

V. H. COELHO

Sikkim and Bhutan

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Preface

My primary interest in writing this book on Sikkim and Bhutan was to assemble historical and cultural data to reveal a sympathetic description of the lands and their peoples and to give an idea of the present administrative and political structures which would serve to enlighten any reader who wishes to know something and understand more about these unusual Himalayan countries.

When one looks at the map of the world, Sikkim and Bhutan appear lost in the obscurity of the Himalayas. Nevertheless they stand out as unique and distinctive, in that they offer a great deal to the visitor or the casual tourist and even more so to those who are engaged in a deeper study of culture, anthropology and religion.

Sikkim came into world focus at the time China issued its ultimatum to the Indian Government to dismantle the so-called military structures on the Tibet side of the frontier between Sikkim and the Chumbi valley of Tibet. This charge was absurd but it provided or could provide, if the necessity arose, the pretext for the Chinese army to launch another totally unprovoked offensive against India, deserving of the contempt that Chinese aggressions have evoked in the eyes of the world. This event took place in September 1965 but somehow Chinese bellicosity at Nathu-la, the pass leading from Tibet into Sikkim, assumed no greater proportion than a few rifle shots in the air or outbursts of propaganda through loudspeakers.

~~*~~ Sikkim is situated directly in the path of the invading Chinese, if they choose to attack. The people of Sikkim, however, remain calm

and undisturbed but proudly determined to fight any intruder and to protect their homeland even with their native weapons, the Kukris.

The sense of determination in the Sikkimese is evident in many ways. For centuries they have held on to their land and have persistently adhered to their own special way of life. This is what gives Sikkim its unusual character. In addition, great natural beauty abounds, with an immense range of the snow-capped Himalayas delineating its northern and north-western borders. This majestic view is a heroic spectacle of grandeur, unforgettable to any one who has gazed upon it.

Bhutan is also a land of natural beauty with its turbulent rivers and jagged hills in the south. Another panorama reveals a landscape of forests and meadows which spread through valleys rising successively to the snow-capped peaks of the Great Himalayas in the north. Hardy men live here among the mountains also believed inhabited by spirits and demons, presenting an archaic picture of life, both of reality and mystery. The people have unusual characteristics which are apparent in their dress, customs and habits. They are hardly curious about the activities of the outside world and have preferred to be isolated from it. On the whole, they are friendly, hospitable and guileless.

Today, the barriers are gradually being broken down: new roads have opened communications bringing with them contemporary progress and technological development right into the heart of the country. Without a doubt Bhutan has wakened from the sixteenth century to find herself suddenly in the twentieth. What will be the reactions of the Bhutanese, believing as they do in countless spirits, to these drastic changes? How will the dzongs, the ancient symbols of religion and government, compete with the chimneys of factories, the new symbols of progress and energy?

During the last few years not more than a dozen people visited Bhutan each year. Over the preceding four centuries at most only ten or fifteen travellers came to the country. Some legends, a fact or two, fragments of history and some notes from the diaries of those who journeyed there, are all that has been recorded about the country. Bhutan has been and is even today an almost unexplored land but with its increasing contact with the outside world, its medieval history and traditional pageantry will gradually recede into the background.

The shock of the revolt in Tibet ten years ago and China's ruthless suppression of the freedom of the Tibetans jerked Bhutan out of isolation and into closer cooperation with India in a gigantic task of reconstruction and rebuilding. To stem subversion from China, or a Tibet dominated by China, Bhutan has indeed to be self-reliant and stable, economically and politically and then to develop as a progressive nation. This task of reconstruction, to which the Bhutanese are energetically devoting themselves, is to be accomplished without any of the fundamental characteristics of the land being lost, her essential

genius being preserved.

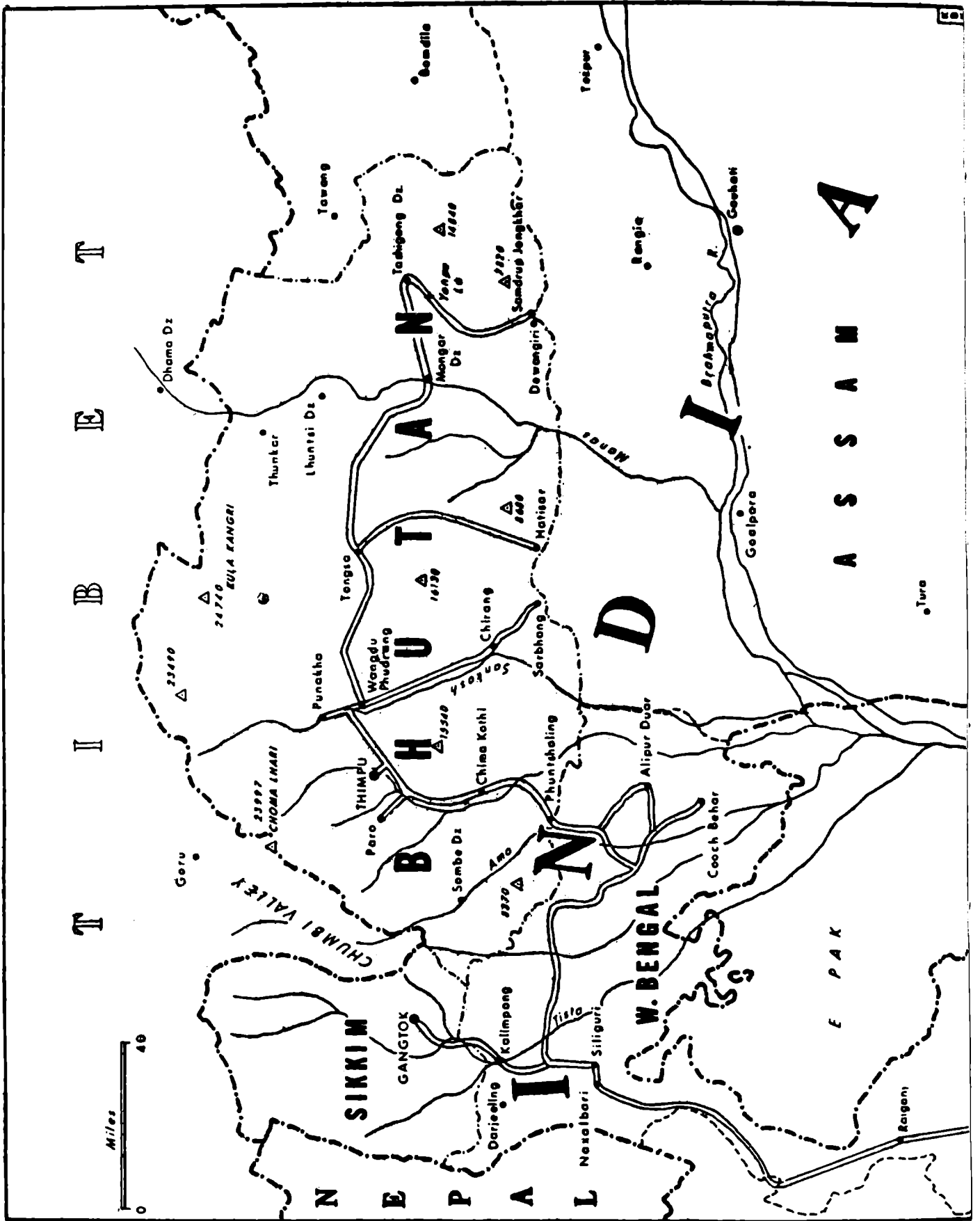
In writing this documentary on Sikkim and Bhutan I have had in mind a sincere wish to fill a much needed gap and to present, in a concise publication, information about the lands, the peoples, their customs and systems of government which might prove useful to the administrator, journalist, tourist or to the reader who wants to be informed about the lesser accessible and unknown countries of the world. The contents of this book are gleanings available from existing sources and some are based on personal observation and numerous conversations during my residence in Sikkim in 1966 and 1967 and my several visits to Bhutan in that same period.

This book was written in Gangtok in June 1967. The texts of several treaties and other official documents, as available in published sources, are appended to it for their historical value and as valuable information to the reader. For the guidance of those who might be interested in further study of Sikkim or Bhutan a bibliography of works by other authors has also been appended.

The author avails himself of this opportunity to emphasise that the views expressed in the book are strictly and entirely his own and do not represent the views of the government of India or of any of the persons whose names have been mentioned.

V. H. COELHO

Gangtok,
June 1967



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SIKKIM

The Land and the People

ON the northern border of West Bengal, the main range of the Himalayas spreads southwards and divides in two enormous spurs. These are the Singilela and Chola ranges. These almost impassable mountain barriers enclose three sides of a gigantic amphitheatre hewn, as it were, out of the Himalayas and sloping downwards towards the plains. The tracts of mountainous country consist of a tangled series of interlacing ridges, rising range above range even to the foot of the wall of high peaks and passes which make it the 'abode of the snows'.

This is the territory of Sikkim. The encircling wall of peaks and passes in the north and east forms the frontiers with Tibet, while in the west and south-west it divides Sikkim from Nepal. To the south-east the watershed of the Dichu is, in a way, a natural boundary between Sikkim and Bhutan.

The Teesta river winds its way through Sikkim. The main tributaries being the Rangit, the Rongni-chu, the Lachen and Lachung rivers, all snowfed torrents coming from the northern hills. Essentially, Sikkim is the catchment area of the source of the Teesta river. The boundary with Tibet was laid down in the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 17 March 1890 and is described as follows:

The boundary of Sikkim and Tibet shall be the crest of the mountain range separating the waters flowing into the Sikkim Tista and its affluents from the waters flowing into the Tibetan Mochu, and northwards into other rivers of Tibet. The line commences at Mount Gipmochi¹ on the Bhutan frontier, and follows the above mentioned water-parting to the point where it meets Nepal territory.

The main mountain ranges are the Singilela, which runs from the Kangchenjunga with its well known peaks of the Sandakphu and Phalut and the Chola range which descends from Pauhunri, to the east of the Dongkya-la, and forming the water parting between the Teesta and the Am-mo-chu. The principal pass on the Singilela (also spelt Singalela) is the Chiabhanjan leading into Nepal, while the Chola has several passes, Jelep-la, Nathu-la, Yak-la and Thanka-la. In the north, the principal passes into Tibet are Kongra-la, Bamchho-la and Sese-la.

Sikkim lies in the direct path of the monsoon, and because of the geographical location of its valleys and its proximity to Kangchenjunga, it has a heavy annual rainfall from 140 inches in the lower regions where the Teesta river flows to 50 inches even in the drier upper valleys of Lachen and Lachung. The monsoon penetrates in fact far to the north, through the deep valleys, and the wet zone reaches almost to the snowline.

* The earliest inhabitants of Sikkim were said to be the Lepchas or, as they call themselves, the 'Rong-pa', literally the "ravine folk". They were believed to have come from the east, along the foothills, from the direction of Assam and Burma. They have little resemblance to the Tibetans, since they are smaller and slighter in build, with finer cut features. These people of a mild and quiet disposition, somewhat indolent, love solitude and possess an extraordinarily rich zoological and botanical vocabulary of their own.

* The Lepchas today are Buddhists and are generally very devout, though at one time they worshipped the spirits of the mountains, rivers and forests, a natural outcome of their surroundings. Mighty snows, raging torrents, the wind and the mist, the rolling thunder and the lightning of the early rains must surely have left a deep impression on the character of a people who lived in the midst of nature's striking manifestations.

* Distinct from the Lepchas are the Bhutias, people of Tibetan origin, of good physique and Mongolian features. The Bhutias settled down in many parts of Sikkim, but in the north they were and still are traders and herdsmen by occupation rather than farmers. They preferred living in the higher, cooler regions rather than in the hot, humid valleys. The religion of the Bhutias also is a form of Buddhism, specifically called Lamaism, and their language is derived from the Tibetan tongue.

¹ Gipmochi also known as Gyemo Chen. The trijunction with Bhutan and Tibet (Chumbi Valley) is near Batang-la.

✍ It is indeed curious that the largest group of people in Sikkim should be the Nepali, who migrated from Nepal and slowly pushed their way into the land. They are an industrious, thrifty people who have made excellent settlers, rising to important positions in business and administration. With the exception of the Sherpas, who are mainly in the extreme west of Sikkim, and the Tamangs, both of whom are Buddhists, the Nepalis are at present all Hindu by religion, with the usual division into castes.

There is, in addition, a fourth group, small but distinct, known as the Tsongs, originally settlers from the Tsang-po valley in Tibet in what is now the Limbuwana district of Nepal, which was at one time a part of western Sikkim. Some of the Tsongs overflowed into and settled down in Sikkim. There is also a very much smaller but economically stable and influential community of Indian traders. Of the present total population of 180,000², the Nepalis are 72 per cent, while the balance, except for the small group of Tsongs, is divided equally between the Lepchas and the Bhutias.

As is evident, there is a basic heterogeneity within the Sikkimese people; three or four distinct origins, as many languages, Lepcha, Bhutia and Gurkhali, and two principal religions with, here and there, a tendency towards syncretism. The term 'Sikkimese' has thus no single or common linguistic or ethnological interpretation. These differences and divisions among the people are reflected, as will be referred to later, in the administrative and political structure. Despite these factors, a widespread feeling of national consciousness has arisen and developed a strong degree of historic and cultural unity.

Lamaism

The original religion of the Lepchas of Sikkim and the Bhutias of Bhutan was a form of nature worship, variously referred to as Pon (also spelt Bon) or Shamanism. It was a curious mixture of witchcraft and sorcery with the worship of spirits and ghosts. These spirits existed everywhere, some good but many others evil, in trees, rocks, on mountain tops and in the skies. They had to be worshipped and propitiated with offerings: a stone, a strip of cloth, a branch and so on. A sorcerer or a sorceress could evoke good will instead of ill. Thus expelling the evil spirits, who brought sickness and misfortunes, and propitiating them by the sacrifice of animals, sometimes even of human beings, were among the fundamental practices of Ponism.

The Guru Padma Sambhaya, the Lotus Born, also known as the Guru Rimpoche, brought Buddhism to Sikkim and Bhutan through Tibet in the eighth century. He was a teacher of mysticism at the Nalanda University in the north of India and was well versed in Tant-

² The last official census was in 1961 and gave the population as 162,189.

ricism, an amalgam of Buddhism with primitive beliefs and nature worship, then current in India. The Guru Rimpoche, whose fame as a mystic and teacher had spread across the Himalayas into Tibet, was sought after by the Tibetan King, Thi-Srong De-tsan, who reigned from about A.D. 742 to 800.

This Tibetan King, Thi-Srong De-tsan, the son of a Chinese princess, had inherited from his forebears a strong leaning towards Buddhism. He sent a mission to India for books and teachers and started systematic translations from the Sanskrit and from some of the Chinese scriptures into the Tibetan language. He also sought to establish Buddhist temples and monasteries, but somehow his efforts were frustrated by a series of earthquakes which were popularly attributed to demons. He hoped to gain his ends with the help and advice of this mystic priest, Padma Sambhava.

Padma Sambhava arrived at Samye (Sam-yas) by way of Kathmandu and Kyirong in Nepal about the year A.D. 747. He vanquished the demons and through conversion established the first community of lamas. He also assisted the King in building the first monastery at Samye. Lamaism as then established was a superb mixture of Mahayana Buddhism with local mythology, mysticism and magic. The relics of Pon as well as Tantric practices in regard to *pranayama*, *asanas* and *mantras*³ were essential ingredients. From magic and rituals, through prayers and congregational worship, Lamaism established the path to altruism (the Bodhisattva ideal) and renunciation (the Sunyata objective).

The Guru Rimpoche is believed to have visited Sikkim and Bhutan during his travels in Tibet and its western regions. The establishment or foothold of Lamaism in Sikkim, however, dates from a later period: the time of Lhatsun Chhembo's arrival there about the middle of the 17th century, though by that time Buddhism had already come to parts of the country. It was in the latter half of the 17th century, in fact, that Lamaism had become a powerful hierarchical institution in Tibet.

This Lhatsun Chhembo was a native of Kongbu, in the lower valley of the Tsangpo, born in the fire-bird year of the tenth of the sixty-year cycles, corresponding to A.D. 1595. He spent many years in various monasteries and gained great reputation and fame by his learning and wisdom. He traversed the Kanglanangma pass and, finding no road beyond the cave of Kampa Kabruk, is said to have flown miraculously to the upper part of Kabru, and after a sojourn there of two weeks to have flown down to where his followers were collected. He then guided them by a road to Dzongre and on to Norbugang (Yoksam) in Sikkim.

³ The Sanskrit terms in Hindu philosophy describing certain postures and positions for meditation, recitation and incantation of prayers or sacred texts.

Lhatsun Chhembo arrived in Sikkim with two other lamas of the Nyingmapa sect, one of the many sects of Buddhism then prevalent. By the western gate of Singile la came another lama, (a Kartok-pa) named Sempah Chhembo, and a lama of the Ngadakpa sect, named Rigdzin Chhembo, who had opened the southern gate by way of Darjeeling and Namchi.⁴ The place where these three lamas met was named by the Lepchas, Yoksam, this meaning the "three superior ones".

The three lamas held a council and decided to look for a fourth. Lhatsun Chhembo said: "In the prophecy of Guru Rimpoche it is written that four noble brothers shall meet in Sikkim and arrange for its government. We are therefore, three and have come from the north, south and west. It has been told that there is, at this time, in the east a man named Phuntshog, a descendant of the brave ancestors of Kham in eastern Tibet. Therefore, according to the prophecy of the Guru we should invite him to join us."

Messengers were despatched, Phuntshog was sought and found, and consecrated Ruler by the three lamas as the fourth superior lama from the east. He was given Lhatsun's own surname of Namgye (Namgyal) and the title of Chogyal (Dharma Raja). He was 38 years of age at the time. This was believed to have taken place in A.D. 1642.⁵

As mentioned earlier, Lamaism had, by the middle of the 17th century, developed into a widespread and influential religion in Tibet. The fifth Dalai Lama who lived from 1615 to 1680 had also been given temporal power in Tibet by the Mongol chief, Gusri Tendzin Chogyal, who had defeated the then King of Tsang in 1642 and established himself as overlord of the entire territory of Tibet. With this combination of spiritual and temporal power the Dalai Lama became indeed the undisputed ruler of the country. From the time of the fifth to the present, the fourteenth, each succeeding Dalai Lama is not only the spiritual head but also the temporal ruler.

The Dalai Lama's spiritual sway extends not only in Tibet but also in Ladakh, Sikkim and Bhutan. He is the reincarnation of Chen-re-zi on earth—Chen-re-zi, the Lord of Mercy, and the patron deity of Tibet. The Dalai Lama may at times indicate before his death where he will be reborn. But if he does not do so within three years of his death the oracles at Ne-chung and Sam-ye will prophesy giving particulars of the parentage, location and abode and other intimate details for the identification and choice of the successor.

The most learned lamas of the three principal monasteries of Tibet then set out to discover the reincarnated one. Boys, born under strange circumstances, are sought after and certain distinguishing marks of the

⁴ Darjeeling is in North Bengal, India, and Namchi in Western Sikkim.

⁵ As related in John Claude White's Book on Sikkim and Bhutan. Present-day scholars, however, believe that the ancestors of Phuntshog were, for three generations prior to his consecration by the lamas, rulers of Sikkim. Phuntshog was the first consecrated Chogyal.

skin and body, resembling those of Chen-re-zi, are looked for. After a final religious ceremony the boy who is chosen is required to identify various objects and articles belonging to his predecessor as proof of his being the true reincarnation. This singular process of discovery and identification is unique in history. It applies also to the Panchen Lama the second pillar of Lamaism, as well as to other high incarnate lamas.

