in South India). Among the many tribes of Nepal, the Chaudasis and the Vyasis, such marriages are not taboo, while the people of Tibetan extraction are more liberal in contracting such marriage relationship. Sherring¹ quotes one instance : "The senior Viceroy, or Urga Gong, has a son, a nice boy of something of over twenty, living with him, who in the usual course of events is married. When the father lost his own wife it was thought proper that he should become a joint husband of his son owning the same wife". Sarat Chandra Das² confirms the prevalence of such customs among the Tibetans. Marital relations of this sort are also common among the Khampas of south-eastern Tibet. In NEFA a peculiar type of marriage is contracted among some of

^{1.} p. 305

^{2.} p. 327

the tribal groups. Among the Daflas an old man marries a young girl not for himself but for his son. This he admits openly to the visitor who commands his confidence. The Dafla women are so much used to this custom that they take it as a matter of course to mess about with the step-son of the family. After all when the old man dies the eldest son inherits all the wives except his own mother.

POLYGAMY

In the Himalayan communities polygamy is either a necessity or a luxury. Where there is enough of land and less hands to till it, as is the case in the interior of Garhwal, Kumaon and Nepal, a man takes more than one wife; woman being a working unit man employs such units to increase his earnings. When one gives his daughter in marriage one accepts money from the bridegroom. After paying the bride-price a bridegroom becomes generally bankrupt. To clear the debt or ease the financial strain on her husband the bride has to supplement the husband's income. Thus the life of a woman from her very childhood to her death is the story of human injustice and cruelty towards the fair sex.

Sometimes the urge to have a son compels a man to marry more than one wife. In 1951, I met the numbardar of Tapoban (Garhwal). He had married seven wives; the last gave him a son. This urge to have a son is not only potent in Garhwal, Kumaon or Nepal; it is evident throughout the Himalayan districts.

In Sikkim, Bhutan and NEFA polygamy seems to be a luxury. Here a man takes as many wives as he can afford, and the adage 'the richer the man the more wives take shelter under his roof' is quite true in these parts. Among the well-to-do classes of the Sikkimese,

the Bhutanese, the Monapas, the Apa Tanis, the Abors, and the Nagas polygamy is in vogue but people seldom marry more than two wives. With the impact of civilisation monogamy is becoming popular among these people. The Daflas and the Mishmis are a peculiar people. They are not agriculturists; they live on local trade and rear *mithune* (bison indigenous to NEFA). They supplement their income with forest produce. During leisure hours they enjoy the company of their wives. Generally they have more than four wives, though even ten is not an unusual number. One would naturally suppose that these people must be committing infanticide to maintain the balance of population of boys and girls. There is however no evidence of this. Probably the surplus male population is looked after by polyandrous tribal women, or it may be that many of the young men of poor means do not marry at all. Considering the social progress which every community in the tribal areas has made one would expect that these people may be soon giving up the practice of polygamy. It is far from the truth. The Daflas are violently resisting social reforms. In fact with the increase of government tribal staff polygamous marriages are on the increase. The worst offenders in this respect are the tribal political jamadars and interpreters.

There is another kind of marriage which is neither polygamous nor polyandrous; it is something in between. According to this the eldest son of the family marries as many wives as the number of his brothers, one for himself and the rest for his brothers, one for each. As soon as one of the younger brothers attains maturity the respective wife is restored to him. This system is prevalent among the prosperous people of Sirmoor (Himachal Pradesh) and Chakrata; it mars the happiness of the couple and engenders difficulties in inheritance. Therefore, such marriages are losing their popularity.

POLYANDRY

Now about polyandry. Some writers have condemned the practice while others have justified it. The very idea of polyandry is repugnant to many, still in many cases its adoption is unavoidable. In a country where a man is always travelling the wife must have people to look after her and she in turn should be able to look after the children. Such conditions prevail in Tibet. Some suggest that the system restricts population. The Mishmis, Daflas, Hill Miris and Singphos practice polygamy in a big way, yet they do not appear to be increasing in population. In practical life it is noticed that those who work hard in hilly areas for their bare necessities of life are not very prolific. Their physical energy is more consumed in maintaining the physical frame than expended in procreating children. Therefore, the argument of polyandry restricting population does not stand the test. It is generally noticed at higher altitudes that neither the man is fecund nor the woman. The proof of this can be seen in Ladakh. Armies of men have gone there and there are reports of irregular sex relations developing between these new arrivals and the local women, but the increase in Ladakhi population is negligible. Therefore, we can say that polyandry has very little to do with the restricting of population. It does restrict the fragmentation of land and the size of the family. It makes a man a For instance in Spiti, only the elder son marries drone. and inherits the family property, the rest of the brothers become serfs in the family, or go out as monks. The parents, if alive, have to make separate arrangements for

their living. The house in which they live is called khang chung. The process is repeated after every generation and the family continues to enjoy the same property till it lasts. If by chance a son is not born to the elder brother, one of his younger brothers after paying a nominal sum to the church returns to the family to perpetuate the family's name. If he fails with his brother's wife he takes another woman. At all costs the family must be saved from extinction. In Kinnaur the younger brothers do not take to monastic life, because Buddhism is not the dominant religion of the people. Here younger brothers generally work as serfs of the family. In recent times the number of those Kinnauri youths who do not subscribe to this social cruelty is increasing; they are leaving their homes in search of employment in order to lead a normal life. Yet polyandry is as popular among the Kinnauris as it ever was. The life of a woman under polyandry may appear pitiable to outsiders. In fact it is not so. It appears that men and women living on higher altitudes (above 9,000 ft.) do not feel as much of sex urge as do the plainsmen. Probably temperature and pressure have something to do with this weakening of the sex urge. Moreover, if the woman does not like to live with her husband, she can easily get separation by paying him compensation-chhut-in cash. In divorce negotiations a husband may higgle over the amount of chhut but he cannot, as is the practice, refuse separation. Further, the separation is not complete as long as the husband has not given his consent. The woman can get remarried only after the first husband has given his consent for separation.

There may be another cause which encourages polyandry. "Whatever the truth is, the mistress of a Tibetan household, being more or less the centre of the

family, the one who begets children for the community, acquires thereby an independence of attitude and behaviour in regard to the community itself much more similar to that of European women, who, it must be admitted, have themselves a tendency to polyandry than that of their Asiatic sisters, who tend more towards polygamy". As polygamy is to a man so is polyandry to a woman. Both polygamy and polyandry are generally the fruits of social freedom, the more the personal social freedom the more the tendency towards change and variety. Some people believe that in course of time with the advance of modern civilisation polyandry will fade away. The facts belie the belief. The very disintegrating influences of families due to industrialisation will strengthen polyandry, if sex relationship of a woman (on non-commercial basis) with more than one man is termed polyandry.

MORANGS

Among the Hindus of the hills marriages are contracted and performed like those in the plains. Whether the system is good or bad, it is there. There is only one difference. In the plains the bridegroom's father generally receives money while in the hills the opposite is the case. After the marriage the bride goes to her father-in-law's house, both in the plains as well as in the hills, and stays there; she leads a hard life under restrictions imposed by old traditions and customs of the family. It is not an unusual sight to see educated girls coming from forests with loads of grass or fuel on their head; working in the fields and doing all odd jobs for the family and that too in the absence of their soldier-husbands who return

^{1.} Audre Guibaut. p. 179

to their homes on leave after months and sometimes years. In Nepal the soldier-husbands see their families after two or three years. Among the 'animists' or the 'heathens', as the West would like to call the hill tribesmen, there exist institutions which help a youth in selecting his life partner. The Nagas and the Abors have the Morangs, and the Chaudasis, Vyasis and the Nepali Bhotias have the Rang Bhang Kuri. These institutions are the same as the Haws of Karrens or the Ghotuls of Bastar tribes. They are the youth clubs where unmarried boys and girls mix freely. In such congregations sex liberties are natural and sanctioned by the customs of the community. Here the youths select their life partners. Morangs serve as panchayat ghars (community halls) also.

Among the Darmites child marriages are very common but the young wives are allowed the privilege of attending the Rang Bhang Kuri till the birth of the first child. The women of Darma and Chaudas, because of social freedom, look very prosperous and healthy. As a consequence the Vyasis and the Darmaites are far superior in physique to their neighbours—the Joharis or the Nitials. With the disintegration of the family and community there may not remain any need for Rang Bhang Kuris and Morangs but certainly, in the latter case, it can safely be said that the Morangs will stay as the panchayat ghars or dharamshalas or village kirtan ghars (community music halls as in Assam) but not as marriage bureaus. This is inevitable. The youth will, if he has not already done, adapt himself to the new moral values with grace and dignity.

MUSIC AND DANCE

The subject of marriage automatically leads to dance and music, and it is a general notion that the primitive people have plenty of music and dance which we, the so-called civilised, do not have. No hard and fast rules can be framed in this respect. Dalton in the 19th century found the Hill Miris completely devoid of any art, but now these very people are the only racial group of the Subansiri Frontier Division who have developed folk-dances of their own. The Nagas, so it is said, had head-hunters' dances. If they had any they were rituals performed secretly. Definitely outsiders could not witness them. Now headhunters' dances are arranged for VIPs or government officials. On these occasions the Nagas decorate themselves hideously and make wild cries to please the VIPs. Recently the Nagas have developed a new taste for Indian classical dances. Their dances have taken a new turn; they are influenced by 'Bharat nattyam' or Manipur 'nritya'. The Abors have graceful dances and they dress themselves befitting the occasion. The Mishmis, the Daflas and the other remaining tribes of NEFA, if they ever knew any folk-dances, have completely forgotten them. The hillmen of the Buddhist faith, especially of the Red Sect, have "devil dances" enacted by men whose distinctive roles in the drama are represented by masks of various descriptions which they wear. When these dances are staged in monasteries they produce a weird effect. Dim lights, incensed smoke, the sound produced by the thigh-bone horns punctuated by occasional beats of the big drum and the magically chanted mantras create a mystic atmosphere. It appears that the Buddhist dances are arranged for a definite and religious purpose. In Nepal, both men and women take part in the Nepali folk-dance. The men form a line and so do the women, each line stationing itself opposite to the other. The dance begins with a slow movement of the feet going forward and backward. During the dance

girls recite poetry. Men reply in poetry too. Thus the songs develop into a duet : the girls throwing a challenge and the men answering it. This form of poetic competition is employed by the Newars for arranging a marriage. A boy meets a girl. The girl sings a couplet; the boy replies. If the boy suitably replies to the poetic queries raised by the girl, he wins the competition—he wins the girl's hand and marries her. If he loses the competition he loses the girl also. There are variations of this romantic dance from community to community, but the basic competetive spirit prevails throughout. The Kumaonis and the Garhwalis have folk-dances, but they are slow and dreary. It is peculiar that these dances hardly develop into a climax. Recently the Garhwalis have shown signs of giving vigour to the 'Pandav dance' their favourite dance, and it is hoped that they would succeed in transforming the dance into an energetic sport. The folk-dance of the Kinnauris is the 'nate', it is also slow and monotonous. One finds that 'bhangra', the Gaddi dance of Chamba (Himachal Pradesh), is catching the imagination of the Kinnauris and becoming very popular in the Sutlej valley. Bhangra is vigorous, manly and exercises every muscle of the body. To the west of Kinnaur is Spiti and adjoining to it is Ladakh. These districts are predominanty Buddhist and the "devil dances" are popular here. Among Mohammedans dancing is considered irreligious and is taboo. The Ladakhi Muslims observe the rule strictly and sincerely.

ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

Dance, not the individual one like the 'Bharat nattyam', but the collective folk-dance, and (alcoholic) drinks are inseparable. To encourage the former and condemn the latter is to neutralise the effects of the patronising attitude—'let them dance and laugh' towards the tribal people. The Nefaites love a drink of lao pani (rice beer) in their joyous moments.

There are two kinds of alcoholic drinks—the distilled and the fermented. The distilled one is strong and is consumed during the winter months. The Bhotias or those who live near the snowline consume it throughout the year, generally in moderation. This drink is not crude and has a sour taste. Its after-effects are not wholly bad and its consumption is not so excessive as to produce drunkards in the Bhotia society; drunkards in every society are condemned and the Bhotias are no exception. The pity is that the distillation of indigenous liquor is restricted and the restrictions are so many and annoying that they amount to prohibition. The locals are afraid of the consequences of breaking the bounds of law.

Fermented liquor is a wholesome drink. It is the lao pani of the Nepalis, Nagas and Mishmis, the apong of the Abors, Hill Miris and Daflas, the chang of the Tibetans and the Indian Buddhists, and the jand of the Uttar Pradesh Bhotias. It is commonly consumed in the Spiti and Hanle districts. The Kinnauris have their fruit wines instead. The Punjab government has imposed on it similar restrictions as on distilled liquor; the Kinnauris resent it. It is too much to advertise rice beer as a food, but if taken in mild quantities, as the hillmen do, it is harmless and is a refreshing stimulant. Its use is more common and frequent in the eastern Himalayas than in the central or the western. In the central or western Himalayan districts the use of fermented liquor is confined to the Bhotias or to those who inhabit the northern boundary fringes. These people live near the mountain passes during the summer and rainy-season months.

These areas are much colder than the corresponding areas located in the same latitudes in the eastern Himalayas, therefore, the use of rice beer is not so essential here as in the east. During the winter months the northerners migrate to warmer valleys where their neighbours advocate and profess to practise abstinence from alcohol. Consequently the northerners abstain from its use openly. Regarding the process of fermentation, the same indigenous yeast is employed to ferment the liquid throughout the Himalayan border regions as anywhere else in Assam. In the east the constituents of the wonder-tablet (the local yeast) are a trade secret. If an inquisitive individual would enquire from a tribal about the ingredients he would at once reply that only their women-folk know them; and when the enquirer contacts the tribal women he is invariably referred back to the men-folk. The fact is that the tribals do not know the constituents. The indigenous yeast was discovered generations ago; the people neither know its history nor its constituents. Every tribal family has a small quantity of yeast from which more yeast is fermented and used. This process is repeated in every family in the east. I wonder whether the consituents of the yeast are known to the people of the western and central Himalayas.

The recent migration of labour to the border areas of the Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh has encouraged illicit distillation and the locals in every district and state have started distilling country liquor for the use of the plainsmen. Here it may be added that distillation from molasses with the use of ammonium chloride is four hundred per cent cheaper than from the use of local yeast; the liquor produced by the former is much stronger and more harmful than that produced by the latter. The use of this prohibited liquid is a necessity for those who work on heights above 7,000 ft. specially on rainy days which are many. Under this circumstance boot-legging has become a flourishing trade in the border districts. When this is the case why not scrap prohibition and make some allowance for the weakness of man? Why not improve the quality of the local beverage or the rice beer for the consumption of the common man? Why grudge him small pleasures in areas where 'stout hearts and iron muscles' only can sustain physical activity?

OPIUM

Allied to the consumption of liquor is the use of drugs like opium, ganja (solidified juice of local hemp) and bhang (dry leaves and seeds of hemp itself). The last is very popular with the Brahmans of Uttar Pradesh. Opium eating, drinking or smoking is a curse imported from south-western China in old days. Its use is prevalent among the Nagas and the Singphos of Tirap and the Mishmis of Lohit. There was agitation in Assam against its use in the last century and the suggestion of reduction of its consumption by 5 per cent annually was strongly recommended by some Assamese nationalists, but with no tangible effect. "It is when the drug is eaten and not smoked, that its baneful effects are surely felt, and this unfortunately is the mode in which the Burmese and other native tribes habitually consume it when they adopt its use"; the Nagas, Singphos and Mishmis are such native tribes. It is surprising why the authorities took a lenient view of the consumption of opium. In those days, it is noticed that in spite of Europeans' professions of being imbued with the instinct of enquiry on a scientific basis

^{1.} Forbes p. 88

they preferred to copy the writings of their predecessors. For instance Trail, in 1820, when writing about the Indo-Tibetan boundary reported : "The northern boundary as recognised by the Tibetan Government, extends to the commencement of the table land; for the southern boundary the opposite base of Himalaya range may be assigned. With these limits, Bhot may be estimated as forming onethird of the province. The southern line of demarcation, by no means, continued or well-defined, intervals between the snowy peaks presenting themselves in the neighbourhood of the principal rivers; the most considerable of these occurs at the foot of the Niti pass, where the line of perpetual snow recedes full a quarter of a degree to the north". About 30 years after, Batten² inserts the same paragraph verbatim et literati in his official report. It might have been the work of a clerk and the paragraph might have escaped the notice of Batten. Batten had a chance to elaborate and explain the significance of 'a quarter degree' but he did not. On the ground the snowline has receded by about 30 miles. If it is 'a quarter degree' of latitude the distance comes to about 16 miles. Such examples of copying can be multiplied. Under such circumstances one has to find out the earliest opinion of western administrators regarding controversial topics which need further investigation. Cooper in 1870 wrote : "I have heard many clever and thoughtful people observe that the use of opium should be put down with a strong hand, but while concurring with them in the wish that the use of the drug should be extinguished I cannot agree with them that it should be forthwith prohibited, and for this reason, that those who have been accustomed

^{1.} AR Vol. XVIII p. 1

^{2.} Official Report 1851. p. 70

to it cannot have it off without dying from want of it"¹. Then in the last decade of the last century Scott wrote: "It is to be noted that there are no victims to opium in the opium-producing districts, any more than there are in Ssu-Ch'uan, where the people are the wealthiest in China, and half the crops are poppy. It is only in places where opium is prohibitive in price that there are victims to opium"². Scott actually prescribes opium as a remedy for the tribals to neutralise fatigue and the venom of malarial germs. Then he adds : "He (the consumer) dies of want, and opium is denounced". He goes on : "Where opium is cheap the people are healthy and stalwart, and the women are fruitful". Scott, in a way, goes further than Cooper. Naturally the Government of India did not introduce prohibition with the seriousness that was required to stamp out opium consumption among the tribal people. The present official opinion is "that poppy-cultivation should be gradually reduced". Even to today it has not been finally decided whether the use of opium should be ended or not. If it is harmful and suicidal to the consumer then its consumption should be stopped completely and immediately. There can be no bar to a reform the introduction of which is long overdue among the tribals.

GANJA AND SULFA

The consumption of opium seems to be prevalent among slow-moving people who like drudgery and monotony of life. Its consumers—the Nagas, Singphos and

^{1.} p. 104.

^{2.} p. 269.

^{3.} Verrier Elwyn p. 241

Mishmis-have to stay in their huts for months during the rains and opium is their consolation. This is not so with the Nepalis, Kumaonis, Garhwalis and Dogras. The Gorkha proverbially has "a contempt of drudgery" and the rest of the central and western Himalayan people have this trait in a good measure, of course the Buddhists being exempted. And these people like to have a drink of liquor, if they can afford it. Those who cannot, take to a cheaper drug. It is the 'ganja' or 'sulpha' which is locally obtained by the road-side and is the easiest and cheapest drug available in large quantities. It gives a kick and warmth to the consumer who after its long use becomes a patient of asthma, a worry to himself and to his poor family. In the past the devotees of Shiva or Bhagwati or Bhairava consumed it and the legacy has passed on to the sadhus (Hindu mendicants) from them. These sadhus, the 'ganja' and 'sulfa' addicts, are a menace to the Himalayan region studded with places of Hindu pilgrimage. To accept a long and deep puff (the drug is smoked) from a sadhu is equivalent to accepting prasad (holy eatable offerings given by the priest of a deity to the devotees), and who would refuse it ? Not the poor, illiterate and superstitious hillman. Thus this addiction in the poor strata of the hillmen, specially along the pilgrim routes, is most apparent, but it does not worry the Hindu social workers and local political netas(leaders). The sadhu goes on prescribing his godly smoke to his admirers with dignity. Certainly after a deep inhalation or two the devotees do experience a pleasant comma, probably a blissful feeling, and in that state they forget, momentarily, fatigue and domestic worries. After all, the mountain gods are not so unkind.

^{1.} Markham p. 136

CASTE SYSTEM

The 'neeyam' or the tradition of [the 'biradari' (community) should also be observed to entitle one to a higher birth in one's next life. The non-observance of caste or community traditions is to invite the inevitable alternative of becoming a ghost after death. Therefore, the rigidity of caste rules is another element in the hillman's life which is very essential for his social happiness in this world and in the next, and these rules are so strictly followed that the very behaviour of a hillman betrays his caste. The caste system among the Hindus in the eastern hills is not rigid. "...a man must be born a Hindoo, and that proselytism is not admitted. Practically, however, this rule is ignored on the eastern frontier, and all along it from Sudya down to Chittagong, where conversions are daily taking place. I remember villages in Assam where caste was unknown thirty-five years ago, but where now the people live in the odour of sanctity as highly or orthodox bigoted Hindoos. Strange to say, the pure Hindoos of the North-West Provinces acknowledged the pretentions of these spurious converts sufficiently so as to allow of their drinking water brought by them".¹ These converts have always been hailed as Rajputs, the second highest caste among the Hindu tribe. If the converts are stained with bigotry and fanaticism it is natural because the religious fervour of new converts is phenomenal in every community and country. In Assam the rulers (Ahoms) were tribals themselves and they openly exhibited their abhorance of the caste system. Naturally, when this was the attitude of the ruling class, there was not much scope for the caste system to thrive. Further, Swami Shanker Dev, a

1. Johnstone James p. 84

venerable religious reformer of Assam dealt a severe blow to this system. He preached for a casteless society. His reforms permeated among the tribal population, and all of the plain Miris, Rajbansis, Kochs, Mechs, etc. joined this casteless society of the Hindus. If alien influences are not allowed to penetrate into NEFA then the Nefaites will also fall in line with the tribals of the Assam Valley. In Bhutan, though Buddhism is flourishing amongst the higher classes, yet there is evidence of a sort of caste system based on economic, professional and racial affinities existing in the state. There are four castes or classes which so far have been hereditary amongst the Bhutanese. They are the Garikh, Lama Rikh, Mang Rikh and Dal Rikh. High dignitaries including the royal family belong to the Garikh caste. Army officers and the gelongs, the lamas who do not marry but are entitled to accept administrative appointments belong to the Lama Rikh. The common man belongs to the Mang (means many) Rikh, while the menial class comprising the erstwhile slaves from the Indian plains are the Dal Rikh. The people of all these four classes are Buddhists. Those who profess Hinduism are the Nepalis and the local tribals. Somewhat similar stratification of Buddhist population is also found in Sikkim. In Nepal every small group of people in a village is a caste and many of the tribes classed as low castes in the accounts of Hamilton, Buchanan or Kirkpatrick are considered as Rajputs today. "They (the Kirats, Hawoos and Limboos) are all Hindus, but of the meanest caste. Bhim Sain is the favourite divinity of Limboos".1 Similarly Ballentine² classifies Magars and Gurungs with lower castes and the Newars, Bhotias, Limbus, Kiratas and the Lepchas with a still lower order

1. Kirkpatrick p. 280 2. p. 132

and all of these are recruited as Rajputs in the Gorkha regiments (of the Indian Army). Within these communities there is not much rigidity in observing caste rules, but among the Nepali Brahmans the absurdity of regarding themselves superior to the rest of the Nepalis makes them a separate people. The Nepali Brahman observes untouchability and all the Nepalese treat their untouchables with contempt. In Kumaon and Garhwal the caste system is observed very rigidly; here the fate of the untouchables could not be worse. All the Bhotias (in Kumaon and Garhwal) among themselves profess to belong to the Rajput caste but their serfs, erstwhile slaves or untouchables (called shilpkars) are unjustly treated. A Bhotia, once the consumer of carrion, will not accept water from a shilpkar's hands and the question of taking food cooked by him is unthinkable. In Kinnaur there are Rajputs and Brahmans only. There was no need of scavengers and the sweeper caste does not exist here; untouchability was unknown in the district. The last is Ladakh. The Ladakhis generally follow the tenets of the Red Sect and have cultural and social affinities with the Bhutanese. As in Bhutan there are families which hold a high position in the society and their privileges are hereditary. There is no untouchability in Ladakh. Vigne noticed (1835) caste system prevailing in this frontier state. "The existence of caste in Little Tibet may perhaps be considered as a proof of the Hindu origin of the natives".¹ Markham observed that the Ladakhis have "none of the narrow bigotry and caste prejudice"2. Vigne probably had the notion of caste as practised by the Hindus of the rest of India ; that is why he mixed up the two-the caste and the class. As in

1. Vol. II p. 258.

2. p. 306

Bhutan some appointments were hereditary in Ladakh also, for instance the office of governor was hereditary. Apart from these hereditary privileges there was no caste system in the Ladakhi society. In this connection Mir Izzat Ulla (1812) observed : "They (Ladakhis) give their daughters to Mohammedans, and these readily embrace the religion of their husbands, returning again to their ancestral faith on a second marriage with a native of Tibet (Ladakh)"¹. The statement clearly suggests that there was no caste system in Ladakh in the beginning of the last century.

From this discussion it is apparent that the caste system is very rigid in the central Himalayan districts, and for this the hillman alone is not responsible. In India even persons occupying the highest positions are not immune to this virus. In a country like India where talent is very limited this virus of casteism is bound to flourish; this is understandable. An administrator would like to put his faith only in those whom he can trust, and naturally his choice will fall, in view of the limited talent, on one of his family or community members to serve under his direction. Thus the caste system is as prevalent in the country as it ever was. The higher classes practise casteism and so do the lower; among the former it is considered inevitable while amongst the latter it is condemned. The caste system leads to untouchability. There is a cure for untouchability ; economic prosperity is the remedy. But there is no remedy for the favours which emanate from the caste distinction itself.

DISPOSAL OF DEAD BODIES

The question of the disposal of the dead is an 1. p. 13

important problem in the hills. How should the body be disposed off so as not to annoy his spirit? In other words its disposal should be according to the well established practice in the community or caste to which the deceased belonged. Generally in every religion respect is shown to the dead, but in the Hindu society, this is more so because of its belief in the transmigration of the soul. In Nepal,Hinduism is unaffected by outside cultural influences and whatever customs one witnesses among the Nepali Hindus are the outcome of the practices of orthodox Hinduism itself. Whether these practices are good or bad is beside the point ; the fact is that Hinduism so far has stayed in Nepal in its original state.

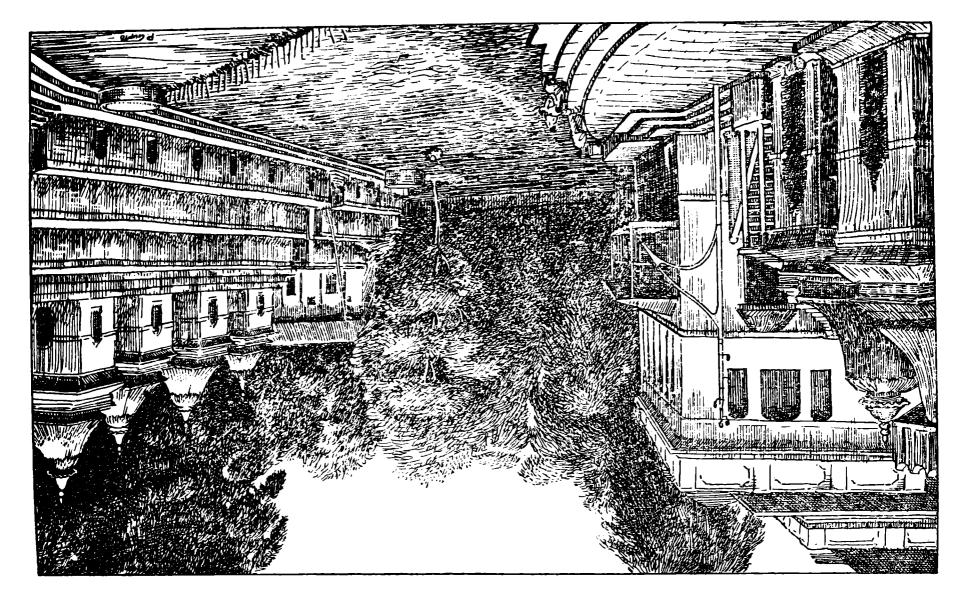
Hindus cremate their dead preferably on the bank of a river. Before cremation the body of the deceased is given a bath. This bath is supposed to cleanse the body of the sins from which the deceased could not purify himself during his lifetime. This practice of bathing the dead body degenerated into a deplorable custom. Tavernier¹ observed that the superstition oftenjwas carried to the extreme and the deceased, when alive or just on the point of death, were pushed into the river and when their souls had departed were cremated at the same place. John Grueberg's observation differs in basic essentials. "They (Nepalis) have a most cruel custom in these kingdoms, for when they judge their sick people to be past hopes of recovery they carry them into the fields, and casting them into deep ditches full of dead corpses, there leave them to perish, and their bodies, when dead, to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey, esteeming it an honour to have living creatures for their tombs."² Even today in Garhwal the victims of smallpox receive an

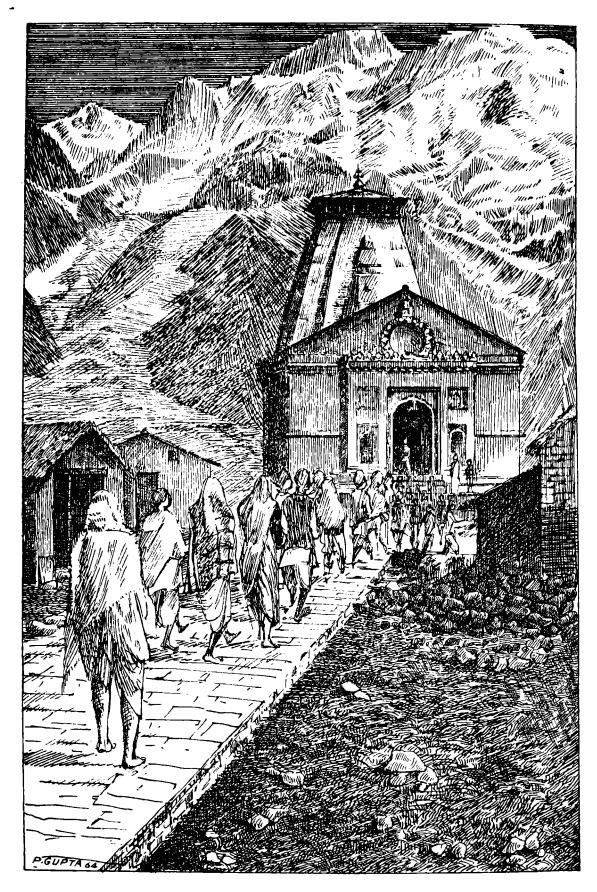
^{1.} p. 207.

^{2.} Markham p. 299.

equally cruel treatment from their relations. In the interior of the district a smallpox patient is carried to a small cave outside the village and kept there. He is fenced with thorny bushes so that wild animals may not harm him. He is provided with water. If he is lucky he recovers and comes back to his home, otherwise generally he dies and his body is consumed by wild beasts and birds. Similar treatment is meted out to the cholera patients and the dead body is thrown into a river. Whenever cholera visits a valley, village after village is wiped out within a week. In spite of the cruel and unhygienic nature of the practice, the dead (from cholera) are not cremated or buried even today in Tehri Garhwal. The State Health Department in this district takes preventive measures every summer against the disease and keeps the district free from this scourge. Coming to Grueberg's remarks it appears that he must have witnessed the disposal of those who had died of some infectious disease. Anyway, to those who are not familiar with the rigours of life in the desolate hills the practice of throwing the patients on their last journey into a ditch sounds cruel. Parallel to this is the custom of 'ardh ghat' (half cremation) prevalent in Nepal specially in the Kathmandu Valley. When a patient is beyond the hope of recovery and is about to die, according to the judgement of his relatives, within three days he is removed to Pashupati Nath Temple huts specially meant for the purpose on the bank of the Bagmati river. The patient is attended by his dearest relatives. When he dies he is cremated on the cremation ground nearby. If he by chance survives for three days, he is brought back to his home. If need arises he is taken back again to the burning ghat (crematorium). For the shelter of such patients the Nepal government has constructed

Pashupati Nath Temple Crematorium





Kedarnath Temple

special hutments. These are lent free of charge. The practice of 'ardh ghat' is also observed in other parts of Nepal, if one can afford it. Any other river serves the purpose of bestowing benefits as does the Bagmati river. Among the Hindus death near a deity or a river has always been prized much. It is usual that a few hundred old people annually come to the bank of the Ganges for a pilgrimage and then live there. They wait for death. There were places where the aspirants met death voluntarily and violently. The 19th century geographers have testified that there is a cliff (locally known as Swargarohini) about a mile north of the Kedarnath temple from where people used to leap to death as an offering to Shiva. Sherring¹ confirms that the practice was prohibited by the British India Government and now the public has forgotten it (the ascent to the spot is very steep that is why only enterprising youths visit it). The belief, that death during the visit to a place of pilgrimage is auspicious and is to be welcomed, is very strong among the Hindus.

Coming to the disposal of the dead bodies of the non-Hindus, customs differ from community to community. Among the Buddhists of Tawang, Bhutan, Sikkim, Spiti, Ladakh and the northern Himalayan fringes the disposal of a dead body is prescribed by lamas. Sometimes dead bodies are cremated and sometimes buried and very often cut up into pieces and the flesh of the deceased thrown to be consumed by birds and wild animals. Here it will not be out of place to put the observation of a traveller before the readers.

Henry Savage Landor has written a chapter on 'Cannibalism of the Lamas'. An excerpt is reproduced for the information of readers.

1. p. 152

"The lamas sit near the body, and with their daggers cut to pieces what remains of flesh. The highest lama present eats the first morsel, then muttering a prayer, the other lamas partake of it, after which all the relations and friends throw themselves on the now almost denuded skeleton, scraping off pieces of flesh, which they devour greedily; and the repast of human flesh continues till the bones are dry and clean."1

I had no corroboration of such cannibalism during the three decades of my travels in the Himalayas and the trans-Himalayas.

Besides the Hindus, Buddhists and Christians there are about half a million 'animists' or 'heathens' living in NEFA and Nagaland. The Nagas give a bath to the deceased and then keep the body on a bamboo platform raised above the ground for a year. During this period the deceased is considered a living member of the family and his daily share of food and drink is set aside and kept beside the dead body. The Mishmis cremate or throw their dead into a river. The Abors bury their dead along with his belongings including cash. This was the Ahom practice also. Many historians believe that the practice was originated by the Mongols. But the people of real Mongolian stock are a microscopic minority in the Himalayan regions. The practice of burning the dead is the custom among the hillmen and the post-death ceremonies are similar (in nature) indicating uniformity of culture in the Himalayan society. Even the Astor (Gilgit Agency) Muslims, before 1842, used to burn their dead².

This Hindu custom of burning the dead is even today followed by the Nakis³ of Yunnan.

l. p. 69-70

Fredric Drew p.
 Goullart p. 161 173

HUMAN SACRIFICE

The respect for the dead led to the custom of 'human sacrifice'. The dead would want someone to help them in their journey. Wives were the nearest and dearest to the deceased. The widows were persuaded to accompany the deceased. Thus sati came into vogue. India practised it and so did China and these were the countries which culturally predominated central and eastern Asia. After wives came the turn of slaves and other human beings. From the dead ancestors emphasis shifted to gods and goddesses, and then they were also appeased. Human sacrifices were performed to please the gods. "And it was not the sacrifice of any man or outcaste person; it was the sacrifice usually of a chosen youth or maiden, a youth more often who was treated with profound deference and even worshipped up to the moment of his immolation. He was a sort of sacrificial god-king and all the details of his killing had become a ritual directed by the old, knowing men and sanctioned by the accumulated usage of ages"¹. In India a few exceptions were made. "Let not the female, whether quadruped or bird, or a woman ever be sacrificed". The Kalika Puran lays down the details of the ritual and the type of youth to be sacrificed. The Kalika Puran further exhorted the devotees : "By a human sacrifice attended by the forms laid down, Devi is pleased one thousand years, and by a sacrifice of three men, one hundred thousand years"². Gradually the practice of human sacrifice spread to every country, perhaps Iran was an exception. Right from Burma to Ladakh human sacrifice was in vogue till very recently. The Was, a tribe of Sino-Burma frontier area "still(1890s)

- 1. H. C. Wells p. 51
- 2. A. R. Vul. V. pp. 372, 781

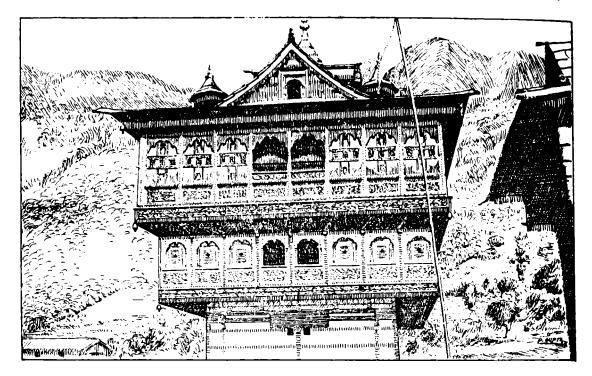
kill human beings as a matter of religion"¹. In 1775 King Alaungpaya founded Rangoon. He buried alive a Mon prince under the Sule Pagoda so that his spirit may keep a watch over the new city (the pagoda is still standing at the main crossing in the Rangoon market). As late as 1857 King Mindon, a fervent Buddhist, sacrificed a pregnant woman, and her spirit became the guardian 'nat' (spirit) of Mandalay, the city where the Fifth Great Buddhist Council was to be convened. During the 19th century human sacrifice was prevalent in Manipur and Manipur tribals performed it up to the late twenties of this century. In 1929 some Manipuri traders were travelling to Cachar. They were waylaid and sacrificed by the locals. In the first decade of this century the Namsanghias and the Bordurias of the Tirap Frontier Division sacrificed their prisoners to appease their goddess. Dr. Guha² confirms that human sacrifice was prevalent in a section of the Konyaks even in 1951. In the Siang and Lohit Frontier Divisions the Padams (Abors) and Mishmis performed human sacrifice. The Idus (Mishmis) were the priests of the temple of Tameshwari (Kacha Khati) where at least two human beings were annually sacrificed to propitiate the goddess. Rowlette³ confirms this. Coming to Bhutan and Sikkim, one cannot be too sure of the prevalence of human sacrifice there in recent times. The religion of the Sikkimese and Bhutanese is Buddhism of the Red Sect which is very much influenced by tantric practices. Further, the Bhutanese do perform Durga Puja (worship of Durga, a Hindu goddess). Therefore, there is every possibility that the Bhutanese also performed human sacrifice in the recent past. West of

- 1. George Scott p. 404
- 2. JASB 1951 Vol. XVII p. 23
- 3. JASB 1845 Vol. XIV Pt. II p. 477

Sikkim is Nepal, and the Nepalis are a hardy people. One of their chief gods is Bhairav and they dance to appease Buchanan describes the ritual : "Once in twelve him. years the Raja offers a solemn sacrifice. It consists of two men, of such a rank that they wear a thread, of two buffaloes, two goats, two rams, two cocks, two ducks, and two fishes. The lower animals are first sacrificed in the outer part of the temple, and in the presence of the multitude their blood is drunk by the masked 'gots'. After this, the human victims are intoxicated, and carried into the shrine, where the mask representing Bhairav cuts their throats, and sprinkles their blood on the idols. Their skulls are then formed into cups, which serve the masks for drinking in their horrid rites". After the Anglo-Nepal War this practice was prohibited by law. It is a common talk in the Gorkha capital that even today human flesh is burnt secretly once in twelve years before the goddess in the Kathmandu Devi temple. Kumaon is contiguous to Nepal and human beings used to be sacrificed in its Kalika Devi temples. Human sacrifices were also performed in the Kali temples near Srinagar (Garhwal) and Kalimath, near Gupt Kashi. Regarding Himachal Pradesh Dr. Franke (1914) wrote an account of the Kali temple-one attached to the palace of the Kinnaur King and the other at Kalpa(Chini). According to him human sacrifice used to be offered to the goddess at the time when he passed through the state².