The Monasteries

The three lamas, as related earlier, brought religion to Sikkim and also found a ruler for the country. Gradually through the years, Lamaism became the state religion, and with its growth innumerable monasteries were built throughout the land. There are two sects of lamas in Sikkim, the Nyingmapa and the Kargyupa as represented by the Karmapa. A third, the Dukpa sect, is not currently represented.

The Nyingmapa, or the so-called traditional school represents the strict or formal style of lamaism and has three lower sects: the Lhatsunpa, to which belong most of the monasteries, with Pemiongchi at the head, the Kartok-pa, with the monasteries of Kartok and Dolling, and the Ngadak-pa, with the monasteries of Namchi, Tashiding, Zilnon and Thang-mochhen.

The Karma-Kargyu is one of the earliest branches of the Kargyupa, and was founded by Marpa and his pupil, Miljarepa. The first Karmapa monastery in Sikkim was built at Ralang⁶ about A.D. 1730 by its ruler, Gyurmed Namgyal, in homage to the ninth Karmapa Grand Lama, during a pilgrimage of this ruler to Tibet. Other Karmapa monasteries are at Rumtek and Phodang.

Specific and identifiable places of worship in Sikkim are: the Takphu, literally a rock-cave (associated with Guru Rimpoche); the Gompa, a monastery proper; and other gompas known as such in popular terms but more correctly designated mani lha-khangs which are to be found in villages. These mani lha-khangs minister to the religious needs of the villagers.

The approaches to the monasteries are lined with rows of tall bamboo poles with prayer flags attached to them, several moss-covered chortens and long mendong monuments. Chortens, literally receptacles for offerings, are solid conical structures originally intended to house relics but are now mostly erected in honour of the Buddha or his disciples. The shape and details of the chorten have an elemental interpretation and symbolize the five elements—earth, air, water, fire and ether into which the physical body is dissolved upon death.

The lower section is a solid rectangular block, and it represents the

⁶ Ralang in Sikkim is not to be confused with Ralang in Tibet which is referred to later in the book.

earth. Above it is a globe which represents *water*. The element of *fire* is represented by a triangular section and *air* by a crescent shape signifying the inverted vault of the sky. The whole is crowned by an acuminated circle symbolising *ether*.

The most holy chorten in Sikkim is Tashiding, owing its special sanctity to its reputedly holding some of the relics of the mythical Buddha, antecedent to Sakya Muni. It is a favourite place for pilgrimage, and the simple act of beholding this chorten is supposed to cleanse one of all sin.

Also frequently visible in the vicinity of a monastery is a stone seat called a throne for the use of the head lama when instructing his pupils in the open. One such reputed throne exists at the Pemiongchi chorten near which the visitors camp is usually pitched.

The oldest and the first monastery to be built in Sikkim is Hungri, founded by Ringzin Ge-dem.⁷ In due course, shrines were erected at Tashiding, Sang-nga-chholing and Pemiongchi built on locations consecrated to the Guru Rimpoche, and these in turn at a later date became the sites of monasteries. The Pemiongchi monastery was built to house the ta-tshang or "pure" monks, celibate and undeformed. It still retains this reputation for the celibacy and high social class of its monks. In Sikkim they are the only bearers of the title of ta-tshang, and their head lama has the special reserved honour of consecrating the reigning sovereign with holy water.

The Pemiongchi monastery supervises many others, as also the gompas of Lingthem, Simik and Phaggye. The most active and flourishing monasteries in Sikkim are the Pemiongchi and Phodang.

The most important part of a monastery is the temple or Lhakhang. It serves two purposes: as an assembly room and as a place of worship with its relics and images. Usually it is surrounded by a paved path to allow the pious lamas and devotees to move around it in a religious procession.

One enters the main door of a monastery by a short flight of steps. On ascending these steps one finds that the entrance is usually screened by a large curtain made of yak-hair or wool which is hung from the upper balcony. Upon entering the hall, the opening is guarded by figures of fiends. They are the demons of the locality. Then one notices a pair of hideous imps painted red and bluish-black. Among those portrayed are sometimes 12 'tan-ma' or aerial nymphs typical of Tibet who are believed to sow disease and to have been among the chief fiends subjugated by the Guru.

In the vestibule are four huge representations in fresco of the Kings of the four Quarters who guard the universe and heavens against the demons of the outer-space. They are clad in warrior armour and have

⁷ A list of monasteries in Sikkim with title and meaning, also date of construction, is at Appendix I.

a threatening expression. Two stand on each side of the doorway. The white Guardian of the East is King of the Gandharvas, the green Guardian of the South King of the Kumbhandas, the red Guardian of the West King of the Nagas, and the yellow Guardian of the North is the King of the Yakshas.

In the smaller monasteries of the villages, the mani lha-khang, or prayer barrel, is set within the temple and mechanically revolved by the hands of lay devotees, each completed revolution being announced by a lever striking a bell.

In the monastery is a large hall with a double row of columns which separate the space forming a nave flanked by two aisles. At the lower end of the nave is the altar. The interior is a mass of bright colour, the walls profusely covered with frescoes of saints and demons. The ceiling beams are painted red with a design of lotus rosettes and other emblems.

Three large seated figures grace the altar. These are the Three Jewels signifying the trinity of the lamas. The Sakya Muni, the Buddha is seated in the centre, the Guru Rimpoche to the left of him and on the right side Chen-re-zi, the Lord of Mercy.⁸ The Sakya Muni is of a yellow shade with blue curly hair, and sometimes he is attended by two standing figures, his closest disciples. The Guru Rimpoche holds a dorje, a thunderbolt, in his right hand. A human skull used as a cup which contains blood is in his left hand. A trident decorated with human heads rests on his left shoulder. In addition he is almost always attended by his two ministering wives. Chen-re-zi, the Lord of Mercy who plays the important role of the patron god of Lamaism, is white in colour with four arms: the front pair of hands are joined in devotion, the upper right hand holds a crystal rosary while the upper left a lotus flower.

The arrangement of the images is not the same in all temples. For example, in the Kargyut temples a special place is given to Karma Bakshi, the founder of the Karmapa lower sect. Another image which is familiar in Sikkim is Khang-chen Dzonga, the protective deity of the land, the literal meaning being "the five repositories or ledges of the great snows". He is a good-natured deity and differs in character being of a protective rather than of a destructive nature.

In some of the Nyingmapa monasteries there exist side chapels or special shrines, which are dedicated to Tamding and Dorje-phagmo as both of these are popular deities. On the second floor of the monastery which is reached by a narrow, rather steep staircase there are images of secondary importance, perhaps frescoes of Gon pos, or protectors of Mahayana Buddhism which are frightening since they are clothed

⁸ Sometimes Tara, the Goddess of Knowledge (Power), Amitayus, God of the Infinite Life, and Vijaya, the All Powerful, known together as the Trinity of Life Eternal, also find a place on the altar.

in human and tiger skin and adorned with writhing snakes, human skulls and bones. Also among these frescoes is the Sepai-khorlo which represents the cycle of existence showing the progressions of rebirth and the dreadful tortures of the damned.

A rebirth, according to Lamaism as is stated in the Indian doctrine of Karma, is determined by one's behaviour and deeds, although with faith, charms and rituals one can supplement good acts. If the virtues outweigh the sins, the soul is reborn as a god. If one is less virtuous then one is reborn as an ungodly spirit; and still less so as a human being. Those whose sins predominate and have fallen low sink into the lower depths of rebirth and are reborn as beasts or ghosts, the most wicked going either to a fiery hot hell or to an icy cold hell. Judgment is delivered by the King of the Dead, sometimes referred to as the "Religious King".

Many other objects are placed on the altar. For instance the lower shelf has offerings of rice, cakes, flowers and the sacred lamps. On the higher shelf there are musical instruments and ritual utensils. The temple lights are on short pedestal stands. A cotton wick is placed in the centre of the socket which is lit and fed by melted butter. The number of lighted bowls is an indication of the wealth of the temple and its numerous votaries.

The numerous monasteries in Sikkim, which as stated earlier are listed in Appendix I, I hope, will enchant the reader and also provide delightful information for the uninitiated traveller who would undoubtedly be rewarded should he undertake this journey.

Gangtok, the Capital

The seat of the government which is also the residence of the Raja, more recently the Maharaja, has changed through the years. The earliest records dating about 1640 locate it at Yoksam which is in the western part of Sikkim. Later, about 1670, it was moved to Rabdentse which lies further in the south-eastern region. A few years thereafter the capital of Sikkim was again moved to Tumlong, more to the centre of the valley, as Rabdentse as a capital was considered too close to the hostile Gurkhas. Security was the determining factor in choosing a location as the headquarters of the Ruler and his government. From time to time the ruler's summer residence was in the valley of Chumbi⁹ in Tibet.

From about 1894, the residence of the Maharaja (his title is now the Chogyal) has been at Gangtok which geographically and as regards communications with the rest of the world has proved to be a more central location. The administrative offices which comprise those of the Principal Administrative Officer, the Chief Secretary, and the

⁹Chumbi is near Yatung in Tibet.

various departmental heads are located here as is also the residence of the Indian political representative, the Political Officer as he is addressed by this title even today.

The capital at Gangtok is a picturesque town with a population of some 15,000 inhabitants. It is so located that it sprawls alongside the southern tip of one of the many disjointed spurs of the Chola Range of the mountains. On two prominent hilltops, not far distant from each other, stands the Chogyal's Palace and the residence of the Indian representative. Some 200 or 300 feet below, sloping down the hillside are the bazars and the city dwellings. The main highway passes through this living area, leading northward, and here is the residential section of private built homes. Also, from the highway the road zigzags climbing steeply upward to the bazars. If one descends 500 feet and follows the road about two miles distance one comes upon the newly built cantonment.

Sunday is the weekly market day and the bazars like a fair hum with activity. Farm produce from the neighbouring villages is brought to Gangtok, by crowds of colourfully dressed men and women, each wearing traditional clothing and adorned with earrings, necklaces and amulets. After the business of buying and selling is over which usually lasts till the early afternoon the village folk depart. During the week the small permanent shops in the bazars and side streets sell the many articles of daily use mostly of Indian make.

The paved highway continues to Rangpo, a town almost equal in population to Gangtok, which skirts the borders of Sikkim and North Bengal. Gangtok, the capital, is at a distance of 26 miles from this town. Beyond Gangtok, the highway continues a further 63 miles to Chungthang leading to Lachen and Lachung in a northerly direction. Eastward another branch of the highway winds to Karponang, Changu and Nathu-la, a distance of 32 miles. Nathu-la, the pass at an altitude of 14,700 feet is the main gateway to the Chumbi valley of Tibet. Across it, but for a short gap, the road continues to Yatung, Gyantse and finally to Lhasa in Tibet.

Gangtok is situated at an altitude of 5,500 feet and has a healthy, bracing climate throughout the year except for a three or four months' spell of the monsoon from June to September. The lowest winter temperature never drops below freezing and the highest temperature in the summer months seldom exceeds 75° degrees Fahrenheit. The rainfall, by comparison with some of the adjoining areas, is heavy: about 140 inches in a year. The winter months starting from November through February are indeed delightfully pleasant, bright yet cold, dry and invigorating.

With such a varied climate Gangtok has its richness of flora; vegetation that is really unique and indescribable. There are not only flowering trees and shrubs, rhododendrons, magnolias, acacias, bamboo but an unusual variety of tree ferns. Several hundred different types

of wild orchids bloom in the countryside and the sanctuaries and other wild flowers are to be found throughout the year, species of both the tropical and the temperate zones. Any botanist would enjoy the challenge since many plant varieties have never been identified or named.

The Palace and the complex of the Secretariat buildings including the High Court as well are constructed in a traditional Sikkimese style of architecture. There is also the Institute of Tibetology, a library of Tibetan manuscripts and a museum and research centre for Tibetan studies. The Cottage Industries Institute sponsored by the Gyalmo encourages the teaching and making of the traditional arts and crafts. There is also an emporium where one can buy the colourfully woven handloom rugs and the artistic wood carvings and ceramics. In addition to an agricultural and dairy farm there is also a paper making workshop which uses the residue of bamboo pulp, producing fine and durable paper for many uses. There are four high schools, one of which is run on public school lines, and several primary educational institutions; also a hospital, a clinic and several dispensaries.

Below Gangtok, a drop of about 4,000 feet, the river Rongnek flows northwards through an impressive valley with its terraced and cultivated gardens. It is one of the many tributaries of the Teesta. Across this valley on a clear day there is visible nature's most impressive sight—the range of snow-capped Himalayan peaks: the Gnarseng, the Kabru, and the towering Kangchenjunga with its elevation of 28,168 feet followed by the Simvo and the Siniolchu. Nature's beauty in and around Gangtok is awe inspiring.

Chapter II

Early History

TRADITION tells one how the three lamas of the nyingma-pa or red hat sect of Buddhism eventually after many wanderings met at the village of Yoksam in Sikkim under the shadow of Kangchenjunga. From here they sent for the ancestor of the Rajas of Sikkim by the name of Phuntshog (or Pencho) Namgyal, an influential Bhutia then residing at Gangtok. This Phuntshog Namgyal, it is said, was himself descended from Raja Indrabodhi, who was at one time ruler of what is today called Himachal Pradesh in northern India. In this dynastic tradition line there is also mention of a Tibetan hero, Khye-bum-sar.

Phuntshog Namgyal was born in 1604 and was consecrated with the title Chogyal (Dharma Raja) in 1642 and in time came to be known as the Denjong Gyalpo. He spent his years conquering or winning over the various chieftains, such as the leaders of minor clans, who had set themselves up throughout the land. He ruled over a wide-spread area many times the size of Sikkim of today. His authority extended in the north to Thang-la, beyond Phari in Tibet, towards the east to Tagong-la, near Paro in Bhutan and to the south to Titalia, near the borders of Bihar and Bengal in India. It comprised also to the west, the region of the Timar Chorten, on the banks of the Timar

river in Nepal. He then proceeded to establish a central administration, dividing the area into 12 dzongs (districts), each under a Lepcha Dzungpon (governor). He had a council of 12 ministers. Phuntshog Namgyal chose Yoksam as his capital.

This Ruler had an only son named Tensung Namgyal who was born in 1644 and who succeeded him about 1670. Tensung Namgyal moved the capital to Rabdentse. Tensung was married three times: His first wife was a Tibetan named Numbe Ongmu by whom he had a daughter, Pende Ongmu who was destined to play an important but disastrous role in the history of Sikkim. His second wife was a Sikkimese, Debasam-serpa who bore him a son, Chakdor; and his third marriage was to the daughter of a Limbu Raja. From this union with the Limbuni princess he had two children, a son, Shalngo-Guru, and a daughter, Pende Tshering Gyemu. His reign could be called a marital one but otherwise uneventful.

Chokdor Namgyal, the son of Tensung, whose mother was Sikkimese was born in 1686. He was a youth of 14 when he succeeded his father as ruler about 1700. Trouble arose between him and his eldest sister, Pende Ongmu, who assumed she was entitled to the accession of the throne. She thereupon engaged and allowed a Bhutanese force to invade Sikkim so as to help her evict her brother. Yugthing Teshe, a loyal councillor, came to the rescue of the Ruler, Chakdor, and took him to Lhasa trekking via Elam and Walong, which was then a part of western Sikkim but is today in eastern Nepal. In Lhasa the young Chakdor distinguished himself in the study of Buddhist teachings and Tibetan writings. He eventually became the favoured and official astrologer to the sixth Dalai Lama. For these services the Dalai Lama rewarded him with landed estates in central Tibet; which in turn were inherited by his successors and continued to be theirs to the end of the 18th century. Tibet re-acquired these estates during the time of Tsugphud Namgyal's minority rule when with the war between Nepal and Tibet a period of confusion prevailed.

However, in the meantime, the Bhutanese forces were successful in their invasion and captured the Palace in Rabdentse which was held by them for eight years. Upon the death of the sixth Dalai Lama about 1707 Chakdor Namgyal was prompted to return to Sikkim, accompanied by a Tibetan Lama named Jigme Pao. When he returned the Bhutanese forces withdrew and evacuated Sikkim west of the Teesta but still maintained their position at Fort Dumsong. This was a permanent loss to Sikkim in that it was never regained.

The bitter tension between the brother and sister continued and came to a crisis when Chakdor was murdered during a visit to the Ralang hot springs about the year 1717. A Tibetan physician overzealously allowed him to bleed to death by opening a main artery. Soldiers who supported the Raja were sent to Namchi, the doctor executed, and Pende Ongmu, the sister, strangled with a silken scarf and her corpse

was burnt. The Tibetan Lama Jigme Pao became the Regent for a while.

Chakdor Namgyal, the murdered Raja, was married to a Tibetan. She bore him a son in 1707 named Gyurmed. Gyurmed also married a Tibetan, the daughter of an abbot from Mingdoling. The story is told that she was so unattractive looking that he left her and retired to the De-chhen-ling monastery to be alone. Further dissensions within the country led to the loss of Limbuana which chose disassociation from Sikkim's rule and later annexed itself to Nepal. Gyurmed, the restless Ruler, went his own way disguised as a religious mendicant. He left on a pilgrimage to Tibet, and eventually returned to Sikkim but remained eccentric in his behaviour. For instance, he refused to take a second wife, his first wife having fled in the meantime to Tibet. This stubborn celibacy was of great concern to the court and to his subjects since there was no direct heir to the throne.

In 1734 Raja Gyurmed was taken seriously ill, and upon being asked on his death bed to name his heir gave the name of a nun in Sangna-Cholling stating that she was carrying his child who, when born, was named Namgyal Penchoo (or Phuntshog). This was realised in 1733, but it paved the way for trouble for Sikkim. One of the Dzungpons (governors) who were chosen traditionally from the Kazi families, Chandzod Tamding, rebelled and refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the nun's offspring. He appointed himself the Raja. Tamding ruled for a few years; but finally the Lepchas, under the leadership of Chandzod Karwang, a loyal supporter of Gyurmed, rose in favour of the nun's child Phuntshog, and forced Tamding the self-appointed Raja to flee to Lhasa to appeal to the Tibetans for aid in re-instating himself as the Ruler.

The Tibetans sent their emissary, a Rabden Sharpa, to make an enquiry into the dispute between Phuntshog and Tamding. He arrived in Sikkim and as the story goes established himself as the Regent for several years. However, he finally returned to Tibet after declaring himself in favour of Phuntshog and seeing him formally seated on the throne as the Raja and rightful heir.

During Namgyal Phuntshog's rule a number of other polemic developments took place. The Deb Raja of Bhutan planned an invasion of Sikkim in conspiracy with the Mangars who inhabited the south-eastern part of the country. The invasion did not succeed, yet the Mangar allegiance to Sikkim was lost. About 1752, an uprising by the Tsongs was in progress but the upheaval was suppressed by Chandzod Karwang. Then an uprising of the Gurkhas posed a new threat when Raja Prithivinarayan Shah of Nepal for a while undertook to support rebellious elements in Sikkim. Bhutanese forces invaded Sikkim a second time, but after negotiations at Rhenock in eastern Sikkim withdrew to the present boundaries. A treaty with Nepal was also concluded in 1775, establishing by mutual consent the Nepal-Sikkim

boundary line at Sango chu, Sangdi dzong, Malliayang and Lha chu. This treaty was not adhered to and was broken by the Gurkhas, who occupied Elam and Topzong in western Sikkim and proceeded to advance further into that region.

Namgyal Phuntshog married thrice. His third wife, a daughter of Deba Shamshed Khiti Phukpa, bore him about 1769 a son who was named Tenzing Namgyal. Prince Tenzing succeeded his father to the throne in 1780. He married a daughter of Changzod Karwang, the loyal Lepcha leader. Her name was Anyo Gyelyum. Their son, Tsugphud Namgyal was born in 1785. The intermittent wars first with the Gurkhas and then with the Bhutanese did not cease. Chandzod Karwang's son, Chandzod Chothup, had in these years acquired the skill of a competent military leader, and with his colleague Deba Takarpo, they combined to drive the Gurkhas from Elam. The Sikkimese forces actually penetrated as far as Chainpore in Nepal. But, then their luck turned and they were defeated in battle near Bilungjong about 1787 when Deba Takarpo was killed and Chandzod Chothup forced to withdraw.

Further active hostilities were discontinued for a while but the Sikkimese forces were lulled into a sense of false security. Suddenly in 1788-89 the Gurkha general Jahar Singh crossed with his army into Sikkim and with alacrity captured the capital Rabdentse. The Raja Tenzing, the Rani and their son fled from Rabdentse to Lhasa in Tibet in order to obtain help. In the meanwhile Chandzod Chothup and his loyal followers succeeded in dispersing and throwing back the Gurkha invaders. Raja Tenzing died in Lhasa in 1793 and the Tibetan government sent his young son, Tsugphud Namgyal that same year back to Sikkim. Tsugphud Namgyal returned to Rabdentse, the capital.

Chapter III

The Nineteenth Century

THE early 19th century witnessed a total change in the political scene in India. Having mastered India, British power ambitiously sought to penetrate the Himalayas in their urge to establish an overland trade route to Lhasa in Tibet and thence towards Peking in China. Sikkim could not help becoming wittingly or unwittingly a party to British strategems and political manoeuvres. On the other hand, Sikkim's traditional role continued to involve it also in Tibeto-Chinese activities.

In 1791, the Gurkhas of Nepal were at war with Tibet and sacked Tashilunpo,¹ the seat of the Tashi Lama. In the following year they were defeated near Kathmandu and forced to accept an ignominious treaty. This treaty was far from advantageous to Sikkim since the boundary line with Nepal was diverted to the left bank of the river Teesta. For several years and until 1815 Pemiongchi and all the inhabitants of the south Teesta tract were obliged to pay tribute to Nepal. During this time Tibet also reacquired the estates in central

¹ Tashliunpo Monastery near Sigatse in the Tsang province of Tibet is the traditional seat of the Tashi or Panchen Lama.

Tibet which had been deeded to Raja Chakdor Namgyal by the sixth Dalai Lama almost a century earlier.

Sikkim was also involved in the Anglo-Nepali war of 1814-15, allied with the British in this dispute. Nagridzong in the west was recaptured by the British about 1814, and in 1815 the Gurkhas were driven out from many parts of south-western Sikkim. In the Treaty of Titalia concluded in 1817 the boundary between Sikkim and Nepal was established along the Mahanadi and Michi rivers and the Singilela mountain range. A part of the Terai, the southern foothills of the Himalayas, was then restored to the Sikkim Raja.

The recurring wars with Nepal and the insecurity of keeping Rabdentse the capital, too close to the Nepalese frontier, made Raja Tsugphud decide to move the seat of government to Tumlong. Conflicts arose between the Raja Tsugphud and his Chief Minister, Chandzod Bolek, which ended tragically in the assassination of the Chief Minister and his family in 1826. Bolek's loyal supporters, the Kotapas, fled from Sikkim and sought refuge in Nepal. Following this agitated episode disputes between Sikkim and Nepal broke out. Now the British Government in India were well aware of these events and, in 1828, they sent Captain Lloyd, an officer, to make an enquiry and to report on the disputes. During this time the British became interested in Darjeeling as a possible health resort for its officials and negotiations for its cession were started. It was not until 1834-35, however, when British assistance was sought to prevent an incursion into the Sikkim Terai by the Kotapas who were supported by the Nepalis, that the deal was finalised. A deed of grant, dated February 1835, was given by Tsugphud Namgyal to the British.² Starting with the year 1841 the British offered a yearly payment of Rs. 3,000 (later it was increased to Rs. 6,000) to Raja Tsugphud Namgyal as a gesture of compensation for the cession of Darjeeling.

The cession of Darjeeling was followed by friction between the Superintendent of Darjeeling and Dewan Namgay of Sikkim because it was alleged that British subjects were kidnapped to be sold into slavery and aid was frequently denied in capturing and surrendering criminals. In 1849, Dr. Campbell, the Superintendent of Darjeeling and Dr. Hooker, a distinguished Botanist with the British Government in India, while travelling in Sikkim were suddenly seized by the Sikkimese authorities and made prisoner. A British ultimatum forced Sikkim to release the two prisoners in December that year, but later in February 1850, a punitive British force crossed the river Rangit into Sikkim. This expedition exacted various penalties: the stoppage of the grant of Rs. 6,000, a demand for the dismissal of Dewan Namgay and the annexation of the Sikkim Terai and a portion of the Sikkim hills bounded by the river Rummam on the north, the rivers Rangit and

² See Appendix II.

Teesta on the east and the Nepalese frontier on the west. Another expedition followed in 1861 and it was then that the Sikkimese were forced to accept the terms presented by the British. This detailed treaty consisting of 23 articles was entered into by the special British envoy, the Hon'ble Ashley Eden, and the Maharaja's son, Sidkeong Namgyal, on 28 March 1861.³ Maharaja Tsugphud Namgyal was in Chumbi and declined to return to Sikkim. It was about this time that the title of Maharaja came to be used for the rulers of Sikkim.

Tsugphud Namgyal's rule was the longest in the history of Sikkim, lasting from 1793 for almost 70 years. He had married five times; his second and third wives were the sisters of the Tashi Lama of Tibet. Sidkeong, his eldest surviving son, was born in 1819, issue of the second wife. The fifth wife named Menchi also bore him a son named Thutob Namgyal. For all practical purposes Sidkeong became the Maharaja in 1861, even though his father died two years later in Chumbi. The yearly payment by the British of Rs. 6,000, which was stopped in 1850, was again resumed in 1862, payment being made to Maharaja Sidkeong and this sum was later increased as a gesture of British consideration. Though generally indifferent to the administration of his own country, Maharaja Sidkeong tried to improve and maintain good relations with the British, and his efforts met with some success. In 1873 he paid a friendly visit to Sir George Campbell, then Lt. Governor of Bengal, at Darjeeling.

Maharaja Sidkeong died in April 1874 and his half brother Thutob, issue from the fifth wife, became Ruler.

It is perhaps interesting, at this point, to have some idea of the varied peoples that made up the population of Sikkim at the turn of the 19th century. The census taken in February 1891 gave the total population as numbering 30,000. One-third were Lepchas and Bhutias, and the rest was made up of Limbus, Gurungs, Murmis, Rais, Khambus and Mangars and some other smaller groups. Generally speaking, there were three main divisions in the population:

- (1) The oldest and perhaps the original inhabitants, the Lepchas or the Rong-pa;
- (2) The next in importance, the Kham-pa, immigrants from the Tibetan province of Kham commonly called Bhutias; and
- (3) The Limbus with whom are allied the Gurungs, Murmis, etc. who belong to the Lhasa Gotra believed to have migrated to Sikkim from Shigatse, Penam, Norpu, Khyongtse, Samdubling and Gyantse, places in the Tibetan province of Tsong, south of the Tsangpo.

The dynasty of the Rulers of Sikkim belongs to the second group. Their ancestor was Khye-bum-sar, a legendary Tibetan hero. His

³ See Appendix III.

descendants, six family branches in all, come from this source. Other Khampas constituted eight families known collectively at one time as the tribe of "the eight respectable names". In all, there were thus in Sikkim 14 original families of Tibetan origin. More Tibetan families came into Sikkim at various later times.

Famous among the Lepchas was Tekong-tek, the old Lepcha chief at the time of Khye-bum-sar's legendary visit to Sikkim.⁴ Tekong-tek was said to be sixth in direct descent from an ancestor of divine origin. Five or six generations later, one of Tekong-tek's descendants became a leading Lepcha minister under Raja Tensung Namgyal. Other equally distinguished Lepchas were Chandzod Karwang, a loyal supporter of Namgyal Phuntshog. One of his daughters named Anyo Gyelyum married Raja Tenzing Namgyal, and was the mother of Tsugphud Namgyal. Several other Lepcha families, living along the banks of the Talung river and its vicinity, took their names from the places they settled in. The Lepchas cultivated their soil but as time went on they lost most of their land through the infiltration of Bhutias and of Nepali settlers who crowded them out. The Lepchas are an honest, peace-loving and virtuous people. But their timidity and shyness, their naivety and a tendency to isolate themselves have apparently served them ill against the later immigrants.

The origin of the Limbus is veiled in obscurity, though it is said their ancestors came from Kasi (Banaras). Limbu is the name given to them by the Nepalis; but they call themselves Yakthumba (or yak herdsman), and the Lepchas and Bhutias call them Tsongs, which in their language means merchants. Since the Limbus were the chief cattle dealers they were the merchants of that time. The countryside between the Arun and Kankaye was originally inhabited by the Limbus, who had their own tribal chiefs. The Gurkhas did not have to conquer the peace-loving Limbus as they voluntarily gave in and by doing so retained special privileges.

Of the other tribes, the Newars, though small in number, were reputedly enterprising and influential. The Gurungs lived mostly in the western part of Sikkim and the Mangars made their homes in the Kangpa-chen and Tamhur valleys. They were however driven away from these valleys by their rivals, the Sherpa Bhutias.

To return now to the rulers of Sikkim. Thotub Namgyal was born in 1860. He became Maharaja in 1874 and married his half-brother's widow, a woman named Pending. She died in childbirth in 1880, and left three children by Thotub; a daughter, Namgyal Dumo, born in 1876; and two sons, the elder Tshodak Namgyal, born in 1878, and the

⁴ Legend has it that Khye-bum-sar actually visited Sikkim in search of the Lepcha patriarch and wizard, Tekong-tek, to invoke his blessing for the birth of a son. A son was indeed born to him, and while on a return visit to offer thanks eternal friendship was sworn between the Lepchas and the Bhutias.

younger Sidkeong Tulku, born in 1879. He then took a second wife from the Lhading house of Lhasa; she was the mother of Tashi Namgyal, a son born in 1893, and Chuni Wangmo, a daughter born in 1897.

Shortly after his accession Maharaja Thotub Namgyal ran into difficulties with the Nepali settlers in Sikkim. He went on a mission with Chandzod Karpo (who had married Thotub's mother, Manchi, after the death of Raja Tsugphud) to the Hon'ble Ashley Eden, then Lt. Governor of Bengal. Some agreement limiting areas in which Nepali settlers would be permitted was reached, but this did not succeed and there were disturbances in Rhenock in 1880. A second and more successful settlement was then negotiated which seemed to set the problem at rest.

Chandzod Karpo died in 1879, Rani Pending in 1880: and with these two deaths the power of the state reverted to Rani Menchi and Dewan Namgay (who in the meantime had married an illegitimate daughter of the Rani). This was the very same Dewan whose expulsion the British had demanded 30 years earlier. From their long residence in Chumbi and close association with Tibetan officials both the Rani and the Dewan seemed naturally to favour Tibetan interests. Their efforts were thus directed towards securing the succession for Tinlay, son of Rani Menchi by Chandzod Karpo.

Tinlay's popularity and influence grew and he persuaded Raja Thotub to go to Chumbi in order to pay his respects to Shape Rampa, a minister of the Dalai Lama. Meanwhile, the British, in their renewed interest in trade with Tibet, sent off the Macaulay Mission,⁵ which entered Sikkim en route. The Tibetans who were far from pleased about the British Mission proceeding to Tibet, thought as a warning to invade Sikkim and establish a fort at Lungthu near the border. The Macaulay Mission was in fact held back (in deference to Tibetan susceptibilities), but Thotub disgusted with British machinations continued to remain at Chumbi and totally ignored British remonstrances that he return to Sikkim. The British answer was to impose the penalty of stopping the allowance under the Treaty of 1861.

The Raja returned from Chumbi in December 1887 after concluding an agreement with the Tibetans which took place at Galing. In March 1888, a British expeditionary force was sent against the Tibetans at Lungthu where the Tibetans had established themselves. The campaign finally ended in September of the same year forcing the defeated Tibetans to retreat across Jelep-la, one of the many passes into the Chumbi valley. A settlement of the Sikkim-Tibet hostilities in which the British were actively involved was, however, reached only with the signing of the Anglo-Chinese Convention at Calcutta in March 1890.⁶ Both the Tibetans and the Chinese acknowledged a British protectorate

⁵ Led by Colman Macaulay, Bengal Financial Secretary, in 1886.

⁶ See Appendix IV

for Sikkim. At the same time, the British, the Tibetans and the Chinese accepted the demarcation line of the Sikkim-Tibet boundary as the crest of the mountain range forming the watershed. Sikkim no longer had a claim to the Chumbi valley where her Rulers had maintained a summer residence for many, many years. In December 1893, a protocol to the Convention of 1890 was concluded which regulated trade, communications and pasturage.⁷ This protocol provided, inter alia, for the establishment of a trade mart at Yatung on the Tibetan side of the frontier, a mart which was opened in 1894.

Maharaja Thotub Namgyal was at this time virtually under the supervision and control of Claude White, who had been appointed the first British Political Officer in Sikkim in 1889 and had been invested with the authority of a *de facto* ruler. For a time both the Maharaja and the Maharani were forced to remain in Kalimpong in North Bengal just outside Sikkim. Thotub's reign continued, disturbed and without serenity. Allowed to leave Kalimpong after months of detention Thotub only found that he was restricted to stay at Darjeeling for the entire year 1895. A change in this British attitude towards Sikkim was noticeable only at the time of the Younghusband Expedition in 1904 to Lhasa when it was obvious that a friendly and non-belligerent Sikkim was essential to ensure its success. Only in 1905 did Maharaja Thotub regain his authority as a Ruler following a visit to Calcutta, where he was invited to meet the then Prince of Wales. Then, in 1906, a significant change took place in the administration of the Sikkim State when control over Sikkim state affairs was transferred from the Government of Bengal to the Government of India.

Maharaja Thotub remained the Ruler till 1914, when his son Sidkeong Tulku took over authority.

For a moment I indulge the reader to return to the year 1894, when a British Civil Servant⁸ posted with the Government of Bengal, summarized in his own words the future of Sikkim. He wrote:

Most of all will our position be strengthened by the change which is insensibly but steadily taking place in the composition of the population of Sikkim. The Lepchas as has been stated, are rapidly dying out; while from the west, the industrious Newars and Goorkhas of Nepal are pressing forward to clear and cultivate large areas of unoccupied land on which the European tea-planters of Darjeeling have already cast longing eyes. The influx of these hereditary enemies of Tibet is our surest guarantee against a revival of Tibetan influence. Here also religion will play a leading part. In Sikkim, as in India, Hinduism will assuredly cast out Buddhism and the praying wheel of the lama will give place to the sacrificial implements of the Brahman. The land will follow the creed; the Tibetan proprietors will gradually be dispossessed, and will betake themselves to the petty trade for which

⁷ See Appendix V.

⁸ H.H. Risley, I.C.S., writing in the Gazetteer of Sikkim (1894).

they have an undeniable aptitude.

Thus race and religion, the prime movers of the Asiatic world, will settle the Sikkim difficulty for us, in their own way. We have only to look on and see that the operation of these causes is not artificially hindered by the interference of Tibet or Nepal.

Time has shown and justly proved that the Civil Servant's statement which was published in the Gazetteer of Sikkim, in 1894, was of little consequence or value since it lacked insight and comprehension. There has indeed been little conflict between Buddhism and Hinduism in Sikkim since the two religions not only exist in separate entities of religious faith but also in synthesised form. Again, as regards the un-segregated population of Sikkim, taken along with the factor of State restrictions in certain areas, governing ownership of agricultural tracts of land, one can feel justified in saying that a natural balance prevails even though the population of the country is made up of multiple groups.

Recent Decades

THE period of active and effective British influence on Sikkim commenced with the establishment of the British Residency in Gangtok under John Claude White, the Political Officer, in the year 1889. Ironically, this happened at the time when Sino-British relations were at a standstill. Other writers have referred to it as the period of “masterly inactivity” in Sino-British relations. In 1879, the British had in fact completed an unpaved road to the Jelep-la so as to facilitate their travel to Lhasa in order to further Indo-Tibetan trade. Then, in 1881, a branch of the East Bengal Railway was extended from Siliguri, the starting point in North Bengal for a journey to Sikkim, to Darjeeling. The first English school in this country was opened in Gangtok in 1906. Even though when in 1905 the Ruler, Maharaja Thotub Namgyal was re-instated with authority, the British Resident in Gangtok exercised vigilant control in most matters. His control in fact continued for a number of years.

John Claude White, the first British Political Officer, has described this period in the following terms:

Chaos reigned everywhere, there was no revenue system, the Maharaja taking what he required as he wanted it from the people, those nearest

the capital having to contribute the larger share, while those more remote had toll taken from them by the local officials in the name of the Raja, though little found its way to him; no courts of justice; no police, no public works, no education for the younger generation. The task before me was a difficult one, but very fascinating; the country was a new one and everything was in my hands.

These words, descriptive of the state of the country during his residence in Gangtok are perhaps over exaggerated, but partial credit is due to Claude White. He made a sincere effort and with his help Sikkim progressed from a primitive feudal country to a reasonably efficient one.

Prince Sidkeong Namgyal, son of Maharaja Thotub, succeeded to the gaddi ('throne' in Hindi) in February 1914, but he did not last long enough for what might have been a promising career. In December that year he was taken ill, and an English physician from Bengal was summoned to administer to him which he proceeded to do by giving the patient "a heavy transfusion of brandy" as is recorded in the chronicle of that time. Sidkeong was then enveloped in many heavy rugs and blankets. From all appearances his sudden death was diagnosed as heart failure; since the records state that "death came within the hour". Sidkeong Namgyal had been closely associated with the administration of the country since his return to Sikkim in 1908 having been educated in Oxford. During his short life he worked to dissolve the greed which occurs in vested interests. He also attempted to unify the Buddhists, by giving new life to the monasteries, and a new significance to their role. Unfortunately, Maharaja Sidkeong did not survive to reap the harvest of his constructive efforts.

Before we go on to Sidkeong Namgyal's successor, another special event was realised of great significance to Sikkim. In 1914, the Simla Convention signed by the representatives of Britain, China and Tibet, ratified the delimitation of the northern frontier of Sikkim, as had been set down in the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890.

Tashi Namgyal, Sidkeong's step-brother, succeeded him in 1914 and was for a time was under the tutelage of Charles Bell, who was the then Political Officer. Complete powers were given to the new heir when he became formally the Maharaja in April 1918. Prior to this date the Political Officer was in a large measure responsible for the administration of the state, although in many matters that arose the Maharaja and his Council of Kazis were consulted. Tashi Namgyal was married in October of 1918 to Kunzang Dechen, the daughter of Rakashar Depon who was a general in the Tibetan army. On her mother's side she was the grand daughter of Lonchen Shokang, now deceased, a former Prime Minister of Tibet.