The development of the practice of human sacrifice in Kinnaur is interesting. At Sarhan, about 20 miles east of Rampur stands the temple of Bhagwati where the Raja or the local Brahmans used to offer human lives to the goddess. There is a deep well within the temple boundary.

1. p. 22 2. Franke A. H. ; p. 12 At present it is covered with a stone slab. A human head was thrown into that dark recess. The goddess was supposed to catch the head in her lap. This did not satisfy



Bhagawati Temple of Sarhan

the tormentors. They wanted to witness the entire drama and the result of their cruelty. Therefore, they devised a better method. They started throwing the sacrificial victim from the top balcony of a three or four storeyed-building into a well down below. By this method also they could not witness the end of the drama. They closed the well and started throwing the victim on the ground from a roof. There is a fort near Sangla which is said to have had seven storeys at one time, and here human sacrifice used to be offered in this manner. Again human ingenuity worked. The Brahmans improved upon the process. They tied one end of a rope to a point about three hundred feet above the ground level, and fastened the other end, at a steep gradient, to a peg fixed on the ground itself. The victim was then made to sit on a wooden saddle placed on the rope at the top end. He was not allowed to touch either the rope or the saddle; he had to keep his hands stretched outwards. A bag of sand was tied to each leg to balance the moving mass. In this position the victim was pushed to slide down the rope. Many a time the victim escaped. If the man survived then in future almost all his material requirements were supplied by the local Hindu community. Slowly and gradually a community called the Jiali sprang up which provided the sacrificial man for the deity. Once in twelve years the last act of human sacrifice was performed at Datanagar, near Rampur, in 1946. Luckily the victim survived the ordeal. Now goat has replaced man in this ritual.

Coming back to Franke's observation we are informed that even the Tibetans practised human sacrifice though with different motives. According to him in the village of Poo a lama beheaded his own father to make the new house he had built "properly habitable". Even the hill Muslims performed human sacrifice. When King Gaur Rehman, the ruler of Yasin (Gilgit), was ill he had some men killed for Niaz, a propitiating sacrifice¹. The practice ceased after Yasin was conquered and occupied by the Dogras.

Eventually, because of the impact of civilising influences, human sacrifice was replaced by animal sacrifice. The dead ancestors or gods and goddesses now wanted a horse, a bull, or a dog for being appeased. Later their likings changed and they wanted money or arms. Thus the spirits or the gods or goddesses remained satisfied with animal flesh and blood. In the Niti Valley up to 1930 Bhotias when they entered their villages took round a dog to every house and then buried it alive. The spirit of the dog was supposed to guard every house which it

1. Fredric Drew p. 181

had visited during the ceremony. In the Himalayan states and districts the sacrifice of animals, specially buffaloes, goats and sheep is a common practice and wherever such customs exist it is certain that at one time human sacrifice was prevalent there.

HEAD-HUNTING

The instinct of self-preservation inspired man to help his dead ancestor in his journey to the next world and later he propitiated spirits, ghosts, gods and goddesses. Finally his attention was directed to his own self. He desired glory in this world and a comfortable life in the next. According to tribal belief the victims of a headhunter were reborn as slaves to serve him in his next life. Thus the head-hunter gained recognition in the community in this present life and was assured of the luxury of slaves in the next. It was immaterial whether the heads were of men or of women or even of children. The line of least resistance is the natural course for a man to choose and the head-hunter did the same. His expeditions degenerated into onslaughts directed against the defenceless old women and children. Few heads were taken in fair fight. Col. Waddell correctly termed head-hunting as "cold-blooded murder"¹. Hutton tried to justify this act of treacherously waylaying women and children and slaughtering them in the name of "everyday human vanity"². This attitude of officials created confusion in the society. In spite of the government's stern policy against the horrid act government officials continued to remain sympathetic towards the practice. "The suppression of head-hunting, though necessary in an area which is fully administered,

2. p. iii

^{1.} JASB 1900. Vol. LXIX. Pt III. p. 63

has probably not been for the benefit of the tribes", writes Mills. He calls these expeditions against the defenceless as 'war' and adds : "The very fact that, far from being an honour, it is a disgraee to be killed in war makes all Nagas very careful of their own safety, and their wars were singularly innocuous affairs". Such wars had to be "innocuous" because it needs guts to kill a man in open fight. Peal informs that "very little pressure by the paramount power would put an end to a custom, which there is reason to believe, is already unpopular among the rising generation"². The observation was made in the last quarter of the previous century and the Paramount Power did put a pressure against the barbaric custom. Public opinion was against the continuance of the practice and the government also agreed with the public sentiment, but the guardians of law and order adopted a neutral attitude. The result was that whenever the Nagas accompanied the punitive expeditions against other tribesthe Hill Miris, Kukis and Tangsa-they, in spite of the instructions to the contrary, took off the heads of the locals and their unlawful acts were connived at by their superior officers. In other words law prohibited headhunting but it continued to be blessed by tacit official sanction.

The Nagas for reasons unknown have been singled out for head-hunting though other tribes also practised it. The Wa was a well known head-hunter till the first quarter of this century. The Lushais used to be "out on a head-hunting expedition"³, and "the Mishmis of Assam were persistent head-hunters"4. Among the Daflas hand-

- Assam Vol. III p. 2
 JASB 1894 Vol. XVIII Pt. iii p. 20
- 3. St. Clair Greemwood; p. 17
- 4. John Hanbury-Tracy; p. 31

hunting similar to head-hunting was prevalent. The Apa Tanis were also hand-hunters; they performed 'Ropi'. Haimendorf was a witness to this ceremony in 1949 when he stayed on the Apa Tani plateau for a year. "This rite known as Ropi*, has much in common with the headhunting ceremonies which some years previously I had watched among the Konyak Nagas", wrote Haimendorf. This observation explains why head-hunting was encouraged and kept alive. VIPs considered an invitation to watch the head-hunting dances as an honour ! They were the people who in the name of Naga art and culture, now and then, raised a cry against the prohibition of head-hunting. They demanded that alternative channels should be explored for the sublimation of energy which the Nagas utilised in staging the head-hunting dances. There may be some persons holding such views even today. Such persons exhibit a depraved and sadistic tendency by expressing their sympathy for the obsolete ritual of head-hunting.

SLAVERY

The Nefaites believe that the slaves of today will be reborn as the slaves of the same master in the next life. A continuous boon to the owner ! This belief was prevalent throughout the Himalayan tract—from Burma to Ladakh. The terrain of the tract being hard to till also encouraged slavery. During the period when Burma extended its empire to envelop Assam, the Burmese took more than one hundred thousand Assamese slaves. Burma

^{*} The right hand of the dead (enemy) was oiled and kept in the worshipping place for a couple of days or more and then burnt amid rejoicings.

^{1.} Himalayan Barbary; p. 47

did not spare Manipur either. The booty was shared by the Khamptis and Singphos. In fact the latter resented the action of the British when they were forced to free more than 7,000 Assamese slaves. Among the Nagas Bengali traders sold slaves (19th century). The tribes of Subansiri sold slaves to the Tibetans in 1910 at Migyitun¹. The Bhutanese robbers raided the Assam and Bengal plains for capturing slaves. In Nepal slavery flourished under royal patronage. There was a special class of slaves in Nepal called the Khawas who, it is supposed, accompanied their masters from Chittor.* The male slave was called a Kheta and the female a Kheti. Most of the slaves had been born free. When the Gorkhas launched their campaign of conquest against their neighbouring countries they took thousands of slaves to the Kathmandu Valley. In fact the Gorkhas were supposed to have a roaring trade in slaves and Nepal was "the source of supplying slaves to Calcutta."² This curse also affected the Bhotias. The Joharis were inveterate slave lifters and the Nitials bought slaves from the Gorkhas. In fact the shilpkars (low class artisans) and farmer tenants of today (in Johar) are the slaves of yesterday. Coming to the western Himalayas there is no evidence to show that slavery was ever practised here. The racial traits of the depressed castes of the Dogra country are in no way inferior to those of the higher castes and their social status is not as degrading as that of the shilpkars of the

^{*} Tod mentions : "Two noble lines were reared from princes of Chittore expelled on similar occasions (when a prince had to be kept away from the kingdom to avoid bloodshed in a civil war); those of Sevaji and the Gorkhas of Nepal.3"

He gives the names of Shevaji's ancestors but keeps quiet about the Gorkhas of Nepal.

^{1.} No. Passport to Tibet by Bailey. p. 218 2. Hamilton Walter Vol. I. p. 107

^{3.} Tod p. 217

Kumaon-Garhwal hills. Among the Buddhists of the Himalayas slavery had been abolished, so the Buddhist literature maintains, even before the commencement of the Christian era. In practice one always sees a Tibetan dignitary accompanied by his 'yogpo' though the Tibetans maintain that 'yogpo' stands for servant yet to a layman a 'yogpo' appears to be only a refined slave. In Kashmir slavery flourished. Vigne observed : "Many of the beautiful children are sold and sent to the Punjab, and, I believe that many of the prettiest of the nach or dancing girls are born of Watul* parents."¹ Slavery also flourished in Chinese Turkestan. Yarkand had a good trade in slaves. After the reoccupation of Turkestan by the Chinese in 1878, the slave trade came to an end.

Slavery as practised in the Himalayas was of a different kind from that which was introduced by the western capitalists. In the latter case the slaves were coloured and could not be assimilated by their masters who invariably were white. While in the Himalayas assimilation was practicable. The slave here, in many cases, was considered a part of the family and the treatment meted out to him by the family was, if not respectable, not degrading. Most of the slaves were assimilated into their own community. If they belonged to the community of their masters they were gradually absorbed in their families. Anyway,

^{*}In the North Indian plains the Watuls are considered as Brahmans, and it is generally believed among the Hindus that the Brahmans are the direct descendants of the Aryans. The Hindus also believe "that an Aryan can never be a slave." It means a Brahman or his children can never be slaves. Then are the Watuls Brahmans? Or is the statement of Vigne preposterous?

Further Drew in his Northern Barrier of India (p. 132) maintains that the Watul (Batal) is the aborigine of the Kashmir Valley. "The Batal is one of those tribes whose members are outcastes from the community."

^{1.} p. 144.

whatever may be said in favour of slavery as practised in the Himalayas the existence of this institution cannot be supported. The slave, his family and his descendants do lose freedom. In Burma slavery had penetrated into the plains. 'The condition of slaves in Burma was very sad'. Therefore, the work of liberating slaves had to be started from the east. But due to Laissez-faire policy the rulers postponed taking any step until they were moved by public opinion. In January 1925, Sir Harcourt Butler, Governor of Burma, visited the Hukang Valley and in August the India Office submitted a report on slavery in that area to the League of Nations. The memorandum "indicated that nearly one-third of the inhabitants of the malarial valley were slaves¹". Consequently, in 1927-1929, expeditions were sent to the valley and 9,000 slaves were liberated. Thus by 1930 slavery was eradicated from Burma. The British did not take any step in NEFA where slavery still flourishes in most parts of the Northern Tract. In April 1962, 3,000 slaves were helped to regain their freedom. Even today if one visits NEFA divisions and studies the problem one can write a long chapter on the subject. In Bhutan the term equivalent to slavery does not exist but the economic condition of the descendants of the erstwhile Bengali and Assamese captives taken by the Bhutanese during the 19th century is pitiable; it is worse than the condition of slaves in NEFA. These serfs form the depressed class of Bhutan. In Sikkim the influx of the Gorkha element has proved a boon to the local depressed class, but from Nepal itself cases of slavery are still reported; now and then the Indian press publishes details of the practice of slavery in the Gorkha country. The goverment of Nepal is trying to eradicate the evil, but as in NEFA in Nepal also things

^{1.} Christian John Le Roy. p, 329

move at snail's pace. In the remaining Himalayan states and districts slavery has been completely abolished, though the economic and social conditions of agricultural labour in Garhwal and Kumaon need a lot of improvement.

POLO

So far most of the social habits and customs of the hillmen discussed are those which ensure a happy life after death. The hillman is essentially an animist and these customs have a significance for him. But to say that he is only interested in life after death is not very correct; he is interested in the present life also. He loves sports and takes part in athletics. Manipur is an outstanding example of this. Manipur is a great place for athletics, and interesting wrestling (mukna in the local dialect) bouts can be seen here. Various indigenous sports like kang jai (ball and stick) and ubi lakpi (coconut and a bat) are peculiar to the state. Before the Burma invasion of 1819 the Manipuris were noted for horsemanship and were expert polo players. Till recently an average Manipur player could easily beat most of the English polo players and it is generally accepted that the Englishman in eastern India learnt the game from the Manipuris. Even now the Manipur State has its old polo ground where the game is played twice a week. 'Every man who has a pony plays, and every boy who has not plays on foot'. How the game came to Manipur is shrouded in mystery. Many western writers believe that the game was introduced by a raja named Vakungba who ruled in 1570; others believe that the word is derived from "pulu" meaning ball in the Tibetan language. The latter indirectly suggests that the game might have been borrowed from Tibet. But it is a far-fetched idea. Neither the Tibetans like energetic games nor the

rarified atmosphere there permits them to indulge in games requiring vigour and quick movements. Anyway the Tibetans have never been noted for their fondness of athletics, let alone polo. Polo was said to be a favourite game of the Aryans. They were supposed to have brought it to India from Central Asia. Later it met its natural death. Again Mohammedan conquerors revived polo in India. The very first Muslim king-Kutab-ud-din Aibakwas killed by a fall from his horse while playing polo in 1210. Babar is said to have patronised the game but after Akbar's reign the game definitely declined. Polo is known as 'chaughan' in Turkestan and in western Himalayan districts. Dunmore in 1893 wrote : "I was most anxious to see the game as played by the natives in this part of the country (Ladakh), where for 600 years it has been the national game, every village having its polo ground, in the same way that every country village in England has its cricket ground"¹. He further observed : "The old chaughan grounds still exist in every large town in the Punjab hills, in Bilaspur, Nadore, Shujanpur, Kangra, Haripur, and Chamba, where the goal-stones are still standing". The game was also popular in Chakrata where there is still a good polo ground. Up to 1947 it was being used regularly by British military officers. As time passed the game decayed in the Punjab, Chakrata and Ladakh.

^{1.} Vel. I. pp. 65 and 69

CHAPTER V

Economic Conditions and Culture of the People

"Man has been disciplined hitherto by his subjection to nature. Having emancipated himself from this subjection, he is showing something of the defects of slave-turned-master. A new moral outlook is called for in which submission to the powers of nature is replaced by respect for what is best in man. It is where this respect is lacking that scientific technique is dangerous. So long as it is present, science having delivered man form bondage to nature, can proceed to deliver him from bondage to the slavish part of himself. The dangers exist, but they are not inevitable, and hope for the future is at least as rational as fear"¹. (Italies are mine)

-Bertrand Russel

"Johri, what do you think of the Noctes?" queried the political officer of Tirap whom I met in Lonju, a Nocte village.

To me they are like any other hillmen. They are well fed and healthy. They are gay and unexpectedly intelligent. I was not the only observer who made such a general remark. Others had also done the same. "Material prosperity seems to exist somewhat in inverse ratio to the degree of civilisation. The head-hunters have the most substantial villages and houses, the broadest

^{1.} The Scientific Outlook p. 279

fields, the greatest number of buffaloes, pigs, dogs and They have also the best conceit of themselves, the fowls. most ornaments, and the least clothes". It needs intelligence to acquire such material wealth. Yet there is another observation which is, in a way, complementary to the first. "It is certainly the freedom from all these daily worries, so overshadowing the life of more civilised world, that is responsible for the gay, carefree temperament of the Konayaks"². The tribal is an animist. He worships nature. He subordinates, comparatively, his mode of living to nature and in the process makes adjustments suiting the needs of the time. Thus the evolutionary era controls his requirements-the less the interference with the evolutionary process the less the need for newer daily requirements. Up to recent times the tribal society was practically static. The speed of evolutionary change was slow with the result that in spite of the time lag between my observation and that of the western administrators (just quoted) the living conditions of the tribal people did not change much. At present the times are changing fast and so are the economic conditions of the hillmen; the time-honoured observations are becoming obsolete. In the good old days demand was limited and supply adequate. Naturally with fewer wants and adequate supply the tribal, in his own way, enjoyed material prosperity.

Similar is the case with the people of the Indian districts adjoining Tibet. Here also times have changed very fast. The India-China Trade Agreement of 1954 expired on the 2nd June 1962 and with it ended the Indo-Tibetan trade. "The real fact is that the Hundesh (Tibet) is dependent on India for its supplies that the

^{1.} George Scott p. 135

^{2.} The Naked Nagas by Haimendorf p. 97

authorities there will never without the most absolute necessity, do anything which might endanger the trade on which their subsistence depends, and they are perfectly aware of the immense power over them which this fact gives to our government and the people of our districts. If the passes were even closed by us for a single season there would be famine in Tibet". There is much truth in it. But instead of our traders supplying the cereals to the Tibetans the Nepali traders have undertaken this profitable business. There is no famine in Tibet. On our side the Indian trader has given up the dream of ever doing trade in Tibet. He has given up his age-old profession and is looking forward to adapt himself to the changed conditions. In the past he had adapted his way of living suited to his profession; he had become a nomad. Now he does not visit Tibet. He has to lead a new and changed life. Under limited availability of arable land and mineral resources in the hills it is difficult to follow the rise and fall in the standard of living of not only the Bhotias but also of the rest of the people of the Indian frontier areas.

MATERIAL PROSPERITY

Considering the average standard of living in rural India, the economic conditions of the hillmen are not bad. In Manipur, Nagaland and NEFA the people have enough to eat. Their houses, in keeping with the local geological conditions and to avoid the ill effects of moisture, are constructed of bamboos on piles of timber. They dress scantily because the hot and moist climate demands it. In western Kameng and further west where geological conditions are better and stones are available they have stone houses. They dress adequately to avoid exposure to

^{1.} Atkinson Vol. III p. 128

cold. In Sikkim the Bhotia population is well fed and the Lepchas have a higher standard of living than that of the Nefaites. The Nepalis have good houses to live in and productive fields to provide them with food. The higher castes have better conditions of living than the depressed classes. Nepal is a Hindu state and one would not expect a better life for those who are not entitled to wear the sacred Hindu thread. Even these 'once born*' in Nepal have sufficient to eat, but suffer from lack of money. These people, wrongly known as Dotials though a substantial number of them hails from central and eastern Nepal, seasonally migrate to India and work as porters and unskilled labourers. They save money and return to their homes after the season. In Kumaon and Garhwal nobody begs and none is a millionaire, especially in the latter. Their economy is sufficiently subsidised by the Defence Department of the Government of India. On the northern fringes of Kumaon-Garhwal the Bhotias reside. They are far better provided with food, clothing, accommodation and other amenities of life than the Garhwalis or the Kumaonis. Going to the west the lot of the Jads, the people of the Jad valley, is similar to that of the Bhotias and the people of Kinnaur cannot, under the present economic conditions expect better. The people of Spiti and Ladakh, in their own way, are economically well provided with the basic amenities of life. They have land

^{*}The twice born have two births—one the natural and the other social. Their second birth is celebrated the day the youth is allowed to wear the Hindu sacred thread and that is the day when he goes out to receive education. In the hey-day of Hinduism only the Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were entitled to wear the sacred thread of a material specified for each caste separately. The 'once born' was not entitled to wear the thread. He had to be content with his natural birth only. He was not entitled to receive education hence there was no necessity for him to enjoy the celebrations of the second birth.

to till and they produce one crop of coarse cereals. They have yaks, goats and sheep to supplement their income. Their country is sparsely populated and they never suffer from starvation. In eastern and southern Tibet the soil is fertile; there is enough rain and the temperature is mild. The mainstay of the Tibetans here is agriculture and they supplement their income by trade with the surrounding countries or districts. In central Tibet the Tibetan's chief source of income is trade. In the western and north-western parts of Tibet there are good pasture-lands-the envy of the Indian Bhotias-where thousands of sheep, goats, ponies and yaks graze. Seventy per cent of the Tibetans here lead a nomadic life but they are the richest in the country. Western Tibet is deficient in food though it has tons of salt, borax, wool, hides and furs to spare. The Tibetans bartered foodgrains with the Indian traders. This economy had been largely accepted by the society astride the Himalayan wall and also in the entire western Tibet. But this system has completely been altered by the Chinese occupation of Tibet. What is happening in Tibet now is China's concern. In India the economic structure of the Himalayan society has completely changed. After the occupation of a portion of the Indian territory by the Chinese India has become frontier conscious and the border people have attracted economic Government of India's attention; their development has been given top priority. Previously if there was any progress it was in step with nature, they are now on the march. Just at present they are living in the transitional period and all the draw-backs of such a period are alarmingly visible.

In Manipur where previously the people danced for pleasure now they are dancing for scholarships. The Government of India is subsidising the cottage industries on a lavish scale and encouraging art and culture at a tremendous cost. Unless

Manipur becomes a tourists' paradise like France in Europe, the Manipuri will find himself plunged in economic difficulties. At present he is paying very little attention either to science or machinery; neither is there any industrial production nor any hope of increasing it in future in Manipur. In Nagaland practically every Christian village has a church and regular services are held. Money in the shape of foreign donations is flowing into this area. Nagaland appears as the Sudetenland of the West, and it is misleading to describe as prosperous the economic conditions of the Christian population of this state. As every Jew in deficit and barren Israel appears to be prosperous so does every Christian Naga in the Naga hills. Easy money (from the West) has spoiled him. He has become soft and unfit to procure his livelihood from the difficult terrain. How long will the foreign donations given clandestinely keep him going ? He has got to work and work hard to make himself comfortable. As far as the 'animist' is concerned his requirments are few and he works, as he has always been working, for his subsistence. The Government of India is spending crores of rupees for the development of Nagaland and the 'animist' is getting more and more prosperous. A community cannot prosper unless everybody puts his heart and soul into the work of production. The sooner the spoilt children of Nagaland realise it the better for the country. Nagaland is a deficit area and the present government is very generous to the Nagas. It is hoped that the Nagalanders would use the benefits to their best advantage. The Indian boundary does not touch China in Nagaland and there should be no immediate danger of Communism spreading in this frontier state. Still some of the western Christian organisations are pouring money into Nagaland to immunise the Naga against Communism. Thus the

Naga is being benefitted by both-the Government of India and the West. In short his standard of living is rising and he is happy. In NEFA the people have been isolated from the rest of Assam and the development work limited to administrative headquarters was being executed behind the 'Inner Line'. The sudden appearance of the Dalai Lama on the scene and Nehru's disclosure of Chinese aggression in Ladakh changed the picture. The people who were supposed to have been suffering from the after-effects of a long fast came to life. They found outside labour entering their country and constructing roads. Army canteens and private stalls have found their way into the Agency. Their sympathisers, in the beginning, opposed the entry of the army into NEFA. An advisory board was organised and army authorities were approached to instruct the jawans how to behave with the locals. India had to be defended. After making every allowance for the susceptibilities of these outsiders defence works are being carried out in NEFA. The game of segregation was up. Who was the sufferer ? The tribal himself. He submitted himself to fate like his brothers elsewhere in the Himalayas. Overnight he was made available for road construction and carrying loads. He became an interpreter or a menial servant in army messes and canteens. If he was lucky he was also enlisted as a contractor. All the elaborate schemes of turning out specialists, political officers, doctors, engineers, etc. were given a practical shape and the tribal has started living like a man of the normal world. His wants are increasing and he is finding it difficult to buy sugar, milk and other accessories for which he has developed a taste. In 1959 he was considered prosperous but after the defence preparations in the country his prosperity, except in the Monpa, Abor and Apa Tani pockets, has

changed into poverty and he is feeling its prick. His struggle for existence has started. In western Kameng the Monpas used to carry on trade with Tibet. With the advent of China in Tibet the Monpas have diverted their attention to the plains of Assam. The India-China border controversy has benefitted them a good deal. They have land and forests and they produce their own food. Their animals are employed by units which guard the Indian frontier and their handicraft articles find a ready market in the Assam plains. In Bhutan and Sikkim the size of outside labour is limited and the Bhotia community has not been adversely affected. If they have been affected at all the effect has been beneficial. They have become contractors and suppliers of animal transport for moving defence stores. There is a general awakening in Sikkim and Bhutan and volunteers for national militia are being recruited in ever increasing numbers. The poorer section of the society is also getting employment under various developmental schemes. In short the standard of living of the Bhutanese and the Sikkimese is rising. Their economic progress or development is gradual and outside influx is minimum, therefore, there is no danger of the evil effects of civilising influences.

[2]

In Nepal very little practical work is being done for the defence of the country, and the economic development of the state is not very encouraging. It will be years before a proper start can be made for developing the rural areas of the kingdom. Nepal is intersected by innumerable rivers which are not bridged and the journey from western Nepal to Kathmandu has still to be performed by making a long detour through India. However, the Nepalis are taking full advantage of the defence works which are being completed in the Indian border areas. Thousands of Nepalis are working on roads and making a decent income. Every Nepali thus employed is saving, on an average, Rs. 500 annually and carrying it home on his return to Nepal. Besides this there are more than 40,000 Gorkhas who are employed in defence and other allied services in India. These Nepali soldiers also augment their national wealth.

In the rest of the Himalayas there are two types of people, one who traded with Tibet and the other who belong to the outer Himalayas. The former are directly concerned with events which have occurred either in Tibet or on the Indo-Tibetan border after the subjugation of Tibet, specially the defence measures which are being implemented to strengthen the defence of the Indian border areas. In these areas portage charges have risen to an unexpected level, and as a consequence of this, the Bhotia animal transport owners are making good profits; the profits are substantial. Regarding the rest of the people many of them have already expanded their trade interests to the plains and some have started rearing sheep and goats for wool near their own village grazing grounds in the vicinity of the mountain passes. The country is being opened up and an intensive road construction programme is being executed at maximum speed. When it is completed the animal transport will be eliminated or its importance diminished. But the Bhotia will not suffer. By that time his farms yielding wool will be ready for exploitation. Then he will be able to export woollen goods to the plains at cheaper rates. What he has lost due to the cessation of the Indo-Tibetan trade he will make up in the internal trade. Have not the refugees from West Pakistan made up their losses? In Kinnaur the prospects of economic development are quite

bright. Kinnaur never depended entirely on the Indo-Tibetan trade. The Great Himalayan range, which runs across the district immediately north of the Kalpa-Sangla line, provides good pastures enabling the Kinnauris to rear animals for quality wool. Further, the moderately dry and cold climate of Kinnaur has been found favourable for the growth of grape-vines. Therefore, the Kinnauris are setting apart more and more land for their graperies. Kinnaur is already known for its apples, apricots, peaches kalazira (a valuable spice which grows wild here) and chilghosa (an edible seed of a high-altitude pine which is priced high). With the development of roads Kinnauri fruits and wines will fetch good prices at Mashobra and Simla. There will be more and more demand for them. Naturally fruit orchards will multiply and the unemployed agrarian labour will be absorbed in the fruit industry. Spitians also never depended on Tibet for trade. They are petty traders and exchange their commodities with the people of Rupshu in the north and the Punjabis in the south. They also produce their own wool. Trees are hard to find in Spiti and the prospect of growing fruits is very dim indeed. However, the government is concentrating on agriculture and it has succeeded in persuading the locals to throw off their lethargy. Now the Spitian is on the march and he has started taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the government. The Changpa of Rupshu is a different problem. He is pastoral and his entire wealth consists of animals-goats, sheep, yaks, and ponies. He needs vast pasture-lands for grazing his flocks. Development of agriculture or horticulture will not benefit him immediately. As long as grass is available for his wool producing animals he is happy. After 1959 about a thousand families of the Tibetan Changpa stock have migrated to Rupshu with thousands of animals. These

have overcrowded the Rupshu pastures, and caused shortage of grass. As a result of this a good many indigenous animals have died. This is a serious problem. Sooner or later the Government of India will have to restrict the entry of Tibetans into Rupshu. China's policy is to squeeze out the Changpas from western Tibet and if India does not stop the entry of these nomads she will not only economically strangle her own people (of Rupshu), but will also encourage the Chinese to inflate their territorial demands on racial grounds. At present the locals feel that eventually Rupshu will go the way Aksai Chin has gone. The Indian Changpas (of Rupshu) are worried. The future does not hold any promise for them. Regarding Ladakh, the Government of India is alive to the fact that this frontier state must develop rapidly. Large sums of money are being spent on the development of high-altitude agriculture and horticulture. Probably similar experiments are being carried out in Russia as well and it is quite likely that the Government of India may be benefitted by their results. But it will take time for such experiments to produce results. Ladakh cannot stay idle so long. Ladakh's immediate need is man-power; the population of Ladakh has got to be increased. Ladakhis are not prepared to welcome the Tibetans; they are frightened of the Pakistanis and will resent the intrusion of Muslims in the district. Then whom will they like to welcome? At present the general merchants and grocers in Leh and other Ladakhi villages are Hoshiarpuris. Therefore, colonisation by the Hoshiarpuris may be tried. The second problem of the Ladakhis is water. There is an acute shortage of water during the winter months but nothing can be done about it; every stream in Ladakh is frozen and snow has to be melted to obtain water. But there is no scarcity of water during the summer months. Ladakh is fortunate

in having a fertile soil and broad valleys. New water channels can be built to provide water to this parched ground and the existing channels can be improved to increase the existing water supply. These measures will produce immediate results. The Jammu and Kashmir government is distributing land to the landless labourers with the intention that the new owners will develop new pieces of land in the Indus valley. Apart from the coarse cereals the Ladakhi villages situated up to a height of 11,000 ft. in the Indus valley can plant apple orchards with success. Already those who have visited the Indus valley must have tasted the sweet, soft and juicy apples of Nimu. When Nimu can produce say 10,000 apples a year can it not yield lakhs in a season? The soil is fertile and there is plenty of water. If the latter is properly harnessed the target is not difficult to achieve. This is true for the other villages of the Indus valley as well. The goverment is already spending huge sums of money for encouraging small scale cottage industries. The introduction of small hydro-electric plants will accelerate the pace of the development of cottage industries. In the north of the Ladakh range is the Shyok-Nubra region which is not much spoken of when we think of Ladakh. To develop the Shyok valley is a tough proposition but certainly the yield of dry fruits of the Nubra valley can be multiplied. Before the coming of the Chinese in Tibet and Sinkiang the Ladakhis were flourishing on the Indo-Tibetan or Indo-Sinkiang trade. From 1954 the Chinese have forbidden Sinkiang and Tibet to have any trade connections with India. As a result the Ladakhis suffered. Soon detachments of the Indian Army arrived. Ladakh again experienced an economic boom; the boom is continuing. The Indian Army is giving the Ladakhi reasonable wages and good money for his merchandise. In the north and

north-east of Leh the Ladakhi is carrying on his normal avocation unconcerned about the happenings around him. He respects the power that holds his territory. India has to drive out the Chinese from Aksai Chin to gain his confidence.

Apart from the improvement in trade and allied matters, a sudden influx of government officials in the border areas has brought a change in the mental outlook of the locals. Every hillman of the Indian frontier areas has started aspiring for a government appointment. For him government employment is a sure road to prestige and comfort. Further, the sudden appearance of men and money in the sparsely populated border areas has caused inflation and hence the prices of food materials have become prohibitive; milk has disappeared; ghee is a thing of the past; vegetables are seldom seen in the village markets and food grains are hard to obtain. Living accommodation is woefully lacking. To crown these difficulties hygienic conditions have become worse. In villages and forests flies and mosquitoes swarm. There is no peace for man. The Himalayas which were considered ideal for meditation have been transformed into a place of veritable torment. However, this is inevitable in a transitional period.

LANGUAGE

After the example of Communist countries Pandit Nehru declared : "It is absolutely clear to me that the government must encourage the tribal languages"¹. He further added : "Regardless of their (Communists') ultimate objective, they wanted to win the good-will of the people and they have won it largely by their policy of encouraging their languages, by going out of their way to

1. Speeches; 1949-1953

help hundreds of dialects, by preparing dictionaries and vocabularies and sometimes even by evolving new scripts where there were none". Other Indian political leaders were also similarly inspired. On the contrary Cooper, who actually saw the language policy of China working in the Mao and other tribal areas in the 1870s, the time when the language policy of the Han was born to be matured in the 1950s, observed : "Chinese is perhaps more used than Moso, and in their schools Chinese reading and writing are only taught, so that in time the Moso, in common with the languages of other tribes in this part of Yunnan, will probably die out"¹. When the Communists came to power, sure enough, the Chinese tribals had forgotten their language; they only knew the language of the Han. For propaganda purposes the Chinese Communists put up a good show before Nehru. He saw a few children of Yunnan tribals dressed in their tribal costumes studying in the elementary schools of Peking. They were learning the obsolete tribal languages ! A marvellous ruse! The Indian Prime Minister was impressed by this unusual array of tribal costumes and the emphasis laid on the teaching of the tribal languages. The method employed to teach these languages, probably, remained hidden from the Indian VIP. Certainly the method could not be democratic. However, Pandit Nehru became an ardent convert to 'linguism' and introduced the idea in India. What followed is a well-known chapter of our recent history. Wherever there was talk of disintegrating a province, on the basis of language alone, there were staunch supporters for this fissiparous policy. The opportunists took advantage of this disturbing state in the country. They opened publishing workshops and started building literature in tribal languages, even of those

1. A Pioneer of Commerce; p. 311

languages which had no script of their own. Their designs were questionable. They themselves very well knew that it was an uphill task to achieve the objective of creating literature in obsolete tribal languages; they were also sure that during this period of experimentation the tribal will remain ignorant and culturally stagnant. In this 'vehicle-of-expression' vacuum the 'Roman script' was slyly introduced. Thanks to the Chinese aggression the country awoke and a full realisation of the pitfalls of 'linguism' dawned upon the Indian people. Now 'linguism' is like a poisonous snake and very few want to tread over it. The official policy is veering round to the right path and that path is to recognise the importance of the regional languages of various zones. It is senseless to produce literature, for common use, in dying dialects which have no script of their own. It may be good for research scholars, but surely it is too late to show any ingenuity in this direction for achieving the emotional integration of the tribal people with the rest of the country.

As regards the regional languages, the Manipuri with Bengali characters, which is almost the same as Assamese, is the natural language of the border people of Manipur State. "In Manipur, there is a tendency among the Nagas to be absorbed among the ruling Meithais or Manipur people."¹ This tendency needed encouragement. Recognition of 'Roman script' in Nagaland is proving detrimental to the natural growth of the Manipuri language among the Kukis and Tangkhuls. In Nagaland itself, before its birth, the *lingua franca* of the people was the Assamese language and the written characters, where in use, were also Assamese. But now 'Roman characters' are the script of the Nagas. The district of Tuensang may not accept 'Roman script' and may

1. Dr. S. K. Chatterji-JASB XVI No. 2,1950 p. 173

demand the introduction of the Assamese language in its In NEFA it is no use gainsaying that Assamese schools. is the natural lingua franca of the people and if the propaganda of 'Roman script' is not conducted vigorously and aggressively the Nefaites will continue to follow the right path of emotional integration. In western Kameng and Buddhist pockets, the Tibetan language in Tibetan alphabet is being patronised, but the presence of the Communists across the Himalayan wall has dimmed its chances of progress. It is not being used in trade; hence it is bound to fall into decay. In Bhutan and Sikkim the ruling families are following the old traditions and using the Tibetan language in official correspondence. At the same time they are not neglecting the teaching of Hindi. This measure is supplying the linguistic needs of the Nepalese, because, Gorkhali is a sister language of Hindi and has the same script. In Nepal Gorkhali is used both for official as well as for commercial purposes. It is fortunate that the British did not encourage local dialects in Kumaon and Garhwal and did not grant them official status either, otherwise Garhwali and Kumaoni along with five Bhotia dialects (mixture of Tibetan and Hindi) would have created insoluble linguistic problems for Uttar Pradesh, and the language of the Jads would have added fuel to the fire. The Maharajas of Rampur (Kinnaur) and Kashmir adopted the same language policy in Kinnaur and Ladakh; the regional languages of the respective states were taught here. Even today the regional languages (Punjabi and Kashmiri) along with the Tibetan language are being taught. The use of the latter in Kinnaur and Ladakh is purely religious. Consequently the people of Kinnaur, Spiti and Ladakh are successfully being integrated into the regional culture. In Himachal Pradesh Hindi is playing the same role as in Garhwal and Kumaon.

EDUCATION IN THE HILLS

Regarding the education of the Himalayan people there is not much to say. When there is appalling illiteracy among the masses even in the rest of the country what can one expect among the hillmen ? Figures of literates are available, but who are these literates? The literates in the Indian rural areas are those who through the zeal of petty government officials have merely learnt to sign their names. The country cannot be expected to achieve the goal of a 'socialistic pattern' of society with this kind of literacy ! In fact society, in anticipation of future industrial development is being divided into two classes viz. the working and the ruling. The future rulers of India are being educated in 'public schools' which once used to be vehemently criticised by the Congress and nationalists. The students of these institutions after completing their primary and secondary education, join the universities and generally show good results. Those who are lucky proceed to foreign universities mostly on government scholarships and stipends. There is nothing wrong in the system. The administration of the country cannot and should not be handed over to those whose early childhood has been spent in the "educational" slums of the country. In every democratic country good schools produce good administrators. Nobody would like to object to this truth but the objectionable thing is that nearly all our top leaders shout themselves hoarse praising the wonderful benefits of 'basic education'. Hypocrisy is the hall-mark of civilisation, but hypocrisy in an undeveloped and economically backward country is the finished product of corruption. Nobody would blame a minister or any other dignitary if he sends his child to a public school but the people resent it when the same minister delivers a

sermon on the benefits of 'basic education' or any other system which has not yet produced satisfactory results.

Education to the future workers is imparted in district board, private and government municipal, primary and secondary schools. Though 'basic education' has been in practice for more than 26 years in the country yet no educationist has been able to define it precisely and lucidly. In short it cannot be denied that the education of the masses in the country has been a total failure. The standard of education has become so low that it has become a cause for despair. Probably the Central Government is aware of the situation. It is because of this that Chagla has been brought in the Central Cabinet as a full-fledged minister. He is handling the portfolio of education. He is emphasising the need of retaining English as the medium of instruction in the universities till such time that Hindi is fully developed to take its place. Chagla has not spoken about the need of reorganising primary education to educate the masses and prepare them for democracy. Probably he has something in his mind, for there is a strong rumour that the Government of India is nationalising education. People may agree or disagree with the step but it is certain that something is being done for educating the Indian masses.

In the border areas attempts are being made to open 'sainik schools'. Even if such schools are established their small number will be like a drop in the ocean. Therefore, the education of the frontier child is in the same position as education of the common man of the country. There has been a tremendous increase in the number of primary, junior and senior high schools in the border areas, but the result of education imparted in these schools will not be different from that seen in the plains. The educational betterment of the hillman is intimately linked with that of the plainsman; one is as anxiously awaited as the other.

CHAPTER VI

Religion of the Hillman

"Our religion has materialised itself in the fact, in the supposed fact, and now the fact is failing us."¹

-Matthew Arnold

"Wherever there is Hinduism in the hills there is peace. The inhabitants are loyal and you can depend on them", said an old magistrate, incharge of a subdivision of Kinnaur.

"It appears that Hinduism is synonymous with the Indian nationalism, specially so in the Himalayan regions", replied I agreeing with the magistrate.

"For this reason I have always been recommending to my seniors that educated sadhus—those who do not emphasise the ritual side of religion but deliver discourses on the philosophical aspect of Hinduism—should be encouraged to visit the border villages", suggested the magistrate.

Recently after the Chinese invasion of NEFA and Ladakh the Central Social Welfare Board, the Khadi Board under U. N. Dhebar, Kasturba Seva Mandir and other social organisations of the country have started taking an interest in the border areas. They have established many social centres from Ladakh to NEFA.

1. p. 1

Apart from social reforms and other constructive activities these bodies will also fulfil the religious needs of the frontier people indirectly. Though the step was overdue for a long time yet it is never too late to begin good work in the border areas which have remained neglected for centuries.

CHRISTIANITY

Unfortunately, the hands of any religion in the East have not been very clean. Christianity, instead of using persuasive and educative discourses, applied questionable means to entice backward people to its fold. Who is not familiar with the fanaticism of Albuquerque? When the Spaniards and the Portuguese approached the Chinese coast they were armed to the teeth and carried priests "fired with the conviction that the cross must be made to triumph."1 Later these Christians from the West, under the apprehension that the Chinese by sheer numbers would hinder European colonisation of the island of Macao, massacred more than 20,000 Chinese. From that day the Chinese always suspected the bonafide intentions of the European missionaries. In India "the Christian Catholic missionaries did not hesitate to use the most cruel measures in the service of their church, for these pious men had more regard for the treasures than for the souls of the poor Hindoos."² Mental torture is worse than physical suffering. Christians in power generally resorted to the former. For instance Sebastian Gonzales, a pirate, became the king of Sundiva island. A revolution in Arakan drove its king to seek shelter in the island. The fugitive prince had brought a sister with him.

^{1.} The Invasion of China by the western World, Hughes. p. 9 2. Western culture in Eastern Lands, Vambery Arminius p. 144

Gonzales demanded the girl's hand in marriage and insisted that she should be baptised first. The king had to yield. After the marriage the Arakan king died in mysterious circumstances. Gonzales confiscated all his property and forced the widow queen to marry his brother Anthony. The queen refused to become Christian and saved herself from undergoing the agony of becoming Anthony's wife. Such wanton acts of cruelty and inhumanity may be attributed to the "corrupt and debased state of the Roman Church in the fifteenth century, but such events remained fixed in the memory of Orientals"¹. As a result Christianity had a set-back. Later the British and then the American missionaries came to the Orient. They had the examples of the Spaniards and the Portuguese before them. They became Their behaviour was more civilised; their wiser. profession was the spreading of Christianity. They used the western scientific knowledge to their best advantage. They bribed some and if bribe failed they employed other methods. In Nepal, certain missionaries offered to teach the Regent the science of mineralogy and metallurgy provided the royal guardian accepted Christianity for his The Regent did not accept the offer; he salvation. offered three other men instead for the privilege. The deal did not come off and the Regent remained a Hindu. "Among the complaints levelled against the mission effort by various Chinese groups and leaders are that Christianity tends to belittle Chinese ethical, social, and political standards, and it is therefore denationalising"2. In India foreign msssionaries have shown some intelligence and tact. They do not belittle Hinduism openly and sometimes show respect to the religion of the idol worshippers,

- 1. Fytch Vol. I. p. 37
- 2. Abend p. 373

but inwardly their antagonistic attitude towards Hinduism remains alive. Therefore, it will not be illogical if the words China and Chinese are replaced by India and Indians in the above quotation.

ISLAM

Islam engulfed Asia by fire and sword. India was an easy prey for the sword of Islam. Hinduism itself is responsible for Islam's success in India. India could not meet Islam's challenge of the democratic principle of the equality of man. Its success was in direct proportion to the orthodoxy and bigotry of Hinduism. In eastern Bengal Hinduism had deteriorated to its lowest level in its inhuman treatment of the lower castes and it is here that Islam had a resounding victory. In the 1790s Mohammedans were a minority but by 1910 they had become the majority community. Conversion of the locals, from Hinduism to Islam, was responsible for this change in the balance of the Bengal population. Islam, whether through force or subjugation, became the indigenous religion of the country. Unfortunately Islam is intolerant of non-Muslims. This is a disturbing element to the peaceful and pacifist Hindus. Within its own fold Islam is not free from blame either. Its group dissensions are well known to be elaborated. The conflicts between the Shias and the Sunnis in the sub-continent of India, racial jealousies of the Arabs and the Turks in Middle East, the sectional controversies of the Chinese Muslims etc. point out that Islam has outlived its usefulness as a uniting force not only in India but also in Asia. In Assam it is fighting its last battle for its expansion. It may succeed in inviting the surplus Muslim population of East Bengal but it will not be able to oust Hinduism from the state.

Pakistan was created as a theocratic state but the Muslim countries of the Middle East have realised the futility of religion in meeting the challenge of the modern age; by and by they are enacting secular laws. However, Islam is the religion of about twelve crores (120 millions) of people of the Indian sub-continent. Islam may inculcate extra-territorial religious sympathies in its followers but it does not breed anti-national feelings against the subcontinent. At the same time unless it moderates its proselytising zeal and cultivates a more tolerant attitude towards others it will land itself in a disadvantageous position in its march towards social and economic progress.

HINDUISM

Spear regards "Hinduism as a body of customs and a body of ideas, the two together having such pervasive power and defensive force as to absorb or to resist passively for centuries any system which comes in contact with it". This is an attribute of Hinduism and not a definition. Hinduism is difficult to define, because it is not a religion. It is a way of life, a civilisation and a movement which adapts itself according to changing conditions. The easiest definition of Hinduism for a foreigner in India is that a person who is neither a Christian, nor a Musalman nor a Parsee, is a Hindu. Thus the Sikhs, the Jains, the Shivaites, the Shaktas, the Vaishnavites, the Sanatanists, the Arya Samajis, the Radha Swamis, the animists and even the Indian Buddhists, each sect having its own philosophy of life, come under Hinduism. The common characteristic of all Hindus is abstinence from beef-eating, and for a Hindu beef is the flesh of Indian cow.

1. p. 60

A human mass comprising so many sects living a peaceful religious life is indicative of its unusual tolerance. Some modern thinkers maintain that as tolerance is inherent in all the primitive religions, Hinduism is the way of life of primitives. It is immaterial. The significant point is that Hinduism stands for 'live and let live'. This motto may be termed as 'co-existence'.

Hinduism so far has given peace and tranquillity to the country, but some of its aspects are proving an impediment to the country's economic and industrial progress. The greatest weakness of the Hindus has always been their lack of expediency in uniting under the central authority. Whenever a Hindu king founded a kingdom within or without India he seldom had any connection with the parent country or power. This sense of disintegration is still strong amongst the Hindus. Secondly, in spite of the Hindu society's assimilating character during the pre-Muslim period when it absorbed Kushans, Sakas, Huns etc., it has now become a contracting society. Many writers attribute this restrictive tendency to the caste system. From the earliest times the Indian reformers have been condemning the caste system but it has continued unimpaired. Buddha tried in vain to banish this stratification of the castes from the country. Buddhism decayed in India but Hinduism flourished. Islam did claim crores of converts but this conversion strengthened the caste system. The greatest defect of the caste system is favouritism which breeds corruption and inefficiency specially in an economically undeveloped country. Thus the present day Hindu society is not only hesitant to assimilate the non-Hindus but it is also ill-equipped for taking a vigorous part in the industrial development of the country. Late Prime Minister Nehru warned the country of the danger : "Society must change

with the times. If we do not endeavour to bring this about society will burst forth through its apparels and come into its own. This is called revolution"¹. The Hindu has been listening to such harangue day and night since 1947 but he has not changed. He is not the material to initiate revolution. India is a country where even the members of the Communist party take to 'satyagraha' for the redress of a political or social wrong. Moreover in this age of science when communications are fully developed and the agency of internal defence—the police—is well organised and equipped a bloody revolution is unthinkable. Curiously, in spite of serious social shortcomings and political leaders' exhortations India still marches on as before.

HILLMEN'S RELIGION

While each religion has its own merits none has succeeded in bringing prosperity and national unity in the country. Christianity has brought material prosperity; it has given its followers self-respect and an impetus towards progress. But all these advantages have been neutralised by its breeding of anti-national ideas among the Indian Christians of the frontier areas. A tribal Christian does not favour the idea of living with a 'heathen' and unfortunately the whole of the frontier and other tracts are peopled with the 'heathens'. Unless entire India adopts Christianity en masse this great religion will remain a disturbing element in many of the isolated pockets in the Himalayas. Islam has given self-respect and fanaticism to the down-trodden to uphold the solidarity of their religion; it has also given national pride to the true believers. Here again the fatalism which Islam inculcates amongst its followers is proving

^{1.} The Pioneer 28.9.1959

detrimental to scientific progress. Now let us consider Hinduism. It has given nationalism to its adherents; it has also given them imagination and contemplation. These have made the Hindu theoretical rather than practical. The worst part of Hinduism is that it has created distinction between man and man and its philosophy of transmigration of soul has transformed the underdog into a confirmed fatalist; his past and not the present karma (action) has made his destiny; he is so much enfeebled by oppression through generations that he finds himself unable to do anything for his own progress. Under the circumstances it is found best to leave oneself to fate ! Lastly Hinduism has glorified poverty which acts as an antidote to material progress. Unfortunately in India Islam and Hinduism are the only two major religions the followers of which seldom have extra-territorial loyalties for a country outside the sub-continent. At present Hinduism has reached a stage where neither it is prepared to absorb others into its fold nor its adherents find attraction or consolation in other religions. In other words Hindus have become a static society. This has made Islam (in India) static too. With this limitation there is no hope that Islam will ever work its way into the Himalayan interior. Therefore, Hinduism, as it prevails along with Mahayana Buddhism in most of the border areas, remains the only religion for the hillmen to follow.

In Manipur the dominant religion is Vaishnavism. According to local tradition King Bhagya Chandra, popularly known as Gharib Niwas, was the first Manipur monarch to accept Vaishnavism. Vaishnavism of Assam is tolerant but that of Manipur is not. Vaishnavites of Manipur are conceited and believe in the caste system with the zeal of a new convert. Side by side with Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Shaktaism also flourish in the

During the early years after independence state. Manipur's religious fanaticism was decaying. The process was not complete when Nagaland was born in the north. Previously the tribals of Manipur were gradually being absorbed or assimilated into the culture and religion of the state, but now things have changed-they are being more and more attracted towards Christianity. Α cleavage between the Manipuris and the tribal population of the state has occurred. This is proving injurious in the larger national interest. In Nagaland too the picture of national unity is not bright. In the past administrator after administrator recommended Christianity for the Naga district. Johnstone said : "I pointed out that the Nagas had no religion ; that they were highly intelligent and capable of receiving civilisation; that with it they would want a religion, and that we might just as well give them our own, and make them in that way a source of strength, by thus mutually attaching them to us. Failing this, I predicted that, following the example of other hill-tribes, they would sooner or later become debased Hindoos or Musalmans, and in the latter case, as we know by experience, be a constant source of trouble and annoyance, Musalman converts in Assam and East Bengal, being a particularly disagreeable and bigoted sect"1. The same eminent administrator adds : "Properly taught and judiciously handled, the Angamis would have made a fine manly set of Christians, of a type superior to most Indian native converts, and probably devoted to our rule." Even today the Angamis of Nagaland have not forgotten their erstwhile masters. If the energies of these stalwart Angamis are properly channelised for building future India they would prove a great asset to

1. p. 43

the country. But will Scott and his like let the Angamis develop loyalty for India ?

Nagaland is the breeding ground of the native missionaries and in due course Christianity will draw the entire non-Christian population within its fold. Contiguous to Nagaland is the Tirap Frontier Division where Vaishnavism of Assam has already claimed the Noctes and it is slowly working its way into the Wanchoo area. The Vaishnavism of Assam with its casteless character and sanction for drinking of wines or liquors and eating of pigs and fowl is the natural religion for the tribals of NEFA. One who has attended the *bhakti* (devotional) dances of the Vaishnavites in Majuli (an island in the Brahmaputra) religious centres will agree that the tribals of Assam will have a flair for these dances.

Either deliberately or through ignorance some people have expressed doubts that the Nefaites would ever accept Hinduism in any organised form because they will never give up beef (the flesh of mithune) and rice beer. Buchanan observed that the Seyana Bhotias had "appetite for beef"¹ and were consumers of carrion, the Kiratas were vigorous beef-eaters and the Lepchas also relished beef. "Until the Gorkha conquest, bulls and oxen were annually sacrificed in great numbers, but since that event buffaloes and the chowrie cattle have been substituted. The Bhotias, however, by the other hill-tribes are still considered cow killers, and, as such, outcastes of the worst description"². The same writer confirms that the "Murmis (untouchables) are called Siyana Bhootias or Bhotias who eat carrion". Today all these tribes are enlisted in the Indian or the British Army as devout Hindus. They were and are entitled to every religious concession granted

Hamilton Francis pp. 53-54
 Hamilton Walter Vol. II. pp. 659, 671

to the Rajputs. Then again the Nepalis ate chowrie cow, when, in the Tibetan expedition of 1790 because of food shortage, they starved. The Tibetans themselves, though Buddhists eat the flesh of chowrie cow; and they enter Hindu temples without any objection from the Brahmans. The Tibetans consider chowrie as an animal of a species different from the cow of the shastras and they eat chowrie beef "asking no questions for conscience' sake". This is with respect to beef-eaters who are all Hindus and treated as the people of the second highest caste. The Newars, the most numerous of all the races in Nepal, eat buffalo flesh. If the Newars can be respectable Hindus why cannot the Nefaites be included in the Hindu fold? For a Hindu a mithune is the same as a buffalo or a chowrie cow. There are only two alternatives for the Nefaites to adopt; either they will not accept any religion and will straight away jump to swell the Communist ranks, or they will be absorbed in tle Hindu religion.*

*"Some Kabui Nagas have taken up the work of sweepers in Imphal town and this is greatly resented by other Nagas", writes Elwyn¹. During the pre-independence era the British officers who had been posted in Imphal badly needed the services of sweepers. Kabui Nagas are considered a depressed class by the rest of the Nagas themselves. The British officers with the consent of the Manipur king persuaded the Kabui Nagas of Mazu Khul, Sabit Manai and Keishamthong villages (of Tamenglong) to come down to Imphal and work as sweepers. The Kabuis were given free land and were promised handsome remuneration. They came and settled down in Imphal as sweepers of the sahibs. Today these very Nagas are the envy of the Manipuris. They are in possession of valuable land in the heart of the town and they have not agreed to sell the land to any prospective customers. The hygienic habits of the Manipuris do not need the services of sweepers hence the question of the Kabuis of Imphal being treated as untouchables does not arise at all. But certainly to propagate such false ideas among the intelligentsia is to create bad blood among the people of the state. Such utterances may not be considered treacherous but certainly they do not help India in her effort for the emotional integration of various communities and races.

1. p. 253

The British, for obvious reasons, never favoured Hinduism to prosper in the hill districts of Assam. If the locals were attracted towards this religion the officials looked upon them with disfavour. "But the event which was fraught with the most fateful consequences for the people was the introduction, or, as some will have it, the revival of Hinduism", wrote Allen in the Assam Gazetteer, an official document. Because of this official patronage Christianity did infiltrate into some hill districts and got a few converts. For instance some Lepchas (in Sikkim) have accepted the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Such instances are rare and they do not affect the religious life of the hillman. In Bhutan Christianity is not at all encouraged by the Maharaja and his administration. There only Buddhism and Hinduism flourish and every Bhutanese belongs to one or the other. Nepal is a Hindu state. There are a very few Mohammedans in the valley. They are the descendants of the Kashmiris, Iranians and Turks who migrated into Nepal for trade. The people of Kumaon, Garhwal and Himachal Pradesh have all been assimilated into Hinduism and the people of the rest of the Himalayan India profess either Islam (in Ladakh) or Buddhism. The religious problems of the eastern hills are entirely absent from the central and western Himalayas.

1. Assam District Gazetteer. Volume IX Naga Hills and Manipur by Allen (1905) p. 13

CHAPTER VII

Administration of Border Areas

. . . .

"It is the common people that benefit most from good administration and suffer most from bad administration. Good administration is therefore a popular interest"

-Ruthnaswamy

"An administrative machine is an instrument of action. It cannot act effectively if it is hamstrung by vacillation, indifference, internal dissension, or disloyalty. Other things being equal, its capacity for action varies directly with its *esprit de corps or morale*"². (Italics are mine)

-Leonard D. White

"Locals do not co-operate. I do not get a servant even. My wife has to do the cooking, cleaning etc. in the house. She has to look after our children as well", dejectedly said an officer of the Indian Frontier Administrative Service (IFAS). He was incharge of a sub-division in one of the disturbed areas.

"Get a servant from your place", said I.

"That is what I am thinking. But what can I do for the security and safety of my family? When I proceed on tour in the interior anything may happen to me. My family will be stranded then".

"Why ? The government will provide relief".

1. p. 7 2. p. 442 "But it will take some time before government relief arrives. What will happen till then ?"

"Surely there must be some fund out of which financial aid can be given to the bereaved family in an emergency. In the army we have officers' benevolent fund for the purpose. Every army officer contributes towards it".

"We are very few to raise such a fund. We are only 80 officers in the frontier cadre".

I had met other officers of the frontier cadre who also had similar anxieties. The frontier administration could have initiated such a fund which could be utilised in rendering financial aid to officers' families in an emergency. This would have relieved the administrative officers of their anxiety about the future of their families in case they suddenly and unexpectedly met their death. Probably the birth of the IFAS was premature. In due course some steps may be taken to meet such exigencies.

NON-REGULATED AREAS

The administration of the North-East Frontier Agency has been built on the foundation laid by the British; and the NEFA type of administration is said to have been introduced in the Indian Himalayan regions. Therefore, to discuss the administration of the Himalayan border areas one has to look for its roots in the British regime. The British introduced 'special type of administration' in NEFA. The Agency was a defence problem for them. It is unproductive and has no trade prospects, hence the rulers either were not interested in developing its administration to perfection, or they postponed its development till such time as NEFA became a 'Crown Colony'. Anyway they left the administration of the northeastern and eastern hills for the Nehru Government to

improve upon. Many Indian ICS officers in the Foreign Ministry were trained in the traditions of British administration in backward areas in particular. Such officers continued the work left by the British.

The British after prolonged deliberation and investigation came to the conclusion that the Burma frontier areas, if administered properly, could be very helpful in developing the Sino-Burmese trade. This trade was the motivating factor which impelled the British to introduce administrative reforms and they did bring the administration to a sufficiently advanced degree of development. Of course as imperialists their natural propensity was to disintegrate Burma so that they could play one racial group against the other to ensure the continuity of their rule. George Scott has outlined the principles of British administration in Burma. "In Burma, as elsewhere in the British Empire, the object of the ruling power has been to maintain the spirit of the native administration and to interfere as little as possible with the native executive, legal, and land systems, and with the customs and prejudices of the people. It was necessary to purify corrupt methods and to remove barbarous excrescences, but it was still more necessary to avoid any attempt at imposing a brand-new cut and dried system, whether from Great Britain or from India, inconsistent with the genius and habits of the Burmese race"1. Based on this the rulers administratively separated the tribal areas from the plains of Burma. They further subdivided the tribal areas into the Excluded and semi-Excluded territories. The area of Excluded territory was 90,222 square miles with a population of about one million, while that of the semi-Excluded regions was 23,000 square miles with a population of 370,000. The combined area of both the territories was as much as 43

1. p. 144

per cent of the total area of Burma and its population aggregated to 14 per cent of the population of the entire country.

The Excluded areas were those the inhabitants of which racially and culturally differed, according to British conception, from the rest of the people of the country, and before they could be incorporated into the political life of Burma proper a complete reversal or abandonment of tribal customs and way of life was considered necessary. As administrative and fiscal segregation of the tribals from the rest of the Burmese was the aim, therefore, the Excluded areas had to be combined into a separate unit. On the other hand the semi-Excluded areas were those the inhabitants of which had accepted the same civilisation as found among the rest of the people, and who needed time to come up to the cultural level of the Burmese. When developed the semi-Excluded areas were to be merged with Burma proper. The Karrens were included in the Excluded areas of which the Shan States were the vital part. Such were the political divisions of Burma, and the administration of the non-regulated areas was organised accordingly. Both the areas--the Excluded and semi-Excluded-were administered by the Burma Frontier Service, the members of which were appointed by the governor under terms and conditions of service framed by him. A large measure of discretion and initiative was allowed to the Burma Frontier Service personnel in administering these areas. The money required for the administration was not subjected to legislative vote. Forest reserves managed by Burma government were progressively handed over to the states concerned.

THE KARRENS

Dr. Mason, the well-known American missionary, found that the Karren legends had a prophecy to the effect that at some time in the future the white man would teach the true religion. Mason along with his wife worked hard and converted the Karrens to Christianity en masse. After this the Karrens became a separate race quite different from the Burmese and their origin was "traced" by some to the area north of Babylonia; before their migration to Burma they were supposed to have crossed the Gobi desert. They attracted more attention than any of the other races of Burma. This privilege can be attributed to the readiness with which they had embraced Christianity. The discovery of the Biblical legend and their conversion to Christianity led to Karren antagonism towards the predominance of the Burmese. Thus a conflict between the Karrens and the Burmese arose. The British intervened. The matter was settled in 1875 and the independence of the Karrens was recognised by the Ava court. Thus the Karrens formed a state of their own and the Karren State eventually became a native state of Burma under the direct control of the Crown excercised through the Governor of Burma without the intervention of the Governor General of India. Even after the independence of Burma the Karrens entertained the same hostility towards the supremacy of the Burmese as they had done before and tried hard to keep the Karren State separate from and independent: of Burma. Recently (March 1963) General Ne Win has agreed to the constitution of a separate Karren State.

THE SHAN STATES

The British organised the Shan States into a federation

and a federation fund raised. These states were not a British territory but took rank on the same footing with the native states of India. It was apparent that the intention was "to maintain unity among the states and to preserve their fiscal and administrative separation from Burma proper"¹. The federation was responsible for the central departments of public works (CPWD), forests, education, agriculture, and public welfare. The laws of Burma did not apply to the states unless specified by the governor, and the Burma High Court had no jurisdiction in the states over the indigenous population. The states did not send any representative to the Burma legislature. Smaller states were provided with superintendents to assist the chiefs who were responsible for collecting taxes and maintaining law and order. The larger states were provided with advisers who were usually the members of the Burma Frontier Service or officers of the army or of detached service. The sawbwaship (chieftainship) was ordinarily hereditary but each new ruler had to be confirmed by the British before he assumed office. No customs barrier existed and trade passed freely between the states and Burma The British did not draw an administrative line proper. isolating the non-regulated areas from the rest of Burma and free intercourse existed between the Excluded or semi-Excluded people and the Burmese.

DEMOCRATIC REFORMS

After the independence of Burma reforms were introduced in the administration of the non-regulated areas. The governor was nominated by the centre. For administrative purposes he was assisted by councillors one councillor from the Shan States and his three deputies

^{1.} Christian John Le Roy. p. 108

represented the Chins, Kachins and Karrens. In the Centre the Upper House consisted of 125 members of whom the Shans were 25, Kachins 12, Chins 2, Karrenis (Red) 3, Karrens 24 and 53 seats were reserved for the members of the remaining territories. The Lower House consisted of 250 members and the membership from the non-regulated areas was fixed on population basis. The Shan States were administered by the Shan States Council consisting of 25 members of the Upper House and all the members of the Lower House. The Chairman of the Council was elected and he had the same functions as those of the governor of a province. The Burma Frontier Service personnel continued to perform the same functions as before—advisers in larger states, deputy commissioners and assistant superintendents in the smaller states.

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In India also the non-regulated areas were divided into the Excluded and semi-Excluded areas. Previously the Naga Hill Tuensang Area (NHTA) was a part of the semi-Excluded area, but now it is called 'Nagaland'. This new state is quite a different proposition; the Governor of Assam, in addition to his duties administers the new state. He is assisted by a 45 man advisory body (acting as a Provincial Cabinet). On the executive side he has his own advisers and Political Officers. These high officials are generally the members of the Indian Administrative Frontier Service and they have ample scope for exercising their discretion and initiative for the welfare of the state. The Political Officer of the district is assisted by health, education and agriculture experts who have their own organisations for professional guidance. Forest reserves are controlled by the Assam government, but with an increasing degree of control by the Nagaland state. Construction of roads and buildings remains under the Central Public Works Department. The Government of India maintained that this administrative set-up was to continue up to 1970 when the position for future political reforms was to be reviewed. The intention was that the advisory body of Nagaland would be transformed into a state legislature. The introduction of reforms was accelerated and Nagaland was given the full-fledged status of the sixteenth state of India on the Ist January, 1964. Thus the Government of India redeemed its pledge and achieved the aim of granting the state status to Nagaland. Though Government of India's action was premature yet the country hailed it as a good augury for the new state itself.

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The Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit and the Tirap Frontier Divisions are the Excluded areas. They have been organised into an agency named the North-East Frontier Agency. The Agency is an independent administrative unit under the Government of India (Foreign Ministry). The Governor of Assam, acting as the representative of the President, administers the Agency. He is assisted by an adviser now from the IFAS cadre. In turn the adviser to the Governor is assisted by many specialist advisers, each having his own deputies and clerical staff, forming a formidable and impressive secretariate at Shillong. At the divisional level the Political Officer is the head of the division. He is assisted by specialists who professionally come under the control of their own superiors at the Shillong headquarters, otherwise for administrative purposes they

are under the local Political Officer. Each division has its sub-divisions and each of the latter has its areas supervised by Assistant Political Officers and area superintendents.

Indian laws do not apply in NEFA and the Indian High Court has no jurisdiction over the Nefaites. The law adviser at Shillong is framing a separate code of laws for the North-East Frontier Agency. In NEFA divisions the Political Officers exercise judicial powers. They are assisted by local interpreters. If the Political Officer of a division is not well conversant with local dialects his judgement is liable to be influenced by the interpreter's word. A convict with a prison sentence is at present sent to a jail outside the Agency. This system is not liked by the so-called tribal sympathisers. Therefore, attempts are being made to reduce the rigours of the system to the minimum. Further, punishments are lenient and local jails are being constructed within the Agency itself. One such jail is located in the Lohit Frontier Division. The money required for administering the Agency is not subject to legislative vote. NEFA is represented in the Indian Parliament by S. C. Jamir and D. Ering, both being nominated members.

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Although NEFA is constitutionally a part of Assam, yet its administration is conducted on lines different from those of Assam. Its educational system completely differs from that of the main state (Assam). Its laws when fully compiled will not be in consonance with those of the state. Besides, all the administrative departments are being expensively expanded and Assam will not be able to foot the bill. All these innovations point to the fact that NEFA divisions may form a federation independent of Assam. Will the Assamese tolerate it? Wherefrom will the expenses required for the running of the federation come? NEFA is sparsely populated and because of shifting cultivation its soil has mostly been deprived of its fertility. Its rocks are geologically new and are not likely to yield mineral wealth. Therefore, the NEFA federation will be a deficit area incapable of supporting its own administration. It will be a drain on India. Nagaland is already a financial worry and the addition of the prospective NEFA federation will economically tax the country.

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The British in spite of the past history of the people who had been equal partners in the political, social and cultural life of the Assamese, segregated them from their countrymen. Trail, the commissioner for the Kumaon division in 1810, found the spirit of clanship amongst the Kumaonis and Garhwalis. He ascribes these feelings "to the state of government that, at one time, existed in these hills, when every perguna and sub-division formed a separate and independent principality". In these parts the British organised the people into two districts and brought about unity among the two groups of pergunas. The rulers further strengthened the tie by amalgamating the two districts into a common division-the Kumaon division of the United Provinces. In NEFA the British did just the opposite. Here they erected an artificial barrier—the Inner Line—and segregated the locals from the main body of the Assamese. Because of the difficulty of terrain the tribal groups were naturally isolated among themselves; each group separated from the other, for 1. AR Vol. XVI. p. 217

instance the Noctes remained cut off from the Wanchoos because of the impenetrable forest along the banks of the Tisa river. But the Ahoms who themselves were more or less like the other tribals of Assam forced the Nefaites to recognise their suzerainty or sovereignty, as the circumstances permitted, and in spite of the terrain difficulties brought political unity in Assam. The British deliberately split the unity of Assam.

After India's independence reasons were offered to explain away the ignorance and lack of political education amongst the tribals of the Agency, and the plainsmen were blamed for their apathy towards the tribals. "One of the reasons was that the city people were a little afraid to leave their familiar haunts and go into the mountains" (A good sermon for small children !) And it was also officially recognised that artificial barriers segregated the people and disabled them from making material and cultural progress ; and nothing was done to alleviate their backwardness. On the contrary stricter rules were framed in 1954 to complete the segregation of the tribal people from the Assamese. 1954 was the year when the India-China political relations started entering the crucial phase of the frontier policy and this historical fact (or the caprice of vested interests) might have something to do with the tightening of the 'Inner Line Regulations' which prohibited the entry of Indians into NEFA. Defence of the area was the excuse for re-emphasising the prohibitions embodied in the 'Inner Line Regulations'certainly an imperialistic tendency. However, the administrative line drawn was far to the south of the crest of the mountain to be defended on the Indo-Tibetan frontier. Instead of creating conditions for the free mixing of the people every step was taken to create a feeling of 1. Jawaharlal's speeches 1949-1953. p. 43

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aloofness among the Nefaites. It is universally recognised that the hillman has a distrust of the plainsman; this fact was exploited to the full. Nowhere else in India such measures had been undertaken to isolate the hillmen from the plainsmen as in NEFA. The entire administrative machinery was directed to effect the emotional integration of the tribals with the rest of the country; this ideology presupposes a gulf between the Nefaites and plainsmen. The administration may achieve its aim in future when the NEFA federation is formed and the Nefaites have fairly advanced to realise the importance of co-operation with their neighbours, but at present fissiparous tendencies are raising their head in the dark recesses of the NEFA divisions.

PRINCIPLES OF ADMINISTRATION

The administration (during the British regime) of the Excluded areas was based on the maxim of 'leading the simple to the complicated by stages'. The territories had not arrived at the start-line even, hence there was no question for anybody to run the race. There was no desire for developing the people and the so-called 'simple machinery of administration' stayed. 'The people were best governed when they were least governed' was a favourite slogan of the imperialists and it suited the occasion because the British as foreign exploiters of colonials wanted political tranquillity in the frontier areas. They did not spend much on the administration of NEFA and did not consider it necessary to bring its expenditure before the Indian Legislature. Probably in the latter step the rulers were not wrong. In fact in border areas, after accepting Tibet as a part of Greater China, this will always be justified.

SEGREGATION WITHIN SEGREGATION

Further, the British made a distinction between Indian administrators and European administrators. They not only differentiated one tribal group from the other but also created this imperialistic proclivity among the administrators themselves. Thus the seed of disintegration was certainly a germinating one. Besides, the rulers took care not to post any Indian official of rank to administer these backward areas. The monopoly of administering the backward areas was reserved for the British or at best the Europeans. These foreign rulers availed every opportunity to create hatred amongst the tribals against their own country and countrymen forgetting that neither NHTA nor NEFA could ever be linked with England so different racially and so far situated. They meant to inculcate in each separate unit loyalty for the British Crown. After India's independence the policy of segregation remained in force and was even strengthened. In the meantime the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) was created. Already there was a split based on professional jealousies between the ICS and the IAS cadres ; it was further aggravated by the creation of this new service-the Indian Foreign Service-and to add to this the Indian Frontier Administrative Service was brought into being. Thus political disintegration (the segregation of backward areas from the rest of India) led to the disintegration of the administrative services themselves. The British had the experience of colonial administration behind them and while stationed in India or in her non-regulated areas they ruled as seasoned administrators. If some of the British officers were given wider administrative powers they proved generally worthy of such a trust. On the other hand the Indians are new to the profession and there are intelligent as well as mediocre government servants, as is the case in every part of the world; but in India today the latter outnumber the former. In fact the majority of the lower staff is just mediocre*. When such people are given unbridled powers they are bound to feel extraordinarily elated. In their zeal they are liable to over-play their parts. In one of the NEFA divisions I requested the Divisional Research Officer to lend me the book No Passport to Tibet by F. M. Bailey. I was told in the presence of two Assistant Political Officers that the book was a 'confidential' document. In spite of the APOs' assurance that the book was a non-official priced publication for open sale, I was denied the right of reading it within the boundary of the forbidden land. Stupid secrecy is a sure sign of inadequacy and inefficiency.

In other border areas the most obvious thing that strikes a stranger is the security arrangement. The deputy commissioners of border districts have been delegated the powers of Deputy Inspector General of Police and in turn they have redelegated the police powers to their subordinates; the provincial security arrangements have been superimposed upon by local ones. At the top of it there is the Central Bureau of Intelligence working side by side with these two. Thus the provincial, the central and the local police constitute a formidable network of intelligence in the border districts. Some of these security personnel assume heavy responsibility and dub anybody and everybody a suspicious character. India is а multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-denominational and multi-racial country. In the international field she is

^{*} Due to shortage of experienced officers the members of the junior staff get accelerated promotion and occupy chairs of responsibility.

committed to non-alignment. Under these circumstances an individual who does not happen to be a member of the Congress party when harassed by these persons of the security force gets confused. The visitor is identified Communist, or communalist, or linguist, or as a pro-Pakistani, or pro-American or some such thing by the security personnel with such wide powers. Thus some of the border districts have become regions of harassment for the general public. The result is that the locals have become cautious, non-communicative and non-commital. A cleavage has thus developed between the public and the official class. The locals were already segregated from the plainsmen and now they avoid contact with the local officials also. Thus there is segregation within segregation.

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If one scrutinises the NEFA administration minutely one would find that the creators of this relic of imperialism were very much impressed by the army administration which they tried to copy. By giving unlimited powers to the Political Officers and placing specialists under them the framers of administrative procedure thought that they would create a family of government officials like that of the army Instead of creating such a family of official class officers. they have created provincial cliques in the Agency. A Punjabi PO would naturally prefer a Punjabi staff and a gentleman from another part of the country would like to have his subordinates from his own part. This is but natural. Government officials' posting in far flung areas makes them home-sick and they crave for the company of men from their own provinces, if not from their villages and towns. Thus a visitor to NEFA finds that if in one division the

Assamese predominate in the local administration then in the other there are Punjabis and so on. These officers and their groups combine to form a united front only when faced with the turbulence of the locals, a natural tendency amongst foreigners. The government officials have thus become foreigners among their own countrymen. It is not that they are provincialists but they have been put in environments which force them to behave in this manner. They have become cogs in the machinery which was designed and built by foreign imperialists in a different context. The principles of army administration are laudable but it is forgotten that the army is a vast organisation and its units move from place to place. The presence, sometimes, of communal and other cliques in the army units or formations may not be denied but their nature will not be confined to a particular locality, it will have an all-India bias. Even then the presence of such groups will be spotted and soon liquidated. In brief the composition of small party groups in an army unit or formation will have territorially a wider range and their existence will be transitory. In NEFA government servants have joined the administrative service for good and the area of their functioning (on duty) is limited; probably none of the NEFA servants (from outside Assam or the surrounding hill districts) will ever get a chance to serve in his home province. Under these circumstances if he forms а provincial group it is likely to continue for a much longer time than one can imagine and prove harmful to the region. The formation of these parochial or communal groups can be minimised if a spirit of camaraderie is infused among the officials. This integration of government servants belonging to different parts of India and to different administrative cadres always separated from their home provinces and living in a closed area and working for

the emotional integration of the locals is not probable. Examples of the Chinese or the British officials who rendered yeoman's service to their respective empires may be quoted. These examples do not offer a solution for India because the very desire of ruling over an alien people may in itself be a uniting force but in India the case is different; here the administrators have to serve and not rule over their own people. Then some may quote instances of army officers. Army officers are only concerned with their own units; they have nothing to do with the emotional integration of the local population with the rest of the people. For the growth of a happy team-spirit in areas where only a few modern conveniences are available and no social life on a reasonably wide scale is possible and where the people to be administered are simple and ignorant needing personal contact with the administrators three things are essential—(1) common interest among the government servants themselves, (2) government officials to have an intimate knowledge of the people's cultural background, their social customs and habits, and (3) they should also be easily accessible. These things can be achieved if the officials are posted, preferably, to their own provinces and if that is not possible then to their own region. Such officials will be attached to the people and will have better association among themselves. Instances can be quoted to show that administrators posted to their own regions kept their areas of responsibility peaceful and very progressive.