During his long reign lasting almost 50 years, Tashi Namgyal introduced a number of social and economic reforms. One of these was a judicial court, set up in 1916 under an independent judge. This step put an end to the old practice of combining executive and judicial

powers in the hands of the Kazis, who acted also as landlords and governors. In 1953, judicial administration took a further step forward when judicial procedures modelled on the Indian civil and criminal codes were introduced. In 1955, a full fledged High Court was established by a charter.

During Tashi Namgyal's reign several social reforms were also promulgated. Task or forced labour was abolished, land reforms were introduced, and the system of taxation was brought up to date. The beginnings of a system of political parties with diverse points of view is also credited to his reign. The period of enlightenment took place at the same time as India was also undergoing radical but constructive changes: the final withdrawal of the British and the emergence of India in 1947 as an independent nation in the world, a development which was also to affect Sikkim profoundly.

In May 1946, the Viceroy of India Lord Wavell declared on behalf of the British Government that under the new Indian constitution, Britain would cease to exercise the powers of paramountcy in relation to the Indian states. Accordingly, the declaration added:

Political arrangements between the states on the one side and the British Crown and British India on the other will thus be brought to an end. The void will have to be filled either by the states entering into a federal relationship with the succession government or governments in British India or, failing this, entering into particular political arrangements with it or them.

Sikkim, as an Indian state under the Indian Constitution of 1935, was bound by the terms of this new declaration. An official delegation led by Maharajkumar (now the Chogyal) Palden Thondup Namgyal with Rai Bahadur T.D. Densapa, Private Secretary to the Maharaja as a member, went to Delhi for discussions with the Chamber of Princes, a body representing the several hundred princely States in India, and the new Government of India.

There was general recognition on behalf of both the Government of India and the Constituent Assembly which had been established to draft the Constitution of the new and independent India, that Sikkim had a special position. At its meeting on 22 January 1947, the Constituent Assembly adopted a resolution moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, then Vice-President of the Viceroy's Executive Council¹ in the following terms:

This Assembly resolves that the Committee constituted by its resolutions of 21 December 1946 (to confer with the Negotiating Committee set up by the Chamber of Princes and with other representatives of Indian states for certain specified purposes) shall in addition have power to confer with such persons as the Committee thinks fit for the

¹ He was also member in charge of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations.

purpose of examining the special problems of Bhutan and Sikkim and to report to the Assembly the result of such examination.

Strengthened with the support extended to it by this resolution the Sikkimese Delegation continued its discussions with the Government of India, leading to a treaty under which some specified matters would remain the responsibility of the Indian Government. To enable both parties to proceed with due deliberation and in a firm and friendly manner it was decided to conclude a Standstill Agreement between the Sikkim Darbar and the Government of India. According to the terms of this Agreement which was signed on 27 February 1948 "all agreements, relations and administrative arrangements as to matters of common concern existing between the Crown and the Sikkim State on August 14, 1947" were deemed to continue between the Dominion of India and the Sikkim Darbar pending the conclusion of a new agreement or treaty. These "matters of common concern" specifically included currency, coinage, customs, postal channels and regulations, telegraph communications, external affairs and defence measures.

Negotiations for the final and new treaty between the Darbar and the Government of India proceeded favourably and the Treaty was signed in Gangtok on 5 December 1950 between Maharaja Tashi Namgyal and Harishwar Dayal, the then Indian Political Officer in Sikkim.²

A press note³ issued by the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India some months earlier, in fact on 20 March 1950, when the Sikkimese Delegation was in discussion with the Government of India, had outlined the future status of Sikkim thus:

As regards the status of Sikkim it has been agreed that Sikkim will continue to be a protectorate of India. The Government of India will continue to be responsible for its external relations, defence and communications. This is as much in the interests of the security of the state as of India and is dictated by the facts of geography. As regards internal government the state will continue to enjoy autonomy subject to the ultimate responsibility of the Government of India for the maintenance of good administration and law and order.

While negotiations between the Sikkimese Delegation and the Government of India were in progress on this vital matter of future political relations between the two countries developments within Sikkim posed a grave threat both to law and order and the stability of the State.

The advent of popular government in independent India encouraged the aspirations of various political groups and parties in Sikkim. Three political parties had earlier been established and were in fact in existence in 1947: the Sikkim State Congress under the leadership of

² Text of the Indo-Sikkim Agreement of 1950 at Appendix VII.

³ Text of Press Note at Appendix VI.

Tashi Tsering represented a predominantly Nepali group; then there was the Sikkim National Party led by Gyaltshen Tsering and later by Sonam Tsering; and the Praja Sammelan, another political group which had as its president Dhan Bahadur Tewari Chhetri. The aims of these political organisations, especially of the first two mentioned above differed greatly, in fact were almost contradictory.

✗ In 1947, the State Congress believed in and as a whole accepted accession to India. They stood for a responsible government in Sikkim functioning as a state within independent India. They also sought changes in the social and economic structure of the country. The Sikkim National Party, on the other hand, campaigned for continuing the relationship which had existed for many decades between Sikkim and the British Government in India. The Praja Sammelan, the third political party, was believed again to favour Sikkim's merger with or accession to India. On the economic front this party was distinctly opposed to the landlords and supported the agrarian peasantry.

During the time lag which preceded the signing of the treaty of 1950 between Sikkim and the Government of India, and with an almost total lack of cohesion manifest in the internal administration of Sikkim, the Sikkim State Congress, the largest political organisation in the country grew restive. It proposed a "no rent" and "no tax" campaign as part of its disruptive programme of agitation. In February 1949, the agitation rose to a crescendo with inflammatory speeches by its members at public meetings. Some State Congress leaders were put under hasty arrest by the Sikkim Darbar while others in sympathy led a march on Gangtok. The Indian Political Officer was implored to intervene so as to avert more serious troubles arising and in order to restore normal life in the country.

The Darbar thereupon felt motivated to accept and establish an Interim Government with a Council of five members: three of these chosen from the Sikkim State Congress and the other two were nominated by the Maharaja. This popular government council set up in May 1949 had as its members Tashi Tsering, Reshmi Prasad Alley, Capt. Dimik Singh Lepcha, Kazi Dorji Dahdul and Chandra Das Rai. It was clearly evident from the start that due to the lack of unity within the council itself and dissident clash of party politics this so-called "popular" government could not function. Demands by the State Congress for a government with more adequate representation, the designation of a chief minister and other changes including a modification of the taxation structure were put forward. The Darbar not responding to these demands was threatened with satyagraha. The political situation grew more confused and difficult and upon the suggestion of the Political Officer of that time, Harishwar Dayal, Dr. B.V. Keskar, Deputy Minister for External Affairs of the Government of India, came to Sikkim to help in any possible way to bring about an understanding that would lead to a harmonious solution.

Dr. Keskar arrived at Gangtok in May 1949, met with the Darbar officials and the representatives of the various political parties, business associations and organisations, and others in public life. No solution could be arrived at and the government of the country was virtually paralysed. To minimise the chaos, the Maharaja got rid of the ministry and appointed the Indian Political Officer as the temporary and interim Administrator until a Dewan could take over and be entrusted with the affairs of state. Thus ended the first ambitious effort of a "popular ministry". It is the only one so far that Sikkim has tried to form and make work. Its tenure of office was of a short duration, from 9 May to 6 June 1949. An Indian Dewan, John Lall was then appointed by the Maharaja, and he took office on 11 August 1949.

In July of the same year, a delegation of the State Congress headed by its President, Tashi Tsering, went to Delhi and held frank discussions with the Government of India. They cleared the air. The Delegation was informed that the Government of India's sole wish was to ensure a stable government in the state of Sikkim and that under no condition could India tolerate chaos and disorder. Towards achieving this goal of a stable government, as was reported in the press release which was issued at that time, the Indian government intended to cooperate more closely in bringing about the increasing association of the Sikkimese people with their government. The Indian Dewan was duly appointed with this in mind. Another conference followed of representatives of political parties from Sikkim in New Delhi in March of 1950 which coincided with the timing of the final stages of negotiation on an Indo-Sikkimese treaty. The outcome of both, the political talks and the treaty negotiations were explained in the press release of 20 March 1950 issued by the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India which has been referred to earlier.⁴

The reaction of the Sikkim State Congress to the discussions and especially to the difficulties of the Government of India is seen in a pamphlet issued by the Sikkim Congress a few weeks later, in April 1950:

Our demand that Sikkim should accede to India has in principle been accepted because the administration will remain in the hands of government of India's official. The responsibility to maintain peace and see to the proper administration has also remained in the hands of the government of India...Although a responsible government could not immediately be established every effort should be made to see to the immediate formation of panchayats on elective system as well as to the establishment of a Constituent Assembly through election within a year.

The Sikkim National Party was equally pleased with the outcome of

⁴ See Appendix VI.

the negotiations. The Praja Sammelan, the third political organisation, did not quite seem to know which way to turn. For immediate practical purposes, it became evident that political development and the establishment of a representative government in Sikkim had been put into cold storage. A popular government seemed a distant goal.

Some measures were however introduced without delay. An Advisory Committee was set up by the Dewan under his presidency. The members of this Committee included Tashi Tsering, Kashiraj Pradhan, Capt. Dimik Singh, Gyaltshen Tsering and Sonam Tsering. The Sikkim State Congress and the Sikkim National Party were both represented but the Praja Sammelan declined to join on the grounds that this Committee did not truly represent all regions and communities in the state. Among the first questions to be considered by the Advisory Committee were the establishment of panchayats throughout the country and the holding of elections towards forming a future State Assembly and Council. One issue of prime importance which came up repeatedly for discussion pertained to the distribution of seats (and the administrative jobs in government) among the principal communities, the Nepalis, the Lepchas and the Bhutias. The attempt at equating the Nepalis on the one hand with the Lepchas and Bhutias on the other, the "parity formula" as it was called, figured prominently in these discussions. And now we enter the phase of the Indo-Sikkim Treaty and what followed thereafter.

The Treaty with India and thereafter :

The Indo-Sikkim treaty was signed at the Palace monastery by the Indian Political Officer, Harishwar Dayal and by the Maharaja, Tashi Namgyal on 5 December 1950.⁵ That night at the State Banquet given by the Sikkim Darbar representatives of the Sikkim State Congress stayed away in discontent. They boycotted the occasion expressing their disapproval. They reiterated their demand for representative government with the least delay. For the third time, a delegation of the Sikkim State Congress went to Delhi for further discussions with the Government of India. The burden of their complaint was that too little was done, and that there was too much philandering which was stalling the realisation of a responsible government in Sikkim. In a speech in December 1950, Tashi Tsering, the president of the Sikkim State Congress, said that the Advisory Committee reminded him of the squabbles of the "proverbial fish market".

Through various stages of discussion, accusation and recrimination among the political parties in the state as well as the Advisory Committee, the State Council and Executive Council Proclamation of 1953 was issued by Maharaja Tashi Namgyal. This proclamation set out

⁵ Text of the Indo-Sikkim Treaty at Appendix VII.

the powers of the Council as well as the composition and powers of its component, the Executive Council. The elections for the first State Council were held from March to May 1953. By August 1953, a Council of 17 members was voted by the people. The Council was made up of six Nepalis, six Lepcha-Bhutias and five were nominated by the Maharaja. An Executive Council of three members, the Dewan and two Councillors from the State Council, Kashiraj Pradhan and Sonam Tsering, was also set up. The term of office of the Council and its Councillors was initially set at three years but at a later date this period was extended to December 1957 by a proclamation by the Maharaja.

The State Council was empowered to enact laws for the country but subject to the Maharaja's final approval. Certain subjects could only be taken up with the Maharaja's consent. These were the state enterprises, police, land revenue and ecclesiastical matters. Some other subjects were excluded from discussion by the State Council. These included the constitutional position of the Maharaja and treaty relations with India. Theoretically the Executive Council assisted the Maharaja but in actual practice its powers were greatly limited. In most matters the Maharaja made the final decision. The Dewan held the position of the Maharaja's principal aide and the head executive official.

In the general elections held in 1953, less than 30 per cent of the population of 50,000 eligible voters went to the polls. Candidates for the Council had to be at least 30 years old, and the eligible voting age was 21. The results of the 1953 elections were such that the Sikkim State Congress won all of the six Nepali seats and the Sikkim National Party the Lepcha-Bhutia seats. The Praja Sammelan remained without representation. The Sikkim State Congress did in fact participate although it had earlier criticised the elections as "a farce".

Elections were again held for the second time in Sikkim in November 1958. There were many changes since the first elections: progress had been made in that more of the country was accessible by newly constructed roads, many administrative reforms had been introduced, and government administration had been extended to the most distant parts of the land. There was, therefore, wider and more extensive political consciousness and a general feeling of individual freedom. With the growing changes, political parties and organisations took on a more mature political attitude: the demand for accession to India seemed to recede into the background and emphasis was on representative government and the removal of communal electorates, especially the abolition of the system of separate Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepali constituencies. There were other subsidiary issues raised for popular appeasement: the reduction of land taxes and transport rates, the construction of more roads and bridges, and the need for a Sikkim subjects law which would abolish the stigma of a "second class" status

given to the many Nepalis who had immigrated to Sikkim.

Further, long discussions between the Darbar and the representatives of the principal political parties followed and a new formula for the distribution of seats in the Council was arrived at and announced in March 1958 in a proclamation by the Maharaja. This proclamation stipulated that there would be six elected seats for Bhutia-Lepchas, six for Nepalis, one representative of the monasteries and in addition one seat for the entire electorate without communal or other conditions attached to it. The members to be nominated by the Maharaja were to be six, bringing the total to 20 as against 17 in 1953. The system of primary elections was also modified and the winning candidate of one community was required as an essential qualification to obtain a minimum of 15 per cent of the votes of the other community. This revision was made with the objective of facilitating the political integration of the Nepali and the Lepcha-Bhutia communities.

Unfortunately with the elections coming up and the prospect of various government offices in sight frictions developed within the two parties. The Sikkim National Party ousted its president Sonam Tsering and elected Martam Topden in his place. In the State Congress, Kazi Lhendup Dorji resigned in order to support a newly founded organisation, called the Swatantra Dal, formed under the leadership of Namgay Tsering. In the election results the Sikkim State Congress won a majority of eight seats, which included one Bhutia-Lepcha seat and the general seat. Of the total electorate of 55,000 some 20,000 of them exercised their vote, that is to say, about 35 per cent. Rival parties made allegations of malpractices by some of the leaders. An Election Tribunal was appointed by the Darbar and as a result of their enquiries and subsequent findings two of the Sikkim Congress leaders who had in the meantime been appointed Executive Councillors, Kashiraj Pradhan and Nahakul Pradhan, as also Sonam Tsering of the National Party, were deprived of their seats and removed from office. Elections were held again and two members, Nahakul Pradhan (whose disqualification had by then been removed) and C.D. Rai were returned elected to the Council.

In the meantime during February of 1959 the new Executive Council, now enlarged to five members, had been formed. The two Councillors were Kashiraj Pradhan and Martam Topden, and Nahakul Pradhan, Norbu Wangdi and Chuksam Bhutia were designated deputies, the latter two represented the Sikkim National Party and the Sikkim State Congress respectively. Following the disqualifications and the re-elections, the membership of the Executive Council changed to Martam Topden and Nahakul Pradhan as Councillors with Norbu Wangdi,⁶ Chuksam Bhutia and Bhawajit Mukhia as its deputies. To his dis-

⁶ Norbu Wangdi died in July 1960 and the office of the Deputy Executive Councillor remained vacant.

appointment C.D. Rai, who had defeated Kashiraj Pradhan, was left out of the Executive Council. This only added to the serious rift within the ranks of the State Congress.

A new political party emerged in May 1960, the Sikkim National Congress, led by Kazi Lhendup Dorji and C.D. Rai, dissenters from the Swatnatra Dal and the State Congress. A third influential member, Sonam Tsering from the National Party also joined it. The declared objectives of this party were: the establishment of responsible government, the framing of a written constitution, and universal adult franchise on the basis of a joint electorate. There was sharp criticism of the composition of the Executive Council, and the National Congress threatened to embark on a programme of satyagraha. On second thought, however, the party decided to send a delegation to New Delhi, consisting of Kazi Lhendup Dorji, Sonam Tsering and C.D. Rai, to express their "grievances" and present their "demands" to the government of India. There were outcries against the Darbar and the Indian Dewan. But as time passed the heat of the excitement and the fervour of the impending satyagraha cooled down.

Two new governmental measures, which were contemplated about this time, caused particular unrest to the political parties, especially the Sikkim State Congress and the Sikkim National Congress. One was the Subjects Regulation, published in July 1961, laying down conditions for acquiring the status of a Sikkim subject; and the other was an increase in the strength of the Sikkim Guards. The four political parties were unanimous in their criticism of the Subjects Regulation. The Government of India was also criticised for approving it and the National Congress raised the slogan: "India practices democracy at home and imperialism abroad". A delightful emotive phrase but one which did not carry any weight. Regarding the increase in the number of the Sikkim Guards, the National Congress held that it would be a force used to stifle political opposition. Only when the Darbar agreed to essential changes in the Subjects Regulation in February 1962 did the four political parties suspend their agitation and agree to its revised formulation.

Early in 1962, the Sikkim Darbar again announced its intention to hold new elections to the State Council. Agitation to this end had started the previous year. With political agreement on the Subjects Regulation attention had been directed towards a demand for new elections. However, the general tone of all the political parties was one of uneasiness and there were symptoms of instability. There were dissensions among the members of various groups, the organisations lacked cohesion and, even more important, there was little appeal to the electorate. It was apparent that in the last few years their voice in government had not been effective: there was, by reason of its composition, no unity in the Executive Council.

The elections which were scheduled to take place did not materialise.

The unprovoked Chinese attack on India in October 1962 changed the picture. Sikkim lay on the direct route from China across Tibet to India, and along with India declared a state of emergency. It was hardly the time to countenance the political excitement and ferment which inevitably precede the holding of any elections. So they were postponed. In November of 1962 a Peoples' Consultative Committee was established with a view to organising popular participation in measures to mobilise and coordinate civilian effort. Steps towards strengthening internal security and preparations for national defence were among the principal responsibilities of this Committee. The membership of the Committee was derived from the political parties.

Maharaja Tashi Namgyal's long rule of almost 50 years came to an end a little over a year later. He died on 2 December 1963. During his lifetime dedicated to the people of Sikkim he had seen the country change from a primitive, feudal state to a modern, progressive one. The entire social structure had been drastically revised, the power of the landowners curbed and with it the protection of the rights of the individual tenants secured and more important still the system of compulsory task labour abolished. The administration had been modernised, a government secretariat established, departmental responsibility defined and qualified personnel appointed to the establishment. The Judiciary had been separated from the executive and made independent of it. The growth of political organisations, necessary to national health, had been permitted without restriction. As described in a later chapter in this book, economic and social development had made outstanding progress. Particularly during the latter part of his rule when failing health beset Tashi Namgyal, his son Palden Thondup had been groomed for his future role as head of state.

Palden Thondup was the second son of Tashi Namgyal; the eldest, Paljor, had been killed while on active duty with the Indian Air Force in 1941. Thondup was born on 22 May 1923 and married in 1951 Sangay Deki of the Samdrup Potrang family of Lhasa from which the seventh Dalai Lama had been born. From this union there were three children: the eldest and heir apparent, Tenzing, the second also a son, Wangchuk, and the third a daughter, Yangchen Dolma. Sangay Deki died on 17 June 1957. Chogyal Palden Thondup married a second time, on 20 March 1963, Miss Hope Cooke, an American by birth. Their first child, a son, was born on 20 February 1964 and was named Palden Gyurmed.