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The basic drawback from which the framers of the frontier administrative policy suffered was their love of power and they wished jealously to guard it like the

tribals who are prone to guard their isolation. The NEFA type of administration best suited them. In this attempt for preserving personal power the framers of the policy took measures and introduced the military type of administration without its essential good points. Military organisations' striking characteristic is the use they make of formal training of large groups of men in a specified job within a specified period. The NEFA administration does not have such a system. The recruits for the NEFA service excepting the POs are raw and hail from every corner of the country. They never collectively receive any professional training for the execution of a specific job. In military organisations instructions in 'how to do it' are carried out in formal training while operational orders are generally restricted to 'what to do'. In civil administration in the absence of formal training the instructions 'how to do it' and 'what to do' are mixed up and they are left to the half-trained supervisors. In NEFA divisions the PO cannot be easily present everywhere and his instructions are conveyed to the supervisors by formal letters and chits. If there is any hitch in carrying out the instructions regarding operational orders the supervisor suspends the work and waits for further instructions; PO is the only authority who is endowed with the power of taking decisions. Thus initiative is taboo for the NEFA subordinate staff. Other differences also exist between the army and the civil procedures such as in discipline and esprit de corps. These differences are so obvious that they need not be discussed here. Without these two attributes-discipline and esprit de corps-an army becomes a mob. One can easily imagine the fissiparous tendencies prevailing in NEFA among the subordinate staff who never had the chance of cultivating either discipline or esprit de corps.

TRIBALS AND LEGISLATURE

In Burma the tribal areas were represented in both the Houses. In India Chaukham Gohain from the Lohit Frontier Division enjoyed that privilege for more than four years (up to 1961). Otherwise these areas were entirely neglected as far as their representation in the Indian Legislature was concerned. No doubt Chaukham Gohain represented the Agency in the Indian Parliament but can democracy thrive on nomination and that too on a limited scale?

PARTIALLY EXCLUDED AREAS

On the eastern frontier Manipur was a 'semi-Excluded' area. Since the lst July 1963 it has its own legislative assembly. Its territorial council was transformed into this august body. Its constitution runs parallel to that of Himachal Pradesh, another frontier state to attain statehood from the same date. In the Parliament Manipur is represented by 3 elected memberstwo in the Lok Sabha and one in the Rajya Sabha. Originally the intention was to merge Manipur in another state. Evidently the Manipuris did not agree to join another state, and formed their own. These new political concessions may usher in an era of peace and prosperity into the tract which is full of possibilities. It is hoped that the tribal population of Manipur will cooperate whole-heartedly with the Manipuris in working the new state.

BHUTAN

In Bhutan feudalism prevails. "One custom among them (Bhutanese) is remarkable and I believe peculiar to

them. When they rise to any post of honour and trust in their country they are separated from their families, and never after permitted to hold any intercourse with them, lest their attachment to their children should induce them to attempt rendering the government hereditary in their families". A plausible idea to be adopted in any country ! But in Bhutan nothing of this custom exists now; the Bhutanese themselves have forgotten it. In Bogles's days there was the Dharam Raja as the head of the state and the Deb Raja was entrusted with the administration of the country. Now instead of the Dharam Raja there is the hereditary king and the rank of the Deb Raja in the form of prime minister still continues. The King of Bhutan is assisted by the Bhutanese assembly (tsongdu) which discusses various state matters; the king makes decisions. For revenue collection the state has been divided into provinces and districts. The Penlops of Paro and Tongsa are equivalent to governors; they are nominated by the prime minister. The governor is given a chief secretary (zimpen) to assist him. The governors in turn appoint jongpens (district magistrates) and other minor government officials of lower ranks. Formerly there was no police force in the state, now militia units are being raised under the direction of the prime minister for maintaining law and order inside the country and defending the frontier against foreign invasion. India has contributed a sum of Rs. 18 crores for the construction of roads. The work is being completed with speed. The multiplication of land communications is bringing the Bhutanese nearer and nearer to India and Indians. Side by side with the development of land communications administrative reforms are also being introduced in the state. Technical and administrative experts from India 1. Markham p. 57

are reorganising the Bhutan administration. The heads of the newly created departments of agriculture, health and forests as well as the financial adviser to the Bhutan government are from India. The Maharaja's brother, Tashu Namgyal, has received training in the IAS Training School of Mussoorie. The population of Bhutan is about 850,000 and nearly all the available labour is employed on land. To meet the labour shortage Indian labour has been imported in construction works. It means Bhutan has given up its age-old isolation. This has helped Bhutan in its economic progress substantially.

During the last century the Nepalis migrated into the state and now they form about 33 per cent of the Bhutan population. Besides the Nepalis there are thousands of descendants of the Assamese and Bengali slaves. So far very little has been done for their economic improvement. The development of land communications may bring relief to these people.

SIKKIM

Sikkim like Bhutan is a feudal state. It is not so priest-controlled as the latter. Here two political parties the Sikkim National Congress and the Sikkim State Congress—are agitating for democratic reforms. By virtue of the treaty of 1950 India has assumed responsibility for Sikkim's defence, external affairs and communications. Sikkim itself is also remodelling its administration on the Indian pattern. Various government departments have been established and a chief secretary and other secretaries appointed. Militia units are being raised to defend its frontier. Sikkim occupies a strategic place in the defence of India therefore top priority has been given to road construction work here. This accelerated speed of development is changing the face of Sikkim and within a few years this small hill state will in no way be inferior to any hill district of India.

NEPAL

Nepal administratively is the most backward state in the sub-continent of India. In the Kathmandu Valley there is some semblance of administration but outside the valley the district magistrate (bara hakim) has been given wide areas and powers to rule them. In the absence of good communications even the routine administrative work remains suspended during the rainy season. Most of the frontier districts of Nepal contiguous to India are served directly or indirectly by the postal department of India. As long as the land communications of Nepal are not developed to a satisfactory extent it is no use discussing its administration. Here the adage 'the people are best governed when they are least governed' applies to the administrative conditions of Nepal in its entirety and in spite of King Mahendra's action in suspending the elected government there is tranquillity in the country. But this tranquillity or peace portends some future political upheaval.

INDIAN HILL DISTRICTS

West of Nepal are the hill districts of India: until 1959 these regions were administratively a neglected tract and the locals lived on their own. After 1947 hardly any deputy commissioner visited the frontier villages. From 1959 things have changed. Now government officials find time to trek to the interior villages and many of them even visit checkposts located at heights above 15,000 ft. During the same year (1959) these areas which were sub-divisions of a district (Pithoragarh, Chamoli and Uttarkashi) attained the designation of border districts. To accomplish the accelerated programme of development and administrative reorganisation a special type of administration has been introduced here.

The general public in India, not realising the full implications of the NEFA administration, get enamoured of that. Their admiration is probably based on oft-repeated announcements of VIPs in praise of the NEFA officials. This one-sided propaganda has influenced the public opinion and whenever something is found wanting in administration or wherever rapid implementation of the administrative decisions is required the India public voluntarily puts forward the demand for the introduction of the NEFA type of administration in the border areas. The Congress party being in constant touch with the Indian masses is a good reader of the public mind. To humour the public an administrative set-up has been introduced styled as the NEFA type. In fact the border administration in Uttarakhand, Kinnaur, Spiti and Ladakh is quite different from that of NEFA. In the first four districts what has been done is that the administrative powers have been concentrated in the hands of the chief ministers of the states concerned. The money spent on border administration is not subject to legislative vote.

The border districts are controlled by district commissioners who are also the development commissioners. The district commissioners come under an additional commissioner whose headquarters is located at the state capital. In turn the additional commissioner assists the chief secretary or the commissioner of the border districts who keeps in constant contact with the chief minister of the state. All the money to be expended

in border districts and subsidised by the Centre is handled by the chief minister who distributes the amount to border districts according to his discretion. The defence of the border areas comes under the Defence Ministry. Because of the division of responsibility there is some confusion regarding the functioning of the Intelligence Branch of the police force. The state keeps its intelligence personnel in the border districts as well as the Centre. This may be conducive to efficiency as well as disharmony. The people of these districts are so much steeped in religion and self-interest that they will be the last to accept Communism. The border people saw (before 1963) Communism functioning in Tibet every summer and they are quite familiar with both the sides of the Communist ideology. If they want to become Communist nothing can stop them from doing so. There have been alarming reports of Communist propaganda from the Indian border districts. These reports might have been true but the possibility of misrepresenting certain facts in a different light cannot be ruled out. The administration in the border areas has been boosted too long without any apparent reason. Now its test has come. The defence units have entered the area and their personnel have actually seen the conditions of land communications to be used for the maintenance of troops in the forward areas. Practically in every border district even at lower altitudes the army has taken over the work of the construction of roads. Had the civil administration carried out the constructional work efficiently this would not have happened. Coming to development work the same inefficiency is noticeable there. The officials due to political reasons sometimes are unable to implement their decisions and the developmental schemes require more money and time for their maturity. Therefore, to a layman there does not seem to be any

difference between the administration in the border areas and that in the plains.

In 1938 and then in 1941 I visited the Garhwali and Kumaoni Bhotias. They were trying to identify themselves with the Garhwalis or the Kumaonis according to their residence in the district. Again I visited them in 1951 and then in 1954. By that time they had been accepted as Garhwalis or Kumaonis. The word Bhotia was going out of use among the younger generation and some of the Bhotia youths were actually being recruited in their respective regiments of Garhwal or Kumaon. Bv 1956 the Bhotias were proud to call themselves Garhwalis or Kumaonis. In 1958 when these areas were declared as border districts they became neither a part of Garhwal nor of Kumaon. Consequently the Bhotias severed all connections with their previous compatriots and now they prefer to call themselves simaprantvasis (the border people). In these border districts former Garhwalis or Kumaonis also reside. The terms like Pithoragarhites, Chamolians, and Uttar Kashites are absurd and after the formation of the border districts the natives of these districts are not entitled to call themselves Garhwalis or Kumaonis. Thus thy are in a fix.

The Bhotias have gained prestige while the Garhwalis and the Kumaonis have lost their privileges of having a definite suffix after their names. Because of this there is an apparent cleavage between the two people—the Garhwalis or the Kumaonis and the Bhotias. Where assimilation was working there now one finds disintegration raising its ugly head.

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The same is true of the Kinnauris also. Previously they were trying to identify themselves completely with

the Rampuris. They even had marital relations with the latter and took pride in calling themselves Rampuris. After May 1, 1960 when Kinnaur became an independent district, the Kinnauris became simaprantvasis, a privileged Social contacts between the two people-the people. Kinnauris and the Rampuris—ceased and one community became strangers to the other. This feeling of separation has recently been accentuated. On June 1, 1962 the border districts have been declared as notified areas and the entry of even Indians has been restricted. Like NEFA these districts have also become a paradise for the VIPs. One assistant engineer in one of the forward areas happened to remark : "Fifty per cent of our energies are being wasted in welcoming VIPs". No doubt this measure has helped the VIPs to credit themselves with 'field service' but it has emotionally estranged the Kinnauris from the rest of the people of Mahasu district. The people of Mahasu, like foreigners have to obtain permission to visit Kinnaur. An Indian has become a foreigner in his own country ! Does it not confirm that India is a 'permit raj'? Could not the development of these border districts be accomplished without granting them the nomenclature of 'border districts'? However, a new circumstance has It is the advent appeared in Garhwal and Kumaon. of the Chinese that has re-started the integration of the border people with their hinterland neighbours. The Bhotias have stopped going to Tibet for trade. Under the force of circumstances they have to stay back throughout the year and this process will continue as long as the Chinese remain in occupation of Tibet. The Bhotias have thus to earn their living in India all the year round. It is surmised that in due course they will be absorbed by the Garhwalis and the Kumaonis. After all what is the origin of the Kumaoni or Garhwali Bhotias? Some

enterprising people detached themselves from the parent group. They took to trade with the Tibetans. Their close association with the Tibetans and dissociation from the Garhwalis or the Kumaonis made them a separate people. Now the process has been reversed; the Bhotias will return to their original group.

The last district on the Indian frontier in the west is Ladakh. Here the deputy commissioner-cum-development commissioner governs the district. He is directly responsible to the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir. The money sent by the Centre to be expended in Ladakh is handled by the chief minister. Apart from this procedure one does not see much of civil administration in Ladakh. The entire district is considered a snowbound area and hence most of the construction work is done by semi-military organisations or by the army itself. In fact with the exception of performing minor duties civilians find themselves unable to do much in Ladakh. It is strange that the Government of India has not handed over the entire administration of the district to the army authorities. There are areas like Rupshu which civilians dare not enter without an adequate escort.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

"The need to-day is to understand these people (tribals), make them understand us and thus create a bond of affection and understanding", are the words of Nehru and his words were the policy of the NEFA administration. The Nefaites could not understand their countrymen and the latter remained ignorant of the former. This was natural because each remained segregated from the other. The result was that the Nefaites could not realise that they were as good Indians as the rest of the people. Their loyalty remained confined to their village, at the most to their community. The Chinese had a clean slate to write upon and they exploited the situation to thier advantage from across the border. The evil effects of the Chinese indoctrination are being neutralised by the good work of Indian social organisations parties of which have gone to the frontier areas. If the saying 'to administer is to foresee' is not the whole administration it cannot be denied that it is the most important function of administration. The NEFA administration either failed to foresee the possibility of a Chinese invasion in the near future or if it foresaw the event it could not prepare in time to avert national humiliation. In other words the Chinese invasion of 1962 exposed the hollowness of the NEFA administration in erecting its machinery on a foundation of sand. The loss so suffered by the nation is being slowly repaired by the Indian administrative pandits. NEFA is being slowly opened up for the Assamese. It is planned that more and more Assamese officers will be given the option to serve in NEFA. Probably the same privilege may be offered to NEFA officials. In the remaining border areas rapid development of roads may effect a revolutionary change. So far however there are no signs of this. The Chinese, as long as they remain in occupation of Tibet, will always continue to infiltrate into one hill district or the other. It means with the Chinese aggression as the excuse Indians will continue to be deprived of their right of free movement in their own country.

It is further to be noted that the Chinese when withdrawing from NEFA carried back some youths of the Monpa, Monba, Khamba and Mishmi community to Peking. These youths are being imparted education in the College of International Studies there. They must be receiving a thorough training in the guerrilla warfare also. They have been in Peking for more than two years and they must be ready now for their anti-Indian activities. Besides, at the time of Jigme Dorji's murder some Bhutanese youths of Communist leanings smuggled themselves into Tibet. They also must have re-inforced the anti-Indian forces under the Chinese control. It is not an exaggeration to assume that these neo-Communists are a serious danger to the security of India.

In Bhutan wealth is concentrated in a few hands (families) and the King of Bhutan is bereft of any military defence battalion. Here the Chinese are likely to try to annihilate these moneyed families and their guerrillas may try to distribute the wealth collected among the masses of Bhutan. Thus they are very likely to gain the sympathies of the common people of Bhutan who overwhelmingly outnumber the high-caste bosses.

In NEFA Chinese agents will start the same stunt of independence as is already in action in Nagaland and Manipur. In fact this trouble has already started in the Idu Mishmi area. If India decides to fight the Chinese only in local actions it would not be surprising that our troops on account of adverse terrain and inadequate land communications may face reverse after reverse. The only hope of counteracting the impending guerrilla actions lies in taking retaliatory measures against the enemy on favourable ground and in circumstances, preferably within the Chinese occupied territory itself. It means that under such a scheme of things the liberation of Tibet cannot be ignored. If India pleads the cause of the independence of the Tibetans she will not only kindle the fire of revolt in the (Tibetan) freedom fighters' hearts but will also attain prestige in the comity of nations. Briefly NEFA and Bhutan have to reorganise their administration to meet these eventualities.

PART THREE

INVASION AND AFTER

CHAPTER VIII

The Invasion

"....the followers of the Dalai Lama resorted to armed rebellion in order to prevent the *Emancipation* of the masses of *serfs* of Tibet, whereas the Chinese Central Government helped the *serfs* who constitute 94 p. c. of the Tibetan population to win their *emancipation*".¹ (Italics are mine)

---Chou En-lai.

"I am a steadfast follower of the doctrine of non-violence, a doctrine which was first advocated, among his critical teachings by Lord Buddha (whose divine wisdom revealed the true nature of existence), and was practised in our own times by the Indian saint and leader Mahatma Gandhi. So from the very beginning I was strongly opposed to any resort to arms as a means of regaining our freedom. All my efforts through these years were spent in a search for a just and peaceful settlement with China, and I tried my best to discourage violence even at the risk of displeasing some of my own people. For nine years I managed to persuade those of my people who were still under the authority of the Tibetan government not to take to arms against the Chinese oppression, because I believed that course would be immoral and knew it would cause havoc on both sides. But in the eastern part of the country which had already been invaded, neither I nor my government had any means of communication through which we could use any influence on the people; and there they rose in revolt against the Chinese. Finally, the oppression of the invaders throughout the country became intolerable, and the patience of my people broke".²

—Dalai Lama

"Why not throw two or three b... atomic bombs over b... India", indignantly shouted a major. It happened during the week when the naval mutiny at Bombay was in progress.

1. The New Development of Friendly Relations p. 75 2. p. xiv "Why not throw five or six f... bombs over f... England ?" retorted I.

"Is it so, Johri ?" questioned the Brigade Major, a graduate from Cambridge and a wartime conscript.

From that day onwards the British officers stopped talking to me. I was the only Indian officer on the Brigade staff. I kept myself busy in the study of general books, not the London Opinion or the Lilliput. I cared not for the uncivilised behaviour of those whom destiny had placed above me. Of course I had to salute my seniors. The salute was invariably grudgingly returned with a slight nod of the head. The Brigade Major got bored. My 'devil may care' attitude annoyed him most. One day he invited me to form the fourth for a game of bridge. One of my opponents was a Lieut.-Colonel, an Anglo-Indian. Whether he made mistakes or I is beside the point, there were arguments. I paid him back in his own coin. The situation was intolerable. The party broke up. I forgot the incident and was happy as ever. Days and weeks passed. The Brigade Major's nerves remained highly strung. One day I was reading Constitutional Problems of India by Rowland Russel.

"Johri, when you get independence what will you be ?" abruptly asked the Brigade Major. He was so pleased with his questioning that he wanted to thrust his own opinion on the audience without waiting for my answer.

"I suppose you will be a commissioner", impatiently said he.

"No sir, I do not belong to that class", immediatly retorted I.

"Then how will you benefit ?" again queried the major.

"I shall command more self-respect", proudly said I.

It pleased the major. He smiled and ordered two drinks and a dinner at his basher the next day. The incident ended happily.

Indians lost this self-respect the day the Chinese hordes after breaching the Indian defence line (in Kameng) came down to Foothills, an outpost of the NEFA administration. The Indians have to retrieve this self-respect, no matter what the Communists and the so-called progressives say.

It was not a haphazard act of the Chinese that they attacked India unprovoked. The invasion was deliberate and pre-planned. It was in their scheme of things. In fact 'war' is an article of faith with the Chinese. "The means whereby a country is made prosperous are agriculture and war". The same sage, Shang Yan(338 B.C.) maintained : "A true sage, in administering a country, is able to consolidate its strength and to reduce it..... Therefore, for one who administers a country, the way in which he consolidates its strength is by making the country rich and its soldiers strong : the way in which he reduces the people's force is by attacking the country's enemies, and so encouraging the people to die for their country...... So an intelligent ruler who knows how to combine these two principles will be strong, but the country of one who does not know how to combine these two will come to be dismembered"1. Therefore, if India had not foreseen the invasion it was not China's fault ; if the Indians did not know the Chinese mentality the Chinese were not to blame. All expansionists, and barbaric expansionists at that, are likely to behave in this way. Can India forget or history forgive the intrigues at Plassey or the spoilation of Oudh? Can India forget the recent vivisection of the country and the policy which the British had adopted to achieve this sinister objective?

1. Chinese Philosophy in Classical Times by Hughes pp. 80, 82

The Chinese were and are cleverer than the British. The British after a rule of about 150 years left India, but the Chinese have been moving towards India since 250 B. C. and have not yet penetrated into the mainland of India. They have yet to come so they think. They have come to Tibet. "No threat, real or imagined, to her western borders set the Red Armies on the march. It was not a bastion but a sally-port that China gained in Tibet"¹. Tibet is a "pistol which scarcely needs to be cocked, let alone fired, to produce an influence upon India"². Various reasons have been offered by politicians and historians for the Chinese occupation of Tibet but the most potent reason now advanced by western writers is the gratification of Chinese (ancient) hunger for territorial expansion. "Many other reasons have been suggested : that the occupation of Tibet appeared to be a strategic or defensive necessity; that there were ideas of economic development or more living room; that Tibet might become a reservoir of reactionary feeling and reactionary organisations; that the zeal of newly converted Communists drove the Chinese to spread their doctrine wherever they could. Those considerations might give colour to the Chinese action and they have varying degrees of force in their own right but, it is submitted, they were no more than secondary to the main object of making good an ancient pretension", writes Richardson. What was the 'ancient pretension'? It was an ancient aspiration of the Chinese emperors to build an empire more prosperous, more expansive and more powerful than any empire the world had ever seen. Asia had seen the Mauryan Empire; the Chinese aspired to surpass all records. To achieve this aim the Chinese had to expand.

- 1. Fleming p. 309
- Fleming pp. 308-309
 pp. 188-189

One's expansion is another's contraction; China planned to expand at the cost of some one. Who was that 'some one'? It was India. India had culturally expanded from the Caspian to Cambodia and from Mongolia to Ceylon; it also penetrated into the Likiang valley¹ (of Yunnan). India had shown the way to China to expand; India had also provided the target for the Chinese to hit. Therefore, India was and is the object of China's 'ancient pretension'.

Chinese aggressive designs started taking a practical shape when Emperor Hawang Ti was ruling China in about 250 B.C. It was the period when Emperor Ashoka was reigning over a vast empire. Although Ashoka had made religion the basis of his administration he never lost an inch of his territory. "He by no means gave up his imperial ambitions, but modified them in accordance with the humanitarian ethics of Buddhism"². Ashoka aroused the jealousy of the Chinese emperors. Right from the beginning the Chinese made a three-pronged approach towards India, from the north-east, north and north-west. In the last stages the British and then the Indians widened the road for the Chinese expansionists and welcomed them to be our next-door neighbours.

In the south of China (proper) there was Yunnan comprising many Shan States. Sometimes these states combined to invade the Chinese mainland with disastrous results to the Han. The Shans were thus a terror to the Chinese. Unless the Shans were annihilated or assimilated China's ambition of invading India from the north-east and east could not be achieved. There were two hurdles to cross. Firstly, the Chinese had to protect themselves from the aggressive Shans and then annihilate them.

- 1. Goullart; p. 78
- 2. Basham; p. 54

Secondly, there was Burma between Yunnan and India which had to be obliterated as an independent nation.

To stop the Shan invasions the Chinese emperors gave their daughters to the Shan kings. Feelings softened and the Chinese were now able to intrigue and they intrigued effectively. During the tenth century the Chinese emperor plotted for the annihilation of the entire ruling family of the Shans. Consequently 800 members of the Nu-lo family, the ruling Shan family, were massacred in one night; the Nu-lo dynasty came to a sad end. Then came the Twan dynasty. The Twan kings ruled Yunnan, under the tutelage of Chinese emperors, for 350 years. They also were overthrown by Kublai Khan and the province of Yunnan was annexed to the Chinese empire. Next was Burma's turn; she had to be liquidated. It is an intervening power between India and the expanding Chinese empire. China invented excuses and invaded Burma. The attack came down up to Bhamo. The conquerors nominated a Shan prince to rule the new dominion. The Burmese Shans ruled Burma from 1369 to 1555. In the meantime the Burmese regained their strength and defeated the Shans. The Chinese again invaded Burma. The Burmese not only drove the Chinese out of their country but also successfully invaded Yunnan itself. The Burmese were driven back from Yunnan. Now it was the turn of the Chinese to invade Burma. The Burmese again succeeded in penetrating into Yunnan. This seesaw battle continued for decades. Probably the Chinese through their diplomacy and treachery would have swallowed Burma had the British not arrived on the scene. They halted the Chinese. What followed is recent history. Even today Burma is not free from the Chinese threat. If China invades India from the east it will not hesitate to occupy Burma. At present Burma under the force

of circumstances is playing the Chinese' game; Burmese socialism is a pro-Chinese slogan. Chinese' threat from India's right flank persists.

On China's west was another independent country. It had to be liquidated to invade India from the north-west. The Hans in collaboration with the Tartars invaded the Kashgharia region and occupied it. The Hans ruled it for about one thousand years. In the eighth century they were ousted by the Tibetans. From the 8th century to the 14th Turkestan changed hands between the Tibetans and the Arabs till it won its freedom. The Chinese waited patiently for an opportune moment. That moment arrived in 1757; they pounced upon the faction-torn state of Turkestan and re-established their rule. With the exception of a short period when Yaqub Beg ruled the country as an independent Mir, Turkestan continued under the heel of the Han. In 1884 the final phase-the inevitable phasearrived. Turkestan became a new province of the celestial empire; it was renamed Sinkiang. Briefly, China assimilated or 'harmonised' Turkestan. According to the Chinese a father should harmonise his son, a husband his wife, a brother his sisters, and an emperor his empire. representative of Heaven, or the Supreme "As the Emperor, he is by Divine right the Emperor of the Great Flowery land, of the Black haired people, and not that of alone, but of all nations of earth who sincerely desire to follow the ways of Heaven",1 says Andrew Wilson. China would have defaced Sinkiang but for Russia. Russia woke up to her responsibility towards Central Asia and Sinkiang became a hotbed of political intrigues.

In Tibet China met with stiff opposition. India had culturally integrated Tibet. Naturally Han kultur met with a formidable opposition in Tibet.

1. pp 10-11

[2]

Nature has cut off Tibet from China. Extensive deserts sprinkled with salt marshes and snow-covered mountains geographically and physically separated the two countries. There was hardly any direct social contact between the Tibetan and the Han by land in pre-Christian era.* In fact China had no definite knowledge of Tibet before the 7th century A. D. Chinese literature vaguely described Tibet as the country of the wild 'Kyang' tribe or a country where 'not a blade of grass grew'. On the other hand access to central Tibet from India was easy. It took only about 20 days to cross the Himalayan range to reach Lhasa by way of the Chumbi Valley. In ancient times some of the Rajput princes had penetrated into Tibet and founded kingdoms. Tibet was wedged in between Yunnan and Turkestan. China had occupied Yunnan in the east and Turkestan in the west. Tibet was the wedge between them; China planned to remove it. Before taking any further step the Chinese emperors wanted information about Tibet. In those days Tibet was as good a part of India as Assam. Alexander Cunningham calls it 'India Extra Gangam'. Chinese intelligence agents, † in the garb of scholars and pilgrims,

†Besides other pilgrims of fame, Fa-hian in the 5th, Sung-yung in the 6th and Huin Tsiang in the 7th century visited India. They carried valuable information about India back to their country. It is beyond doubt that Fa-hian's concern was always to contact government officials to get information about the country he visited. On his return to China he was given a dignified welcome and his report, though very much appreciated, was not published for the benefit of the general *Continued on page 253*

^{*}Beal mentions that five Buddhist priests from Ceylon arrived in China by the Tibetan route in 460 A. D. Firstly, this is an isolated instance of some religious zealots crossing the plateau, and secondly this adventure was undertaken in the A. Ds. and not in the B. Cs., when Tibet was unknown to the Chinese.

came to India and carried back information about the wonderland of Tibet to China. Huin Tsiang was the last eminent pilgrim from China to India. He had visited Nepal and had heard about Tibet. After Huin Tsiang's return to his country the attention of the Chinese emperors was drawn towards Tibet and its subjugation. Tibet was a stepping stone to the advance towards the Gangetic plain ; dragging India under their influence was the goal.

The history of India-China political relations may be divided into six parts—(i) from the 7th to the 9th century, (ii) from the 10th to the middle of the 17th, (iii) from the latter part of the 17th to 1792, (iv) from 1792 to 1914, (v) from 1914 to 1962, and (vi) from 1962 onwards. Creating conflicts, if they do not exist already, among the neighbouring people and supporting the dissidents against the government is the Chinese technique. The success of the dissenters is the success of the Chinese.

Concluded

public. Thus Fa-hian was a willing agent who played the game for his king and country. Sung-yung was an Indian, a Swati. He was sent to India by the queen of Wei herself (at that time China was divided into three kingdoms, Wei being the most influential). Sungyung first visited Swat, his motherland and then the surrounding countries. He came up to Peshawar. During his sojourn in the various kingdoms of North-West India he mostly contacted government officials and collected political information about this part of the subcontinent. He returned to China after three years. Though an Indian he was another agent of the Chinese empire who supplied political information about India. Regarding Huin Tsiang there is some doubt. Historians believe that Huin Tsiang had left China without seeking permission from his emperor to visit India. He was chastised, so it is said, by the emperor for this lapse. However, Huin Tsiang after his return to China was entrusted with the task of writing the accounts of his foreign travels. His accounts are said to have contained very little political information hence they were of no value to the Chinese emperor, but there is no doubt that the Chinese government used Huin Tsiang's services for the benefit of the state; Huin Tsiang supplied as much information as he could. Huin Tsiang was thus an unconscious agent of the Chinese emperor.

Chinese monarchy was abolished in 1912 after which Chinese national leaders ruled the celestial empire. Chinese expansionism since 1914 is simply the continuation of Manchu or pre-Manchu tradition. Manchu, Republican, Nationalist or People's China have followed the same lines about Tibet and all other neighbours.

After the return of Huin Tsiang to his country things started moving. The Chinese made overtures to Tibet but the latter spurned them. Chinese emperors married their daughters to the Tibetan kings, thus establishing social contacts with Tibet. In the long run the Chinese succeeded. They intrigued in the Lhasa court. During the 9th century, Long-Dar-Ma* the last king of Indian descent was murdered. Thus came the end of the Tibetan monarchy of Indian origin. The deposed dynasty divided itself into two branches; one branch proceeded to the west and ruled over Ladakh, the members of the second retraced their steps to the south contiguous to their parent country, India, and carved out kingdoms of their own. In central and northern Tibet the Amdoites (from the north) came to power. The Indian religious influence still prevailed in Tibet. This was not to the liking of the Chinese emperors; they wanted to eliminate it permanently and decisively from Tibet. Therefore, the Chinese emperors started taking an interest in the Tibetan religion; they wanted to remove the foreign influence from within. At last Kublai Khan, embraced Buddhism as a policy and not as a creed. Thus Buddhism became the religion of the empire (China); and Mongolia, which had already joined

^{*}Unfortunately Long-Dar-Ma has been depicted by the Tibetans as an incarnation of evil who tried to suppress Buddhism. For Indians he was a link between India and Tibet. Similar is the case with the 'fifth' Dalai Lama. For Tibetans the 'fifth' was their greatest leader and for Indians he was the greatest stooge of China.

the Buddhist camp and had repeatedly resisted Chinese political advances, came nearer to China. With one stone China killed two birds—Tibet was impressed by this unusual turn of events and Mongolia peacefully agreed to come under the political influence of China. This was a substantial gain for the Han. In 1368 the Mings came to power in China. They continued encouraging religious reforms (beneficial to China) in Tibet. The birth of the Ge-Lug-Pa was the result of this process. Naturally this sect had the blessings of the Chinese emperors. A conflict between the new sect and the Red Sect, which already flourished in Tibet, ensued. The followers of the latter were persecuted. The persecuted escaped to southern Tibet and the Himalayan states. Ultimately the Dalai Lama became the spiritual and temporal head of the united Tibet. In 1644, the Manchus replaced the Mings. They recognised the Dalai Lama as the undisputed God-King of Tibet. "The Dalai Lama (V) gave powerful aid to the Chinese Government by lending the weight of his great name and authority...."¹. Under the leadership of the fifth Dalai Lama the struggle for religious supremacy in southern Tibet commenced. To strengthen the Yellow Sect in the south, the seat of the Panchen Lama was created. Side by side with this attempt at bringing the remnants of the Red Sect into the Yellow fold the 'fifth'. started aggressive measures against Ladakh and Bhutan, strongholds of the Red Sect. Bhutan gave a good account of itself. Tibet attacked Bhutan five times but the Bhutanese successfully beat off every attack. In Ladakh circumstances were against the Ladakhis; they had militarily become weak. They could not drive out the Tibetan raiders from the Indus valley. The king of Ladakh asked the Great Mughal for military aid which

^{1.} Tien-Tseng Li; p. 34

was readily given by Jahangir. Mughal forces thus entered Ladakh to protect the Ladakhis from the Tibetan menace. The Mughal forces inflicted a crushing defeat on the enemy. Tibet sued for peace. The treaty of 1684 was concluded. According to this treaty the 'fifth' had to surrender eight villages to Bhutan and one to Ladakh. At the same time southern Tibet, under the persuasion of the Dalai Lama, joined the kingdom of the 'fifth'. It is noteworthy that even then the local authorities of Taklakot and Daba Dzong continued to pay tribute to Garhwal and Kumaon respectively. Thus Chinese political influence spread and Indian influence decayed throughout Tibet; the princes of Indian descent disappeared from southern Tibet. Nepal held sway in southern Tibet till the 1790s. China now acted vigorously and subjugated Nepal and claimed suzerainty over Sikkim. Bhutan escaped the aggression. With the liquidation of Nepal as an independent sovereign state the tribute paid by Daba and Taklakot to Garhwal and Kumaon also ceased. In the meantime the British entered the Central Asian politics. They were able to contract treaties and agreements of 1876, 1890, and 1893 with China about Tibet. Tibet naturally resented. The Tibetans remained antagonistic to British rapprochement. During this period Chinese influence practically disappeared from the Lhasa court. The Chinese wanted to re-assert and strengthen their hold over Tibet. Tibet's hostile attitude towards the British offered a good opportunity. The Chinese availed They manipulated things in such a way that false it. rumours* emanated from Tibet about Russian influence

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^{*}On August 2, 1902, the British Minister at Peking wired that a secret agreement between Russia and China had been concluded. The twelve-clause agreement was published in 'China Times'. Six of the important clauses are as under :---

growing in Lhasa or Russian armies marching to halt the British advance into Tibet etc. Great Britain already suffering from Russophobia was alarmed. She did not want Russian influence to penetrate into Tibet. Tibet's obstinacy in refusing to abide by the terms of Anglo-Chinese treaties and the apprehension of Russian advance forced Great Britain to take action. The British played into the hands of the Chinese and despatched the Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa in 1904. On September 7, 1904, the Lhasa Convention between Great Britain and Tibet was signed; China was not a signatory. The latter fact was a clear acknowledgement of Tibet's sovereignty; Chinese suzerainty did not appear at all in the document. In fact by the Lhasa Convention China became a foreign power and Britain became the de facto suzerain of Tibet. How it came about is difficult to say; because the British were

(Concluded)

- 1. China, conscious of her weakness, undertook to relinquish her interest in Tibet to Russia in return for Russia's support in maintaining the integrity of the Chinese empire.
- 2. Russia pledged this support, which would be forthcoming as soon as her interests in Tibet have been secured.
- 3. Russia would suppress any disturbances in the interior of China which the Chinese government found itself unable to cope with.
- 4. Russia would establish government officers in Tibet and control Tibetan affairs! China would have the right of stationing consuls in the country.
- 5. Russia would abstain from introducing Christianity into Tibet, and in the construction of railways and fortifications would avoid the 'desecration of temples and other sacred spots'.
- 6. China would be allowed to participate in mining and railway enterprises, the Chinese imports would be either duty-free or very lightly taxed.

"....it (the agreement) had so plausible an air that it was difficult to reject it, in toto, as without foundation". (Fleming p. 46). It is needless to say that the *Times*' report was totally false. In a similar manner rumours concerning Russian troop movements in Tibet and the so-called Russian agent (Dorgief) emanating from Lhasa proved false in the long run.

never seriously contemplated the possibility of establishing their protectorate over Tibet. "Even if that had not been excluded by specific undertakings to Russia, the most optimistic imperialist would have shrunk from assuming responsibility for another 2,000 miles or so of frontier enclosing over 500,000 square miles of country, mostly high, severe and unpopulated and totally lacking in communication"¹. The Chinese reacted. They manoeuvred and succeeded in concluding the 1906 Convention with the British. The Convention was signed at Calcutta; Tibet was not represented; in fact the Tibetans did not know that there was any Convention of the type at all. According to the Convention China was recognised as the suzerain of Tibet. What Great Britain had gained in 1904 she gave away to China in 1906. By this Convention Britain virtually handed over Tibet to China; China was no longer a foreign power to Tibet; she was her suzerain instead. China was not slow to exploit the advantages that accrued from the Convention. Chao Erh-feng, a Manchu general, who had already arrived in Tibet in 1905, overran southeastern and eastern Tibet in 1910 thus laying the foundation of Sikang province. The British watched the happenings in Tibet with indifference. Providence helped Tibet. The Manchus were overthrown in 1911 and immediately after the Chinese troops in Tibet revolted against their officers. The British arranged the repatriation of the Chinese soldiers through India. Tibet declared her independence in 1912. On the British side they wanted to annul the provisions of the 1906 Convention. They manoeuvred and succeeded in holding the Simla Convention in 1914. For appreciating the full significance of this Convention it is necessary to be familiar with the outlines of the Tibetan boundary as it existed prior to the Chinese acts of aggrandisement against

1. Richardson p. 104

the plateau. Tibet in 1720, before the Amban (Chinese minister) was posted in the Tibetan court included the district of Chamdo including Litang, Batang, Tachienlu in the east and south-east and Koko Nor in the north; Tachienlu and Sining were Tibetan frontier towns. The Kuen Lun and its eastern extension separated Tibet from Chinese Turkestan and China.