A change in the titles of Maharaja to Chogyal (literally Dharma Raja) and Maharani to Gyalmo was officially recognised by the government of India in April 1965.

To return to the main stream of events: These were troubled times, marked by a sharp worsening in the relations between India and China on the one hand, and India and Pakistan on the other. China seemed determined to involve Sikkim in her machinations.

On 10 January 1963 the Chinese Government sent a note of protest to the Indian Embassy in Peking alleging that India was guilty of intrusions into Tibet across the Sikkim-Tibet frontier in the area of Nathu-la. The note charged Indian military forces with constructing 39 pill-boxes, erecting barbed wire fences and digging trenches within the territory of Tibet. Provocative intrusions by Indian reconnaissance units were also alleged. According to the same note, the Sikkim-Tibet boundary had been delimited and the border had been a tranquil one where the Chinese and the Sikkimese customarily moved to and fro. The stationing of Indian troops and the stoppage of traffic across Nathu-la were held as deliberate acts to upset the tranquillity of the border.

Relations between Sikkim and Tibet had been traditionally based on mutual understanding and cooperation. There had been no frontier disputes since the delimitation of the boundary in terms of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890. The practice observed by the Sikkimese of grazing their cattle in the Chumbi valley of Tibet had continued from time immemorial. Only when the Chinese occupied Tibet in 1958 and stationed her troops along the Indo-Tibetan frontiers, including the Chumbi valley, did this customary practice come to an end. The trade routes were closed in 1962, when the Indian Trade Agencies in Yatung and Gyantse (and the Consulate-General in Lhasa) were withdrawn. The customary and old established contacts between Sikkim and Tibet were then ended except for incoming Tibetan refugees who sought escape from ruthless Chinese oppression and persecution and asylum in Sikkim.

Chinese bellicosity in regard to alleged Indian constructions on the Tibetan side of Nathu-la continued and assumed graver proportions when in September 1965, Pakistan attacked India in the west. The Chinese even went so far as to question the very basis of Indo-Sikkimese relations. At a press conference given on 29 September 1965, Marshal Chen Yi, Foreign Minister of China, asserted that the Sikkim-Tibet border did not come within the scope of the Sino-Indian border question. This was in open and blatant contradiction to Premier Chou En-lai's statement in New Delhi on 29 April 1960, when he had said: "China fully recognises India's special relationship with Sikkim and Bhutan." The Chinese were determined to undermine and weaken the close friendship between Sikkim and India. But neither India nor Sikkim were taken in by China's provocative statements and postures. Today life in Sikkim continues a little tense but essentially unruffled by these events.

The situation on the frontier between Sikkim and Tibet, where Indian and Chinese forces face each other in a continuous state of alert, has since become static. The latest elections, the third in the country, were held in March 1967. The elections followed further discussions between the Darbar and the political parties and an understanding reached to increase the overall strength of the State Council. In the

next Council there will be seven representatives each of the Nepali and Lepcha-Bhutia communities, one representative each of the Scheduled Castes, the Tsongs (both groups politically represented for the first time) and the monasteries, one general seat and six other seats to be filled by nomination by the Chogyal, making a sum total of 24 members against 20 in 1958.

While the Sikkim National Party and the Scheduled Castes League, a more recently formed political group, unequivocally accepted this new formula, the Sikkim National Congress expressed its dissatisfaction. They charged that the introduction of new seats for the scheduled Castes and Tsongs introduced "casteism" in what had earlier been only a "communal" pattern. The Sikkim State Congress, though reiterating the charge about "casteism", acquiesced in the changes and reservations. The voting privileges and the conditions of eligibility for candidates to the State Council remained.

Life in the Sikkim at the time of writing is unruffled, despite political campaigning. Paradoxically, the people whose affluence has grown in recent years side by side with a decidedly greater political awareness prefer to "take it easy" rather than to nurse their political ambition. The honours of the elections have gone to the Sikkim National Congress, which secured eight elected seats out of the eighteen, followed by the Sikkim National Party and the Sikkim State Congress which have five and two seats respectively. The other three seats are held by representatives of the Tsongs, the monasteries and the scheduled castes and none of them adhere to any distinct political organisation. The Council is completed with the nomination of six members by the Chogyal, three of whom are government servants, and the other three are representatives of the public without party affiliation.

Chapter V

Natural Resources and Development

SIKKIM is essentially a mountainous country without a flat piece of ground of any size anywhere. The mountains rise in elevation northward, culminating in the Kangchenjunga. The northern part is cut into deep escarpments, and, except in the Lachen and Lachung valleys, is thinly populated. In contrast southern Sikkim is at a lower altitude, is more open and supports more people. This physical configuration is partly due to the geological structure. The northern, eastern and western parts of the country are constituted of hard gneissose rocks capable of resisting erosion, while the central and southern region is formed of comparatively soft, thin, slaty and half-schistose rocks.

The two principal mountain ranges are the Singilela and Chola which start in the north and continue following a more or less southerly direction. Between these ranges are the principal rivers, the Rangit and the Teesta, forming the main channels of drainage. The valleys cut by these rivers and their chief tributaries are very deep, at times over 5,000 feet. These rivers are fed by the monsoon rains as well as

by melting glaciers. The perpetual snow line in Sikkim is about 16,000 feet. The higher altitudes both in the north and east abound in small lakes.

The mineral wealth of Sikkim is mainly in copper, then zinc and lead. Copper veins are widespread and constitute the principal source of mineral wealth. The richest ores occur at Pachikhani and Bhotang and the latter is at present being worked by the Sikkim Mining Corporation, an enterprise financed jointly by the governments of Sikkim and India. The copper concentrates, together with some lead and zinc, are sent to India for refining. Deposits of copper are found also at Dikchu, Rhenock, Lingui, Ronglichu, Londok, Rathokhari, Bar-miak, Tukkhani and Rinchinpong.

Other minerals such as pyrites are found in abundance at Bhotang, limestone and coal near Namchi, and graphite is being mined in the Chhitre area.

By and large Sikkim's wealth is derived from agriculture and forests. The economy of the land is principally agrarian. Rice and maize are the main monsoon crops. Other grains include millet, buckwheat, barley, dhal which constitute the subsidiary crops. Mustard is grown for its oil, and cardamom, the cultivation of which is rapidly increasing, is the main export crop. The cultivation of the potato is growing in importance especially in western Sikkim, at altitudes of about 8,000 feet. A potato farm has been established by the government also in that region. Sikkim's seed potatoes are valued in the potato-growing areas of India. Tea is a new venture and a government tea estate is being developed in Kewzing in the western part of Sikkim. Citrus fruits, apples and pineapples are also grown, and a fruit preservation factory, government run, is in production at Singtam.

Cattle of local breeds, yaks, sheep and goats are to be found throughout the country.

As may be expected, in an area which extends from the tropical terai to the highest regions of the Himalayas, there is an immense variety of vegetation. The lower or tropical zone abounds in plantains, tree ferns, bamboo, laurel, and some walnut, sal and oak. In the intermediate zone are oak, cherry, laurel, chestnut, maple and birch; and finally at higher altitudes rhododendrons, the glory of Sikkim, magnolias, conifers, larches and junipers.

Orchids are a special feature of Sikkim, and some 600 species are listed. The more important of them are the *Dendrobium*, *Coelogyne*, *Cymbidium*, *Vanda*, *Arachnanthe*, *Saccolabium*, *Aerides* and *Phalopsis* which attach themselves to trees and rocks, as also *Calanthe*, *Goodyera*, *Habenaria*, *Diplomeris* and *Cypripedium* of the terrestrial species. Sikkim is equally famous for its primulas. Perhaps no other country of equal or larger size presents such a wide variety of flora.

Almost one-third of Sikkim's area of 2,818 square miles consists of forests, a potential and important source of wealth. The forests of

sal and bamboo in the south as well as of coniferous trees in the north are capable of exploitation but are not as yet utilised. Attempts to float timber down the Teesta from the Lachen-Lachung area have not so far met with success owing to the sudden floods to which the river is liable. A fuller survey of the prospects for paper pulp production is currently in progress.

Programmes for the Development of Sikkim

The idea of planned development to stimulate Sikkim's economy was the outcome of Indian Prime Minister Nehru's first visit to Gangtok in April of 1952. After discussions with Maharaja Tashi Namgyal, and upon his return to New Delhi he directed the Indian Planning Commission to draft a development plan for this country. Nehru's conclusion was that the resources and potentialities of the state were not large and therefore the available resources had to be carefully screened and utilised properly for planned projects. A programme of development, as broadly conceived by Prime Minister Nehru, would in its first phase cover the improvement of all communications, some of these were obviously of strategic value; the promotion of education by opening more schools; the expanding of health facilities; and finally the setting up, in gradual stages, of small and large-scale industries based on Sikkim's natural wealth—copper and other metallic ores, agriculture and timber. According to him the fostering of cottage industries, too, merited greater attention.

A number of experts of the Indian Planning Commission visited Sikkim and drafted a seven-year economic development plan for the period starting 1954 through to 1961. Guide lines for the achievement of the plan objectives for Sikkim were laid down. The main points of the plan were:

- (a) The improvement of road communications: the opening up of northern and eastern Sikkim by extending the national highway to Lachen and Lachung in the north and to Nathu-la in the east; a second traffic artery to the east from Ranipul to Pakyong, Rhenock, and finally linking with Rangpo. These thoroughfares were to be the responsibility initially of the Indian Central Public Works Department and later of the Indian Border Roads Organisation because of their strategic importance. The western part of Sikkim to be linked by a roadway running from Singtam through Namchi and Naya Bazar and circling back to Singtam via Geyzing and Rabang-la.
- (b) The provision of additional educational facilities: more schools of both primary and secondary grades to be established throughout the country.
- (c) The reorganisation and expansion of health services: more hospitals, clinics, dispensaries to be built in various parts of the country.
- (d) The completion of basic geological and forest surveys: fundamental data on Sikkim's mineral, timber and other resources was essential

in determining the feasibility of setting up specific industries in the country.

- (e) The fostering of cottage and small-scale industries: this would revive Sikkim's traditional and exquisite arts and crafts—blanket weaving, wood carving, handworked articles in silver and other metals in typical designs.
- (f) The improving of Sikkim's agriculture and horticulture: the expansion of irrigation facilities; setting up seed farms.
- (g) The building of hydro-electric projects: essential for the power requirements of new industries and for modern amenities in towns and villages.

Undertaking a programme on such a vast scale naturally presented its own problems, the main one being an acute shortage of trained manpower. To execute the programme technical experts would mostly have to be supplied by India.

India's contribution to the first development plan was mostly financial and technical. A total of Rs. 325 lakhs¹ was offered by India to Sikkim as grants for the seven year plan period. This did not include amounts spent directly by the Government of India for the extension of the national highway to northern and eastern Sikkim, as these projects were carried out by the Indian Border Roads Organisation and charged to the Indian exchequer. The ropeway from Deorali (Gangtok) to Thegu, near Nathu-la, was financed by an Indian loan.

A second Five-Year Plan was then drafted and approved for the period covering 1961-66. The plan was to cost Rs. 813 lakhs and sought a further all round improvement in living standards, and added impetus to agricultural production, an expansion of cottage and small-scale industries and a general increase in employment for young men and women. Many of the projects of this second plan carried forward work which had been started during the first seven-year plan period.

Now a third Five-Year Plan has now been drawn up, covering the years from 1966 to 1971. With marked progress achieved in the fields of communication, education, health and social services, one could concentrate on increasing domestic economic capacity and building up the State's export potential. Agricultural development called for closer attention as with a growth in population and a rise in the standard of living, planned progress had brought about a gap between consumption and production, particularly of cereals, which was increasing quantitatively year by year. Within the guide lines earlier established, special emphasis was to be placed on the following:

- (a) A further intensification of agricultural programmes towards attaining higher outputs both of food and cash crops.
- (b) Industrialisation based on locally available raw material (agricultural, mineral and timber) resources and the utilisation of specialised

¹ One lakh = 100,000; Rs 325 lakhs = US\$7.0 million (approx.)

skills.

- (c) The expansion of transport and power facilities, already considerably developed in the first two plans.

This did not mean that other aspects of development were to be ignored. Social services, for example, were to receive the same close attention as in the past plan periods. In many a sense, the existing services and facilities are still primitive and further development is essential for the well being of the people.

The third plan entails a cost of Rs. 900 lakhs. This figure includes a special provision of Rs. 210 lakhs for loans for industrial development, both major and small-scale. Among the revenue-earning schemes included in the plan are a tea garden of 1500 acres (to be established over a period of five to ten years), further expansion of Sikkim Nationalised Transport and preliminary work on the Lagyap Hydel Scheme which has a generating potential of some 25,000 kw. of electricity. This is expected to meet the entire demand of Sikkim leaving a surplus for export.

Some statistics of plan achievements during the period 1954 to 1966 are given in an appendix.² The results of this planned development are clearly discernible in the villages. Most villages now, as well as other population centres, are no more than a few hundred yards from a paved road. The extensive road building that has been carried through makes it possible to move agricultural produce to market and distribution centres by motor truck rather than on mule back, the common means of conveyance until a few years ago. And with access to highways, life in the villages has undergone a deep change. For instance: Every child in Sikkim can be a pupil and attend a primary school. Schools are within walking distance of most villages. As regards public health strikingly better standards of hygiene and care have been achieved. Programmes of malaria eradication, vaccination, etc. have resulted in a vast all-round improvement in efficiency.

Agriculture is traditionally the mainstay of Sikkim's economy. Of its population of 180,000 (estimated), some 130,000 are dependent on the land. So special emphasis was placed on agricultural development. Experimental laboratories and model farms have been set up at various places: To name a few: Geyzing, Tadong, Lachung, Ribdi. Government nurseries at Geyzing and Ninth Mile, also at Lachung, assist the farmer in horticultural development. Trained workers and specialists teach the farmers improved methods of agriculture, and plant protection facilities are available as a part of government assistance.

The Cottage Industries Institute, a Sikkim government institution in Gangtok set up in 1957, instructs boys and girls in the traditional arts and crafts such as weaving, carpet making and wood carving.

² See Appendix VIII

Those who are trained in the Institute then take their knowledge and skills back to the villages and it is hoped that this diffusion will lead to subsidiary occupations and income.

Sikkim's first hydro-electric power project at Sangkhola was completed in 1964. It has a capacity of 2100 kw. and now provides power to Gangtok, Singtam and Rangpo. Four other 'micro-hydel' schemes³ have been planned and work is in progress. When completed they will supply power to Mangan, Naya Bazar, Namchi, Geyzing, Pakyong and other townships.

Sikkim's per capita income is higher than that in most parts of India. It is now estimated at Rs. 700 per annum. For its area and population the per capita export factor is also higher than that in many equivalent areas of India. Together, the principal export crops of cardamoms, oranges, apples and potatoes were estimated (in 1960) to be worth Rs. 70 lakhs. In 1967 this will be about three times as much. There is no unemployment in Sikkim and no beggars.

The revenue-earning capacity of the state has increased a great deal. In 1960, Sikkim's revenue was Rs. 41 lakhs; in the current year the estimate is about Rs. 120 lakhs. It is gratifying to see that in a period of six to seven years the revenue has almost trebled. This is no doubt due to the success of planned development initiated in Sikkim in 1954 by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

India has given all its support to the planned economic progress of the country. Sikkim's successive programmes have been backed and financed by the government of India. India has also provided expert and technical assistance wherever it was needed for development. Yet many Sikkimese are critical of India's aid and assistance stating that this is done with ulterior motives and selfish interests. Nothing could be further from the truth. Perhaps the best answer to these criticisms is Chogyal Palden Thondup's statement on the occasion of the Ser-Thri-Nga-Sol (his installation as Chogyal) in March of 1965. He then said:

While the streams of many and diverse cultures have for generations flowed into and enriched Sikkim, her geographical situation also raises problems that lay upon her people a special burden of responsibility. India is a great and peace-loving country and we feel secure in her protection. But we are also conscious and alive to the need of preparing our own people for any eventuality, so that they may be ready to lay down their lives in the defence of their country should the occasion arise.

India has been a good friend to Sikkim and we have received from her generous assistance for which I and my people shall always remain deeply grateful. The bonds of friendship between our two countries are strong and indissoluble and I take the opportunity to affirm, on this solemn day, that it will be our purpose and endeavour to yet

³ These are the Rothak, Rongli, Manul and Rimbi Micro-Hydel Projects.

further strengthen these bonds in fullest measure. We recall with profound affection the memory of Jawaharlal Nehru, a true and steadfast friend of Sikkim, and we have confidence that the Government of India will continue to hold out to us the hand of friendship.

His statement was indeed a generous recognition of India's friendly assistance to Sikkim.

Government and Administration

IN previous chapters dealing with political growth and change in Sikkim since India's independence in 1947 the general pattern of the government and the administrative structure of the country was described. The Chogyal has complete authority over the executive powers of the state. His chief aide and executive officer is termed the Principal Administrative Officer, presently R.N. Haldipur and is the successor to the Dewans of the earlier period. The Principal Administrative Officer is appointed by the Chogyal though like the Dewans he is an officer of the Government of India on loan to Sikkim. The powers and functions of the Principal Administrative Officer are established by the Chogyal under an informal internal arrangement. During the Chogyal's absence, the Principal Administrative Officer functions on his behalf, subject to his actions being later confirmed by the Chogyal.

The State Council, as already mentioned before, has been successively enlarged since 1953 and has now 24 members against 17 at that time. The Executive Council, a component of the State Council, continues

unchanged since its first establishment in 1958 and has two Executive Councillors with three deputies drawn from the principal political parties represented on the State Council. The functions of the Councillors and the State Council have also been explained in previous chapters. The Principal Administrative Officer is the ex-officio president of both the State Council and the Executive Council. Important decisions are submitted to the Chogyal for his acceptance. In financial matters the powers of the Executive Councillors are limited. Under the present arrangement the Executive Councillors who are elected members of the State Council are responsible for education, public health, transport, bazars, excise, forests, public works, animal husbandry, agriculture, press and publicity. Both the State Councillors and the Executive Councillors have the prerogative to bring any matter concerning the valid interests of Sikkim to the notice of the Chogyal.

Administration is run by a Secretariat headed by a Chief Secretary under whom are departmental secretaries responsible for individual matters such as finance, panchayats, land revenues, education, public works and law and order. The Chief Secretary is also the head of the district administrative system functioning through four district officers. Revenue collection in the districts is in charge of officials who are designated revenue officers. At the village level panchayats have been established since 1966. The panchayats are responsible for village administration and coordination of the development programmes. The maintenance of village roads, water supply and schools is one of their principal functions. Elections to the panchayat are on the basis of one vote to each family and campaigning on party tickets is not permitted.

To facilitate local administration, Sikkim is divided into four districts, a northern district with headquarters at Mangan, an eastern with Gangtok as the headquarters, and southern and western districts with Namchi and Geyzing, respectively, as their headquarters. In each of these, there is a District Officer who is also the Magistrate, a Deputy Development Officer, and an Inspector of Land Revenue who share responsibility for district administration and tax collection.

Some of the departments do not have a Secretary but a Director, or an equivalent technical authority. There are thus the Director of Education, the Director of Health Services, the Chief Engineer, the Commissioner of Police, the Conservator of Forests. The Chief Secretary as well as the Secretaries and Directors are subordinate to the Principal Administrative Officer and work under his orders.

Some special departments come directly under the Chogyal in respect of subjects which are outside the competence of the Council or "reserved" subjects as they may be called. One of them is relations with India. Another is the monastic sphere, the Secretary for ecclesiastical affairs functioning under the Chogyal, though through the Principal Administrative Officer. The Chogyal also deals with law and order

except in routine matters which are the concern of the Chief Secretary.

A coordinating authority dealing with many different departments is the Development Commissioner, who draws up development programmes and assesses progress in relation to planning. He functions in close collaboration with the heads of several departments.

There is a Financial Adviser who combines the functions of advice with audit in regard to expenditure on development. In respect of developmental projects it is his duty to advise the various departmental heads on the financial propriety of their actions or proposals for action. There is a Chief Accounts Officer who is also the chief auditor of the state whose responsibility is to draw attention to the misuse of state funds or the contravention of rules and regulations governing the propriety of expenditure. The Finance Secretary maintains the accounts of the revenue and expenditure of the state submitted to him through the District Officers and the state bankers, Messrs. Jetmull Bhojraj.

State revenue is derived mainly from income and sales tax, excise, bazars, forests and the state nationalised transport. There are several minor taxes, including land revenue with an inconsiderable yield.

The judiciary is distinct and independent. As mentioned before, a High Court was established in 1955 under a special charter. Besides the Judge of the High Court there are other judicial authorities: a Chief Magistrate in Gangtok, and four Magistrates, one in each of the district headquarters. Some laws have been codified and an attempt is being made to compile a complete system of laws. In many cases, particularly where heavy sentences for criminal offences are concerned, the final appellate authority is the Chogyal who, if he thinks necessary, may appoint a Tribunal to further examine the case. Capital punishment was abolished in Sikkim in 1948.

Some attempts to set up an administration in Sikkim on modern lines, as a departure from primitive feudalism, started with the first British Political Officer John Claude White in 1889. He tried to lay down a basic administrative structure and to regulate the taxation system. He appointed clerks to be in charge of various departments. With the appointment of Dewans who were officers solely in charge of the administration of the country, from 1949 onwards, the modernisation of the administrative system made steady progress. The revenue system was further revised, the evils of landlordism largely controlled, the revenue collecting and magisterial functions of landlords altogether done away with, and several departments established to deal with health, education, public works and so on. Monastic estates were brought under control and attempts made to put them on a self-sufficient basis, though considerable government subsidies are still granted to them.

There is as yet no civil service nor is there any regular system of recruitment to the administration and most government positions are recommended by the Darbar. A number of the top posts are held by

Indian officials on deputation as there are not enough trained Sikkimese. In the appointment of Sikkimese to government posts the "parity formula" is important and the Nepalis have to be balanced with the Lepcha-Bhutias. This is a practice which works against efficient administration though it may help in maintaining communal harmony. Even scholarships follow the parity principle. The number of the elite, particularly in the sciences and technology, is low and few Sikkimese come forward to man the available posts. Until a sufficient number of young men and women from Sikkim are ready to fill a majority of the administrative and technical posts, the personality of the country will be weakened and critical political elements may express the view that India continues to dominate Sikkim and to support vested interests in the country. In several respects the present administrative structure could with realism and enlightenment be considerably improved upon.

Political Parties

In other chapters which dealt with political developments there have been references explaining the political party system in Sikkim. Political fronts or organisations were in existence from the early thirties. Their interest in the government of Sikkim and its future was stimulated by the preparations, after World War II, for the withdrawal of British power from India. Under the stress of events their ideas became more clearly defined and political parties emerged just before the independence of India.

The two oldest political parties, the Sikkim State Congress and the Sikkim National Party, were more formally established in 1947 when the "winds of change" blew across India. The Praja Sammelan, a comparatively small party, also had its origin at about the same time. Two other political organisations, the creatures of circumstances, established themselves later.

The basis of the political organisations is the ethnological division of Sikkim into Lepchas, the earliest inhabitants, the Bhutias, migrants from Tibet some four to six centuries back, and the Nepalis immigrants of barely 100 or 150 years ago. While the Lepchas and Bhutias once owned the land between them and a group of powerful Kazis divided the state into autonomous districts for the collection of revenue, the newly arrived Nepalis, industrious and thrifty, gradually encroached on the land, and in comparatively short time became the most important group both economically and politically. In numbers, too, the growth of the Nepali population was far more rapid than the Lepchas and the Bhutias. But, until twenty years ago the Nepalis were not accepted as full fledged Sikkimese subjects and even today there are restrictions on the Nepalis acquiring agricultural land in areas predominantly populated by the Lepcha-Bhutia.

The Sikkim State Congress, the oldest political organisation, was

founded in 1947 and played a significant role in the days which followed India's independence. According to the party's constitution which was adopted in June 1951 and later amended in April 1954, its objects were as follows:

The well being and advancement of the people of Sikkim; the achievement of political, economic and social development of Sikkim under the protection of Bharat; the establishment by peaceful, non-violent and constitutional means and with the cooperation of the people a democratic and fully responsible government with the Maharaja as the constitutional head, and based, as in Bharat, on the principle of equality of rights and the abolition of all religious, caste, colour and sex discriminations.

The president of the party today is Kashiraj Pradhan and its Secretary, Adiklal Pradhan.

The Sikkim National Party, which evolved at about the same time, represents the views and interests of the Bhutias, and to a lesser extent of the Lepchas. The party has not adopted any formal charter or constitution, but its objectives as declared in public statements and pronouncements include: the maintenance of Sikkim as a distinct national entity, the safeguarding of the interests of the Lepchas and Bhutias versus the Nepalis, the strengthening of relations with India and the abolition of landlordism and slave labour in Sikkim. The President of the party today is Martam Topden and the Secretary, Harka Bahadur Basnet.

The Rajya Praja Sammelan, a third political organisation, was also in 1947 founded by Dhan Bahadur Tewari Chhetri and Goverdhan Pradhan, an elder brother of Kashiraj Pradhan. Its first declared aim was complete union with India and affiliation and identification with the Gurkha population of North Bengal. At one time it had links with the All India Gurkha League, but this is no longer apparent.

In 1960 another political party called the Sikkim National Congress was established as the outcome of a split within the State Congress. Its leadership included Kazi Lhendup Dorji, one time a founder-member of the State Congress, as President and Sonam Tsering as Vice-President. According to the party's constitution, the aims of the organisation are:

The achievement by peaceful revolution of the fundamental rights of the Sikkimese people, guaranteed by a written constitution that ipso facto entails a completely representative government with an executive entirely responsible to an elected National Assembly elected by adult franchise, by non-communal voting and counting systems, based on parity between Bhutia-Lepchas and Nepalis; and secondly, the achievement of constitutional monarchy.

One must mention yet another political organisation which is called

the Scheduled Castes League, which existed even before the Sikkim National Congress. It was founded by P.B. Khati and its declared aim is to promote the interests of the scheduled castes, who belong mainly to the Nepali community. Its chief demand has been for the reservation of a seat in the Council for the scheduled castes, a demand which has been met in the most recent formula for the composition of the State Council.

These various political organisations have common problems: a shortage of finances and weak political cadres especially at the village level. The drawback of the political system in Sikkim is the lack of active participation by the younger generation: the result is that the leaders of 1947 continued, and still continue, to be in office in 1967. The malaise can at least be traced partly to the fact that effective, responsible and representative government is difficult under the present system of elections to the State Council and the distribution of seats between elected and nominated members. A dynamic, progressive political life in Sikkim is therefore difficult to achieve and political stagnation is inevitable in the present phase.

India's Special Responsibilities

Relations between India and Sikkim are based on the treaty concluded and signed on 5 December 1950. In accordance with the terms of this Treaty, Sikkim is described as a "protectorate" of India, and India has direct responsibility for three specific matters: external relations, defence and communications. There has been criticism about the use of the word "protectorate". It is said to connote or suggest the existence of a colonial relationship between India and Sikkim. Such an interpretation would be far from correct. The treaty between Sikkim and India was freely negotiated by representatives of the two governments after the lapse of British paramountcy; and Sikkim of her own free accord passed on these special responsibilities to India. This was in fact recognition and realisation by Sikkim of her geographical and political position. Other than in these three specified matters, full autonomy vests in the Sikkim Darbar and India assumes no interfering role. This word "protectorate" would therefore imply, and correctly so, a voluntary association between Sikkim and India where the former has literally placed herself under India's protection.

India, in consequence of its special responsibilities, maintains some essential departments and offices in Sikkim. They are the offices of the Central Public Works Department and the Indian Border Roads Organisation. They coordinate their activity and share responsibility in building and maintaining national highways, especially the roads from North Bengal to Gangtok and from Gangtok to the northern and eastern parts of the country.

The postal, telegraph and telephone services are also run by the

government of India as an integral part of the Indian system of communications. There is no special currency in Sikkim nor postage stamps distinct from the Indian. The Indian rupee is legal tender everywhere. There is no trade or customs barrier between Sikkim and North Bengal, though in principle taxes, such as sales tax, levied by the West Bengal government are not collected on business transactions relating to Sikkim.

Troops of the Indian Army stand on guard along Sikkim's frontier with Tibet, for the defence and security of both Sikkim and India. Today, one can assume that India's frontier with China is the Chumbi Valley and the crest of the Himalayas along Sikkim's northern border with Tibet.

The government of India maintains in Gangtok for purposes of coordinating its activities in Sikkim what is called the Political Office. The title has been carried forward from the days of British influence and control, but the functions of this office are now of a radically different nature. It is principally an office of liaison between the government of India and Sikkim and assists the Sikkim Darbar in relation to the many efforts being made towards the economic and social development of the country. To call it the Political Office is perhaps a misnomer, in that some elements in the local political parties understand it, though incorrectly, to be a symbol of the government of India's so-called control over the state, functioning to protect vested interests in Sikkim and some individuals see in it the watchful eye of the Government of India which they could well do without.

Chapter VII

The Road Ahead

THE road ahead is difficult, though not obscure. Sikkim lies on the shortest and most direct route from the plateau of Tibet to the plains of India. In the past, British power was attracted to Sikkim and established itself there to keep open the most direct trade route to Lhasa which led ultimately to Peking. The prime function of the British Political Officer, until the eclipse of British power in the Indian sub-continent, was to guard the trade offices at Yatung, Gyantse and Lhasa and keep communications alive. With the drastic changes which took place in 1947, the British relinquished their Tibetan interests and with it the various British run offices in Tibet. These offices were taken over by the government of India, not that Indo-Tibetan trade had ever proved to be lucrative for even at its peak it was insignificant.

British offices in Tibet, however, had a certain political importance. On the one hand, they served as a warning to the Chinese, who had invaded Tibet from time to time and imposed their will on the government of the land, and, on the other, they stood as a reminder that the British Government of India was vitally interested in the peace and tranquillity of regions across her northern borders, however inaccessible the mountain ranges were. The independent government of India did

not, and could not, wish to inherit the British mantle of imperialism. Its interest in Tibet was based on cultural and religious tradition going back into the distant past—to the days of the Buddha. There were no considerations of commerce or power.

The emergence of a powerful and ruthless China threw Sino-Tibetan relations back into the worst period of their history. Through persecution and oppression Tibet was reduced to abject slavery, and in their hundreds and thousands Tibetans fled for refuge to Sikkim, Bhutan and across the north-east frontier into India. Bereft of everything they possessed, driven to sell their earrings and amulets, corals and turquoises for a few days' sustenance, the refugees sank into abject poverty. Chinese measures to stop the flight of the Tibetans meant the end of the trade route to Tibet. The door to the north of Sikkim opening into Tibet was slammed shut by China and still remains shut.

The route to the south, to the plains of India, became vital, more meaningful to the Sikkimese. Long before the events in Tibet Indo-Sikkimese relations had a new purpose: In fact, as early as 1952, Prime Minister Nehru and the then Maharaja, Tashi Namgyal, outlined this in plans for the economic and social development of the country. Since then Sikkim's progress has made great strides, and as each day goes by some further significant improvement is recorded. This is as it should be; a modern, progressive, economically strong Sikkim is vitally important both to herself and to India.

The old pattern of political relations between Sikkim and India has also changed with the independence of India. A new treaty was concluded in 1950, underlining a partnership between the two countries premised on a clear realisation of the mutual interests of both Sikkim and India. That the treaty and the basis of mutual relations has stood the test for over 20 years since India's independence, is itself proof that relations between the two are established on a sound, firm foundation, on indissoluble bonds.

Despite these features, although good in themselves, there are some disturbing factors. It is difficult to think of Sikkim as economically viable or self-generating, at least for a decade or two. Nature in Sikkim is extravagant but not really bountiful. The exploitation of the country's natural resources calls for heavy investment of capital and highly specialised skills. Both are scarce and difficult to secure. Investment in a sensitive area is not an attractive proposition. And education, unfortunately, though conducted in well established institutions, is limited in scope and almost neglects the first steps to developing specialised skills. If Sikkim's economic disadvantages of expensive road haulage and generally higher costs of living, and therefore of wage levels, are to be overcome, compensating factors such as specialisation and sophistication in production are highly important and must be introduced.

The domestic political scene is again, not very encouraging. Political

life in Sikkim is almost stagnant. The political parties have failed to enthuse the people, and new currents hardly flow in the political stream. The younger generation seems to stand aloof and some of it takes shelter, somewhat sulkily, behind slogans accusing India of a lack of sympathy or even of a new imperialism. This is not the truth. The simple fact is that the political structure needs change and revitalisation.

Nationalism in Sikkim must have more real content. The men and women, particularly the young, must feel that they belong here and they have an individual stake in the land. The personality of Sikkim, however enlightened the Ruler, should be built up with an increasing share of the administrative and managerial posts held by Sikkimese. "Sikkimisation", inadequate though the word is, cannot be achieved as long as trained graduates do not return to take up positions in their own country.

The future of Sikkim and the strength of Sikkim lies, on the one hand, in a real, meaningful partnership of the many elements, among them the dynamic, progressive ruler, the Chogyal, the administrators, the politicians, all of whom undoubtedly have the interest of the country and the people at heart; and, on the other, a friendly, genuinely sympathetic understanding between Sikkim and India, where the interests of the two countries are just one, single, objective and not two antagonisms.

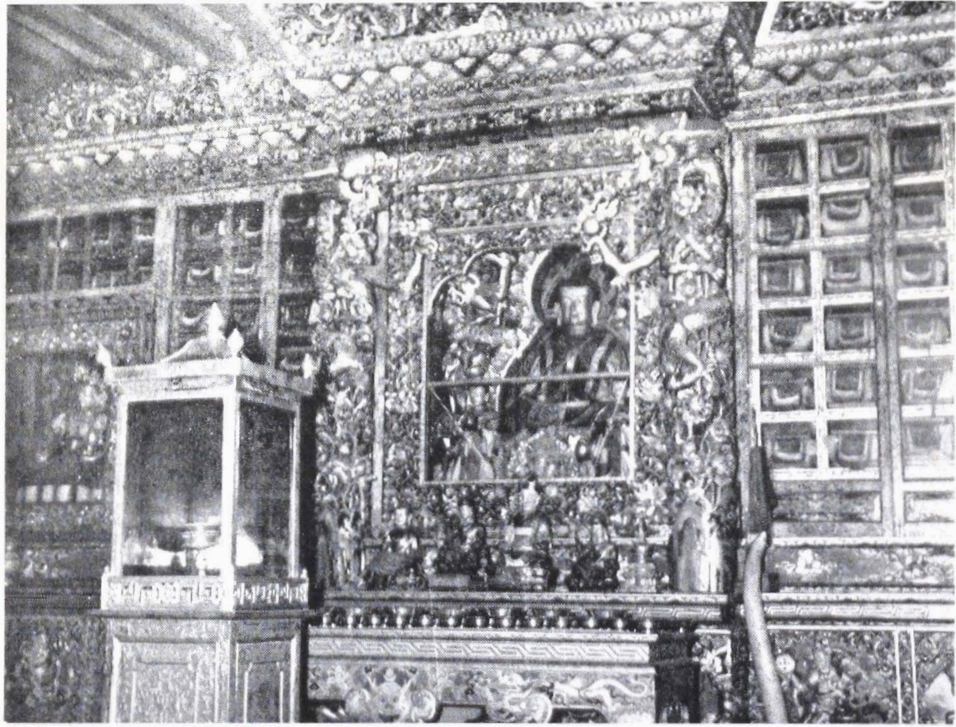
SIKKIM



Their Highnesses the Chogyal and the Gyalmo accompanied by the Author and Mrs. Coelho on a tour of West Sikkim.

The Palace at Gangtok on the occasion of the Losang Festival.

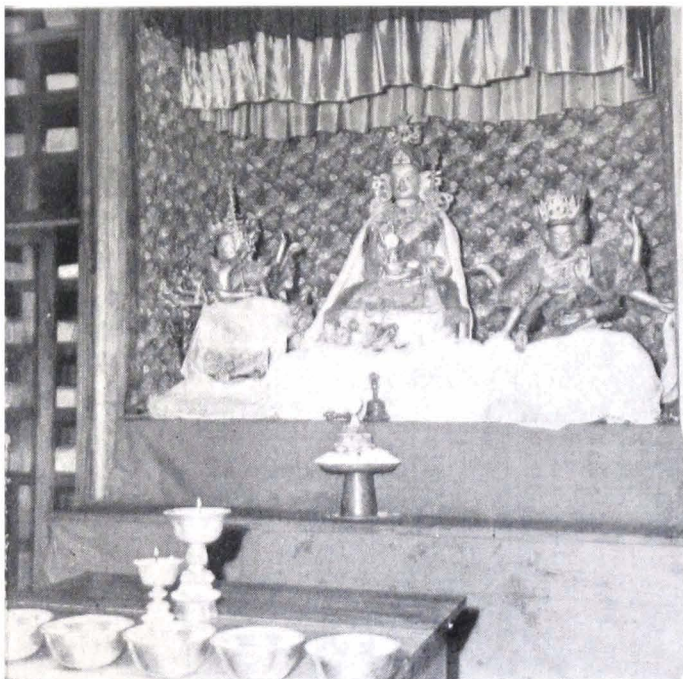




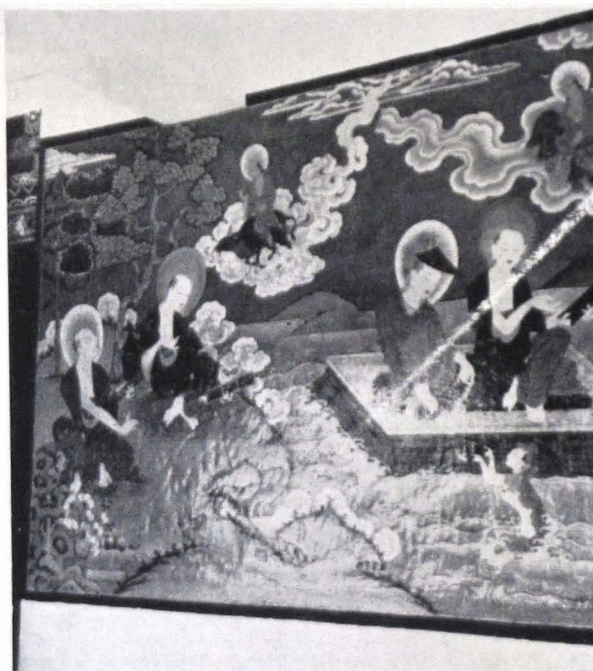
Gautama Buddha's idol at one of the many monasteries in Sikkim showing excellent craftsmanship.