There were prolonged negotiations between Britain, China and Tibet before the Simla Conference was actually held. Things had been thrashed out and decisions arrived at in consonance with the different national interests. While British were keen to settle the Indo-Tibetan frontier, at the same time they were reluctant to take decisive action; their trade interests hindered them. China was categorical and firm. She wanted to expand southward to procure land for her ever-increasing population in consonance with her 'ancient pretension'. This was to be done at the cost of India. And Tibet wanted to maintain her independence which she had declared in 1912. The outcome of these conflicting motives was that (a) the McMahon Line was demarcated on the map along the crest of the highest ridge in the locality; the principle of watershed was not strictly adhered to and attempts were made to appease China-Mt. Tsari though situated south of the local watershed was included in Tibet; (b) the British confirmed the suzerainty of China over Tibet. (Great Britain and Russia had already recognised it in 1907). (c) The Outer-Inner Tibet boundary was drawn from about 20 miles east of Rima northwards thus including the district of Chamdo under the British sphere of influence. Tibet was more or less satisfied with the results. Her representative's signature confirmed her independent status; she had been treated as an equal partner with China and Britain. She did not mind recognising the

suzerainty of China because both the powers, Great Britain and China, solemnly undertook not to interfere in the internal administration of Tibet ; further, Outer Tibet being within the British sphere of influence, Tibet could ask for British military aid whenever necessity arose. The Convention was the best solution under the circumstances The British always wanted to "patch up things between Tibet and China in a way which would restore a formal connection between them, saving Chinese face but restricting Chinese control".1

China was not satisfied. China wanted Tibet to be declared 'an integral part of China'. "One concession was resisted by the Tibetans with the utmost determination. They fiercely disliked the proposed description of Tibet as an integral part of China and they finally prevailed, to the extent that this point was not mentioned in the main body of the agreement as eventually drafted but in notes which it was proposed to exchange"2. It clearly shows that the British did want to recognise Tibet as an integral part of China. China's position was peculiar. She did not want to annoy Britain and Tibet but at the same time she in consonance with her history did not want to commit herself to any permanent solution of the national frontier; she did not want to define it and make it static; she wanted to expand. Therefore, she consented to the terms of the Convention but did not ratify the "Thereupon Britain itself. Tibet Convention and announced that they regarded themselves as bound by the Convention, but that China would be debarred from enjoying the rights and privileges which it conferred on her until she signed it". The Tibetans persisted in their

- 2. Richardson p. 109 3. Fleming p. 305

^{1.} Richardson pp. 104

refusal to acknowledge China as suzerain. The British Indian Government refused to supply to Tibet a modest quantity of arms and ammunition so that she could hold own against the Chinese in the 1930s. her The Convention and all the relevant notes remained a dead letter while in practice China "reserved, in its own opinion, the right to settle with Tibet in its own time".¹ Later China did settle matters with Tibet according to her genius and national interests. In 1904 the British held the Chumbi Valley to ransom and the Chinese were forced to abide by the terms of the Lhasa Convention. In 1914 the Government of India did not hold any Tibetan territory as a security to compel the Chinese to ratify the Convention. The entire attitude of the British was half-hearted towards the Simla Convention. Later China wanted to neutralise all the benefits which Tibet and Great Britain had acquired from the Convention. While her attention was fixed on achieving this aim the world was convulsed by the two World Wars. According to Richardson Sir Anthony Eden, British Foreign Minister, (in 1943) communicated to T. V. Soong, the Chinese Foreign Minister that the British Government had always "been prepared to recognize Chinese suzerainty over Tibet only on the understanding that Tibet is regarded as autonomous"². Who was to help Tibet to maintain her autonomy?

Yuan Shih-kai who tried to proclaim himself emperor of China died in 1916. He was followed by Sun Yat-sen who died on May 30, 1925. Sun Yat-sen had formed a strong political party on modern lines. This party came to be known as the Kuomintang, the 'National People's Party', or by its initials 'KMT'. After Sun Yat-sen Chiang

^{1.} Richardson p. 116

Kai-shek assumed the leadership of 'KMT' in July 1925. Kuomintang remained in power and ruled China till it was overthrown by the Chinese Communists in 1949. Chiang thus ruled China for about 25 years with an iron hand. Therefore, he is responsible for all his actions directed towards the framing and execution of the foreign policy of China, specially that portion of the policy which vitally concerned Tibet and China. Chiang intrigued. He created a split in the Dalai Lama camp. A controversy arose between the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. The latter took refuge in Inner Tibet under Chinese protection. Tibet became weak. In 1934 the Chinese armies forced the semi-trained Tibetan army to retire. The Tibetans fell back to the west. Now Chiang was strong. He pushed the Outer-Inner Tibetan boundary to about one hundred miles east of Lhasa. According to this new alignment the Outer-Inner Tibet boundary ran from the north of Tawang and included the entire district of Chamdo in Inner Tibet. Thus Inner Tibet became contiguous to NEFA. This was not enough. Chiang did more. He organised this new territory, so-called Inner Tibet, into a Chinese province and named it Sikang. This happened in 1944 when China was supposed to have been fighting for her very survival against Japan. China's ambition was, after all, fulfilled ; Chiang succeeded in establishing a common frontier with India. Chiang had interfered with Tibet's independence in 1934 and during the the investiture ceremony of the present Dalai Lama he sent a Chinese mission to attend the function. Afterwards he declared that the mission had attended the ceremony on invitation. Thus Chiang compromised Tibet's independence. Lastly, it is a well known fact that Chiang continuously bribed the Regent, Reting Rimpoche, to bring Tibet under the Chinese sphere of influence. The

Regent revolted aganist the Dalai Lama but failed to achieve his aim. Again, when the Asian Conference was being held in Delhi in 1947, Reting Rimpoche attempted a coup d'etat with the help of the lamas of the Sera "That the Reting Rimpoche was in monastery. communication with the Chinese government and sought its support is beyond doubt ; but it was generally believed in Lhasa that Shen, who had recently returned to China, advised against the sending of aircraft to support him and that Chinese help was limited to financial support." So Chiang was thinking of bombarding Lhasa to achieve his end; but his own end came instead. Briefly Chiang tried his level best to destroy Tibet's independence. His work was made easy by the preoccupation of the Government of India elsewhere.

Immediately after the Simla Convention the First World War broke out. Great Britain diverted all her resources to the prosecution of the war. Naturally war was more important for Britain than keeping the Chinese hands off Tibet. Another factor crept in which strained Great Britain's moral resources. It was the national movement in India under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi which kept the British administrators on their toes all the time. As days passed the movement took a more serious turn for the rulers. During the 1930s it became fairly evident to Great Britain and China that within a couple of decades India would win her freedom. As a result of this awareness Britain lost interest in Tibet and the political events which were happening there. China became more and more vigilant. The expected powervacuum in the south after the British withdrawal from India revived the Chinese expansionist propensities which had been lying dormant for a long time. China aspired 1. Richardson p. 171

to swallow NEFA politically. When China was fighting the Japanese for her very survival Chiang had not lost interest in NEEA. Eventually the British agreed to relax Immediately before their hold on India. India's independence Chiang's first step towards the fulfilment of his ambition was to repudiate the Simla Convention, and to claim NEFA as Chinese territory. Chiang published political maps to that effect. He went further. He persuaded the present Dalai Lama to forward a claim to the Government of independent India for the "return" of practically the entire territory north of the Ganges to Tibet ! Richardson gives an interpretation of this act of the Dalai Lama. He says: "This was, perhaps, an attempt to test the Indian attitude to border regions where their British predecessors had, by a series of agreements, established the frontiers of India;....."1. What a test for a friendly neighbour ! However, this was Chiang ! Chiang prepared the programme for future Chinese mischief; the Chinese Communists followed it up.

In 1663, Mr. Masani, a Swatantra leader, visited Taiwan. Whether Chiang granted Masani an interview or invited him to have a friendly talk is beside the point. The important thing is that Masani met Chiang. Masani is proud of the historic meeting ! Even if it is not historic Masani is trying to make it one. During the interview Masani probably discussed the India-China boundary dispute and the future of Tibet. On his return to India he assured the Indian people that Chiang is India's friend and in case the generalissimo regained power he would settle the India–China dispute amicably. About Tibet he tried to be more convincing than the Chinese dictator himself. He declared that Chiang would restore Tibet to its pre-1950 status. Masani is going the

1. p. 174

way the others have gone. It was Chiang who repudiated the Simla Convention; it was Chiang who pushed the Outer-Inner Tibetan boundary to the west thus making China contiguous to India; it was Chiang who printed political maps showing the NEFA territory within China; and lastly it was Chiang who persuaded or influenced the present Dalai Lama to write to the Government of India to "restore" almost the entire territory north of the Ganges to Tibet.* The territory according to the Dalai Lama belonged to Tibet. Outwardly Chiang posed as a friend of India; he along with Madame Chiang Kai-shek visited India twice and sympathised with India's aspirations for achieving independence. He invited Nehru to China and proved a worthy host. What did he do afterwards? He betrayed India's faith. All of his moves were intended to exploit the power-vacuum created by the sudden withdrawal of the British from India. Chiang wanted to fill up the vacuum ; he wanted to take the place of the British ! The British came to India as traders and conquered the sub-continent by force of arms and diplomacy. Chiang manoeuvred to swallow India under the garb of friendship. That is what Chiang did. He has done it once, he will do it again if he gets a chance. Regarding granting of the same status to Tibet as she had enjoyed before 1950, Chiang is again dubious. He had repudiated Tibet's independence twice--once in 1934 and then in 1939. He had sliced off eastern Tibet

^{*} I have lived in a suburb of Dharamsala (the town where the Dalai Lama resides) for three months. I had contacts with the prominent inmates of the camp. I am convinced that the Dalai Lama's entourage is of pro-Chiang leanings. I am also convinced that either the Dalai Lama acted under duress of the Chinese dictator to forward an absurd territorial claim to the Government of India or his act was purely motivated by the desire to please Chiang. In any case the name of Chiang cannot be washed off from the doings of the Dalai Lama.

comprising the whole district of Chamdo from Tibet proper to form the Chinese province of Sikang. Even if Tibet is granted the pre-1950 status she would be under two political disadvantages-a truncated Tibet and under the tutelage of China. Tibet's independence under these limitations would be a constant headache to India. Then India would be the neighbour of a Tibet, hostile to her political interests. It is not only that, India's northeastern frontier would still be common with China; India's frontier worries would still remain. Further, Masani or the people of his way of thinking may argue that Chiang being a friend of the NATO powers may be persuaded to be reasonable. What a hope ! There is not a single Chinese of American nationality who is in sympathy with India's stand. Richardson is critical of American views and policies : "But United States policy was firmly wedded to Chiang Kai-shek, and American officials appear to have relied on Chinese sources of information and to have based their views on generalisations which were, perhaps, not very carefully checked ;" In the British camp the opinion on the current India-China border dispute is adverse to India. In fact the dispute itself has been inherited by India from the British. If the British had wanted they could have settled it with a stroke of the pen. In fact Sir Francis Younghusband did partially succeed in solving the riddle but some of his decisions favourable to Indian political interests were over-ruled by the British Government. 'Their's is the Government which victimised Sir Francis for his 1904 Expedition ; their's is the Government which handed over the Chumbi Valley to Tibet (China)'. Sir Clement Markham confirms this. Sir Francis at the request of the Tibetan chief secretary, had fixed the amount of l. p. 163

indemnity to 75 lakhs to be paid in 75 annual instalments. "As security for the indemnity and for the proper operation of the trade marts, the British were to occupy the Chumbi Valley until the indemnity had been paid (i. e. for seventy five years)". Brodrick, the Secretary of State for India, removed this clause. In Markham's opinion Brodrick's action was ill-advised. "A much more recent example of such ignorance was shown in the case of the Chumbi Valley, respecting which Sir Francis Younghusband made a well considered treaty with the ruling lamas of Tibet. This excellent clause in the treaty was disallowed and its adoption was censored at home, because Ministers were ignorant of the position and history of the Chumbi Valley, and of the race to which its inhabitants belong. They thought it was in Tibet. It had been occupied for some years by aggressive lamas, but is entirely on the Indian side of the Himalayas, wedged in between Sikkim and Bhutan, and the inhabitants are not Tibetans. This disastrous reversal of a wise and far-reaching arrangement was, in the opinion of Sir Clement Markham, detrimental to the interests of our Indian Empire".1 (Italics are mine). The British politicians may argue that Great Britain had given an undertaking to Russia that she would not occupy any portion of Tibetan territory. "The question was This also seems to be a lame excuse. whether they ran counter to any pledge we had given to Russia, and I had a private and very confidential letter from Lord Curzon written from England after an interview with Lord Lansdowne (the Foreign Secretary) saying that in Lord Lansdowne's opinion the pledge we had given to Russia not to occupy Tibet did not prevent us from occupying Chumbi Valley''2 writes Younghusband. Further Russia was preoccupied in the Russo-Japanese

- 1. Seaver p. 254
- 2. Seaver p. 252

war; she was ineffective. The British Government wanted to appease China. British commercial interests outweighed all other considerations, and Great Britain handed over the valley to Tibet (China). Later, the British would also have given Nilang (Tehri Garhwal) area to Tibet but for the latter's stupidity in refusing the generous offer in 1929. Even today the British do not support the view that the real Himalayan watershed is the boundary delimited by history and tradition. I shall refer to Lord Russel's opinion later, here I quote the opinion of an eminent British geographer : "Even where there are suitable topographic features, their selection as political boundaries might not conform to local usage. For example, on the Survey of India topographic maps the boundaries between Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet are shown to follow the crests of the Himalayan ranges, while the line recognised by the local inhabitants of the three states is the junction of the pine forests and bamboo forests which roughly coincides with 11,500 ft. contour". The statement is ambiguous. I have discussed the validity of this statement with the Sikkimese and Bhutanese officials. In fact Sikkim claims the area up to Khampa Dzong in the north and up to the Chumbi village in the east as its own territory. The Sikkimese do recognise the line joining the two types of vegetation referred to by Spate above as the Sikkim-Tibetan boundary, but according to them the line lies in the Chumbi Valley. Spate's statement creates confusion as he is not specific about the location of the line. It can lie towards Sikkim as well as towards the Chumbi Valley. Regarding Bhutan the Bhutanese are ignorant of the fine point of Spate. After all the Bhutanese the inhabitants of the southern slopes of the are Himalayas; they should know their boundary best. The

^{1.} Changing Map of Asia-Spate p. 370

Bhutanese quote the example of Kang La and Bod La; "Kang La is the watershed, but not the boundary between Bhutan and Tibet. Bod La (16,290 ft.) is the boundary"¹. Elsewhere the Bhutanese frontier has always been on the crest of the Himalayan range. Bogle in 1773 and Turner in 1783 confirmed it. Alstair Lamb, an eminent British historian, while describing the northern Kashmir boundary writes : "To the north of Kashmir across the passes of Karakoram lay Sinkiang with its Karavan cities of Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan"². He conveniently omits the name of Kuen Lun, thus creating doubts in the minds of readers about the correct alignment of the Indo-Sinkiang boundary in the Aksai Chin sector. Elsewhere he assumes that Ladakh was a Tibetan dependency-a fact which defies history. This is regarding the British who at the time of their departure from India divided the country into two making the sub-continent militarily weak for ever. As far as the Americans are concerned, I have not seen any atlas printed in America in which the India-China boundary in the Hunza and Aksai Chin areas has not been shown as 'undefined'. American geographers are definitely of the view that Indian frontiers ran (before the British era) along the southern extremity of the foothills of the Himalayas.

"Over the centuries, the limits of Tibetan and Chinese culture have spilled across the Himalaya and extended down the south slopes as far as the Terai swamps at the base of the mountains. These swamps in time have marked the traditional northern limit of Hindu culture. During the period of British rule in India, the political boundary was unilaterally pushed to the crest of the mountains, thus including the south slopes within India and its related states

- 1. Claud White p. 193 2. pp. vii & 60-61

of Nepal and Bhutan. In the area north of Assam, British and Indian maps thus show the so-called McMahon line, dating from 1914 but never ratified, whereas both Nationalist and Communist maps locate the boundary at the base and very close to the Brahmaputra. Similar disputed areas are present in Ladakh and northern Kashmir", writes Cressy in his book Asia's Land and people (p. 173).

The above is one of the books recommended for study in the Agra University vide the Agra University Text-Books and Syllabi—1964 and 1965, p. 36. Comments are unnecessary. Indian students of geography read that India is enjoying the fruits of British generosity or of imperial aggrandisement ! According to Cressy the British forcibly snatched the territory from China and now India is in possession of it ! What a travesty of facts ! The Government of India, on the basis of history, tradition and treaties, claims the crest of the Himalayan wall as the Indo-Tibetan boundary but literature recognised by the university belies what the government maintains; "the political boundary was unilaterally pushed to the crest of the mountains". Who is right, National Government or the university text-book ?

Mao replaced Chiang in 1949. He had two tasks to perform, (a) to invade, occupy and assimilate or harmonise Tibet, and (b) to dominate the southern slopes of the last highest range of the Himalayas from the Chinese side and the first from the Indian side. Mao's armies invaded Tibet in 1950 and in 1954 the Government of India officially declared that Tibet was a part of China*. There were

^{*&}quot;He (Dalai Lama) remarked that Nehru relied on the McMahon Line as the frontier of India. That was a valid agreement concluded by the British Government and Tibet. If Tibet had been deemed sovereign treaty-making state at that time, it was (Continued on page 271)

'ifs' and 'buts' in the declaration; China did not bother about such niceties. Mao's first task was accomplished with the minimum of effort. India helped China in this noble work of harmonising Tibet ! Side by side with this success Mao prepared for accomplishing the second taskthe dominating of the southern slopes of the Himalayas. The People's Republic of China negotiated with the Republic of India. China did not succeed. There were treaties and agreements which had defined the Indo-Tibetan. boundary. This boundary had been confirmed by history and local traditions. Mao could not easily ignore them. He waited patiently. Indian political leaders during this period were constantly harping on the liquidation of the relics of imperialism from India. The Indian people got excited; they demanded the liquidation of foreign pockets from India. The government had to act. Goa, Daman and Due were set free from the Portuguese rule. This provided an excuse to Pakistan to cry 'wolf, wolf' to impress its patrons that India was bent upon expanding her territorial limits.

Pakistan exhibited symptoms of hostility towards India. Indian leaders warned Pakistan of the consequences

⁽Concluded)

still the same when it was invaded by the Chinese in 1950. If the Indian Government did not agree with that, how could they continue to claim that the McMahon Line was valid? That succinct, incontrovertible statement showed up, without ever saying so, that the Indian Government was very ready to claim its rights under the treaties with Tibet which it inherited from the British but was less scrupulous about its obligation", writes Richardson. The same author commenting on the 1954 India-China Treaty writes : "So far as the status of Tibet was affected, the most important of the agreement was the reference to 'The Tibet Region of China', of the position that Tibet forms an integral part of China. That is something which no India Government had previously admitted; and in the circumstances of 1954 it amounted to the countersignature by India of the death warrant of Tibetan independence". Richardson pp. 197, 231

if she ever attacked India. China was watching. China probably thought that India was on the war path. India must not be allowed to advance further in her aggressive designs! Mao's avowed policy was to invade India to accomplish his second task, but in the process he was met with a rebuff from India, so he must have thought. He thought that India might neutralise China's gain in Tibet, the strong base for future operations against India. Apart from these self-created apprehensions China made sure that the western powers including Russia were entangled in the Cuban affair. Simultaneously India was lulled into false hopes that her officials would be taking part in negotiations for peace with their Chinese counterparts Pakistan's during the middle of October, 1962. representative in the same month was present in China to conclude the Pakistan-Sinkiang boundary treaty. From every aspect October was the most opportune month for China to strike. China struck. She struck hard when India was least prepared, when India was entertaining false hopes of coming to some understanding. Briefly India was invaded when she least expected it. The invasion came as a storm. It exhibited its fury in NEFA and Ladakh. India had grown curiously dull to realise the gravity of the situation. Her leaders continued their efforts of converting the Chinese leadership to their point of view ! A forlorn hope. Anyway she hit India below the belt.

[3]

It is said that the Brigade Commander at Se La had decided to hold on. He was the man on the spot and he knew the situation best. But he eventually acted contrary to his own decision. He as a good soldier obeyed the command of his superior commander. He did not take a calculated risk. His intellectual make-up was too rigid and inflexible to allow him to weigh the consequences of his action opposed to his earlier decision. This flexibility of thinking and manoeuvrability of action in the face of definite orders from one's superiors does not, I submit, fully mature either in the ranks or at Kharakvasla^{*}. It is nurtured in universities.

The Brigade Commander retired with his troops. The Chinese had established road-blocks on the supply line connecting Bomdi La with Singe Dzong. The Indian troops encountered seventeen such road-blocks. They

After completing the training at Kharakvasla the cadets join Academies of their option. Some join the Military Training Schools or Academies, others the Naval Establishments and the rest the Air Training Schools.

The whole scheme is laudable. But there are limitations. An Indian youth of $17\frac{1}{2}$ hardly gets a chance of being guided and taught by teachers and professors of wider education and outlook. He hardly gets opportunities to move in the society of youths of mature intellect and experience. Naturally his mental capabilities remain dormant, yet to mature. In this state he is thrown in the Defence Academy for training, the process which puts a ceiling on his mental dynamism. No doubt he becomes a good fighter and certainly a better officer in junior ranks, but he is hardly equipped to be a leader of masses of men. If the age for admission in the Kharakvasla Academy is raised by another year and a half i. e. to 19 years then the results of training and the period spent in this Academy are bound to help more in equipping the cadets for senior ranks; for proving better leaders of men. This upgrading of age may create other administrative difficulties like those of length of service for the entitlement of pension benefits etc., but they can easily be overcome.

^{*} The National Defence Academy at Kharakvasla admits Indian youths up to the age of $17\frac{1}{2}$ years. The academi runs after the West Point of the USA and jointly trains potential officers for the three services—Army, Navy and Air Force. During the training period the cadets develop comradeship, a distinct bond of friendship like that of 'School Tie', amongst themselves. Time strengthens the bond. It is rightly surmised that this comradeship familiarises them with each other's future professional limitations and difficulties. Thus it helps in combined operations.

fought hard; they removed the road-blocks and continued their retirement. They halted at Tenga Pani; they had to because this place is a defile. They were sniped. The Brigade Commander was hit by the well aimed bullet of an enemy sniper. He died. An army without a leader is a rabble. The orderly withdrawal became a rout. Many were killed yet some reached Tezpur to tell the harrowing tales of the rout.

In Kameng one infantry division is said to have taken part in the operation. Its most forward troops fought on the southern slopes of the Dhaula Ridge. They fought to reach the crest. They failed. The Chinese had already concentrated men and material behind the ridge and they had troops well dug in on the crest itself; they were dominating the Indian positions. The Indian troops fought heroically but were pushed downward towards Chutangmu. The Chinese broke the Indian defence line. The Indian troops lost heart and officers became confused. The capture of Tawang by the enemy was a question of only a couple of days. Tawang encountered a threepronged attack-from the west through the river valley, from the north through Bumla and from the east through the mountain depressions. Once the defence line was breached the holding of Tawang was impossible. The invaders immediately after breaking through the Indian forward positions rushed towards the precipice standing perpendicular over the north of the Jang bridge (13 miles south-east of Tawang). The Indian troops could not halt the Chinese advance. There was confusion resulting in However, the battalion which fought the reara rout. guard action retired to Se La. It suffered heavy casualties and some of its troops were taken prisoner by the Chinese but its substantial strength reached Se La, the base or their Brigade Headquarters. Se La could have been defended effectively for a few days, but it was abandoned to be ravaged and looted by the enemy. The next ridge to be defended against the rapidly advancing foe was that of Bomdi La. But it also fell. The Chinese then easily rolled down to the Foothills. They posed a threat to eastern India. Assam trembled.

The Kameng reverse was a good example of lack of strategical security inviting a surprise attack of the Chinese. "Where there is no strategical security, there is a strategical surprise; that is, a possibility for the enemy to attack us while we are not in a position to receive him under good conditions; a possibility for him to prevent our insufficiently protected assembly from taking place. Further, our forces as they go into action, go astray, imperil themselves by taking wrong directions, owing to lack of reconnoitring, of information, and owing to imperfectly understanding the notion of security; an idea which implies the art of acting not only securely but also surely, that is, with full knowledge of the case", wrote Marshal Foch. The armies of a nation continuously slumbering since 1947 under the influence of panchsheel opium could not escape its dulling effects. There are very few who would like to be the commanders of the armies of a country talked nothing but leaders the so-called whose 'international peace', 'shanti sena', and cultivation of every habit leading to non-violence, more so at the time of the first invasion. These leaders wanted the world to be transformed into an abode fit for sadhus and ascetics, and themselves (are said to have) practised such idiosyncracies.

A Brigade of the NEFA Corps was located in the Walong sector. Here the Divisional Commander decided to fight. The Brigade units fought effectively. The invaders employed mass tactics and wave after wave of the Chinese

1. The Principles of War; p. 232

troops (mostly Koreans) advanced and became the targets of the defenders light machine gun and medium machine gun fire. When the Indian defence line bent Walong was evacuated. The Chinese advanced up to Hayuling and later their troops were seen roaming in the foothill jungles of the Lohit Frontier Division. In this sector, in spite of innumerable natural obstacles in the smooth functioning of communication the morale of the Indian troops never sagged. Consequently there was no panic in Lohit and trade centres of north-east Assam—Kundil (old Sadiya), Tinsukhia and Dibrugarh—continued transacting their normal business.

In the western sector, the Indian troops, in spite of the difficulty of terrain, high altitude and extreme climate, gave an excellent account of themselves. Here the active front extends from Karakoram pass in the north to Hanle, a distance of more than 500 miles. Yet it was defended by only two battalion strength of the 'fighting Jats' and the 'stalwart Ahirs' reinforced by 'hardy Johnny Gorkhas'. These battalions were however split into scores of checkposts to arrest Chinese infiltration in small parties into our territory. Police duties ! Daulat Beg Oldi, a small base, had 25 forward posts. Naturally their reinforcement was also limited. The two battalion strength, engaged in police work, was pitted against a Chinese brigade in the Chip Chap valley and Galwan valley and a Chinese division (Rudok was the base) on the rest of the front. The Daulat Beg Oldi posts were surrounded by the enemy. A company strength reinforcement under 2nd.-Lieut. Gujral was despatched to strengthen the beleaguered. He successfully broke through the enemy ring and joined his company. The enemy attacked thrice. The attacks were repulsed. The invaders suffered heavy casualties. The besieged succeeded in breaking through the enemy line

and withdrew. They reached the base. Daulat Beg Oldi was abandoned.

South of the Chip Chap valley is the Galwan valley. The two valleys are separated by a watershed of high altitude. There is no track from the Chip Chap valley by which reinforcements could be sent to the Galwan valley. There was no route to the south of the latter either. The company stationed in the Galwan valley had been airdropped and was maintained by air. Here the Chinese military base was located at Samzoling on the water-head of the Galwan river. The Chinese troops could easily roll down to surround the Indian picket any moment they liked. In July 1962 the Chinese decided to come down to surround the Indian picket from three sides. The Indian garrison was, however, under orders not to provoke firing and not to open fire first. They stood the strain. They were congratulated for their restraint by Nehru himself. This artificial lull did not last long. On the 20th October the Chinese opened fire on the Indian garrison. The Indian troops could not fight for long. Overwhelming odds were against them. The Chinese inflicted casualties and took A company was sent via the hot spring to prisoners. reinforce the Galwan garrison. It managed to reach there after great difficulty but too late. The show was already In the meantime the hot spring had fallen. Now over. the problem was how to extricate the new arrivals and bring them to safety. The company commander took a risk. He followed a new track. The officer is said to have had no knowledge of this track. On his own initiative he followed the track. Fortune favours the brave; he succeeded. He brought the entire company to safety after undergoing great hardship. The story of these heroic deeds was repeated in the Pongong sector also.

The Gorkhas were manning posts on the eastern bank

of the western Pongong. The Chinese attacked the thinly held Indian posts en masse. The Indian parties under orders retired to the western shore. Spanggur met the same fate. The area had to be abandoned. The garrison retired to the high ground—the mountain ridge of which the Rezng La is the pass. There was furious fighting here. The Ahirs suffered heavy casualties but the enemy suffered even heavier. The pass had to be abandoned. Now Chushul was threatened. Light tanks and pieces of mountain and field artillery were flown to Chushul. These blasted the Chinese soldiers out of their hiding. It was a prestige battle. Chushul was saved. Major Shaitan Singh and about 110 jawans sacrificed their lives to save the prestige of the Indian Army.

Descending to Demchok, the Ladakh Militia (now Ladakh Border Scouts) fought heroically, literally to the last man. The suicidal waves of the raiders overran the platoon position. The few who survived retired to tactically advantageous positions. The battle of Demchok was fought for days and weeks. Winter arrived and the mountain passes were choked with fresh snow. As the Chinese had suddenly attacked India in a similar manner they unexpectedly announced the cease-fire and later voluntarily retired. India was aghast; the world was confounded ! According to the Chinese announcement the withdrawal should have been completed by the 1st January 1963 but it was not. Reports of isolated small parties of Chinese soldiers carrying wireless sets in the jungles of NEFA were received till much later in May. It is surmised that the remnants of the Chinese armies were deliberately left behind to watch the movements of the Indian troops in the area. However, the voluntary Chinese withdrawal set all nations thinking and guessing. Each nation interpreted the withdrawal according to its own way of thinking.

[4]

The British have been the most important third party greatly concerned about the India-China border dispute. In fact India is the inheritor of this legacy, the border controversy, from Britain. British intellectuals like Lord Bertrand Russel, the "lifetime friend of India", praised China for voluntarily withdrawing her 'victorious armies' indicating thereby her peaceful intention of helping in the maintenance of the so-called 'international peace'* !

*The Cuban affair and the Chinese invasion stirred Lord Russel the most. How he felt and acted to evoke the world conscience has been compiled into Unarmed Victory. Lord Russel has condemned the American force stationed in Europe, including England. He does not condemn the British for their colonial possession of Hong Kong but he chastises the Americans for sending their forces to England and Europe. The philosopher is jealous of the Americans! Throughout the book he has good words for Russia. Lord Russel condemns other nations for their nationalism though he himself does not escape the charge. It is in the national interest of the British that they should not annoy the Russian bear. What is England without her customer nations? It is good salesmanship to please the customer. Who does not like self-praise? Russia certainly is no exception. These reasons impelled Russel to pronounce : "I cannot think of any other instance in which a victorious army has been halted in this way by its own government. Because it has seemed to me, from Chou En-lai's letter and from my talk with the Chinese Charge' d'Affairs, that the Chinese were, in the matter of the border dispute, reasonable and temperate, I had thought it worth while to write to Chou Enlai as I had done, appealing for such magnanimous action on the part of the Chinese Government, but I was taken by surprise, as was the rest of the world, that they believed sufficiently clearly and strongly that war must be avoided to take such extreme measures, to make such a sacrifice of their gains", writes he. Russel's first premise seems faulty. Chinese forces numbering 70,000 strong had invaded Nepal in 1792. They could have overrun not only Nepal but the Indian Terai also; but they did not. They voluntarily withdrew sacrificing 'their gains' ! He continues : "The Chinese cease-fire and withdrawal strongly suggests that China is more anxious to put an end to the conflict than is India". Russel equates the invader with the invaded. "I believe that in initiating this (Continued on page 280) Some Britishers opined that China feared an attack from India against Tibet; to ward off this danger China attacked India. When China found that she was wrong she ordered her 'victorious armies' to retire ! Both of these opinions are

cease-fire without waiting for the possibility of Indian agreement to abide by the stoppage, you emphatically halted a grave situation in rapid deterioration on the Sino-Indian boundary and clearly gave evidence of the complete sincerity of your Government to resolve the differences through negotiation'', wrote Russel to Chou En-lai. Let any country grab a portion of Chinese territory and then see how China reacts? A country which grabs the territory of another country always wants to consolidate the gains; it always cries for peace. German armies when they had reached the western coast of Europe appeared very peaceful. Germany offered terms to England to negotiate. Not a single German soldier had set foot on the shores of England even then the compatriots of Lord Russel did not agree for negotiations. At that time the atomic bomb had not appeared on the scene; it had yet to come; so is the case with China at present. She will take years to manufacture one. When England a tiny little island could defy the threat of the German armed forces why should not India think of driving the Chinese bandits out of her territory ? Further, Russel keeps quiet about Tibet. If Tibet is allowed to regain her real status as it existed after the Simla Convention the controversy meets its natural death. This is the ABC of the Chinese invented border controversy. Russel ought to have known better. As long as Tibet or a portion of Tibet is under the heel of the Chinese there can be no peace in the Indo-Tibetan border areas. It is most unfortunate that Russel gives preference to his national interests and is swayed by them! On the contrary he keeps mum over the freedom of Tibet. compares the Tibetan case with that of Nagaland; thus he confuses the issue—a typical British diehard habit. He admits that Tibet declared her independence in 1911, still he does not think it fit even to write a few lines on the subject. He does not appear to bother and to investigate whether Nagaland was ever an independent state or it ever had declared its independence. Because Phizo is a Christian and the guest of a British missionary, Russel believes Phizo's credentials and puts India and China on the same footing. Let Russel depute one of his representatives (not the host of Phizo or his kind) to visit Nagaland and Tibet and let the visitor compare the social, economic, political and cultural conditions of the Nagalanders with those of the Tibetans. Even after knowing the full facts and being fully convinced that the conditions in Tibet do not entitle China to be called a civilised nation the British Lord (Continued on page 281)

in consonance with the British national policy of enhancing their commercial interests. What else could one expect from a nation of industrialists and monopolists? The British opinion no doubt flattered China.

will not be agreeable to condemn China for her barbarous behaviour towards the helpless Tibetans. British commercial interests will intervene and will not let Russel think clearly and justly. Russel in his condemnation or criticism of India has gone further. He has made confusion worse confounded by including Bhutan and Sikkim also in his discussion of the India-China dispute. He has a good word for China here too. The philosopher has completely ignored the fact that China has started claiming portions of these states as well. India believes that the British Lord is her friend. "It was indeed true that I had been a life-long friend of India. My great-greatgrandfather had been Governor General of India (and his greatgrandson, Viceroy) and when I was a little boy tales of him had seemed to me romantic and interesting. Very many years later, I was the President of India League and worked for her freedom. On the other hand, again when I was a small boy, a party of the Chinese in beautiful robes and pig tails had come to see my grandfather at Pembroke Lodge and stirred my curiosity and interest; and again, many years later, I became much interested in Chinese philosophy, especially in Chuang-tse, and after living and travelling in China for eight months I felt that I had many sympathetic Chinese friends and I greatly admire the Chinese''. The philosopher has inherited from his imperialist forefathers a patronising attitude and he is a friend of India. He admires China also. And then he sits in the chair of judgement to pronounce his obiter on the India-China political dealings. A true Briton he is ! India is already in the 'trade pocket' (she is one of the members of the British Commonwealth), and there is thus no need to worry about her. It is the Chinese who must be wooed. It is the trade interest of 70 crores or more of people which inspires Lord Russel to close his eyes to history, treaties and local traditions which have delimited the India-China boundary permanently centuries ago. He praises China the prospective customer of Britain. India is too familiar with 'her friends' and 'messiahs'. She will not falter. Russel cries for the oppressed but he would like a world goverment where bullies like the Chinese Communists would be wielding power.

Lastly Lord Russel tries to take the credit for the fact that the Chinese withdrawal was effected at his behest. Senility nurses individual vanity. Forces greater than an individual's appeal determine historic decisions. China had to wind up her aggression for good reasons. The Russians are the next-door neighbours of the Chinese. The former are as much in danger from the Hans as we Indians. What the Russians actually thought of the Chinese invasion is only known to their top leaders, but outwardly they announced that it was China's mistake to have attacked India unprovoked, but when the Chinese realised their mistake, so the Russians believed, they voluntarily withdrew to compensate for their unwarranted act. The real story may be different, because Russia became more vigilant about the integrity and security of her Asian border areas than ever before. She moved reinforcements to these border areas to defend her political interests, and she is continuing to do so even now. In September 1963 Russia accused China of distorting historically developed boundaries.

The Americans thought that China merely launched an "assault" against India. Had it been a full-scale invasion the Americans would have taken sterner action against the mainland of China from the east and south-east. As the Chinese voluntarily withdrew the question of American reprisal never arose.

Smaller nations like UAR, Ceylon, Burma, Malayasia, Indonesia, and Nepal etc. were surprised but did not express a definite opinion; they did not like to annoy either of the belligerents. Pakistan was foremost in condemning India for entertaining the idea of fighting the Chinese in the highly mountainous terrain. For Pakistan India had attacked China instead. According to the Pakistanis when China had taught a lesson to India, Mao ordered his troops to retire. Opposed to this Tunku Rehman, the President and Prime Minister of Malayasia, condemned the attack in no uncertain terms and pledged his country's unconditional support to India. Pakistan is an Islamic State and Malayasia a Muslim majority Federation. The former is hostile to India, the other is not. History has made all the difference.

More than one and a half years have elapsed since the Chinese retired from most of the Indian territory they had occupied in the 1962 push. During the period many events of political importance have occurred. Diplomatic conferences have been held and the representatives of neutral countries have visited India and China. In spite of their efforts no meeting of Indian and Chinese officials has been so far (October, 1964) convened nor has it been possible to bring the contending parties to any conference table. But sufficient material has been published for writers to guess the causes of the Chinese withdrawal with a certain degree of definiteness.

Immediately after the attack the Cuban affair was satisfactorily settled. Western powers were free to interfere in the India-China conflict. This was unfortunate to China's interests and designs. Had the Chinese continued their advance in Ladakh or in NEFA and had occupied either central Ladakh or Assam or both their lines of communications would have stretched beyond optimum point and out of control. The Americans would not have remained idle spectators. Their 7th Fleet, "The biggest striking power in history,"¹ in the east and the Marine Divisions in South-East Asia would have bombarded the Chinese lines of communications both in China and Tibet*. Chinese troops would have been stranded and starved. Mao and his gang were fully

*"At the time of the Chinese invasion of India last year, one of the aircraft carriers of the Seventh Fleet was ordered to the Bay of Bengal to help defend the Calcutta zone if the need arose.....," informs the Times of India of the 19th December, 1963. 'The Chinese withdrew because they feared that the west would retaliate'.

^{1.} Prentice-Hall; p. 123

aware of this fact. Therefore, Mao ordered his 'victorious armies' to retire. This is also certain that the Chinese troops could not continue the fighting for more than a week, the period for which they had been provided Had the circumstances forced them to wage a for. longer war they would have died like flies in the plains It is not quite correct to say that the Chinese of Assam. force withdrew because China did not want her assault to grow into a full-fledged war. It is a well-known fact that Mao is a confirmed believer in an international holocaust; in fact his hopes of building China on the ruins of the war-devastated world rest on his conviction of the inevitability of the Third World War, a war initiated by revolutionary China herself. Some historians or politicians describe this as a mad desire of involving the world in a conflagration towards the resuscitation of ancient Han glory. Therefore, it was the fear of an onslaught of the American Air Force squadrons which deterred China from taking an adventurous course and causing further damage to India. The presence of various foreign missions to gauge the amount of military aid required by India to meet China's challenge indicated the intentions of the western world at that time. These missions left China in no doubt that the West would retaliate with all its might in case China persisted in her mad course and crossed the Assam-NEFA boundary to enter the valley. China was afraid of retaliation. Her troops withdrew. She was saved from the wrath of the world powers. Lastly, how could she benefit by holding on to an undeveloped region like NEFA ? Her resources were not If equal to the task of economically developing NEFA. this surmise is correct then she has postponed the occupation of NEFA for a more opportune moment. She retains the initiative to manipulate the opportune moment.

CHAPTER IX

After the Storm

"The status of a nation is not a matter of how that nation regards itself, or even how another nation regards it : status is to be found somewhere in the relations which obtain between the nation in question and all the other nations which may affect it and which it may affect. In the second place, the status of a nation is something which changes through a process of time in relation to each of the nations concerned with it, and *the nations themselves are changing too*" (Italics are mine).

-Tien-Tseng Li

"If you do not fight this just battle You will fail in your law and in your own honour, and you will incur sin"².

—Bhagwad Gita.