Her Highness the Gyälmo with Sikkimese ladies, in traditional costumes.





An idol of Guru Padma Sambhava at the Gompa near the Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok.



A Tibetan painting depicting the six jewels of the world at the Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok.

The Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok.



A Lama with 'Torma', conical oblations made of 'Tsampa', in hand, pauses before Ganapati while going to the Assembly Hall in the Rumtek Monastery, Sikkim.



A Sikkimese girl and a child.

BHUTAN



His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo with the Indian Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, at Thimphu on her arrival there on May 3, 1968.



His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo and Crown Prince Jigme Singhye.



A demonstration of archery; the national sport of Bhutan.

A group of "masked dancers".



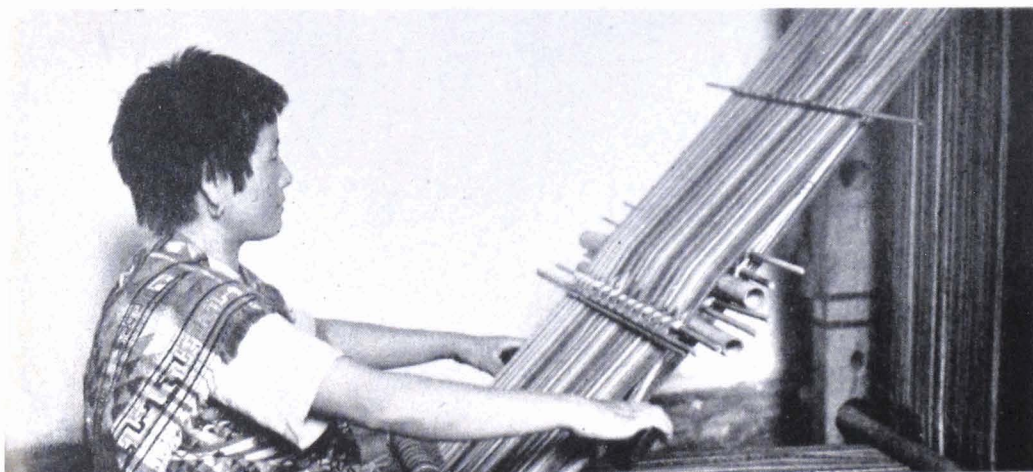


The Yak-Po-dancers (Yakwallas).



Jokers at a dance performance.

A Bhutanese lady weaving cloth in traditional design.





A Bhutanese family at meal time.

His Holiness the Jey Khemp.



BHUTAN

The Land and the People

EMERGING from a static past, after centuries of isolation, into the world of today is the Kingdom of Bhutan, a land of a virile people whose origins are lost in obscurity, but who retain a tradition dating back many hundreds of years. Bhutan was cut off from contemporary civilization, as we understand it, until a few years ago. It evolved its own pattern of existence, curiously without the impositions of religious or political reformers. Sparse population, rugged terrain, and poor communications discouraged the ferment of ideas. Down the centuries, there were a few travellers, hardly more than a dozen or so, who introduced novelties from the world outside, notably an Indian guru who brought Buddhism, a thousand years ago. There were some searchers after truth or adventure, lamas from Tibet, officials of the East India Company, and finally envoys of the British Empire. They travelled the hard way, along rough and dangerous tracks, over steep mountains and swollen streams; and many arduous days of journeying either from the plains of India or from the heights of Tibet were needed mostly on mule or horseback, with caravans of ponies to carry their camp outfit and personal effects.

Bhutan lay hidden in the mountain slopes of the Great Himalayas.

It was cut off from the north, except for a few, almost inaccessible passes, by the snow-capped peaks of that great range, and from the south by dense tropical forests. Bhutan in fact had no easy access to anywhere nor was readily accessible from the outside. The first paved road from the border town of Phuntsholing to the capital, Thimphu, was completed as recently as 1962 making it possible to undertake a journey in seven hours that previously took twice as many days. A similar highway in the east, linking Tashigang, the principal town in that part of the country, with the southern plains of Assam, and roads cutting across Bhutan from west to east will bring to that land new contacts and with such contacts new ideas and perhaps an awakening. Work on these projects started in 1964 but will take a few years more to complete.

The people are quaint, but they display social and economic characteristics based on traditions that make for national discipline. Their habits of dress and food, their customs, religious practices, pantomimic dances are their own, different from those of their neighbours near or far. Bhutan may be 'feudal' or, in a sense, 'primitive', yet there is in that country a strong class of lamas, an independent peasantry and skilled artisans who produce some of the finest objects in wood and silver and fabrics of cotton, silk and wool. In their own special way, they have a voice in their government: they hold opinions and make them known, in no uncertain manner, as to what should or should not be done. This type or form of 'democracy', or such 'democratic methods' have no parallel elsewhere.

Bhutan has a young ruler, named the Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, who was born in 1928 and who succeeded his father, the Maharaja, in 1952. He has the love, respect and regard of his people, whether lama, peasant or the new university-educated administrator. The destiny of the land is in his hands; the shaping of its future is a task for him and his people who extend their willing cooperation to him. Gradually, a new Bhutan is being shaped where the best of the age old traditions and the characteristic patterns of culture will be retained and moulded with the needs of today's civilisation. The task is a most demanding and challenging one.

The historical and anthropological beginnings of Bhutan and the Bhutanese people are shrouded in mystery. The name 'Bhutan' cannot be easily explained; it has either a mixed or unknown derivation. The inhabitants themselves call their country 'DRUK-YUL', or 'the Land of the Dragon', while the name 'Bhutan' seems to be a term used by foreigners starting with 'Bhut', a name given by the Tibetans to their own country and 'tan' perhaps a corruption of 'stan' as found in Indo-Persian names such as 'Hindustan' and 'Afghanistan'. It could also be derived, some say, from the name 'Bhotanta', meaning an extension or the end of 'Bhot', that is the land of Tibet.

The earliest reference to Bhutan in published records in English

is in Hakluyt's "Voyages" which date back to the late 16th century:

"There is a country", he says, "four days journey from Cuch or Quichue, before mentioned, which is called Bootantar, and the city Boottea, the king is called Durmain, the people whereof are very tall and strong; and there are merchants which come out of China, and they come to sell musk, agates, silk, pepper, and saffron of Persia. The country is very great; three months journey. There are very high mountains in this country, and one of them is so steep that when six days journey off it, he may see it perfectly. Upon these mountains are people which have ears of a span long, if their ears be not long, they call them apes. They say, that when they be upon the mountains, they see ships in the sea sailing to and fro; but they know not from whence they come nor whither they go. There are merchants which come out of the east; they say, from under the sun which is from China, which have no beards; and they say, there it is sometimes warm. But those which come from the other side of the mountains, which is from the north, say, there it is very cold. The Northern merchants are apparelled with woollen cloth and hats, white hozen close, and boots which be of Muscovia or Tartary. They report that in their country they have very good horses, but they be little; some men have four, five or six hundred horses and kine, they live with milk and flesh. They cut the tails of their kine, and sell them very dear; for they be in great request, and much esteemed in those parts; the hair of them is a yard long. They use to hang them for bravery upon the heads of their elephants; they be much used in Pegu and China, they buy and sell by scores upon the ground. The people be very swift on foot."

Bhutan has an area of approximately 18,000 square miles and is located on the slopes of the eastern Himalayas. It is bounded on the north by Tibet, on the west by Sikkim and the Chumbi valley of Tibet and on the east and south by the Indian states of Assam and West Bengal. The mountains of the eastern Himalayan range divide the country into many gigantic valleys. As they fall away from the Himalayan crests they form long sloping ridges north-south to the plains of the Brahmaputra basin a hundred miles away. These almost parallel mountain ranges are again broken up into innumerable smaller ranges, which form a vast labyrinth of valleys.

Geographical Features

The terrain can be divided roughly into three distinct zones: first, the foothills which adjoin the plains of the Brahmaputra basin; the second, a central belt, between the foothills and the highlands; and thirdly, the highlands, leading up to the watershed of the Great Himalayas and the frontiers of Tibet.

The first zone, or tract, includes a small strip of the plains and then the foothills to a depth of some 20 to 30 miles. The mountains covered with a thick growth of tropical jungle rise impressively and abruptly from the plains and are cut into deep valleys or gorges by rivers which

are prone to sudden floods. The altitude varies from 3,000 to 8,000 ft. above sea level. The annual rainfall can be as much as 200 inches. Generally, the climate is hot and humid and is considered unhealthy during the monsoon season.

The second zone is made up of the valleys at altitudes varying from 3,000 to 10,000 ft. above sea level which, with their dividing ridges, extend some 40 miles inland and northwards. The valleys are comparatively wide and flat, with a moderate rainfall and are fairly well populated and cultivated. Here the slopes of the mountains are much more gradual. In this region the four main valleys are nurtured by the waters of the Amo-chu, Wong-chu, Ma-chu and Manas rivers.

The third, or northernmost zone, includes the snow-capped Himalayan ranges which rise to altitudes of 24,000 ft. and here the valleys are at heights of between 11,000 and 18,000 ft. The zone forms part of the Greater Himalayas and the prominent peaks are the Chomolhari in the west (23,930 ft.) and Kulukangri (also Kulagangri) in the north (24,740 ft.), which remain covered with snow throughout the year. The tree line is generally at 13,000 ft., with coniferous forests of pine and fir.

There is a feature of special importance in the contour of the land: one of the many spurs of the Himalayas which runs from the north to the south, called the 'Black Mountain range', seems almost to divide Bhutan climatically and ethnographically. This range which forms the watershed between the Sankosh (Ma-chu) and Manas rivers is traversed by only the Pele-la (pass). To the east of the range the people have greater affinity with the population of the Assam hills, with a smaller, darker, stature; and, to the west, they retain more of the Tibeto-Mongoloid features. The 'Black Mountain range' also allows the deeper penetration of the monsoon currents into the north of the country and consequently the wet zone in the east extends as far as the snow line while in the west it stops in the valleys.

There are in addition many other ranges which follow, generally, a north-south direction: the Masong-chung-dong, separating the rivers Amo-chu and Wong-chu; the Dokyong-la, dividing the Wong-chu and the Ma-chu; and finally the Tawang range which is located in the far eastern part of Bhutan.

Another feature of some importance seems a natural corollary of the dissection of the entire terrain of Bhutan by a vast system of rivers and their tributaries. The southern borders of Bhutan, which run for about 200 miles alongside Indian territory, emerge onto the plains of North Bengal and Assam in a series of gaping gorgemouths known as the 'duars' or gateways. There are 18 such duars, 11 between the rivers Teesta and Manas in West Bengal and the other seven between the Manas and Dhonseri in Assam.¹

¹ The Bengal duars are: Dahalimkote, Mynaguri, Chamurchi, Luckee, Buxa, Bhulka, Bara, Gumar, Cherrung and Bagh; the Assam duars: Burree Goomah, Kalling, Shurkolla, Banska, Chappaguri, Chapkahama and Bynee.

Early History

THERE is practically no recorded early history of Bhutan. Fire, earthquake, flood and internecine war unfortunately destroyed whatever records may once have existed and these were few. The accidental burning in 1832 of Punakha, at that time one of the capitals of Bhutan, and the earthquake of 1897 were especially responsible. The earthquake of 1897 destroyed almost entirely the library of the Tongsa Penlops, and only a few of the manuscripts were saved. The printing establishment at Sonagachi also had a fire about 1830 which completed the havoc.

We have from early British and Indian travellers to Bhutan the first reports of the legends prevalent in the country. These legends speak of a personage named Sangaldip coming from the region of Kooch (whether this was in Bhutan or Assam is not known). In the seventh century A.D. Sangaldip conquered the countries of Bengal and Bihar, fighting against Raja Kedar of Lakhaute or Gaur and was later defeated by Piran Vaish, General of Afrasaib, King of Turan or Tartary.

In the middle of the eighth century A.D., an Indian guru named Padma Sambhava (meaning 'the Lotus Born'), won Bhutan to the Buddhist faith. The chief rulers of that time were the Khi-kha-ra-thoid

of Khempajong in Kurtoi and Naguchhi, King of Sindhu. The site and ruins of the latter's palace, Changkhar Gome (literally the iron fort without doors), are still there today. Naguchhi, who was the second son of King Singhala of Serkhya, founded the kingdom of Sindhu and his sons enlarged and extended his realm to Dorji-tag and Har in Tibet.

During a battle which Naguchhi fought against Raja Nabudara, who lived in the plains of India, his eldest son was killed. Naguchhi was despondent with grief, and in this period of sorrow Guru Padma Sambhava arrived. With the aid of the King's daughter, Menmo Jashi Kyeden, the Guru succeeded in helping him to forget his tragic loss. According to legend Naguchhi could be compared to King Solomon, for in addition to wisdom and bravery he had almost a hundred wives all of them the most beautiful women of India or Tibet.

King Nabudara was also converted to Buddhism by the Guru and peace was restored to the land and a boundary pillar set up at Nathang in Khen. The peaceful reign lasted a century until the kingdom was destroyed by invading Tibetan hordes during the rule of Langdarma (also Landarma), the apostate King of Tibet. King Langdarma reigned in Tibet from 803 to 842 A.D. Two centuries later, Bhutan was again occupied by the followers of King Triral-chan of Tibet.

Somewhat later the history of Bhutan was closely influenced by the origin and growth of the Dukpa sect of Buddhism founded by Yeses Dorji at Ralung, a famed monastery about 30 miles east of Gyantse. Yeses, or to give him his full name, Gro Gong Tshangpa Gyal-ras, was born in A.D. 1160, and died in 1210. The Dukpas formed originally one of the subdivisions of the Nyingmapa sect and it has been recorded that it was entirely due to Yeses and his followers that Bhutan began to merge as a separate and distinct entity. Then followed a steady influx of lamas, and with the lamas monasteries were set up and temples built in many parts of the land. But the country remained under the control of a multitude of warring chieftains and was broken up into fragments with no central authority.

During this agitated period a young Buddhist lama from China came to visit Yeses' successor, Sangye-on, at Ralung, and was there given the name of Fago-Duk-gom-Shigpo (also spelt Farchu Dupgein Shabdung). After studying at Ralung for some years, this young lama, popularly referred to as Duk-gom, was sent by the Ralung monastery to Bhutan, and settled at Cheri Dordam in the western part of Bhutan where he remained with his wife and family. However, his fame as a distinguished lama spread, rousing the jealousy of Lha-pha (also referred to as Lama Apha), a rival lama then living in the same part of the country. Lhapha decided to attack Cheri Dordam, the stronghold of his rival, but was defeated, and fled. In the flight, he came to the valley of the Am-mo-chhu where he was warmly received by the inhabitants and accepted by them. Lama Lhapha later treacherously betrayed these hospitable people to the Tibetans, who then gained control of the

valley.

John Claude White, the first British Political Officer in Sikkim who set up residence in Gangtok at the close of the 19th century, has recorded most of this early history of Bhutan. As he reported:

With the defeat of his rival, Duk-gom's power increased greatly, and the conversion of the Bhutanese to Buddhism was further assisted by the advent of four other lamas from Tibet. But although so many lamas visited Bhutan and settled there, many of them of sects different from the Dukpas, yet they only served as heralds to symbolise or portray the auspicious advent, some three centuries later, of the Dukpa Rimpoche, Nawang Du-gom, who brought Bhutan under a single ruling power and control.

Nawang Du-gom, better known as Shabdung Nawang Namgyal, came from a noble family. He was the son of Dorji Lenpa Mephram Tempai Nymia. His mother was the daughter of Deba Kyishopa and he was an exceptionally talented and precocious individual. As a child his artistic carvings were marvellous in beauty and showed unusual skill of workmanship. The exact date of his birth is doubtful, but it was about A.D. 1534.¹ He studied under the famous Dukpa lama, Padma Karpo, at the Ralung monastery. He almost succeeded in becoming the chief lama at Ralung but a rival claimant, Karma Tenkgong Wangpo, backed by Deb Tsang-pa was too powerful and Shabdung Nawang Namgyal, annoyed and disgusted, went on a long pilgrimage which led him into Bhutan by the Lingzi (also Lingtsi) pass in A.D. 1557. He was then 23 years old and he lived to be 58. In this span of active life of 35 years, Nawang Duk-gom's ambition and main goal was to consolidate his spiritual as well as his temporal authority. The opposition he had experienced coming from the Deb Tsang-pa of the Ralung monastery and from the descendants of the lamas, who had earlier settled in Bhutan, involved him in incessant discord and frequent and serious fighting. Five or six times, the Tibetans attempted to conquer Bhutan. They even penetrated as far as Simtoka, but each time they suffered defeat and there were many prisoners. An old chronicler reports the following:

It seems as though they (the Tibetans) had come merely to die and leave their bodies in Bhutan. . . . They never besieged or stormed any of the Bhutanese forts, but simply filled the wilderness of Bhutan and Tibet with useless forts and redoubts.

The loot and treasures captured from the vanquished greatly increased the wealth of the Shabdung (Nawang). His prominence and fame spread to India, even to Ladakh in the far north-western part of

¹ Some scholars dispute these dates and are inclined to believe that Shabdung Nawang Namgyal was born in 1594 and entered Bhutan in 1617.

India. The powerful Raja, Padma Narayan of Cooch Behar, sought his friendship and sent presents, as did also Drabya Sahi and Purandar Sahi of Nepal.

Unconnected with the main stream of events, but proof of the Shabdung's fame, is the historically recorded fact that about this time, some foreigners from a distant country called Parduku (probably Portugal) crossing the limitless oceans, made their appearance in Bhutan. They brought with them guns and gunpowder never seen before and a telescope, and offered their services to the Shabdung!

The Shabdung's reign in Bhutan saw the building of many of the larger monasteries and forts in that country. Very few of them have survived destruction by fire or earthquake. The Simtoka Dzong was first built in 1617 and again rebuilt in 1619 and perhaps is the only structure still standing as it was first built. The next oldest is Paro-Dzong built originally as a school of medicine but destroyed by fire in 1907.² Most of the other forts and monasteries have been either rebuilt or enlarged. Punakha Dzong was founded in 1637, then designed to house 600 monks. The Shabdung, when criticised for planning such an enormous house for the monks, answered that the building would in time be found much too small. Indeed, in 1905 there were at least three times as many monks in residence there. The Monastery at Angduphodang (now spelt Wangduphodrang) was begun in 1638, and the Tashi-cho-dzong in 1641. The Shabdung's private quarters are still in existence in the western corner of the fort at Tongsa.

Shabdung Nawang Namgyal was something of a humorist. During the rejoicings at a notable victory over the Tibetans at Punakha, he was asked if he thought it likely they would return or send any more expeditions against Bhutan. His reply was couched in the phrase:

Oh, there is no assurance they will not come again, but as they never do any harm to us it will be all right. This time we have a sufficiency of armour and weapons; we will in future indent for some tea and silks.