"Will China attack India ?" This is the question which worries everbody specially the vested interests. They fear that the army may take over the administration of the country. Anyway this was the question asked wherever I went in western Himalayas. "Why should China attack India ?" was my query. None could give a satisfactory reply to it. Most people never tried to go deep into the question. For them the Chinese invasion was an accident. They did not know the objectives of the Chinese and even today very few are prepared to

1. p. 11

2. From Basham.

accept that China attacked India because she wanted to capture tactically dominating positions, she wanted to dominate the southern slopes of the Himalayas, the slopes of the last range on the southern edge of the Tibetan plateau from the Chinese side so that her armies could roll down into the Indian plains whenever it pleased her, she wanted to reduce the manoeuvrability of the Indian forces for ever. And she has done it, though temporarily. Wherever she was unable to do so in 1962 she did it in 1963. For instance she concentrated a brigade in the middle sector threatening Bara Hoti. The Government of India thought it wise to declare Bara Hoti as a disputed area. Thus China's objective has been achieved.

The fifth phase of China's expansionism (supra p. 253) is complete. Now she is preparing for the sixth. She need not militarily launch an attack against India. Chinese history tells us that the Chinese infiltrated into Yunnan, Sinkiang and Tibet by dubious means. They exploited or created internal conflicts ; they helped one faction against the other. When the faction supported by the Chinese won and came to power it was in fact the victory of the Han ; their future was assured. In due course they assimilated the peripheral countries into Greater China by dubious means. Why can the same tactics not be employed in India where there are opposing camps in every sphere-the ruling group and the dissidents, the pro-NATO and the Communists and so Besides, Pakistan with its so-called Azad Kashmir is on. a threat to India's integrity. China has already started flirting with Azad Kashmir leaders. Chou En-lai was in Karachi in February 1964. Field Marshal Ayub Khan held a dinner in his honour. He did not invite the president of Azad Kashmir. Next day Chou En-lai held a party and he rectified the omission by inviting the Azad

Kashmir chief. Mao's China is looking forward to the day when the pro-Chinese faction of the CPI comes to capture power in India. On that day the sixth phase will be complete. Later China's multiplying population can migrate into India as technical experts, to share the burden of the Indian labour ; they will come to India as advisers, the easiest and most lucrative jobs in the country, engineers, doctors and scientists. Slowly and gradually India will be 'harmonised'; she will become a part of the world which Mao is dreaming to build. This is the Chinese' plan, their dream, their political philosophy, their "resuscitation", their "ancient pretension" or "aspiration". Indian youth has to become aware of it. Kuomintang China is a glaring example-the general public was ignorant of the issues involved, only the top leaders were aware of the truth. The public suffered, millions were massacred and mauled; Chiang Kai-shek is still hale and hearty and kicking even today (1964). The story may be repeated in India too. There are many who are confusing the issue and misguiding the Indian public. Statements like 'a mile here or a mile there' or "this difference of a few miles can be thought of sufficient importance to be mentioned in a general discussion of differences" are misleading and mischievous if not treacherous. A couple of miles makes all the difference specially in the Himalayas where within this distance altitude sometimes falls or rises by more than 10,000 ft. The Himalayan range was the last hurdle which the Chinese wanted to cross, and they have done Now India is constantly being persuaded to forego it. 'a mile here or a mile there' for the preservation of 'international peace'. Why cannot this dictum be made applicable to China? Why cannot she go back to the 1. Bertrand Russel; p. 84

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bottom of the northern slopes of the first highest range on the Tibetan plateau from the Chinese side ? Why cannot China be told to forego 'a mile here and a mile there'? Has India alone decided to shoulder the entire responsibility of preserving 'international peace' at the cost of her honour? It may sound "bellicose" to Lord Russel but for the Indians it is a question of slavery or freedom from the dread of being dominated by the Chinese dragon. Hinduism has been commented upon adversely enough: "To die yes; this Hinduism can do; but to act, this is not of it nor from it."1 It is not Hinduism, Islam or Christianity that has to fight alone. The adherents of all these religions in the country have to fight unitedly and the fight must not be delayed. China is clever and every word of her politicians has to be weighed properly and interpreted in the light of her present as well as past history. She has already played her cards extremely well and some time back succeeded in creating impressions favourable to herself in the mind of self-interested nations*. How she did it is the question which may be answered now.

During the invasion the Chinese offered terms for negotiating the settlement of the border dispute. These terms are popularly known as 'the three points of the 24th October'. They were (i) to settle the boundary dispute through negotiation, (ii) to effect cease-fire to create a favourable atmosphere for such a conference, and (iii) China and India to withdraw 20 kilometres behind the 'line of actual control' to avoid future frontier skirmishes. India was in full agreement with the first two

* Every nation is self-interested so is India. If the self-interest of one does not injure the national interests of others it is a wholesome incentive to keep national life dynamic. But self-interest which harms others is barbaric and deserves condemnation.
1. Pringle Kennedy; p. 10

but she was sceptical about this new term-'the line of actual control'. She asked for a clarification. The clarification came. According to this clarification Mao claimed 'the line of actual control' to be the line up to which the Chinese armies had advanced in Ladakh in 1962. In the eastern theatre this imaginary line ran in such a way that the entire territory of NEFA, except the Thagla crest and the Longju pocket in its south remained within India. To a casual observer Mao made territorial concessions to India in the eastern sector. But one who is familiar with the NEFA terrain will fully appreciate the significance of the Chinese offer. These two pockets, the Thagla crest and Longju are tactically dominating positions in NEFA. In short China claimed tactically dominating positions in both the sectors. In the middle sector also there were many 'ifs' and 'buts' favourable to China. However, the Chinese further maintained that 'the line of actual control' was the line which marked the extent of the Chinese territory and also the limit of the Chinese administrative control as it existed in November 1959. In other words the Chinese repeated their inflated territorial claims which they had been advancing right from the very beginning of the dispute. The fact was that there were no Chinese troops anywhere near that fictitious line in 1959. At the same time India also had not established its police checkposts to guard these areas, though they used to be frequently patrolled in the summer months. In brief China claimed (in 1959) the Indian territory lying mostly unguarded during the winter months. After the flight of the Dalai Lama from Tibet in 1959 Indian authorities woke up to the danger. From that time they gave priority to the defence of the northern and north-eastern frontier areas. It seems that the Government of India on account of the confusing policy

of the British regime in the matter and various ambiguous statements of western statesmen, probably wanted to make sure that whatever frontier she accepted as an ad hoc arrangement was also acceptable to China. China had not defined the India-China frontier till that time. She did it then. In February 1960 the conference of Indian and Chinese officials ended. China specified its claim and defined the India-China frontier. The Government of India ordered their troops and police (in Ladakh) to move up to the frontier as defined by China. In the meantime units of the Assam Rifles guarding the McMahon Line in NEFA came under the Indian Army. Here it may be pointed out that the boundary just defined was adopted as an ad hoc arrangement; there was no question of the frontier prejudicing the Indian territorial claims in future negotiations. However, in September 1962 India completed the establishment of regular administration of her territory up to the line agreed to by the Chinese.

Now after the invasion India could not and did not agree to the new Chinese 'line of actual control', but as a friendly gesture offered to recognise it as it existed immediately before the 1962 attack started. Briefly, India was prepared to recognise the line as it existed on the 8th September 1962. From the very beginning of the controversy India had always maintained that prior to any negotiations the Chinese armies must withdraw behind the international boundary as shown in the map attached to the *Imperial Gazetteer* (1908). But this time she only required the Chinese to withdraw behind the 8th September line prior to negotiations proposed to be held for the solution of the India-China frontier dispute. It was a big concession. China did not appreciate the friendly gesture; she interpreted the conciliatory offer as India's weakness. China did not accept India's interpretation of 'the line of

actual control'as the line which existed on the 8th September 1962; she stuck to her stand that it was the line which existed in November 1959. Evidently November 1959 is an earlier date than the 8th September 1962. As a result some neutral nations were confused. Doubts arose in their mind about the bona fides of India. Thus China appeared to have won the political battle also. India stuck to her Slowly and gradually she succeeded in persuading guns. the world to appreciate the truth and the Chinese game was up. But the Chinese are not a people to be so easily outmanoeuvred in diplomacy. China vigorously renewed her efforts for winning supporters for her cause. She got a few. Indonesia and Pakistan were the prominent nations who joined the Chinese camp. The former impelled India to divert her attention to the Bay of Bengal and to further strengthen the long neglected Indian Navy. This naturally led India to take a keener interest in South-East Asian affairs. The Navy which had been neglected since independence (1947) could not be set right in a day. The process required a long period. At the same time the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean could not be left unattended. Therefore, the USA stepped in. She took over the command of the seas in this sector, and ordered her 7th Fleet stationed in the China seas to extend its control over the Indian Ocean as well. In due course the USA will probably form a separate fleet to control the Indian Ocean. The pro-American Indian politicians hailed USA's step with joy; others condemned it. India could do nothing as oceans, beyond the three-mile limit, are open for any power to move her ships in.

Pakistan posed complicated problems, both internal as well as external. She increased her armed strength on the Indio-Pakistan frontiers, thus threatening the integrity and security of her neighbour. It is rightly presumed that if Indio-Pakistan political relations deteriorate and a shooting war starts China is certain to send her armies of occupation from Tibet into the Indian plains in an attempt to complete her sixth phase of expansion. Therefore, India is not faced with a danger from China alone but from Pakistan also. The latter is determined to force India into an armed conflict. Because of the U. S. A. and U. K.—the powers handling India and Pakistan and keeping a military balance between their forces in the border areas—Pakistan may not succeed in initiating an armed conflict on the western frontier; but her hands are free to play a sinister role in the east.

Pakistan has flooded India with problems-social, economic and political--of tremendous magnitude. Pakistan authorities are encouraging landless Pakistan Muslims, the so-called Mymensinghias, to migrate into Assam, Tripura and West Bengal en masse. This exodus is not new. It started during the regime of Lord Curzon. It was deliberately planned and vigorously executed. The British continued to encourage it. After 1947 the impetus and intensity of this migration increased. Opposition parties in the Assam Assembly declared that more than nine lakhs of Mymensinghias had migrated into Assam since independence. The Government of India considered this figure as an exaggeration; at the same time it did not specifically mention its own estimate. Further, the system of census conducted by the country in 1961 was such that it is not easy for one to correctly guess the number of Mymensinghia Muslim immigrants who entered Assam after the partition. Then there are other administrative factors which make it difficul to estimate correctly the number of the new arrivals in eastern India. Under the circumstances one is forced to rely on the figures supplied by the opposition.

Swarms of Muslim immigrants from East Bengal are

concentrated in Goalpara, Kamrup, Nowgaon, Sibsagar and North Lakhimpur districts. "The Mymensinghias have increased the cereal output of Assam. The present Assamese prosperity owes much to them", said to me an Assamese Muslim at Nowgaon in June 1960. There may be some truth in the statement. The new arrivals have also substantially increased Congress votes; Congress rule is permanent and undisputed in Assam. Apart from these benefits the migration has created a serious social problem for Assam to tackle.

The Mymensinghias are quite different from any of the racial groups residing in Assam. They form a separate and distinct entity in the Assam Valley. There is practically no social contact between the Assamese and the Mymensinghias. The roots of the latter for decades to come will not implant themselves in the alien soil of Assam. In due course they are liable to develop separatist tendencies, the outcome of inferiority complex on a mass scale. This social segregation therefore may end up in further political disintegration of eastern India; the story of the partition of Bengal (of 1947) may be repeated in Assam also. It is not only that. Assam produces just enough to feed its own population. This extra burden may cause the economic structure of the state to collapse. The possibility of this economic collapse is increased by other factors discussed below.

This mirgation of the Mymensinghias will not stop. "Yet, without industrialisation, East Pakistan is a miserable, overcrowded agrarian slum"¹. Pakistan has been neglecting East Bengal since its birth in 1947 and it will continue to do so indefinitely; one cannot expect a better treatment from the dominating groups of Punjabi Muslims in the body politic of the theocratic state

1. Pakistan by Spate; p. 552

of Pakistan. Spate continues : "...., while it leaves Pakistan with a more desperate problem of adjustment of excessive numbers to land—so desperate that some Muslim migration to Assam has persisted"¹. Even today the migration continues.

India is facing multiple difficulties both within and outside the Indian states of eastern India. Within these states the Mymensinghias are ousting the indigenous population and overburdening the arable land. Naturally they are not a welcome people for the Indian nationals of Assam, West Bengal and Tripura. Complaints constantly reach the authorities about the intruders and their number. They are spotted and ordered to leave the country. Some temporarily leave while the others stay put, the latter are amalgamated with the rest of the Mymensinghia residents of India. The over-all effect of police operations results in the increase of Mymensinghia population in eastern India. This process of infiltration continues at all times. The danger is grave. When the intruders temporarily withdraw to East Pakistan they are encouraged to squeeze out Hindus from there. Every day the number of such exiles is increasing. Thus India has to provide land to the Hindu refugees and the Mymensinghia infiltraters.

The new arrivals (Mymensinghias) have permanently planted themselves on the southern fringes of the Siang, Subansiri and Kameng Frontier Divisions. The Nefaites are facing a two-pronged attack ; from the north of the Hans and from the south of the Mymensinghias. What may happen to NEFA will be interesting to watch. At present the Mymensinghia Muslims are a problem for the administration. From the security point of view they are a liability to India and an asset to Pakistan, hence to China.

1. Pakistan by Spate; p. 563

On the Indo-Pakistan frontier in the east things are very serious. The Muslim immigrants from East Bengal enter India under the protection of Pakistan Rifles. Sometimes Indian security forces detect this illegal infiltration which is being aggressively carried out. They intercept. An exchange of fire results. The danger is that one of these days the local skirmishes may flare up into a full-fledged war. The Indo-Pakistani diplomatic relations are showing signs of a complete breakdown. The Indian Commission at Rajshahi is already closed. The time is fast approaching when Pakistan may cease all diplomatic relations with India, as she did once with Afghanistan.

Things cannot go on like this indefinitely. An end to such human miseries must come and come soon. There are two apparent alternatives to end the miseries of the people of eastern India. Either India absorbs East Pakistan or the population of the latter overwhelms the Hindus and the 'heathens' of eastern India and in time to come may demand the inclusion of Assam and Tripura in East Pakistan. The first is a far fetched idea. India is already worried about the "human" side of the case; she will not entertain such "imperialistic" ideas. The second is more probable specially when the West is sympathetic towards Pakistan's economic and other difficulties, real or or invented.

Pakistan is the creation of the British. It seems that she is bent upon flouting the good will of the western powers and has decided to join the Chinese side. Somehow or the other Pakistan is at present closely connected with the India-China controversy to the detriment of Indian interests. Will she succeed in her aim in involving India in an armed conflict thus helping the Chinese' design of completing their sixth phase of expansion? It depends on the attitude adopted by the USA and Great Britain on one side and Russia on the other. Therefore, it is interesting to study the foreign policies of these nations to understand the outcome of the India-China border dispute.

[2]

During the invasion India was perplexed. She despatched alarm signals to friendly countries and, probably, requested them to be prepared to intervene and prevent the border conflict from developing into a major Her appeals were also directed to the so-called war. neutral nations. The six neutral nations which were later known as the Colombo Conference powers met in Ceylon. They framed proposals and forwarded them to India and China for approval. The Chinese leaders asked for the clarification of some of the points in the proposals. The clarification was provided. The Prime Minister of Ceylon and representatives of UAR and Indonesia visited the belligerent countries and explained every point in detail. As a result of these well-meaning efforts India accepted the proposals in toto, but China as usual, raised 'ifs' and 'buts'. In the end the Colombo proposals did not do more than expose China's real intention of sticking to her policy of aggrandisement. India and China did not come to the conference table. Nehru declared that India would go to the conference table only after the Chinese had accepted the Colombo proposals without any reservations. China was in a tight corner. Chou En-lai as a face-saving device is persuading the Colombo powers to make provision in the proposals for enabling China to negotiate with India directly. The Colombo Powers are in a fix. They cannot go back upon their word and ask India to agree to the unreasonable Chinese demand specially when China has not at all accepted their proposals. Therefore, for all intents and purposes the attempt of the powers as peace-makers has completely been nullified by the intransigence of China. Chou Enlai is trying to woo the African nations for his cause. His efforts seem to be partially succeeding. Because of the softened attitude of the African nations France has also been influenced by the change of the political atmosphere in her colonial empire. France has already recognized the People's Republic of China. This is certainly a political gain for Chou.

Unlike that of India the attitude of the western powers, including Russia, is practical and realistic. India's appeal for military aid received an encouraging and quick response from them*.

The response of the USA and her western allies was immediate and effective. Most of the surplus arms in western Europe were air-lifted to India for immediate

^{*} Bertrand Russel thinks that by inviting American military aid India has brought the controversy from the local or national stage to the international arena. The day Tibet was overrun by China in 1950, every political event occurring in Central Asia assumed international importance. Will Russia welcome China coming out of this controversy unscathed? The increasing military might of China is a menace to the security of the Russian frontiers in Asia. Further, will the USA ever like to watch unmoved the strangulation of democracy in India? Chinese armed threat to India from the north is permanent. It is not conducive to a healthy growth of democracy. In fact this threat will not let democracy thrive in India. Lastly will Great Britain ever like to see a strong and industrialised China? The former will lose a valuable market for her exports in the east. At the same time England would never like China to be crippled. A crippled China will release Russian forces from Siberia to be transferred to Europe. Therefore, how can one ignore the international importance of the outcome of the India-China controversy? In view of the importance of the controversy it was but natural for India to appeal to friendly countries for aid. The appeal was intended to avoid a nuclear war and not to invite it.

use on the Himalayan front. Along with this supply of arms and war materials came military commissions. They were to gauge the amount and duration of the military and economic aid needed by India to meet the Chinese threat. There were difficulties. The Chinese threat is neither accidental nor transitory. It is permanent. The western powers had to decide whether their aid should be for a limited period or it should enable India to stand on her own legs in matters of defence. When the British left India a power-vacuum was created in South Asia. The British could never tolerate India filling up this power-vacuum as that would have affected their commercial interests adversely. "It is also generally known that the English have from remote times diligently watched the progress of events in the whole world (in the interest of Great Britain, be it observed), and that they are always troubled and dissatisfied if fate allows any other nation to have influence over the progress of mankind. This is the policy.....of maritime and commercial powers,"¹ writes the Russian official historian as quoted by Sutherland.

The foreign policy of the USA cannot be considered apart from that of Great Britain, because the latter is constantly engaged in converting the USA to her way of thinking. Invariably in the long run she succeeds. America and England are inseparable friendly powers; one cannot flourish without the support of the other.

USA's foreign policy otherwise is clear. It is to contain the expanding Chinese Communism. It is to arrest permanently the spreading of the Chinese brand of Communism in Asia and Africa. The expansion of ideological influence in Europe is a minor problem. NATO powers have already arranged to contain it. It was the 1. p. 85

non-alignment policy of India which provided a free passage to Chinese Communism to infiltrate to the south into Tibet. America has already erected a barrier in the east and south-east of Asia. India provided a powervacuum. After the Chinese invasion India's policy to remain indifferent to the political convulsions outside the country weakened. She decided to fill up the vacuum, thus arresting the barbaric Chinese expansionism. India like China is also a potential military power. If her potentials are properly exploited and guided she is sure to become an important military power. In Britain's view India also needs to be contained. Though Britain is no longer the key power in world affairs yet her traditional diplomacy and capacity for mischief cannot be ignored. Britain does not want Russia to be strong; she would not like a strong China either; and she hates the very idea of India becoming a strong power. Because of British persuasion and insistence American aid to India may be given only for a limited period; it may cease any day. In spite of this India contracted a few deals with America. Also the coming of the American Seventh Fleet to the Indian Ocean as an effective measure to fill up the power-vacuum in the South Asian waters was not quite agreeable to India. However, so far the USA has not slackened her efforts to aid India in every way. But Pakistan is a safety valve. USA's military support openly provided to Pakistan is fraught with danger. It neutralises all the American aid extended to India. India under the circumstances cannot become a strong barrier against the spreading of Chinese Communism in the sub-continent. The Government of India, it must be noted, is, however, neither consistent nor clear about Anglo-American aid. Thus while India badly needed powerful radio transmitters to counteract Chinese propaganda in South Asia, the Government of India got

into a fiasco over Voice of America (VOA) transmitter. Similarly while joint India–USA–UK air exercises were held in the Indian skies in October–November 1963, later the Government of India became reticent over the US Seventh Fleet moving into the Indian Ocean.

If political events happening in South Asia are studied properly one cannot escape the conclusion that it is a historical necessity that India must become militarily strong; and for this historical inevitability neutralisation of Pakistan is as essential as destroying a wolf to save one's flocks. It may be that India and Pakistan join together to erect a strong defensive barrier against Chinese expansionism or India becomes so strong that Pakistan keeps quiet. It is on the backing of western powers that Pakistan is playing a dangerous game and injuring the sub-continent's safety. This game has to be stopped through the mediation of the western powers. If this fails then India has to act on her own; there are various courses open to her. There cannot be two foreign policies, one opposed to the other, functioning in the same sub-continent, the foreign policy of one has got to be in conformity with that of the other. The Kashmir dispute Pakistan to act in the manner she has been doing since 1959. But Kashmir alone will not gratify the territorial appetite of frustrated Pakistan. Her demands would go on increasing. Therefore, to waste time and energy in solving the Kashmir issue is a serious political mistake. In fact the Kashmir problem has already been solved by the Kashmiris* themselves and India is so much committed to guard Kashmir's security that she cannot retrace her

^{*}British intelligentsia has started seeing the light. For the first time a British writer, Rawson, has written : "Permanent partition, probably along the present cease-fire line, seems the only practical solution to the dispute". (p. 146)

^{1.} Toynbee; p. 189

steps when Ladakh has been invaded by the Chinese and the Kashmir Valley has become the life-line of Indian troops stationed in this district. In 1959-1960 Pakistan's territorial integrity was in danger when Chinese troops had infiltrated into northern Hunza and had built their winter barracks. According to press reports Pakistan had approached India to organise common defence against the invader. It is not known why and how this common defence was not feasible. Still Pakistan had no right to hand over 2,000 square miles of Occupied Kashmir in the north-west of Hunza to China thus making Daulat Beg Oldi, one of India's forward bases ineffective. Pakistan has given a clear indication of her future intentions. The point has been reached when the western powers have to exorcise the evil (spirit) they conjured up. The USA owing to British influence will not sever her connection with Pakistan. Russia may also be one of the reasons for this. At some time a climax may be reached. There is a great possibility that India may sever her connections with America. This is a possibility which cannot be ignored. Therefore, logically India must develop her own resources and must try to fill herself the powervacuum left as a legacy by Britain. She need not come in conflict with the USA but at the same time it is a shortsighted policy to depend entirely on that country for recouping what she has lost. It is a fact, though unpalatable to many, that Russia may continue her friendship with India, but the USA cannot be depended upon for ever. The British diplomacy will not give up its sinister policy of 'balance of power' in Asia and one day it is quite likely that the USA may also give a twist to her foreign policy so as to come in line with the British political trend. There are already signs to that effect. Pakistan is trying to bring about a reconciliation between

America and China and some of the American statesmen have started exploring the possibilities of contacting China for trade. That is why America is continuing her supply of aircraft to Pakistan, the latest ally of China. These are the considerations which might be weighing heavily on the minds of Indian administrators and statesmen; these might be the reasons which are slowly driving India towards the Russian camp. The existence of a militarily strong Pakistan is a reminder to every Indian of the West's duplicity in Asian political affairs. The West, therefore, has to decide once for all whether it wants to arrest the growth of Chinese Communism in Asia or not. If it prefers the former alternative then it must be realised that an armed Pakistan in alliance with China is a danger to the peace of Asia and hence of the world. Whatever alternative the West chooses India has to go on increasing her military strength to prepare herself for any eventuality. For achieving this aim a strong economic base is a must. Therefore, for India the success of her Five Year Plans is as essential as the raising of army divisions for the protection of her China and Pakistan frontiers.

There is a widely prevailing view that America is not sure of Russia's intentions in Asia. It is because of this fear that the western powers are arming Pakistan to plug the gap between India and Afghanistan or Iran against the advance of Russian Communism. Firstly, Pakistan is a small country with meagre natural resources ; as such she can never stop the Russian tide if Russia decides to advance towards Pakistan. Secondly, Russia is herself pre-occupied with the Chinese in extending her sphere of influence in Asia ; she has to hold the territory which she acquired from the 15th to the 19th century. Therefore, China is an effective check to the revival of Russian expansionism. To arm Pakistan for containing Russia is a lame excuse. In practice this diplomatic manoeuvre and military aid arrest the growth of democracy in India and thus indirectly help China to expand southwards. Russia will not commit political suicide by joining with China in her advance towards the Himalayas.

To study further the Russian foreign policy vis-a-vis China attention should be given to China's borderland, Sinkiang. There can never be full accord between the Russians and the Chinese as to who will control it. "While the Soviet Union's objective was to incorporate Sinkiang into the territory of USSR or to make it a satellite like Outer Mongolia, the aim of the Chinese Communists was to keep it under China's sovereignty...", wrote General Sheng Shih-Ts'ai, Governor of Sinkiang from 1933 to 1943. General Sheng visited Moscow in August 1938. While in the USSR capital he met Stalin thrice. He discussed with him various topics, Sinkiang being one of them. "Our next conference gave me more opportunity to outline plans for developing Sinkiang, culturally and economically, toward the goal of a model socialist state. While my plans suggested an autonomous status for the province, at no time did I raise, nor Stalin discuss, the possibility of Sinkiang becoming an independent republic, much less attaching it to the Soviet Union. Rather the goal was in terms of carrying the ideas of socialism and progressive reforms ahead in Central Asia so that they might penetrate the important areas of the Middle East and Southeast Asia"². From the General's statement it is apparent that Russia wanted Sinkiang to veer round to her political fold; she was not interested in annexing Sinkiang to the USSR. On the other hand China was keen to keep Sinkiang under her sovereignty.

^{1.} p. 170

^{2.} p. 200

In other words Russia wanted Sinkiang to be a buffer state between her and an expanding power and that power in the later 1930s and early 1940s was Japan; Japan had already established a pro-Japanese belt all along the Russian frontier (in Asia). Russia's political ambition was obvious and on account of various reasons justifiable. On the contrary China's aim was primitive—subjugation of weaker racial groups and ruling over them. Naturally the people of Sinkiang hated the Chinese and they always looked to Russia for their liberation from the Chinese yoke.

In size Sinkiang is a large country being 650,000 square miles in area. It is sparsely populated; its population being not more than 5 millions. A bait for the Chinese colonists ! A more serious drawback from which Sinkiang suffers is its people. They are made up of as many as fourteen nationalities; Uighur being the majority community while the Chinese are an unwanted minority. The predominant religion of the people is Islam. This 'unity in diversity' can easily be exploited. China exploits the racial diversity for perpetuating her rule while Russia takes advantage of the religious affinities of the people for inciting them to revolt against the Chinese overlordship. Invariably the slogan for revolt is 'an independent Islamic state'. The country is rich in minerals specially in uranium or thorium. "...., in Communist parlance 'non-ferrous metal' is frequently used as a euphemism for uranium or thorium. Significantly, though never officially admitted by the Chinese, uranium is believed to have been discovered in Sinkiang in about 1949"¹. "Uranium is thought to exist in such vast amounts as to make Sinkiang a prime source of supply for Soviet Russia as well as

1. Prentice-Hall; p. 20 also refer pp. 152-155

China"¹, maintained Sheng. Industrial and progressive Russia is interested in the exploitation of Sinkiang's mineral wealth and also in its trade.

Sinkiang's trade prospects attracted the British also. They tried to extract as many concessions as possible from the Sinkiang rulers. There was competition between Russia and Great Britain; China, being militarily weak, remained an onlooker. She was satisfied if both-Britain and Russia-recognised her sovereignty over Sinkiang. She relied on Russian military aid for suppressing local disturbances. As a consequence the Eighth Army Regiment of USSR in addition to Russian combatant aircraft and tanks was stationed at Hami, east of Urumchi, the capital of Sinkiang, on the Peking-Moscow road. Russia was never interested in the annexation of Sinkiang. To meet the requirements of her 'forward' policy she wants Sinkiang to be a strong and united buffer state between her and China. To the Russian mind there can never be peace in the Kirghizistan-Kazakhistan tract as long as China rules over and colonises Sinkiang. Oppressed by Chinese rule thousands of Sinkiang refugees have left and are still being forced to leave Sinkiang to take refuge in Russian Turkestan. This exodus is very much encouraged by the fact that the Kirghiz and Kazakhs are of the same ethnic group as the refugees; the religion and culture of both peoples is common. The unity of Kirghizistan, Kazakhistan and Sinkiang may be in the Russian scheme of things. "The people along the Sino-Soviet frontier are all brethren. The racially related population will one day be united as citizens of the same nation. The cleavage at present is like a watermelon cut into two halves which sooner or later will again combine as single unity", maintained

^{1.} Sheng; p. 154. 2. Sheng; p. 168.

Russian officials. Sinkiang will be united with Kirghizistan, Kazakhistan under 'an independent Islamic state'. This 'single unity' would have matured earlier but for British reluctance. They did not want to instigate Indian Muslims to agitate prematurely for the formation of a similar state in India. Since then the political conditions have totally changed. Now the British in collaboration with the Americans may welcome the formation of such a state to cut India to size; in the long run this proposed Islamic state may form a federation with Kashmir (less Ladakh and Jammu) and Pakistan. This will please both Russia and Pakistan and will permanently damage the prospects of China for expansion on this side. There are already signs of this trend. Russia has started co-operating with the USA in the latter's attempt to maintain international peace. This co-operation may extend to encourage the formation of the Islamic state. It may be because of this that the West is keen to settle the Kashmir issue in Pakistan's favour. The recent (April 1964) release of Sheikh Abdulla is a pointer to and his utterances a confirmation of this (proposed) federation. The surmise is further strengthened by the obstinate attitude Pakistan is constantly displaying towards India.

China might be aware of this possibility. She may be planning to offset its effects in Sinkiang. It is because of this appreciation and political realisation that the Sinkiang-Gartok road assumes a greater importance for China; in addition to supplying Chinese army's needs in western Tibet it also provides a second supply line (via Lhasa) to Sinkiang. Secondly, China is coming closer to Pakistan for thwarting the formation of the Muslim federation. Indian administrators may not give any credence to the possibility of the western bloc manipulating the formation of this federation. But this possibility cannot entirely be ignored. India has to guard against this sinister move. Even the manoeuvres to bring about the federation are damaging to India's interests; she may have to lose the goodwill of Russia.

However, at present India's destiny seems to be closely linked with that of Russia. Both the countries are regarded as outcastes by the West and western writers ignore their literature and history so that the world does not know about the achievements of India or Russia; it is by her dogged determination that Russia is forcing the knowledge of her achievements on an unwilling audience accustomed for centuries to rejoice at the scientific attainments of Great Britain and America. Further, these countries are the adherents of the hateful policy of 'balance of power' which definitely damages India's interests. This 'balance of power' brings in China the 'flirt' who let down America to follow an independent policy. Europe (minus Russia) and America are China's friends and hence will not desert her. Chiang's role in this relationship is a temporary phase and Chiang is also a chip of the old block. In polygamy or polyandry copartners do have jealousies but such jealousies do not worry the common wife or husband as the case may be. With the West's help China is following a course with which she has been familiar for centuries, the humiliation and subjugation of her neighbours. This proclivity of the Chinese causes India and Russia to get closer. Moreover there is another factor involved in the Indo-Russian political relations which cannot be ignored easily. It is the geographical position of the two countries which draws them together. Their boundaries are not common and their interests do not clash.

They have not mixed politics with religion under whose label more blood has been shed than in battles in a conventional sense. The fear which has been instilled in our minds is that of international Communism, the ideology of Marx. Russia cannot attempt to introduce this 'ism' forcibly in India while China can. Indians who have been enjoying independence for the last seventeen years will not succumb to force. Here Russia may succeed in her mission if she continues her present foreign policy of peaceful co-existence with India. Moreover, if the Indians have decided to have Communism in their country they will have it. No power on earth can stop them from going Communist if they so choose. Lastly, will the formation of the Russo-Indian bloc please Britain ? Certainly not. But future India is more likely to march on this road leading to Russian friendship than remain in the camp dominated by Britain. If the continuance of military aid to Pakistan is an endeavour of the West to keep India away from Russia, such endeavours will hasten India's progress towards the same destiny.

(3)

The visits of foreign military missions to India at the time of the emergency had a salutary effect on India's neighbouring hill states and Burma. Sikkim and Bhutan began to co-operate whole-heartedly with India in warding off the Chinese threat. Bhutan has started imparting military training to her people. She has raised units of local militia and police for guarding her northern frontier. Her soldiers and policemen are being trained by Indian Army instructors. Bhutanese youths of upper classes are receiving training in Indian Defence Colleges and Academies to assume responsibilities as regular commissioned officers of the Bhutan army. Bhutan is also concentrating her efforts on road

construction work. Paro is already connected by a jeepable road with Phuntsholing and very shortly it will be connected with Tashigong (eastern Bhutan) and Dirang Dzong (NEFA) in the east. Her immediate need is land communications and the work is progressing at speed. Bhutan has not neglected the social and educational development of her people. Though this work needs to be accelerated yet the speed of its progress is not wholly unsatisfactory. It must be realised that a few years back Bhutan was completely an isolated country. It was cut off from Tibet by the Himalayan wall and religion (Tibetans were under the Yellow Sect government while the Bhutanese take pride in their Red Sect). In the south there stretches a 50-mile wide belt of dense tropical forests between India and Bhutan. The age-old isolation had made Bhutan a static country in every way. She will naturally take time to adapt herself to modern conditions; she will slowly but surely get in touch with modern trends prevailing in India. Sikkim is no problem. Its defence, unlike that of Bhutan, is the responsibility of India and to fulfil that India has sent her armed forces to guard the high passes of this mountain kingdom. Sikkim needs to be economically developed and the Sikkim Darbar is engaged in further uplifting the standard of living of the Sikkimese. The point of interest regarding Sikkim is that tactically the Chumbi Valley, her next-door neighbour in the east, is the most important area in the whole of the Himalayas. This fact alone increases greatly the tactical importance of Sikkim. Indian forces should be alive to this fact. In this state the Chinese have to cross comparatively lower passes. Once they cross them there remains no obstacle in their way to the Indian plains. The inevitable corollary to this is that the Silliguri-Sikkim sector has become very important.

The foothills of the Silliguri sector are quite close to the Pakistan frontier. The distance from the Pakistan frontier to the railway line connecting Assam with Bihar is hardly ten miles. It is not only that; this railway line is the only satisfactory land link connecting Assam with the rest of India. If this line falls into the hands of Pakistan-China axis the whole of eastern India will have to shift for itself till the link is re-established. A road and another railway link are being constructed to provide alternative routes to the existing railway line. The construction of the former is almost complete. The establishment of the second rail link may take some time. After the completion of these projects it will be easier for India to transport rations and war materials to the eastern theatre in larger quantities.

In Nepal the picture is as bright as in Sikkim and Bhutan. Nepal, as long as Tibet is in Chinese hands, cannot breathe freely. Her frontier is such that she cannot afford to provoke the Han. In spite of this difficulty her attitude towards India has recently been very friendly. India recognises Nepal's difficulties and Nepal those of India ; both co-operate with each other. India is taking a keener interest in completing some of the developmental projects of Nepal. The Trisuli project, in addition to the Gandaki scheme, is being executed with Indian aid. Nepal is also not lagging behind. She is helping India where such help is required. The Nepalis are coming in thousands to join the Gorkha regiments of the Indian Army. They are also working as labourers and petty officials on the supervisory staff in various construction projects (there are very few specialists in Nepal and whatever their number they are being absorbed in Nepal itself). Thus India is utilising the robust and hardy man-power of Nepal to her advantage and the latter is being financially benefited by this mutual co-operation. Nepal's sons carry back annually millions of rupees on return to their homes. As far as Nepal's defence is concerned she cannot fight China alone, nor for obvious reasons she can allow foreign troops of any country to pass through her territory. If China decides to attack Nepal she can overrun her within a very short period. Therefore, it is neither in the interest of Nepal nor of India to provoke China. India should be content if Nepal continues to progress and the standard of living of her people keeps on rising. This will counteract the Communist propaganda. Nepal's benevolent neutrality is the highest price which India can expect for her friendship and co-operation. Circumstances demand this. The presence of China in Tibet prevents Nepal from having a more friendly intercourse with India.

Burma is also a tactically sensitive area from India's defence point of view, more so at present. She is sandwiched between China and India. It is not only that. She is adjacent to the Naga Hills also. If she wishes she can clandestinely help the Naga rebels. So far Burma has maintained neutrality about the India-China controversy. It necessarily follows that India should always keep on friendly terms with the land of pagodas. The Chinese have already disturbed the northern, north-eastern and north-western border areas of India. Their attention will soon be directed to Nagaland and Burma. So far the Himalayan frontiers were sensitive but circumstances are leading to a flare up in the east as well. General Ne Win's government has failed to pacify the Burmese Communists, Red and White, and Naga hostiles may utilize the opportunity to exploit the disturbed conditions of Burma. They are already in league with the Chinese leadership. A representative of Phizo visited Peking recently (1963) and Phizo himself may be in contact with the Chinese Communists. Therefore, India naturally must concentrate on extinguishing the Naga ebullience; the sooner it is done the better for the country. At present India can do one thing; she can completely isolate the Nagalanders from the influence of foreign missionaries. It is the foreign missionaries who have kept the fire of Naga revolt burning; they seem to be guiding the movement from Pakistan and England.

Nagaland has been raised to the status of a full-fledged state of India. It is the sixteenth state of the country and if her leaders work zealously and impartially for the uplift of her masses, one day Phizo may be transformed into a different man constructive and tolerant. Phizo who once worked for the uplift of his people may again take a realistic view and may start taking an interest in the economic development of progressive Nagaland.

[4]

At the time of invasion India was heading towards disintegration. There was a split within the Congress itself; it was divided into 'left' and 'right'. This was not good for its oft-repeated policy of non-alignment. The leaders of these groups had created factions in many states e. g. Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Mysore. These fissiparous tendencies had weakened the Congress. Corruption and nepotism were the order of the day. "Finally, it is an unfortunate truth that nepotism and other forms of corruption are widespread at all levels throughout Monsoon Asia !¹ The masses were disappointed and had become unenthusiastic. The speed

1. Rawson; p. 18

of the economic development had slowed down. Ancillary ideas like basic education etc. had caused deterioration in the standard of education throughout the country. Nationalism among the people had foundered on the rocks of internationalism, liberalism, progressivism and opportunism. The Indian people were demoralised. There seemed to be no one to guide them properly in this crisis. There was a vacuum in the political leadership. This was a new thing for India, a land of 45 million people! Mahatma Gandhi had so trained his countrymen that at the time of his death there were more than a dozen leaders who could shoulder the responsibility of Prime Ministership. After independence political conditions in the country deteriorated so much that at the time of the crisis there was none who could assume the leadership of the country. Nehru appeared to be losing influence but his experience tided over the crisis and the Indian masses rallied round him. Outside the Congress the disintegrating tendencies went on raising their head. Nagaland continued to be a hotbed of political intrigues. In NEFA the people had been estranged from the country by vested interests. The Nefaites were regarded to be weak and irreconcilable to their integration into the nation. Indians had been repeatedly told that Nefaites were an isolated people and their country was dreadful. In the west of NEFA is Bhutan. The Prime Minister of Bhutan had declared that the Chinese by mistake had shown slices of Bhutan territory within China on their maps which they later amended. Besides, Bhutan had asked India for the return of her "territory" which she had forcibly annexed before the advent of the British rule in Bengal and Assam. In the west Sikkim was having internal trouble and so was Nepal. It appeared at the time that dissensions might create conditions in these countries favourable for an internal political

convulsion. Had the conditions remained disturbed either in Sikkim or in Nepal India would not have escaped from their baneful effects. In the Indian Army the position was neither good nor bad. It was what one would expect in a country where the people talked of nothing but 'international peace', 'shanti sena', 'bhoodan', 'shramdan' etc. ; where even the dacoits had been contacted for peaceful conversion to better ways of living.

In Walong the Indian troops were hailed as gallant soldiers. In the Tawang sector their senior officers were blamed for the NEFA rout. Nobody seemed to have bothered about the 'political interference' in the army administration. It is said that politicians interfered even 'in field orders'. How far it is correct one cannot say. It is a fact that the Government of India, probably in the public interest, did not publish the proceedings of the court of enquiry held to investigate the NEFA reverses. The British had equipped the Indian soldier with the 303 rifle. That very rifle was still the personal weapon of the jawan, though the British Army had replaced it with semi-automatic rifles. One British officer (of the Indian Army) had carried out researches on the semiautomatic rifle for six years at a tremendous cost. He mainly based his researches on the American rifle-30 Girand. What a waste of time and energy! At the end of six years he did get some tangible results. But he left the country quietly. It is said that at the time of his departure he despatched the 'blue print' of the proposed rifle to Pakistan. As if Pakistan could be benefited from the 'blue print' made by an inefficient and discarded British officer of the Ordnance Corps! The net result was that the Indian rifleman remained without a semi-automatic personal weapon. That 'drain pipe' the so-called 'sten gun' was the only consolation and that too was also sparingly issued to JCOs (junior commissioned officers) or NCOs(non-commissioned officers), according to the task of the individual. In the western sector the picture was very encouraging indeed. There the soldier was welcomed as a hero. "Wherever I went I was welcomed as a hero, a Napoleon who had won the entire campaign in Ladakh" sort of thing was on the lip of every officer who had taken part in the 1962 operations. "We suffered casualties but the Han got a bloody good licking" was another favourite remark of soldiers on the Ladakh front. The morale of the Indian troops remained high. Senior commanders saved the honour not only of their country but also of the officer class without whose efficiency and firmness an army becomes a mob.

This was the situation when the invasion took place; this was the position after the Chinese invaders had withdrawn; and this was the condition when Indian leaders got time to ponder over the national humiliation caused by the invasion. Circumstances made Nehru the sole leader whose shoulders were burdened with the task of guiding the ship of state through the stormy sea and bringing it safely to harbour. It was good in a way but it also had its own lessons. Anyway, Nehru did not live long after the invasion. Disillusioned and disappointed, he died on the 27th May 1964.

Nehru had been administering the country since independence and had become acquainted with every problem vis-a-vis China. He was the only leader to guide the country through the crisis which suddenly had developed in the wake of her independence. Like Chiang Kai-shek, Nehru had wielded power so long that he had made himself indispensable. He could keep unity within the Congress camp. Further, he had operated his foreign policy of non-alignment in a manner that foreign powers had begun to understand him and appreciate his point of view. He could get economic aid from both the campsthe Western Bloc and Soviet Russia. Lastly he had dealt with the treacherous Chinese for the last 17 years or more and had thoroughly acquainted himself with the diplomacy of the Han. After becoming a prey to the equivocal Chinese diplomatic correspondence he alone could become firm with the invader in the face of the opposition of nations who had become sceptical about India's bona fides. The major powers of the world had come to have faith in what Nehru said. What was objectionable in this enviable position was dormant in his undisputed leadership. 'Who after Nehru' was the question which worried the nation? This was inevitable as long as he remained at the helm of affairs. The answer at that time lay hidden in the future. Nehru's illness at Bhuvaneshwar was unfortunate for the country, but in a way it seriously shook the Congress party and the substitute seemed to have sprung naturally. The country was not worried about 'who after Nehru'. The people had realised that this question should not pose a problem for a democracy.

The first thing that the late Prime Minister did after the 1962 invasion was to accept Krishna Menon's resignation. Public opinion demanded it and Nehru had to yield. The country heaved a sigh of relief. China was disappointed; Russia kept mum; the western countries were happy. Next came the turn of K. D. Malviya. The opposition exposed a scandal regarding some funds which had been collected for the general elections. Malviya was supposed to have taken a minor part in the transaction. He had to pay the penalty and he did it quietly. He walked out of the Cabinet. Then remained Patnaik, the Chief Minister of Orissa who had through clever

moves found himself entrusted with the task of running between India and the foreign countries on important and secret errands for the Government of India. In his enthusiasm he is said to have given out that he was the future Defence Minister of India. He had also to make his exit from the State Cabinet. These leaders were the stalwarts of the 'left' wing. The so-called 'rightists' were jubilant. They had become too strong for the leader of the party to attack them frontally, but they had to go. There seemed to be impediments in the functioning of policies for establishing a 'nationalistic pattern of society'. Their exit could not be planned and executed in a straightforward manner. Some sharp but apparently innocent weapon had to be designed and employed to get rid of them from the Cabinet. Help came from the intelligent south; the weapon was forged. It was the 'Kamraj Plan'. The plan was a device cleverly invented and affectionately nurtured; it smoothly brought about the 'democratic purge'. The first victim was Patil, evidently an admirer of Nehru who had said that Nehru was the "leader of leaders". Patil had been erroneously labelled as the strongman of Maharashtra and the future aspirant for Prime Ministership. Desai was the next sacrificial horse at the altar of the Kamraj Asvamedh Yajna. Desai was an ex-deputy collector and a strong protagonist of prohibition but an utter failure in his mission. He regarded himself to be the indispensable Finance Minister, though his home state thought otherwise and he was served the notice to 'quit the Cabinet' without any prior indication to the press. It was not he alone who attached so much importance to himself, it was the USA which entertained the idea that Desai was the next man to hold the reins of administration of India. The last important personality to leave the Cabinet was

Jagjiwan Ram. He on the basis of seniority in the Congress heirarchy had claimed the deputy leadership of the party. For him seniority was the main criterion for becoming the Prime Minister. Whatever portfolio Jagjiwan Ram had held during his tenure of ministership he made it a 'harijan paradise'. He was a darling of the 'harijans'. It was difficult to show the green signal to a 'darling' of an important section of the Indian people. The last was the Home Minister of India-Lal Bahadur Shastri.* Once he had been the Railway Minister in the Indian Cabinet. He had to resign (voluntarily). Too many railway accidents were the cause of his renunciation. The Cabinet and the whole country paid tribute to his self-sacrificing spirit. Next time he was again invited to join the Cabinet where eventually he was offered the portfolio of Home Minister. To all intents and purposes Lal Bahadur was neither on the 'left' nor on the 'right'; he was a pucca 'neutralist'. The Indian people did not understand the reason which impelled the late Prime Minister to let him resign and take to party work. People thought that Shastri would be raised to the gaddi(throne) of the Congress President. But that too did not happen. After all why should the public know the reason? It was considered prejudicial to public interest to know the inner story behind these Cabinet changes! What is after all the 'Kamraj Plan'? A secret weapon to be used against static or too dynamic individuals quietly with immediate effect. However, Kamraj the inventor of the secret weapon and ex-Chief Minister of

^{*}Like the degrees of M. A. and B. A. Shastri is also an educational degree. Some people consider this degree equivalent to B. A. but others aver that it is not only higher than B. A. it also connotes higher intellectual attainments of its possesser. However, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri is the popular name of the Prime Minister of India.

Madras was made President of the Congress. Shastri's case remained unexplained. Eventually, as expected, he rejoined the Cabinet to help Nehru in his onerous work. In the past Shastri had always rejoined the Cabinet on promotion. Then came the turn of Shrimali, the Education Minister, who once had declared that the 'basic education' had not produced results as expected. A minister "announcing" his own failure ! In the states C.B. Gupta, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, was the fourth casualty of the 'rightist camp'. Gupta has been and even now is a very useful member of the Congress party. The entire capitalist class of Uttar Pradesh comprising mostly his caste fellows has full faith in him and wholeheartedly supports him. He is the leader whose help is always sought whenever there is a financial crisis in the ruling party. His exit was also intelligently manoeuvred.

These victims of 'the democratic purge' were replaced by other leaders, some were Congressmen while a few were not.

Y.V. Chavan, a Maratha and popular Chief Minister of Maharashtra, was given the Defence portfolio. He commanded the respect of the whole House. In the beginning he had a divided responsibility. Krishnamachari and Patnaik bore the burden of proceeding to foreign countries to negotiate the purchase or loan of war materials. Chavan spent most of his time in visiting troops in forward areas and receiving foreign military missions and dignitaries. He does not seem to be an internationalist or an idealist or a dreamer. He is a realist and under the circumstances he is a good choice for the Defence. The country has full faith in him. This is what counts.

After Chavan came Chagla, ex-High Commissioner for India in England. He was given the Education

portfolio. He is a non-Congressman and thus has brought a change in the official dress. He does not wear khadi clothes. Chagla is a strong believer in national unity and thinks that the English language till it is replaced by Hindi is the only medium which will keep the country united. What he says and believes is not new; others have done it before. But the redeeming feature with him was that he enjoyed the confidence of Nehru and hence was in a better position than Shrimali his predecessor to frame and execute educational policies which might in the long run help the country to extricate herself from the quagmire in which she is floundering. Chagla is thinking of starting afresh; it is the beginning and not the end of the new educational era! Unfortunately the country has to frame and launch initial educational reforms after 17 years of freedom ! The 'trial and error' method may take some years to give finishing touches to the 'blue prints' of new educational reforms and even then success for the reforms is not assured. Anyway the task is immense but Chagla is in a position to succeed where others have dismally failed. The pity is that time is against him.

There were other changes in the Cabinet. Krishnamachari and Nanda were given the portfolios of Finance and Home respectively. Both are busy in finding the weaknesses in the policies pursued by their predecessors and exposing them before the Indian public. A clear symptom of bankruptcy of ideas? Krishnamachari seems to be displaying signs of enterprise and Nanda has asserted (November 1963) that within the next two years he will root out corruption from the country's adminstration ! A brave undertaking indeed ! Both of these ministers are fond of giving long speeches. At present they are receiving full co-operation from the press and its comments are very complimentary to them. How long will this press-built atmosphere prevail in the country? Once Patnaik was acclaimed as the youngest chief minister full of energy, honesty of purpose and what not. What was the end?

There were also other minor changes in the Central and State Cabinets but they are too insignificant to be worth mentioning. The net result of all the changes in the administrative set-up was healthy. The people welcomed it. The reason for their wholehearted welcome was not the 'rising prices' or 'increasing taxes' or 'long speeches full of promises', but the determination of the government to meet China's challenge. But Nehru died on May 27, 1964 and was succeeded by Lal Bahadur Shastri who has done nothing substantial so far. The political picture of India remains as blurred as ever.

On the 2nd October 1962 an 'emergency' was declared but the government did not name the enemy. The 'emergency' was the people's mandate but its edge was blunted by not specifying either the Chinese invaders or the Pakistani mischief-mongers as the country's enemies. Its effect was that the nation prepared to meet any eventuality quietly without displaying any sign of war psychosis or fear. The right type of atmosphere. It enabled India to execute her Five Year Plans for the rapid industrialisation of the country and thus to provide a strong base for future military operations against an invader who dares to threaten her integrity and security. It also enabled India to keep her gates wide open for the amicable settlement of controversial issues with her neighbours— China and Pakistan—through diplomatic negotiation. Further, the 'emergency' gave hope to the country. The people became alert and have great expectations from the new team of ministers. The great good that the 'emergency'

brought was to put the so-called 'internationalism', 'liberalism' or 'opportunism' to discount. Nationalism reasserted itself! India became realist and discarded 'Hollywood ideas'. On the 16th November 1963 I happened to go to a picture. On that day a news-reel depicting the activities of the 'National Cadet Corps' was screened. It was the first time in free India when I saw the entire news-reel devoted to the theme (India prepares) and not VIPs. There were no 'bhashans' (lectures), no 'udghatans' (opening ceremonies) and none of the familiar faces were exhibited on the screen. Khaddar (home-spun cloth of milk-white colour) was conspicuously absent. A redeeming feature in national life ! Then at the end of the show the Indian National Anthem was solemnly sung under the National Flag. The audience was quiet and proud. Lastly the 'emergency' has brought a sense of preparedness among the people. Wartime black practices and allied problems like inflation, shortage of food and other essential materials giving rise to profiteering and black marketing have raised their head but the government is overcoming these tactfully.

In spite of so much concern felt by the general public about the future no national leader outshone Nehru who continued to dominate the Indian political stage till his death; in spite of the 'Kamraj Plan' and its advertised benefits the Congress continues to be in the grip of factional jealousies and group bickerings. In India the business community is notorious for its greed and dishonesty. "Moreover India is not fortunate in her businessmen. With rare exception this class has been characterised more for its cupidity than for its enterprise, for its insatiable greed for quick profits rather than for any planned effort and, where necessary, sacrifice. It is doubtful if the word "sacrifice' has a place in the vocabulary of these gentlemen

the majority of whom are not genuine businessmen but speculators, neither pure nor simple". A community so depraved as described above cannot change its character overnight specially considering the broader aspects of mass education imparted to the people in the country. This community holds the strings of the purse; it has captured power in most of the states through money. Wherever this has happened the fissures among the Congress groups are the widest. Very few chances are left for the Congress High Command to patch up the differences in the Congress ranks. A disunited ruling party can hardly expect unity among the state ruling circles, specially amongst those whose states have recently attained a provincial status. Nagaland is one such state. Factional fights based on group jealousies among the Nagalanders and Manipuris may be attributed, as is done in other states of the country, to the fruits of democracy, but the seriousness of exhibitions of violence (witnessed in Nagaland and Manipur) cannot be belittled. Disunity in the country is a domestic problem; time may prove a great healer. But that is not the case with the Naga Hills. Nagaland is a frontier state and has its own importance in 'External Affairs'. To leave embers of discontent alive is not wise. These very embers may burst one day into fierce flames engulfing the entire eastern territories of India bringing untold misery to the people. The Naga ebullience has to be tackled firmly and decisively. The Nagas of the Naga Hills and the tribals of Manipur have to be completely isolated from the insurgents.* The operations which may be launched

*On April 15, 1964, Mrs. Laxmi Menon, Minister of State for External Affairs said in the Lok Sabha: "I do not know who has provided them (Naga rebels) weapons but it seems that they have collected them from Pakistan." The same day Sri Lal and the second

Continued on p. 324

^{1.} Frank Moraes; p. 175

to achieve this end may prove expensive both in men and money, but it has got to be done.

The problems of NEFA are, more or less, akin to those of Nagaland. In NEFA the history of Nagaland must not be repeated. Here China is a next-door neighbour of India and can directly send aid to the insurgents. To guard against this eventuality it is best to assimilate the Nefaites into the Assamese culture. Here emotional integration and not assimilation is a dangerous game. It is nonsense to declare that the Nefaites are taking 'orange juice' after breaking a long fast; it is idiotic to declare that NEFA should take forty years for its economic development. Time is against such misguided and unpatriotic advice. The sooner the NEFA territory and its inhabitants are brought nearer Assam and the Assamese

Concluded

Bahadur Shastri, Minister without Portfolio, informed the House that "the security forces were making every effort to intercept the band of hostile Nagas which was returning to Nagaland from East Pakistan where it had gone to collect arms. Its strength was 850 including porters" (the Times of India, April 16, 1964). Guerrillas seldom have strangers as porters specially when ammunition has to be smuggled from a foreign land to Nagaland. Therefore, it can safely be assumed that all the estimated 850 rebels were the Naga insurgents who eventually succeeded in returning to Nagaland. When this was the number of Naga insurgents allotted to the task of smuggling arms from Pakistan what must be the strength of Naga rebels who remained in Nagaland to keep the embers of revolt alive? On a modest estimate the number could not be less than 850. That is 1,700 Naga rebels are still fighting the Indian security forces in Nagaland. According to modern practice about 20 soldiers are required to fight one guerrilla fighter. In other words about 34,000 Indian troops are required in Manipur and Nagaland to bring peace to the harassed states.

Further, it is common talk in Nagaland that the insurgents are equipped with medium machine guns and 3 inch mortars. If it is true then the Naga guerrillas, in all probability, will not confine their operations to harassing and ambushing our patrol parties only; they may start launching attacks against our far flung outposts also.

the better it is for the country and her people. The slogan should be 'the greatest good for the greatest number' and not 'the greatest good for the least or limited number'. In Bhutan things are different. It is an independent country but nothing prevents the Indians from having a closer mutual social contact with the Bhutanese. This will eliminate the effects of the isolation of the latter. One-sided social contact-the Bhutanese were free to come down to the Indian plains but the Indians required permits to enter Bhutan-has been practised for more than 300 years and it has not brought the Bhutanese any nearer to the Indians. In Sikkim the conditions are different. Here the Sikkimese are a part of the bigger society that is India. In Nepal the Indo-Nepalese political relations have improved after the invasion. India cannot expect more than this in view of Nepal's limitations and India's military weakness at the moment. The more the military strength of India develops the more the hill states will be attracted towards her.

As a result the strategical and tactical position of India improved but China displayed better diplomacy; European nations are softer towards China and America is feeling that she might not be left behind in the race. Pakistan is trying to bring about a reconciliation between China and the USA. The Chinese Communists who won battles in NEFA and Ladakh have since regained the political ground which they had lost to India. It would not be long when India would be drawn into negotiations with China and in negotiations China is a past master. Already Indian intelligentia is fed up with the whole affair; it wants to end the stalemate which means that India should respond to the Chinese game of starting

negotiations* on the present dispute. China being in occupation of Indian territory what will India negotiate for? In spite of this naked truth India is entertaining the idea of coming to terms with the aggressor. The Indian Prime Minister attended the non-aligned nations' conference (October 1964) and appealed to the Colombo powers to persuade China to vacate her aggression. Chou-En-lai reacted. He categorically blamed the Indian Prime Minister and Marshall Tito for bringing the India-China dispute before the non-aligned conference. He is said to have accused President Nasser of double-talk. He bluntly told a Ceylonese delegation : "China has withdrawn 20 kilometres behind the line of actual control. At no cost will we withdraw any more"¹. On one side Chinese leaders are adamant on retaining the fruits of their aggression and on the other the aggrieved party is begging others, mostly non-military powers, to intervene for the restoration of its territory. To convince the world the aggrieved party has framed ten-sheel instead of panchsheel for strengthening the so-called international peace. A more farcical drama in the international political field has yet to be seen.

^{*} At present India seems to be willing to negotiate with China if the latter withdraws her six outposts-Shenhoien, Tienwentien, Kongka Pass, Hot Spring, Nyagzu, Khurnak Fort and Spanggur-from the self-declared demilitarised zone. The Chinese established these posts after the invasion of 1962. China might not agree to withdraw these posts, she may allow India to re-establish an equivalent number of posts instead. This may satisfy India's demand. Because in that case both the countries will stand on the same level, as far as the number of posts is concerned. What are the likely places where India may be allowed to re-establish the posts? Beggars cannot be choosers. She may be allowed to re-establish her posts in Daulat Beg Oldi and in the Galwan valley. The former is already neutralised by the Pakistan-China boundary treaty, the latter is inaccessible by land and can be overrun by the Chinese in a couple of hours. In every way India will be a loser. This may prove to be the result of calling in the mediation of foreign countries— Colombo Conference powers. 1. The Times of India; October 12, 1964

CHAPTER X

India Prepares

"China will not vacate Indian territory itself, it will have to be made to do so"¹.

—Jawaharlal

"To wish that Chinese troops would withdrawis impossible. That would be against the will of 650 million Chinese. No force in the world could oblige us to do something of the kind"². —Chinese broadcast

If one wants to know the strength of the American Defence Forces one should pick up any international year book or any other American or other international journal and get the desired information. But in India, where there is hardly anything which is of a very secret nature things are peculiar. Patnaik, the ex-Chief Minister of Orissa, happened to give out the number of infantry divisions India was going to raise by the end of 1963. His utterance, on the pretext of security, was criticised in the Parliament. While John Masters, leading an American television team, was permitted to visit the forward posts of the Indian Army in some of the Himalayan sectors and in all probability permitted to film the life of an Indian soldier, non-official Indian civilians are seldom allowed

2. White Paper, No. VII; p. 37.

^{1.} The Times of India; 16th December 1963.

this privilege. This business of secrecy has gone beyond all reasonable limits and has permeated every department of the Indian administration. Those who have been visiting the interior of the Himalayas are quite familiar with this national "secrecy". Wherever I went in the interior of the Himalayas (before June 1, 1962) I always met one or two foreigners equipped with the latest maps of the area. The most objectionable thing about these maps was their scale, some of them being 1 inch to 4 miles. On the other hand if I had been found in possession of such maps I would have been faced with the task of clearing myself of the charge of espionage. In spite of these difficulties I have tried to discuss the military preparedness of the Indian Army to meet China's challenge. I have confined myself to facts which are known to the general public and the press.

The Indian Army has gone to the Naga Hills and Manipur in aid of civil power to quell the tribal disturbances. Naturally the Indian troops are not to blame if the Naga ebullience has not shown any signs of abatement. Political considerations have outweighed the defence of these areas. It is the misguided zeal of foreign missionaries which excited and is continually encouraging the tribals of the Naga Hills in this dangerous game. Further, Phizo and his friends are getting nearer and nearer to the Chinese Communists. In fact the time has already arrived when the Indian Army can be in sole charge of the area for its defence. One who has read Mao knows very well that the Chinese leader will do his best to keep the torch of rebellion burning in these dark areas. Burma is already in the grip of the Communist trouble and the Naga Hills are contiguous to the troubled spots. The insurgents of Burma will, if sufficient care is not taken to isolate the Naga hostiles from them, combine to keep the IndoBurmese border areas alive which will be a dangerous situation for India. It has already been declared by responsible authorities that it is impossible to stop the Naga insurgents from escaping into Burma. At present Burma provides a corridor to the insurgents to escape into Pakistan, but the time is not far when Burma itself may become a strong base for the incalcitrant elements of the Indo-Burmese areas, a very favourable situation for the Chinese Communists. Sooner or later the Indian Army will have to be made responsible for the defence of Nagaland and Manipur. Why not do it now?

The peace mission (of 1964) composed of J. P. Narayan, Chief Minister B. P. Chaliha and Scott was able to arrange a cease-fire with the Naga hostiles. But that was an uneasy peace. It damaged the interest of the ruling party—the Aos. It was a victory of the vested interests of which Scott is a leading representative. In July 1964 public opinion (in Assam) demanded the expulsion of Scott from the country.

In NEFA the Indian Army has not advanced up to the McMahon Line. It is not that the country is afraid of annoying the Chinese by sending our troops to the NEFA-Tibet frontier; it is for tactical reasons that the Indian Army has postponed the occupation of checkposts (in NEFA) which were in her possession before the 1962 invasion. In NEFA, with the present demarcation of the Indo-Tibetan frontier, the ground is difficult to defend. There are some isolated pockets which the Indian troops can hold against the enemy coming from the north. But the cuts, splits and depressions in the frontier ridge offer an easy entry to the enemy; enemy columns can penetrate through these openings without difficulty and thus can cut off the line of communications of the Indian defenders from the rear. As long as the Tsang Po is not made the

common frontier between India and Tibet it will never be safe to put our troops on the Indo-Tibetan frontier. Here it is interesting to note that when the Chinese invaded NEFA divisions there were only two fair-weather roads connecting Bomdi La and Ziro with the Assam plains. The supplies for our jawans had to be transported by porters, while the Chinese brought their reinforcements in trucks. India kept the area undeveloped for 15 years and created a communication void there. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to remove the deficiency. Army authorities should be fully conscious of the deficiency and they cannot under the present state of affairs send their units to defend the McMahon Line. That is why today they have concentrated their main effort in the plains of Assam. In Assam troops to the tune of one corps are deployed in the valley. In case the enemy decides to enter the valley he will no doubt meet a stiff resistance.

Internally the political situation in NEFA is as sensitive as in Nagaland and Manipur or more. Here the Chinese are in direct contact with the people of NEFA and certainly they can bring about a serious internal convulsion. It is not certain whether the units of the Assam Rifles can cope with the internal trouble or here also the army will be asked to enter the NEFA territory to control the internal trouble. It depends.

Adjacent to NEFA is Bhutan. Here although the responsibility of defending the Bhutan frontier is shouldered by the Indian Army, yet its units are not stationed in the State. But they are in a state of readiness to move in on receipt of a request from the Bhutan government to defend their northern frontier. The Bhutan government is training its people in handling the rifle. The Bhutanese being a good soldier will no doubt shape well. But Bhutan recalls an awkward parallel with Tibet on the eve of 1950. The Tibetan resistance to the Chinese invaders in the shape of the Khampa revolt of 1956-1959 failed. This has a lesson for Bhutan. Bhutan is perhaps preparing to meet the Han challenge. Anyway the Indian troops will have to be in a state of readiness to enter Bhutan whenever such an exigency arises. Operations in an unknown terrain, with mountains and forests, require adequate knowledge of the ground and the people. If the Indian Army is to be at an advantage for defence, every jawan concerned should be familiar with the Bhutanese people so that he can easily distinguish a Bhutanese from a Chinese. It is relevant to note that the Chinese on the other hand never operate in unknown surroundings.

Sikkim is a protectorate of India. If Sikkim is lost then eastern India is not safe. Therefore, the Indian Army has taken measures to defend the frontier of this 'Arcadian state'. The Chinese are fully conscious of the tactical importance of Sikkim. The Chinese central command has concentrated the main strength of its forces in Yatung (Chumbi Valley). If a shooting war breaks out between India and China this sector will witness the bloodiest battle of the campaign. Pakistan may add fuel to the fire. India, however, is prepared for the eventuality.

Nepal is a difficult problem; she can be overrun by the Chinese forces in no time. Nepal can do nothing about it. If she starts making war preparations the Chinese may become suspicious. As soon as Nepal launches any scheme for strengthening the defences of her northern frontier the Chinese may on some false pretext invade her. The Gorkha kingdom is also handicapped by the fact that a sizeable proportion of her population inhabiting the northern border areas is of Tibetan extraction and religion. China is bound to exploit this fact. Under the circumstances Nepal has adopted the best course; she is concentrating her efforts on the economic development of the country and thus not giving any cause to the Chinese to suspect her intentions. Nepal's independence will be a reality only when China has vacated her aggression from Tibet. Under the circums tances it is creditable for Nepal that she is maintaining strict neutrality towards India and China. But the Chinese threat through Nepal is real for India. It is up to India to remove that threat.

In the west of Nepal is the middle sector which is the hope of India. Here the Garhwalis, the Kumaonis and the Bhotias are fully seized of the Chinese threat and the consequences that may result from Chinese infiltration in the area. The Chinese are not likely to disturb the status quo. In this sector also the Indian troops have not moved up to the frontier. The civil police is guarding the border areas and manning the frontier posts. Even that is doubtful, because, the Government of India have declared the Bara Hoti plateau as a disputed area and as such they could not send any civilian personnel even to administer the area and realise revenue from graziers. The troop disposition in this area is bound to improve in the near future; its preparation is interlinked with that of the western sector. If the Chinese are allowed to keep the Aksai Chin road open for military movements the threat to the middle sector will persist; the Ladakh front is the key to the security of this sector. In Ladakh Indian troops have withdrawn more than 20 kilometers from 'the line of actual control' as it existed on the 7th September, 1962 but they are reported to be in a far better position than they were when the Chinese launched the attack. The job of the Indian Army is different now; it is to defend the integrity and security of the Indian frontier and also to repulse any

Chinese attack which may be launched against us. So far the Government of India has merely declared that it would get every inch of Indian territory vacated by the Chinese. But what is Indian territory? Anyway the Indian Army is capable of holding its ground in Ladakh against a local action of the Chinese. It is surmised that the combat preparation of the Indian Army will be developed to such a state that it will be fully prepared for an offensive against the Chinese intruders in a couple of years.

[2]

Before I proceeded to Ladakh I had studied the terrain of this frontier district on maps and had come to the conclusion that there would be a bloody fight between India and China for the 'mountain ranges'. But after actually going over the terrain and staying in Ladakh itself for 4 days at a height of 12,500 ft. and studying the difficulties experienced by troops and units I reoriented my ideas. I concluded that 'war between China and India in the Ladakh sector was impossible'. It is presumed that the Chinese armies will have to bring reinforcements from China (proper) both for Sinkiang and Tibet. Some may consider this preposterous. It does look odd to think that the Koreans, the Manchus and the Mongols will always be brought from the far north to fight in the Himalayas. Can the tribes of Sinkiang and Tibet not fight the war of expansion after a few years of pacification, military training and Communist indoctrination? Will the Chinese allow the colonials to sit idle and intrigue for their (Chinese) annihilation ? My answer to this pertinent query is that Russia will never let China release Sinkiang resources to be used elsewhere. Regarding Tibet China can never trust the local population as long as the Dalai Lama is

living the life of a refugee in a foreign land. The Dalai Lama, it is true, will lose his influence on the plateau after a few years. If that happens then nobody can predict the future events. It will be disastrous for India to wait for the day when either the Dalai Lama loses his voice in Tibet or Tibetans become hostile to India *en masse* and identify their ambition with that of the ruler.

It is not that either of the countries will abstain from fighting due to cowardice; there are other real reasons against a shooting war to break out between India and China. These are explained below.

Supply of war materials and reinforcement of 1. troops in Ladakh is most difficult. Here the production of food and manufacture of essential items for daily consumption is insufficient even for the local officials. Every item for the consumption of the local officials is imported from Srinagar which itself draws its supplies from Pathankot, the nearest rail-head for Jammu and Kashmir. Even if a rail link between Pathankot and Udhampur is completed (which is likely to take a few years more) the problem of supplies remains unsolved. Air transport can help to solve the problem partially only. India will never have a sufficient number of aircraft to transport food and war materials to her troops in Ladakh. Poor industrial resources of the country (India) and the terrain of Ladakh coupled with its hostile climate are serious factors to be reckoned with. To fly hundreds of aircraft over 20,000 ft. or more continuously for months together will strain the industrial resources of any power of the world. Even the USA or Russia with their unlimited industrial potential cannot do it. Therefore, India will have to depend always on land communications for the supply of war materials to Ladakh; this is the only way in which she can maintain her troops in the western theatre.

Leh is more than 450 miles from Pathankot. Chushul is further to the north-east by another 150 miles, and Shyok-Nubra is further north of the latter. A convoy of military vehicles takes three days to reach Srinagar from Pathankot and another four days to Leh with a break of three days at the state capital to complete the essential loading and unloading. In all it takes more than ten days for a military convoy to reach Leh from Pathankot. The terrain permits a two-way traffic from Pathankot to Srinagar, and one-way after that. Because of the nature of traffic, terrain difficulties and climatic conditions of high altitude convoys leave Srinagar for Leh twice a week. Their frequency can hardly be increased. The road-space cannot take more than 300 vehicles at a time. It means that 600 vehicles per week or 30,000 vehicles per year reach Leh, one 3 ton truck carrying 2 tons of pay-load. One soldier needs about 3 tons of ration, ammunition, equipment and other items per year. Suppose there are 20,000 troops stationed in Ladakh. They will need at least 60,000 tons of stores for their consumption, i. e. 30,000 three ton trucks will be required to reach Leh annually for the maintenance of troops. This is possible only if the road is kept open for traffic all the year round. But this is not possible, at least in the present state of land communications in Ladakh. The road remains open only for six months or less. The Zoji La is snowbound and blocked for the rest of the year. All attempts have so far failed to keep this pass, situated in one of the coldest belts of the northern hemisphere (outside the Arctic zone), open throughout the year. In other words a maximum of 30,000 tons of load can reach Ladakh in a year. How is the deficiency of 30,000 tons of stores to be made up? This is the problem confronting the the Indian army. A fraction of the problem may be

solved by air transport but that also will be a drop in the ocean. It is not the Indians who alone are affected by the difficulty mentioned above. The Chinese are even greater sufferers. Their rail-head (Urmuchi) on the Turfan-Kansu Railway is more than 500 miles from Khotan (Sinkiang), and 250 miles more from their forward bases in the Aksai Chin plateau. Even then the supplies do not reach anywhere near the Chang Chenmo, Rudok and Gartok sectors. Just as our jawan needs 3 tons of stores annually similarly the Chinese regular soldier also needs at least the same quantity if not more. To keep 30,000 three ton trucks on the road (taking the army strength to be 20,000 only) and to carry 60,000 tons of stores per year across mountains of soaring heights is one of the most tedious tasks for the Chinese to accomplish. So far they have solved the problem by storing their supplies in advance; they started stocking their stores from 1950, immediately after the occupation of Tibet. When a shooting war starts these stores will be consumed and they will have to run convoys regularly to replenish the dwindling supplies. This will strain the resources of any power, and the Chinese are not superhuman. Recently Russia has withdrawn her help and has restricted, if not entirely stopped, the supply of essential motor oils to China. This has added to China's difficulties. Therefore, if the provision of supplies is a headache to us it is more so to the Chinese.

2. If Indian troops advance into Tibet or Sinkiang their supply line outstretches itself beyond control. This is more so with the lines of communication of the Chinese. Think of the Chinese fighting in Kashmir and Assam and thus being supplied from bases in China ! Rice and petrol of the Assam Valley may solve a part of their supply problem but not the whole of it. Once the Chinese enter the Indian plains they have to go on occupying the country till they reach Cape Commorin. Is it possible? The same applies to the Indian troops. In what time and under what terrifying difficulties will they be able to reach North Korea? It is impossible for either to occupy the sub-continent of the other. Some intellectuals may argue that one need not occupy the entire country of the enemy; the defeated enemy's 'will to fight' may collapse and the entire nation may yield to the victor. This is again a hypothetical argument. Chinese national spirit of resistance will not break. Japan tried once and she miserably failed. In India it may happen, because there are large sections of men who owe allegiance to foreign agencies-some worship the West, others Russia and a few China. The very nature of these disintegrating elements may invite foreign powers to take sides in the India-China conflict. Which power will help which country is difficult to predict. A victorious or crippled China, for reasons of commercial benefits and 'balance of power', is neither in the interest of the West nor of Russia. This anomaly-neither victorious nor crippled China is in the interest of the major powers of the world—coupled with the war potential of African and South American nations, the nations who are developing fast and gaining importance day by day in the international field makes things uncertain. The present 'unanimity of purpose' between the Western Bloc and Russia may strain itself to breaking point; it may break and may draw the two camps into the war on opposite sides. If that happens it will be the end of the world as we know it. To initiate war under this shadow will be suicidal. Neither India nor China would like to adopt this mad course. If either of these decides to start a war there can be no argument; the civilised world will be destroyed and the Chinese or

the Indian civilisation go with it; the survivors, mostly barbarians and savages, will be left roaming the world and leading a miserable and primitive life. If 30 crores of Chinese savages survive the destruction the number of Indian remnants will not be much less. This will be no consolation to either ! It may be presumed that the Chinese leaders, being realists of repute, must be conscious of this naked fact. Therefore, it is not wrong to conclude that the leaders of India and China would endeavour to avoid war. Once a war starts it will terminate only after the entire civilised world has been annihilated. In short the possibility of India going to war with China or *vice versa* is unthinkable. It is safe to say that it is not possible for China to swallow India or for India to subjugate China.

3. Suppose, either India or China, after being assured by the nuclear powers of their neutrality in the conflict, initiates a shooting war, and the armies of one march into the territory of the other. As soon as this happens, the world will go hysteric. It happened during the Korean crisis and, it may happen again. World opinion will assert itself; it will see that hostilites between the belligerents cease forthwith. This fact alone is sufficient to rule out any possibility of a major war between India and China.

Besides these major deterrents there are other minor factors which discourage both the countries from going to war to settle issues like the India-China border dispute. These have been dealt with elsewhere.

When war between China and India is not likely then what other alternative is there for China to force India to yield to her influence, thus allowing her surplus and ever-increasing population to migrate to the south? Or what alternative course is open to India for driving the Chinese from her territory forcibly occupied by them? It cannot be hoped that China would return the territory voluntarily to its owner; she is not a believer in 'bhoodan' or 'sampatti dan'.

There are various other means by which China can expand. These are the very means which India may, probably will, adopt to meet China's challenge. A major war between the two countries is out of the question but 'war of subversion' is the weapon which suits China to achieve her aim of territorial expansion. This is the weapon which India can also use with effect; India has to bcat China at her own game.

The containment of China is the most active consideration which is engaging the attention of Russia as well as of the western powers. Russia is moving her army divisions with all the supporting arms and services to the Sino-Russian borders. The USA took similar steps long ago; she stationed her 7th Fleet in the China Sea to contain Chinese Communism in the east and south-east. India offers a gap in this ring around China. The USA by extending the area of operation of the 7th Fleet to the Indian Ocean is trying to fill up this gap. In spite of such efforts for strengthening the iron ring around China the USA has not succeeded entirely. There are still breaches in the barrier. The USA has failed to plug them so far. "The presence of the Seventh Fleet tends to hearten the hesitant allies and to impress nervous neutrals...We do not have a good answer to the infiltration, propaganda, and subversive technique of the Communists. Neither have we done enough to develop a skilful, determined antiguerrilla force—our own or those of friendly countries", writes an astute American observer. Similar to this is the opinion of Brigadier Aubrey : "The Red guerrilla

^{1.} The Reporter, June 8, 1961; William H. Hessler.

movement in the U. S. S. R. was thus, by all standards, an affiliated organisation of the Communist Party. It is well to keep this fact in mind. Should the Soviet Union or China ever be at war with another country, the Communist Party in the country will be charged with the task set by Stalin and the International, and will organise the guerrillas who fight against their own national army"¹. Here we are concerned with China and her dictator Mao. Therefore, we can ignore the Soviet Union and can replace Stalin by Mao and International by the Chinese Communist party without impairing the significance of the quotation. The same author continues, "It is a grave mistake to allow the Communists everywhere to monopolise the guerrilla movement".

Success of guerrillas or anti-guerrillas varies directly as the co-operation offered by the locals. "Because guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and co-operation",² says Mao. History also supports Mao. Shivaji fought a guerrilla war constantly against the well-organised, disciplined, and much superior army of the Mughals. He succeeded. He built a Maratha empire by guerrilla methods. Shivaji's success is entirely attributable to the sympathy and co-operation of his own people. Wherever he failed to win the confidence of the locals he lost. Briefly the sympathy and co-operation of the locals decides the fate of the guerrillas or the anti-guerrillas in internal revolutionary convulsions. Apathy of the locals denies a victory to both-guerrillas and anti-guerrillas. The struggle between the two continues. And that is the case with the South-East Asian countries. Here the masses

- 1. pp. 68–69.
- 2. p. 33.

are neither wholly co-operative with the Chinese nor with the Americans. Michael Edwards thinks that this non-cooperation of the Asian with the West is based on history. He writes : "History tells him (Asian) that his former rulers used his country as a pawn in the politics of Europe, for ends remote from Asia and Asian interests. Whatever the West says in propaganda, he still believes, deep down, that Europe and America are the centre of the world, and that Asia is still thought of as inferior". There may be reasons for such a passive attitude but the fact is that the Americans are foreigners for the people of South-East Asia. They innately do not relish to cooperate with a foreigner specially in a conflict in which China, their neighbour, is directly involved. It is not their war; the conflict has been forced upon them, so they think. In other words it is not the 'people's war'. The Americans are trying to fight for them.

In spite of America's efforts to erect a strong barrier around the Sino-Russian territory to contain Communism the Americans have yet to go a long way to achieve their aim. They may not reach their goal at all. In India Indians themselves are trying to arrest the advance of Chinese Communism into their country. How far have they succeeded in achieving their objective ? Have they made the struggle against the Chinese a 'people's war'?

The Indian Army is a regular force like that of any other democracy of the world. To expect this force to mix with the civilian population of the country is fraught with danger. It is a non-political organisation and it should be kept as such; infiltration of the civilians or their activities will prove harmful to the organisation. This experiment was tried once at Ambala and the result was disastrous. The same infantry division which constructed

1. p. 100.

soldiers' barracks at Ambala under the 'amar plan' fought in Kameng. It met with a crushing defeat and was almost routed. India or any other country should not try this experiment again. In the western countries during an emergency or war there is conscription and every able-bodied man gets a chance to serve in the national army for a specific period. Thus the civilians get a chance to know the army's aspirations, aims and objectives; army's ideal becomes their own ideal. Conscription provides this chance; it lessens the isolation of the regulars from the civilians and the struggle becomes a people's war. In India some politicians are advocating a different method to achieve this end. They are in favour of bringing about a closer contact between the soldier and the civilian. They want to have a regular army on the western model but want to give it a civilian bias-make soldiers as producers-after the Communist methods; they do not want all the able-bodied civilians to shoulder the responsibility of defence during the national 'emergency' but contrary to this they want the regular troops to turn producers of goods for at least their own consumption ! Under the latter proposal the professional training of the soldier suffers. The result was adequately demonstrated on the Kameng front. Therefore, regular troops when on duty are rightly kept away from the civilian population. The civilians in this military set-up remain unaware of the army and its aspirations, aims and objectives. Briefly, in a democracy the soldier is segregated from the civilian and vice versa. There is nothing in-between bridging the gulf separating the two. The Government of India has raised Militia, Assam Rifles, Armed Police, Border Scouts and Security battalions, probably in an attempt to narrow the gulf. Even then to a careful observer the attempt seems to have

succeeded only partially. Why? The personnel of these semi-military organisations do not fully appreciate their role in the scheme of things. Their role is definitely different from that of the army regulars. These semiregulars in due course mix the two; for them their own role becomes identical with that of the soldiers. Then they demand equal rights and privileges with the regulars and get them. Further, the units or detachments of these second-line troops are also quartered away from the civilian population. After some time their bearing improves and they start behaving as regular soldiers. Even if their general turn-out and discipline does not touch the mark, the deficiency is made up when they repeatedly prepare for the intermittent visits of local formation commanders. Thus gradually these semi-military personnel almost in all respects become full-fledged soldiers. They are aptly called the second-line soldiers. The gap between the civilians and the army remains as wide as ever. The civilians remain quite unconcerned, specially in areas which have been recently opened up to outside influences, about the army, its aspirations and its activities. Now let us consider the Chinese soldiers and civilians and the relationship which exists between them.

In Chinese army units there is a political commissar, a civilian and a member of the Communist party, who carries equal, if not more, authority as his colleague, the army officer commanding the detachment. This communist agent indoctrinates troops in the party ideology, some ideal for which the soldier has to fight. The Communist indoctrination takes priority over military training. Thus a Chinese soldier becomes a Communist first and a soldier next. Chinese civilians also are first Communists then anything else. The aims and objectives of the two, the soldier and the civilian,

coincide and a bond of sympathy and co-operation develops between them. Further, in a Communist state every member of the society is armed and a wholesale conscription functions. Thus every member of the society gets a chance to come in close contact with the army and its activities, even if it be for a limited period only. The civilian identifies himself with his national army and the soldier with the former. This is about the Chinese troops and civilians within the country. Outside the country as in Tibet, the civilian commissars and party bosses continue to accompany the troops. The Chinese authorities station small parties of troops in Tibetan villages and along with them the unavoidable evil, the Communist agent. These detached troops stay with the villagers for a certain duration. Within a short period they formiliaries thereachees with the local dialocts the they familiarise themselves with the local dialects, the social customs and the religion of the people. They get closer to the locals and become a part of the village life. The villagers start identifying their own aims and objectives with those of the army; they provide first class information to the newcomer. In the meantime the troops also reconnoitre the area of their responsibility and become thoroughly acquainted with it. The locals also help them in this onerous but interesting and essential task. If the enemy infiltrates into the area pat comes the information. Thus the Chinese higher commanders not only get the information about the locals but they are also posted with the latest information about the enemy. Their future operational planning and its execution becomes more accurate and realistic. The planners know every inch of the ground and the prominent personalities of the area before the launching of any operation there. It is seldom that the Chinese soldier has to operate on new ground. In this planning and

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execution every civilian lends a hand. Thus the Chinese make their war 'the people's war'. The western democracies have recognised that whatever the Communists do they carry the locals with them. The masses consider themselves as an important cog in the wheel. On the other hand in a democracy the masses remain indifferent to government-run schemes and projects. During the Korean crisis the Chinese Communists were fighting their own war, 'the people's war'. In the South Korean camp there was little unity in the aims and objectives of the UN force. The American parents-Americans fanatically supported the Korean war-clamoured for the recall of their sons from the Korean front. It seemed that the Korean war had been thrust on the common American. India till the cease-fire was not convinced of the genuineness of the cause for which the UN force fought along with the South Koreans against the North Koreans and the Chinese Communists.

In India, the country of multiple religions and ideologies the difficulties are greater. In the Manipur tribal areas, the Naga Hills, and in NEFA the people are imbued with group loyalties of varying degrees. Nationalism, what to say of internationalism or liberalism or opportunism does not exist at all. Among the people of the rest of the country confused notions of Socialism or a 'socialistic pattern of society' or other political 'isms' prevail. There is nothing common between the ideologies of the different Indian political parties and they cannot frame a common programme agreeable to themselves and intelligible to the masses. What ideology can they offer to the hillman ? The Congress party lays emphasis on prohibition and wearing of *khaddar* and the Gandhi cap. The hillman hates prohibition and the cap does not suit him. The Indian

Socialists sing songs of non-co-operation with the ruling party, a dangerous propaganda. The Jansanghis aspire to revive the 'prachin sanskriti' (old culture) and thus to force the country to develop on ancient lines. The tribals of Manipur, Nagaland and NEFA have their own religions. They are not interested in or amenable to conforming to the modern standards of civilisation. Will they agree to adopt the ancient ways of living of the Hindus? They may do so under the force of circumstances, but the reformation, if it is at all reformation, will take decades to convince them of the efficacy of 'prachin sanskriti'. Probably by that time the whole game of Chinese expansionism will have finished. Considering the ideologies of the Indian political parties it is suicidal to allow Indian political workers to penetrate into these areas and disturb the peace of the land. The people have sent small parties of social workers to these undeveloped areas. These groups will certainly help to solve the problem partially. The tribal will still need something to fight for; he will need something which may stand him in good stead against the Chinese Communist propaganda. That something must be tangible and framed in the language of the people. Surely if the Indian political parties have the good of the country at heart then they can agree to draw up some common programme the execution of which may benefit the tribals of the Himalayas. This programme must not be rigid in its application; it should be flexible. As the people of the Himalayas are not uniform in their understanding of life similarly the programme should not be couched in a fixed ideology. It should differ in its application from area to area. In this programme the Indian jawan should not be forgotten. I noticed in Ladakh that some religious preachers visited the forward areas to deliver highly metaphysical talks absolutely unintelligible

to the soldiers. There are Gita and other religious books. Gita's simple and practical teachings can be used with good effect among the soldiers. Briefly Indian people must agree to have some minimum programme based on a common ideology. This programme must be practical; it should also be palatable to different sections of the people of the border areas and also to the Indian soldier. The propaganda machinery of the Government of India must be geared up to broadcast this minimum programme among the people who are directly concerned with the India-China dispute. This is not very easy but it has got to be done.

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The tribals of Manipur, the Nagas and the Kukis, are fighting against the Indians considering them to be aliens. This is about the internal conflict. Outside the state the Indians, so the tribals think, are fighting the Chinese, another foreigner, therefore, they have nothing to do with the India-China controversy. The roots of this estrangement are embedded in the hostile propaganda conducted by foreign missionaries through their agents within or without the state. It is for the Manipur government to isolate their tribals from this pernicious propaganda. The Manipur tribal must develop loyalty for the state and must not consider himself racially separate from the Meithai, the Manipuri. It is not good for the country to have most of the districts of a frontier state continuously declared as 'disturbed areas'.

Manipur tribals have inherited this infection—the fissiparous tendencies—from the people of the Naga Hills. The Tangkhuls (Manipur Nagas) aspire to join Nagaland. They think, erroneously though, that if they succeed in achieving their objective they will be a solid group in the Nagaland State and by virtue of their number they will get the major portion of the offices in the new Nagaland of their dreams.

In Nagaland the Naga insurgents are fighting a war of liberation against the Government of India. An overwhelming majority of the Naga people is whole-heartedly co-operating with the local administration in the execution of developmental activities for the improvement of the economic condition of the people. They, in fact even the insurgents, are convinced that it is in their interest to have Nagaland as an integral part of the Indian Union. At the same time they are equally hesitant in extending their full co-operation to the Nagaland administration for the extermination of the Naga rebels. This apathy on the part of the people is based on the fear of reprisals to which they might be subjected if they betray the hostiles. The day this fear psychosis disappears the people would extend their unstinted co-operation to the local administration. This will happen only when the Nagaland administration has become firm and strong; strong enough to guarantee safety to those who prove loyal to the state and to inflict exemplary punishment on those who act otherwise. The people of this hilly tract respect firmness and strength. It is for the Government of India to isolate the hostiles from all anti-Indian elements like the foreign missionaries and Pakistan, while it is for the Nagaland State to show firmness in dealing with the hostiles and their sympathisers. In brief, the Nagaland State has yet to convince its people that they are fighting their own war against the antisocial elements in the state. This is the preliminary step for the Nagas finally to identify themselves with the aspirations of the rest of the Indians.

On comparing the internal conditions of Nagaland with those of NEFA the political picture of the latter becomes blurred. Here communications, neglected so long for reasons of ineffciency and apathy and on wrong or mischievous advice, are yet to be developed. There is no free social contact between the tribal groups themselves. The result is that the tribals remain wedded to local loyalties. Except the Abors (Adis) other tribal groups have yet to progress to integrate among themselves. For them India, a foreign country, is fighting China-another foreign country. Here the people have to be told in simple and practical language the ideal for which they have to fight the Chinese bandits. To nurture the idea that the Nefaites are a politically immature people is to deceive oneself. There is no doubt that they are a politically conscious people. What they dislike is the outsider. The same atmosphere had prevailed in Chinese tribal areas bordering eastern Tibet. The locals of these areas hated the Chinese and their rule. The Chinese by-passed the tribal areas and occupied Tibet. Having surrounded them the Chinese Communists started the work of pacification. India has tackled the tribal problem in a queer manner. First India exposed the northern frontier of NEFA to the Chinese and then she started the work of pacification. As a consequence the Nefaites became bargainers and the Government of India's humane policy towards them appeared as if the tribals are being bribed. That is why even today no responsible Indian authority can claim that the tribals of NEFA, except the Abors, are imbued with regional loyalties. This has happened because military strategy was completely divorced from the civil administration of the NEFA divisions. To isolate military strategy from the economic development of NEFA is to create difficulties for both.

Though Bhutan is contiguous to NEFA yet its people have some ideology to live for and fight for. They have been fighting with the zeal of crusaders for their survival against the Chinese or their political influence since 1644, the year when the Manchus came to power in China. The Bhutanese ruling circles are of a different sect from that of the Tibetans; the former belong exclusively to the Red Sect and the latter predominantly to the Gelugpa Sect of which the Dalai Lama is the head. The Yellow Sect (Gelugpa) was born and nurtured under the influence and patronage of the Chinese. It served the purpose of the Chinese expansionism. There was a religious war between the two sects; the Chinese supported the Yellow Hats against the Reds. The followers of the Red Sect, the most popular at the time, were persecuted. Its leaders took refuge first in southern Tibet and later in Ladakh, Sikkim and Bhutan. In due course these refugee princes or high lamas founded kingdoms of their own. The fifth Dalai Lama under the instigation of the Chinese emperor waged war against the new kingdoms. The Bhutanese lamas withstood the attacks. Some of the invaders returned to Tibet while others preferred to stay back in Bhutan and in due course the latter were assimilated by the Bhutanese. Thus culturally, traditionally and historically the Bhutanese are opposed to the Chinese and their ways of dealing with smaller and weaker nations; they are certainly against the Chinese rule. Therefore, Bhutan will not yield to the Chinese cunning and treachery.

In Bhutan as in Tibet the masses are steeped in religion and blindly follow their leaders in spiritual and temporal matters. The common man is of Khampa stock and is a brave fighter. If he is properly led he will prove a hard nut to crack. Therefore, it is for the ruling classes of Bhutan who provide the national leadership to convince the Bhutanese masses of the consequences of Chinese expansionism; it is for them to make the struggle against the northern hordes a 'people's war'.

Like Bhutan Sikkim is also very much influenced by the philosophy of the Red Sect. Further estrangement of the Sikkimese from the northerners has been effected by the marriage of the present king of Sikkim with an American lady. The royal marriage has brought the state nearer to progressive forces; and liberal influence is steadily increasing in the ruling circles of Sikkim. The Tibetans in Tibet are not wholly in favour of the Chinese rule in their country. This neutral if not hostile attitude towards China will persist only as long as the Dalai Lama lives the life of a refugee in a foreign land. Tibet, under Chinese indoctrination, after a dozen years or so will become pro-Chinese. In that contingency Sikkim, the land of the Red Sect in the past and the land of progressive forces in the present, will definitely part ways with Tibet. In other words for Sikkim it is a real 'people's war' against China. Compared with Bhutan the Government of India is politically in a much stronger position in Sikkim to help the Sikkimese in keeping the Chinese out. Whatever political agitation one notices in Sikkim is of local origin and is being dealt with effectively by the Sikkim Darbar. But such internal disturbances are not peculiar to Sikkim alone. They are the results of democracy occurring even in many districts of India. In short if the struggle against the Chinese in the Indian plains is a 'people's war' it is more so in Sikkim.

The position in Nepal is peculiar. Here the Nepalese cannot openly declare war against Chinese Communism, nor can they act in a manner prejudicial to the good political relations existing between Nepal and China. Nepal cannot afford to provoke the Chinese. She is concentrating her energy and resources on the economic development of the country thus raising the standard of living of her people. In the long run her efforts will bear fruit. Nepal is sitting on the crater of a volcano which may become active any time. She dare not take any action which may precipitate its rupture.

In the western districts of Nepal one notices a definite change in the political thinking of the people. Here the Nepalese are nearer to the Indians. They do not look with favour on the Chinese methods of swallowing weaker and smaller nations. This anti-Chinese feeling grows into hatred in Kumaon. The Kumaonis once ruled in the Taklakot-Mansarovar area. They strongly believe that the Taklakot-Mansarovar region belongs to them. They will fight to a man, to liberate this area from the Chinese hordes. The same applies to the Garhwalis. The Tholingmath area, north of the Niti-Mana ridge, once paid tribute to the king of Garhwal. The Rautelas (a Garhwali community) had conquered the area; later on it was considered to be a part of Garhwal itself. History has handed down this fact to the present generation. The Garhwalis, therefore, are united in their resolve to push the Chinese forces of occupation out of the Tholingmath area. If the struggle against the Chinese can be a 'people's war' anywhere in India it is so par excellence in Garhwal and Kumaon. Here the Government of India is finding no difficulty in imparting training for future military operations.

As one goes further this sentiment of the 'people's war' gradually declines till it becomes non-existent in Ladakh. Though Ladakh is adequately defended by the Indian Army yet the Government of India will have to do a lot to transform the people's attitude.

The Indian Army is effectively preparing for the struggle against the Chinese intruders. It will not be

long before Indian Army units will be fully ready for an offensive against the enemy. This picture of military preparations is very heartening. But in these days the army cannot achieve success unless it is fully supported by civilian population. In other words the army can only succeed if the struggle develops into a 'people's war'. The Government of India, therefore, has to devise, construct and operate a multi-purpose machinery for the economic, social and cultural development of the hillmen. One is astonished by the amount of constructive work done in the northern border districts during the last four years. Any country can be proud of such an achievement, but there is still much to be done. The day India succeeds in impressing upon the frontier people that it is their duty to ward off the Chinese threat she wins. The day India has succeeded in transforming the struggle into a 'people's war', she can rest assured that she has redeemed her past mistakes and has regained her self-respect which she evidently lost during the Chinese invasion. History will record that India committed a political blunder, and much more than a blunder, in declaring Tibet as an integral part of China, but China committed a heinous crime against humanity by invading a friendly country; the first was a moral lapse but the latter a calculated breach of faith. History will also record that if India paid for her folly China worked out her own nemesis.

CHAPTER XI

Conclusion

"Britain and the United States, and probably most of the European nations, regard Tibet as being under China rule. No doubt this is a convenient arrangement for them, as they have thus only one authority to deal with. Besides, we are always being told about the vast potentialities of trade with China. To my recollection we were told this fifty years ago, but during those fifty years no such vast development has materialised; the potentialities are still no more than potentialities. However, the foreign nations wish to gain a good share of this trade, and to that end try to please China. But it is an outrage that they should sell Tibet in order to increase their own commercial profits in China."¹

-Charles Bell

Mohammedan conquerors changed the course of events of the Indian history. Whether they destroyed the Hindu literature and ancient historical records or damaged them or whether the Hindu administrators and historians were thrown into oblivion is beside the point; the fact is that the Indians forgot their national history. When the British arrived in India they had a clean slate to write upon; they wrote what they liked according to their genius and national interests. The second contribution of Mohammedan conquerors was that they effected the conversion of a large Hindu population to Islam; and the third noteworthy consequence of their rule was the closure of the southern gates of the Himalayan regions because of which the hillman was more and more attracted towards the north.

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There were British officers and historians like Tod, a. Atkinson, Cunningham and others who tried to paint a balanced picture of India for the British intelligentsia. But by and large British writers made their contributions to serve their own national interests. Thus they created false notions about our ancient history. They ignored our philosophy and seldom referred to our historical records. For Asian affairs they generally relied on Chinese historical records and copiously quoted from them in their writings. Chinese records naturally had been written to serve the interests of the Chinese empire; they were damaging to Indian interests. British hatred or apathy towards the Hindus and their appreciation of everything Chinese and reliance on Chinese records was reflected in British writings; they gave a twist to the Indian history. The result was that the Indians read their history in this new form and imbibed many of the myths made current by the rulers. According to British scientists and historians India is flooded with foreigners; Dravidians and Aryans are of foreign origin; the denizens of our northern hills, and mountains are descendants of the Mongols. Who is the true Indian? If the British anthrapologists whether of the past or the present are to be believed there is none who can claim pure Indian stock; this is more so in the Himalayas. Some British authorities have traced the recial affinity of the Nagas with the Polynesians ! Such man-made myths were not confined to the Himalayan racial groups; they coverd the whole country and confused

the Indian mind. This confusion must not be allowed to penetrate into our borderlands. The hillman must be told his history in true perspective so that he realises his identity with the rest of the people.

b. The hillman is a chip of Hindu stock ; his behaviour is not different from that of the Indian masses. When hundreds or thousands of Tibetan refugees entered Bomdi La in April 1959, their first curiosity was to explore government officials' quarters. Officers' families at Bomdi La were embarrassed. They had to keep the doors of their houses open throughout the day for the inquisitive visitors. Such experiences, even today, are shared by block development staff in UP villages. Indian hillmen are simple and they are steeped in religious dogmas and beliefs. They are not different from the rest of the Indian people. To study their social habits, customs, religion, culture or language of pockets or isolated groups of the Indian society is to betray one's ignorance about and apathy towards the Indian masses; integrated study of the hillman is, therefore, essential. Wrong notions concerning the denizens of the Himalayas have been acquired by the average plainsman. This has been effected by the propaganda of vested interests. This must cease forthwith. There is no need for foreign advice in cultural matters. To allow foreign influence, quite alien to the soil is in short unpatriotic and dangerous. Our evolutionary culture must not be allowed to be subjected to shocks and sudden eruptions touched off by foreigners or their agents. If the government has to be advised it must be advised by the indigenous experts. If India cannot guide her own people in cultural affairs then she hardly has a claim to her superior cultural heritage. After all what does an American or a Britisher know about the Indian hillman? Even if he

contracts marital relations with local girls he still remains wedded to the ideas nurtured in his childhood in an alien society; his intellectual make-up* interferes with his social work which he is prone to carry on among the so-called primitives. Tampering with the culture is tampering with the social and political security of the nation. To avoid this mutilation of culture and national security the best thing is to hand over the cultural matters of the border areas to the indigenous experts; if such experts are locally not avialable they may be imported from the adjoining states. For instance NEFA may not be able to provide social workers and public leaders to guide the Nefaites, but they can be imported from Assam and definitely not from U.K. or the U.S.A. The Kameng debacle has given enough material to reorientate the policy for the development of the people of NEFA. The British ruled the Agency for more than one hundred years and they encouraged the growth of loyalty for the British Crown as also for the white man. If India has to be safe

^{*}There is a morbid tendency in the country to compare foreign social or religious workers with Mahatma Gandhi and thus glorify every Tom, Dick and Harry from the West specially one who marries a tribal girl and keeps innumerable mistresses. Mahatma Gandhi was a Hindu, an evolutionary. He had no commercial interests or empire behind him to support his humanitarian work, but these social workers from the West belong to a proselytising religion and are backed up by strong commercial interests and sometimes imperial considerations. They create friction among the people they work for. If their activities are scrutinised under proper perspective then these and their consequences appear suspicious and pugnacious to the Indian way of thinking. Therefore, to compare Mahatma Gandhi or advertise the attributes of the so-called intellectuals from the West is to insult such a revered personality as the Mahatma. When Mahatma Gandhi worked among the Zulus his aim and conduct were purely spiritual. In the case of these workers from the West this assumption cannot be maintained; many a time their objectives are materialistic.

and progressive then the very roots of this artificial loyalty must completely be pulled out and new roots implanted instead.

There is a cry in the country that the 'emergency' c. may remain imposed in border areas only though it could be lifted from the rest of the country. Why? The answer to this is to be located in the vested interests. The advocates of this cry enjoy the fruits of democracy while they would deny the same to the frontier people, an important section of the Indian nation. If some disturbances occur in our border areas, will the Indian plains escape their effects? If one studies our borderlands sincerely and dispassionately one will arrive at the inescapable conclusion that the need of the hillman is to bring him nearer to the plainsman. Wherever the standard of living of the hillman is found below the general level it has to be brought in line with that prevailing in the country; his administration has to be integrated with that of the adjoining state; he has to be taught the regional language and the linguistic fad-creating literature of dialects which have no script of their own even—must be given up. The people who are employed in turning out "literature" from "linguistic factories" may be released to do some constructive or productive work. Lastly the word *assimilation* and not integration must be made use of wherever the frontier people and their future is concerned. For the satisfaction of the personal whims of a few the security of the nation must not be held to ransom indefinitely.

d. Emotional integration of the Himalayan tribes is a weak policy; it is a primitive slogan. It suits nations who are new and are passing through the formative period. To emphasise at this late hour that the Nefaites or the Nagas are Indians is to raise doubts in the minds of all concerned. This is an indication of bankruptcy

of dynamic thinking and action and is contrary to the past history of India. Those who are living in India and are enjoying every benefit of Indian citizenship must be punished for their anti-national proclivities or extraterritorial loyalties; such people must be made to behave like Indians. Every respectable nation has its own scheme of things : China aims to herd together Nepal, truncated Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan into a hill federation; Great Britain aims at expanding her trade and fetching more and more markets for exports ; Russia aspires to be the dominant power of this planet; while America is determined to contain international Communism. What is India's aim? She equates herself with nations like Pakistan, Ghana, Burma, Indonesia and so on and talks about the 'emotional integration' of her own people ! Let Indian national leaders be realistic and ponder over the post-independence history of the country; let them fix a tangible, practicable and dynamic aim; let them give a dynamic ideal for which the Indian people will live for and die for. Let them (so often repeated) leave 'international peace' to those who are armed and are in a position to destroy that ideal. A nation of 45 crores deserves to live and fight for some dynamic concrete objective. Let the Indian leadership perform its task to meet the aspirations of these 45 crores of the people.

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a. Because of the steady indoctrination of the Musalman from the end of the nineteenth century by the British Government till the 1940s and its continuance by the Anglo-American agents India has been facing communal problems since independence; she has not been able to

solve them. Concession after concession is being made to Pakistan, but the political atmosphere in the country is deteriorating day by day. Examples of Akbar's endeavours are freely and affectionately quoted to impress the ignorant about the potency of secularism but it is entirely forgotten that whatever secular image Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan built in more than 50 years was destroyed by Aurangzeb within a few years. On the other hand Shivaji the Maratha built an empire where Hindus and Muslims could live with respect and in amity; Hindus and Muslims enjoyed the confidence and fellow-feelings of each other. Aurangzeb followed a policy the reflection of which is very often noticed in communal pogroms in Pakistan while in India Muhammad Ali Currimbhai Chagla, the Education Minister, is reminiscent of that secular culture which flourished in the Maratha empire! In other words if India wants to cultivate friendship with Pakistan she need not rely on appeasement; the only course for her to achieve her aim is to gain in military strength and deal with Pakistan firmly and strongly. Pakistan has played her cards, now it is for Indian leaders to act. She wants political strangulation of India with the help of U. K., the U. S. A. and China. The Indian people must realise that 'peace is inherent in strength; opposite is the case with appeasement'.*

*When the Chinese invaded India the NEFA theatre commander was supposed to be holding conferences with the Defence Minister at Delhi. If he was suffering from a minor ailment he could have been easily medically treated either in Shillong or in Calcutta. Obviously his presence in Delhi at such a crucial moment had some other significance. Contrary to this when in January 1964, a communal riot broke out in Calcutta in consequence of genocide of Hindus in East Pakistan, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of the Indian Army himself was asked to (continued on page 361)

b. India is a secular country and her leaders are proud of this fact. But it is strange that in spite of their profession, for ulterior motives, they exhibit communal bias in every administrative act. If a Muslim minister unfortunately has to quit the Central Cabinet, he must then be replaced by another Muslim aspirant ! Religious affiliations rather than merits seem to be the criteria for administrative appointments ; expediency overrules efficiency and the tax payer has to support ministers who should never have been in the Indian Central Cabinet. For all intents and purposes it appears that attempts are afloat to transform the Hindu majority into a substantial but ineffective minority. Pakistan is already an Islamic State; a few lakhs of the non-Muslim population of East Bengal have forcibly been squeezed out of Pakistan; very shortly Pakistan will be free of any minority problem. These throw-outs are migrating to West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. At the top of it Mymensinghia Muslims are also entering these states in lakhs. It would not be long before these new unwanted migrants will create serious problems and in time their efforts with the support of the West will in all probability not prove futile. Therefore, the integrity and security of India is already threatened by this surplus concluded

maintain law and order at Calcutta ; a Lieut.-Colonel's job was entrusted to one of the heads of the Indian Armed Forces ! Evidently the communal trouble at Calcutta was more important than the Chinese invasion. One Lieut.-General assisted by one Major-General and three Brigade Commanders with their mobilised formations was the incharge of the local civil operation. For a few hours the COAS must have held the command of the communally affected corners of Calcutta. However, the COAS must have attracted the attention of national leaders and other smaller VIPs. It is said, and not very wrongly, that the VIPs outnumbered the rioters themselves. Was Pakistan or the West impressed by this undue anxiety shown towards the minority? On the other hand such deployment of Army Generals cast a reflection on Bengal Police and added to Pakistan propaganda.

population of Pakistan, and in time a crisis may be reached and West Bengal, Assam and Tripura follow the way which has already been treaded by East Bengal. If East India goes to Pakistan then the further vivisection of the country will have serious repercussions and anything might happen. The Muslim majority formed out of the drama of intrigues, appeasement and national weakness will usher in an era of confusion and economic stagnation. In short, the Hindus are a contracting society and the present leadership has been unable to arrest the penetration of Pakistan's influence which is demoralising the Indian people. At the same time Pakistan is not likely to go in for industrial and economic development, because she is all out to build a war-state against India and to find economic gains out of this. Migration of poor Muslims from East Pakistan is in the fitness of such policy. What is the solution then? Military strength supported by industrial wealth of the country partially answers the question. For a complete solution the answer may not be palatable to some. Nevertheless the answer lies in the termination of theocratic or sectarian pattern of state in the sub-continent. It is not only an anachronism to have a theocratic state in the middle of the twentieth century; such a state is like a bad coin which will drive good ones out of circulation. So the solution does not concern India or Pakistan only, it concerns progressive states all over the world. It is thus an international issue, This issue is much larger than UK-US interests of keeping India dependent on the West.

c. Pakistan is the creation of the British diplomacy and treachery towards the country which gave Great Britain the much needed start for her industrial venture. As long as Pakistan is allowed to sponge on the West, the sinister British hand will always be noticed in every incident politically important for India. Great Britain's foreign policy is guided by various motives, but we are concerned only with those which have inspired Britain to cultivate political relations with China and India. The main attributes of the British foreign policy vis-a-vis China or India are the 'commercial interests' and 'balance of power'.

British commercial interests inhibited the paramount power of India to think and act justly and freely. The fear of Russian expansionism (though false* supra 256) influenced the British to lean on the Chinese. To further their expansionism the Chinese held out promises of trade and concessions to the British. The British played into China's hands and China continued to act on her primitive role of assimilating the weaker nationalities. In fact Great Britain connived at and abetted the Chinese crime of swallowing Tibet. Great Britain had every intention of giving "China a practically complete control over Tibet"¹ and declaring Tibet as an integral part of China; she virtually handed over Tibet to China by contracting various treaties and conventions. Her help to China has not abated. The lure of trade with 70 crores of people is quite a tangible charge on British honesty and fair-play. As long as India is a member of the British Commonwealth Great Britain will go on flouting Indian interests and serving the purpose of those who have not been included in Britain's customers' list. Evidently India's membership of this august body presided over by the Prime Minister of the nation of monopolists and industrialists is proving prejudicial to her national prestige and interests and is also exposing the hollowness of the claim that

^{*}Great Britain was suffering from Russophobia. Dorjief was the germ of the disease, Younghusband the remedy. "It (the Younghusband Expedition) had of course been a preventive campaign, aimed at averting a Russian menace to Tibet, but this menace proved a myth....", says Flemming (page 298). 1. Charles Bell; pp. 98—99.

India is a non-aligned country. The British without their industrial installations and foreign markets are an insignificant nation. They cannot and will not give up their diplomacy dominated by commercial interests, and India will always remain a loser as long as British diplomacy dominates, if not in Asia, at least in the sub-continent. These two things are interconnected. India, if she is desirous of being respected as a free nation, will have to, therefore, quit the Commonwealth one day. When she has done that then she can decide on her future preferences ; she can then be neutral if she To be a member of an organisation which likes. constantly forges links of dependence on India, is suicidal. To be free and then gain strength to act dynamically is the role of a progressive nation.

The second main characteristic of British diplomacy is the 'balance of power'. UK along with the USA has no liking for Russia's increasing industrial strength and China's expanding frontiers and India's potential; she prefers a contained Russia and China and a preoccupied India. She wants to retain a dominant position in world politics. She has withdrawn from the Indian Ocean but she is satisfied that America is filling up the vacuum. She will never like India to grow into a power to reckon with. She has created Pakistan to thwart India's ever-increasing political influence; she has thereby contained India. India has so far tolerated this state of affairs; the future generation may not follow in the footsteps of the present administration. The future youth may endeavour to win independence for his country from the mischievous diplomacy of India's erstwhile exploiters. USA's policy is linked with that of U.K. and time is not far when India may become inclined to quit the western camp. Automatically, if the argument is stretched to its limiting

point, India may be drawn towards the Russian camp. India's national interests are throwing her into the Russian camp.

From this discussion it is fairly evident that India can no more afford to remain a victim of British designs and diplomacy. At the same time Russia is not in a position to render aid when India needs it. Under these circumstances India has got to exploit her military and industrial potentials to their maximum on her own. She may not have to wage war against China but she has to remain on her guard to protect her territorial integrity and security. The present trend of the ruling party is not different from that displayed by the British and the present Indian rulers may commit political suicide by compromising with China on the boundary dispute; the current India-China frontier as it exists today may be recognised by the Congress party. But India can never feel free as long as Tibet remains under the heel of the India is acquiring the character of her cricketeers-Han. draw and draw-, but a time will come soon when India will have to act decisively and vigorously to arrest Chinese expansionism. Indian youth has to be prepared for that eventuality.

d. War between China and India may not be possible. But it does not mean that China will stop its expansionism. She will not; she will continue waging a war of subversion. To meet this challenge of China India will have to equip herself to defeat China at her own game. In other words India will have to transform the struggle to regain her self-respect into a 'people's war'. At present, for most of the hillmen the struggle against China is a conflict between Chinese and Hindustan Sarkars. It is not a 'people's war'. The day India has been able to convince the frontier people that the struggle is for their own survival, she has won more than half the battle.

[3]

a. A consequence of the Muslim rule over India was that the Tibetans were attracted towards China. Now the political conditions in the country have changed. The Dalai Lama and thousands of his Tibetan followers are living in India. Let India atone for her moral sin and help the Tibetans to regain their independence. The burden of confronting the Chinese may strain the nerves of the present administrators and they may decide to lessen the responsibility of defending the Indian frontier by reducing its extent i. e. by transfering Kashmir and Nagaland to foreign sphere of influence. Still the main responsibility of liberating Tibet will rest on India unless she abnegates her own political existence and invites 'Balkanisation' of the country voluntarily. In other words will the Shastri-Nanda-Kamraj entity choose disintegration of the country and pass over the sin or will it keep the country united and atone for it? It is a difficult proposition for those to decide who are advised by theorists like J. P. Narayan, ascetics like Bhave, apostle of disintegration like Rajaji and are themselves enamoured of the West. In their submissiveness they may prefer 'Balkanisation' of the country. But the Indian people probably will like to act in a way befitting a respectable and healthy nation. They will strive for the atonement of the moral sin.

b. To achieve this end—the atonement of the moral sin—the Indian national leadership has to instil an offensive spirit into the whole nation; it has to transform the static foreign policy into a dynamic one. The present team of national leaders is heavily leaning on non-violence and its ancilliaries and with its dogmas it may find itself

inhibited in washing off the sin. This is quite natural. To overcome this shortcoming future Indian leadership may co-opt military leaders to the Cabinet. At present there may be some clerks or other ex-junior officers of the Indian Armed Forces within the ruling party, but the country had enough of advice from such personnel of the Indian Defence Forces; let the Indian people have a senior General as their full-fledged minister in the Cabinet. This step will hearten the soldier. In every country those who sacrifice invariably share in the country's government. Here those who sacrifice remain subservient to the national leaders who have never seen or will never see "blood and iron" in their whole life. It is a tragedy that the former are courageously and quietly facing danger while the latter are comfortably routing the Chinese in verbiage only. Let this anomaly be done away with; Let the Government of India invite at least one Army General to be a member of the Cabinet.

c. If the present national leadership finds itself unable to invite an Army General to be one of the members of the Cabinet then let it not stretch nonviolence too far; let it not sign the death warrant of the Himalayan regions by contracting a border treaty with the aggressor; let it wait and watch.

d. After the NEFA debacle there was disappointment in army circles. Senior Army Generals, somehow or the other, were removing the defeatist feelings from the army ranks. Unfortunately, the country heard the news of the air accidents. Lieut.-General Daulat Singh, Lieut.-General Vikram Singh, Major-General Grewal, Brigadier Das, Brigadier Nanavati and other senior military officers along with Air Vice-Marshal Pinto were the victims of these mishaps under unsatisfactorily explained circumstances. A feeling of dispondency crept into the Indian Armed Forces. This feeling, after the Pakistani slaughter of 14 members of the Provincial Armed Constabulary in Chaknot area (Kashmir) in February 1964, has also penetrated into police ranks. It portends revolution and revolt against the present passive policies of the government. To avoid a bloody revolution an offensive spirit should be inculcated in our Armed Forces and in the police; and the tempo should be maintained till those who flout decency and civilised behaviour have learnt a lesson. Further, wide publicity should be given to the results of the display of this spirit exhibited on the frontier.

e. Recent political developments in the international field forecast danger for India. The West is heavily committed to help Pakistan and is indefinitely helping China. The British public is inclined to favour China (except officers who have worked on the Himalayan border). Russia is preoccupied with her own problems with China. Under these circumstances India seems to have lost the active upports of all the major powers of the world. Then what can India do? She has to depend on her own resources and fight the diplomatic battle on two fronts-Pakistan and China. Colombo powers are also inclined to favour direct talks between India and China. All the impediments might be removed and India may be compelled by world opinion to open negotiations with China. The paramount fact is that China is already in possession of chunks of Indian territory; what is left for India to negotiate for? The wonder of wonders is that all the major powers have forgotten Tibet, the key to the solution of the present India-China dispute. Can there be any peace on the Central Asian plateau without the liberation of Tibet?

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Note:-Page 274 line 11 from the top please read 'Thagla' for 'Dhaula'.