The answer subsequently turned out to be a prophecy. Again to quote a Tibetan chronicler of that time:

In the intervals of peace the Dharma Raja (the Shabdung) devoted himself with full energy to his various state duties, founding a body of priesthood, providing for and controlling them, giving instructions to those who were serious seekers after truth; in short, he was pastor, abbot, psalmist, rector, superintendent of carving (for printing purposes), architect of State and monastic buildings, overseer of book-binding and other establishments of the Kagyur library, settlement

² The Original Thimphu dzong, according to some scholars, is believed to be older than the Paro dzong.

officer, chief commandant of the forces for quelling foreign aggressions, chief protector and ruler of his own adherents and followers, chief avenger and punisher of those who were inimical to the cause of Buddhism and the public peace. He was all these in one person, and fulfilled the duties thoroughly and efficiently. He introduced law into lawless Bhutan. His boast was that he never wasted any time in idleness or self complacency.

To improve the ecclesiastical and temporal administration of Bhutan he appointed two of the faithful monks who had come with him from the Ralung monastery, one Nay-tan Pay-kor Jungnay, to be the Chief Khempo (the religious head) whose duties were to enforce the strict observance of vows taken by the lamas, to supervise their studies, and to preside over the religious ceremonies. The second monk named Tenzing Dukgyag, the Amsed of Ralung, was the first Dug Desi (Deb Raja) and his authority extended over the temporal administration of the state. He had the responsibility of dealing with foreign powers, managing the revenues and other resources of the state and of providing the lamas with food. In short while he looked after the temporal affairs of the state, the Shabdung and the Chief Khempo devoted themselves to the monasteries and to religious matters in general.

The character of the first Shabdung was indeed extraordinary. After his death in 1592³ there were three reincarnations: his body re-appeared as the Chos-rgyal (Dharma Raja), his voice as the Chole Tulku, and his mind as the Thi Rimpoche—an incarnation which has since died out. But with the Shabdung's death internal discord and dissension returned to the country. Unity disintegrated and Bhutan returned to the control of many warring chieftains who ruled various fragments. This is where Claude White's report on Bhutan ends.

Even with this unfavourable turn of events a certain framework remained. It consisted of the Chos-rgyal and the Dug Desi and beneath them officers, called Penlops, who were the senior members of a council of seven, known as the Lenchen. The Penlops were the governors of the provinces of Paro, Tongsa and Duka, in the western, eastern and central districts of the country respectively. They were expected to attend the Council whenever they happened to be present at the seat of government. They were also liable to be summoned to appear at times of emergency. Other members of the Council included the Lam Zimpon, a Chief Secretary to the Dharma Raja; the Deb Zimpon, or Chief Secretary to the Deb Raja; the three governors or dzong-pons of the Tashi-cho-dzong, the Punakha and the Angdumphodang Dzongs and the Joom Kalling, or the Chief Judge.

The Dharma Raja had necessarily to be an incarnation, and as a child had to exhibit certain supernatural attributes before he was accepted as the chosen one. The Deb Raja was, on the other hand,

³ Some scholars believe this date to be 1652.

elected by the Council of the permanent members which were chosen from amongst the principal officers of the country who were considered eligible for seats in the Council. In practice, this procedure of election changed into one of nomination by whoever of the Penlops, of eastern or western Bhutan was the more powerful. These two Penlops were usually at war with each other and the Deb Raja became merely the nominee of the stronger one at the time. The Penlops usually appointed the dzong-pons or the district chiefs and when the Penlop fell from power, the dzong-pons were dismissed with him. Subordinate to the dzong-pons were the Nieboos, who supervised scattered groups of villages. In a country like Bhutan, with its physical divisions and differences between loosely knit communities, such a system of government did not seem durable or likely to last. Its main weakness lay in the endless strife between local chieftains. Whoever could attain sufficient power and authority to assume the title of Penlop, appointed the Deb Raja of his choice. His ruling powers only lasted as long as he was capable of not being ousted by a more powerful adversary.

The British Period

WHEN conditions in Bhutan were generally confused and chaotic, a new power arose in India with the emergence of the East India Company. The first encounter between officials of the Company and the Bhutanese was in 1772. The Bhutanese put forward a claim to Cooch-Behar. They invaded that State and kidnapped the Raja, Durender Narain, and his brother, Dewan Deo. Cooch-Behar sought aid from the East India Company, which was readily given. A small force under Captain Jones was sent to drive the Bhutanese back across the borders. This expedition proved successful; the Bhutanese retreated from Cooch-Behar. Thereupon they appealed for help to the Tashi Lama, then the Regent of Tibet, as the Dalai Lama was still a minor, too young to assume his important role. The Tashi Lama wrote to Warren Hastings, who was at that time Governor-General of India, and on his approach the Governor-General agreed to negotiate a treaty of peace.

A Treaty was signed at Fort William in Calcutta in April 1774 between the East India Company and the Bhutanese. Under this treaty, the Bhutanese agreed to release Raja Durender Narain and his brother, and the Company relinquished whatever territory it had taken

during the conflict. The Company also permitted Bhutanese traders to bring in their goods to Rangpur¹ free of any levy of duty.

In the following years a number of special missions and envoys were exchanged between the Bhutanese and the Company. George Bogle had been sent in advance to Bhutan for negotiations which led to the Treaty of 1774. His successor, in 1775, was Hamilton, who went there to examine the claims of the Deb Raja to Falakata in Jalpaiguri District.² Hamilton once again returned to Bhutan in July 1777, to offer congratulations to the new Deb Raja on his succession.

There followed a lull in active relations between the East India Company and the Bhutanese and for a period of time, with the exception of a commercial mission led by Captain Samuel Turner in 1783, there was little intercourse between them until the occupation of Assam by the British in 1826. The annexation of Assam which had a long common frontier on the south and east with Bhutan provoked the Bhutanese who made a series of raids on these new British acquisitions. Reprisals by the British followed and tracts of territory across the Duars were occupied by them. In an effort to settle these incessant disputes, the Company sent an Indian official, Kishen Kanta Bose, to Punakha, then the capital of the Deb Raja of Bhutan. A further mission on a larger scale led by Captain R.B. Pemberton followed in 1837. To his dismay, Captain Pemberton found it almost impossible to have any contact or dealings with the Bhutanese. His mission failed to reach any effective or permanent agreement with Bhutan and he returned to Calcutta with relations between the British and the Bhutanese tense and most unsatisfactory.

There were renewed attacks and invasions of British territory by the Bhutanese who also disputed the payment of tributes demanded of them by the British. With evident impatience the British then sent messages to the Deb and Dharma Rajas in 1863 that yet another mission would be sent to explain their demands. The mission, led by the Hon'ble Ashley Eden, reached Punakha in March, 1864. To his misfortune he was received discourteously and even humiliated by the Tongsa Penlop, then the ruling power in Bhutan. On one occasion a cake of wet barley was slapped on Ashley Eden's face to the accompaniment, it is said, of much laughter. This infuriated the British who decided to punish the Bhutanese on Ashley Eden's return to India. An expeditionary force of some 7,000 men, in two columns—one against the western and the other against the eastern half—was despatched by the British in November 1864. With little difficulty the expeditionary force occupied the Duars in 1865 and within a few months thereafter the Deb Raja was forced to make overtures for peace and ask for the restoration of the Duars.

¹ Then a market town in Bengal.

² A district in the northern part of Bengal.

A treaty of peace was concluded at Sinchula in Bhutan in November 1865. In terms of this treaty the British declared their permanent occupation of the Bengal Duars but agreed, at the same time, to the payment to the Deb Raja of Bhutan of Rs. 25,000, which they offered to double if the treaty obligations were faithfully adhered to. Despite this amicable settlement, further problems arose, this time as regards the Assam Duars, and for a few years the British stopped the payment of the allowance. Bhutan was now weakened by domestic strife until, in fact, the Tongsa Penlop, Ugyen Wangchuk assumed political supremacy in 1885, when he defeated the supporters of the Deb Raja. This did not put an absolute end to the troubles of the country since the defeated dzong-pon of Thimpu and others fled to Tibet and asked for the Dalai Lama's assistance.

In the meantime, the British had also their problems with the Tibetans, mainly over Tibet's repeated violations of the frontiers of Sikkim, a situation which provided an excellent opportunity for the British to make common cause with Ugyen Wangchuk, the powerful penlop of Tongsa. The British sought the aid of Ugyen Wangchuk's personal agent Ugyen Kazi then residing in Kalimpong in the province of Bengal. Ugyen Kazi was specially commissioned in 1899 to write to the Dalai Lama, suggesting that it would be a good thing for the Tibetans to start negotiations with the British. However, nothing came of this feeler but later Lord Curzon again approached Ugyen Kazi to take a personal letter from him to the Dalai Lama. This latter effort too brought no response; indeed, the envoy had to return without being able to deliver the letter to the Dalai Lama. These repeated attempts having proved futile, the British Government decided on a military expedition to Tibet. They needed most urgently the cooperation of Bhutan for making a survey of a possible direct route to Tibet through the Chumbi valley via Bhutan.

The military invasion of Tibet in 1904 by a British force under the command of Colonel Younghusband was a turning point in the relations between Bhutan and the British. Now the undisputed ruler of Bhutan, the Tongsa Penlop, Ugyen Wangchuk decided to join the British military expedition to Lhasa and to use his personal influence so as to bring about an agreement. The expedition was successful in forcing the Tibetans to start negotiations with the British. The negotiations ended in the Anglo-Tibetan Convention of September 1904. Ugyen Wangchuk's services to the British were especially recognised by them in the title of Knight Commander of the Indian Empire which was conferred on him.

The Dharma Raja of Bhutan died that same fateful year and as his reincarnation did not appear for some three years, the Deb Raja continued the reign assuming the leadership of both the religious and the secular administration of the country. However, the Deb Raja was by nature a recluse, devoting himself principally to the spiritual affairs

of the country. In time the Tongsa Penlop took over the secular part of the government and became the so-called strong man of Bhutan. In 1907, the British through the then political officer in Gangtok, Sikkim, John Claude White, put forward the suggestion to the lamas, the chiefs and their supporters that Ugyen Wangchuk should be installed as the Maharaja of Bhutan. There was unanimous agreement to this idea and Ugyen Wangchuk was declared the Maharaja of Bhutan. A man of strong character, he continued to govern Bhutan and guide her destinies with exceptional wisdom and ability until his death in 1926, when his twenty-four year old son Jigme Wangchuk replaced him.

A minor event, but nevertheless significant, occurred in 1906 when the British Government decided to transfer responsibility for the conduct of relations with Bhutan from the Government of the presidency of Bengal to the Government of India. Bhutan was thus brought into direct contact with the British Indian Government whose headquarters were then at Calcutta in the winter and Simla in summer. The last Deb Raja, known as the Chole Tulku, died in 1907, thus leaving Maharaja Ugyen Wangchuk in complete authority and absolute supremacy. A fresh treaty was concluded in 1910 by the British Government with Bhutan amending some of the provisions of the treaty of Sinchula of 1865 and increasing the annual payment to Rs. 100,000. Under this revised agreement the British Government undertook not to interfere in the internal administration of Bhutan; on her part, Bhutan agreed to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in regard to her external relations

Since India's Independence

MAHARAJA Jigme Wangchuk, son of Ugyen Wangchuk, was the guiding and progressive ruler of Bhutan when India gained her independence in 1947. One of the first measures undertaken by independent India was to revise the treaty based on the former relations between Bhutan and the British Government. A new treaty was drawn up and signed in Darjeeling on 8 August 1949.¹ On the whole, some features of the treaty of 1910 were retained in that India undertook not to interfere in Bhutan's internal affairs and Bhutan, on her part, agreed to be guided by the advice of India so far as external relations were concerned. The Government of India further increased the allotted payment to Bhutan from Rs. 100,000 to Rs. 500,000 a year. An area of 32 square miles in Dewangiri, which had been annexed by the British in 1865, was returned to Bhutan.

Maharaja Jigme Wangchuk died in March 1952 and his son, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, continued the dynastic reign as Maharaja. He was formally installed in October 1952. A year before this event Jigme

¹ See Appendix X.

Dorji Wangchuk² had married Kesang-la, the daughter of Raja Sonam Tobgye Dorji. She was also the sister of Jigme Palden Dorji who was then the Bhutan Agent at Kalimpong. A son and heir named Jigme Singhi who later assumed the title of Crown Prince, was born to Maharaja Jigme Dorji Wangchuk in November 1955.

In 1963, the Government of India extended its agreement to a change in the title of the ruler of Bhutan from His Highness the Maharaja to His Majesty the Druk Gyalpo.

I beg the indulgence of the reader to return briefly to Ugyen Kazi who had tried in 1899 and the following years to facilitate negotiations between the British Government in its dealings with Tibet to complete the historical picture. At the time Ugyen Kazi acted as a liaison between the British Government and the Dalai Lama he was the official Agent of the government of Bhutan maintaining his residence in Kalimpong. He served with great distinction on other missions playing an important role in the revision of the treaty of 1865. As recognition of his distinguished services, on behalf of the British they honoured his accomplishments by bestowing on him the title of 'Raja' in the year 1908.

Raja Ugyen's son, Sonam Tobgye, who was also known by the simpler name of Raja Dorji followed his father's career and took over in 1916 the functions of Agent to the government of Bhutan and Dzong-pon or Governor of Ha. In addition he was designated by the British as the Assistant for Bhutan to the Political Officer in Sikkim. He continued to reside in Kalimpong combining an unusual and double role serving two governments, the British and the Bhutanese. In 1946 the formidable Raja Sonam Tobgye retired from his post as Agent at Kalimpong and was made Deb Zimpon or Chief Minister to the Maharaja. It should be recorded that Raja Sonam Tobgye had many years earlier married a sister of the Maharaja of Sikkim which complimented his high ranking position. He died in September 1953.

His eldest son, Jigme Palden Dorji succeeded him in 1946 also having the dual functions of Agent to the government of Bhutan and Assistant to the Political Officer in Sikkim. Jigme Dorji gave up this post for a brief period in 1951 when he went to Europe for medical treatment and in his absence his sister Tashi Dorji was appointed the Agent. However, on his return Jigme Dorji again assumed the office in Kalimpong and continued in that role until 1962, when Lawrence Sitling was appointed to the charge. Since 1957, Jigme Dorji's more important task was as principal adviser to the Druk Gyalpo. He was a popular figure so much so that the Indian press referred to him as the Prime Minister of Bhutan. Unfortunately, Jigme Palden Dorji's life which was dedicated to the welfare of Bhutan came to an untimely end when he was assassinated in Phuntsholing in April 1964.

² Wangchuk is also written Wangchuck.

For a brief period after this tragic event, Lhendup Dorji, the younger brother of Jigme Dorji, assumed the functions. His period of office was, however, marked by domestic strife with added internal political complications. An attempt on the Druk Gyalpo's life in July 1965 brought about drastic changes in the governmental structure. The Druk Gyalpo himself took over the role of the chief executive of the country.

Since 1906, India's relations with Bhutan were, as mentioned before, taken care of by the British Political Officer in Sikkim. Contacts between the officials of the governments of India and Bhutan were superficial, limited to ceremonial courtesies with occasional visits to Bhutan by the Political Officer and his staff. Following India's independence in 1947, this polite and rather moribund state of relations began to alter to a more active and dynamic understanding between the two countries.

The first positive contacts were established as early as 1948, when a delegation headed by Raja Sonam Tobgye Dorji came to New Delhi to negotiate a new treaty between the government of Bhutan and the government of independent India. Bhutan hoped to clarify her position with India and also to raise her prestige which had suffered greatly when India was under British rule. The Bhutanese delegation assured the new Government of India of its firm desire and sincere intention to maintain close and cordial relations. The outcome of these negotiations between the two governments was the signing of the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Friendship of 1949 which has been referred to earlier.

Then followed important events establishing closer relations between India and Bhutan. The Bhutanese Ruler, Maharaja Jigme Dorji Wangchuk visited India officially in response to invitations from the Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. The first official visit was to New Delhi in 1954 and this was followed by a second visit in November 1956 when the Maharaja toured Calcutta, Tatanagar, Bodhgaya and Varanasi. In the meantime, in 1955, India's Foreign Secretary, R. K. Nehru, and a group of Indian officials went to Paro, the principal town in western Bhutan, at the invitation of the Bhutanese government.

In September 1958 the Indian Prime Minister, who was proposing to visit Tibet, altered his programme and went instead to Bhutan. He took the only road then existing, leading to Paro in the western part of the country. Several days of hard travel were involved from Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. The first lap of the journey was to Nathu-la, the 14,700 ft. mountain pass leading from Sikkim to the Chumbi valley of Tibet, then across the valley in easy stages travelling on horseback and camping at nights and finally to Paro. Maharaja Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and the high officials of Bhutan were there to receive Jawaharlal Nehru and his party. The Prime

Minister was accompanied by his daughter, India's present Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi.

Prime Minister Nehru expressed his friendship for Bhutan and understanding of her problems at a large public gathering of the Bhutanese notables at Paro on 23 September 1958. To quote the Indian Prime Minister's words:

Some may think that since India is a great and powerful country and Bhutan a small one, the former might wish to exercise pressure on Bhutan. It is therefore essential that I make it clear to you that our only wish is that you should remain an independent country choosing your own way of life and taking the path of progress according to your will. At the same time, we two should live with mutual goodwill. We are members of the same Himalayan family and should live as friendly neighbours helping each other. Freedom of both Bhutan and India should be safeguarded so that none from outside can do harm to it.

This was an historic event and the meeting between the Heads of State provided an excellent opportunity for fruitful discussions on various aspects of the economic and social development of Bhutan. These talks between the Indian Prime Minister and the Bhutanese Ruler led to the formulation of the first development plan for Bhutan for the period 1961 to 1966. Indian experts were invited to draw up a five year development plan for Bhutan. The plan was finalised and details announced in July 1961. In this first phase, roads had to be built linking Bhutan with India, other communication facilities established and simultaneously administrative infra-structures created to make possible the carrying out of programmes in such fields as public health, education and agricultural development. The total cost of the plan which was financed by the government of India was Rs. 17 crores.³

In May 1960 an Indian Parliamentary Delegation led by Dr. Ram Subhag Singh was invited by the Government of Bhutan to Paro. Later, in 1961, the Maharaja accompanied by the Bhutan Agent in Kalimpong, Jigme Dorji, carried through a prolonged trip to central and southern India covering Madras, Madura, Bangalore, Mysore, Bombay, Ajanta and Ellora. Such exchanges between India and Bhutan have continued through these years establishing closer and friendlier contacts between the two countries and leading to a better understanding between them. In this same period as the result of the programme of road and communications construction undertaken by Indian engineers, Bhutan has gradually emerged from her isolation and into contact with the outside world.

Because of its inaccessibility Bhutan was still an unknown, legendary country to the rest of the world. It remained a mysterious place in the mystic East. However, India sought to assist Bhutan in remov-

³ One crore : 10 million; Rs 17 crores : US \$ 36 million (approx.)

ing her isolation and increasing her association with the world outside. Two events which took place during this period are especially noteworthy: Following a request from Bhutan, India agreed in 1961 to sponsor her for membership of the Colombo Plan organisation, and Bhutan was admitted as a regular member of that organisation in 1963. She has since then continued to participate in and benefit from its activities. The second event which followed related to Bhutan's membership in the Universal Postal Union. This was the subject of discussion during the official visit of the Druk Gyalpo to New Delhi during April-May 1966. The Government of India also willingly agreed to sponsor Bhutan for admission to this International Organisation. These two sponsorships proved to be most significant as regards Bhutan's relations with other countries as well as her dealings with the rest of the world.

Bhutan's cordial relations with India are based on mutual national interests as well as on the realities of the geopolitical situation. Geographically situated amidst the Himalayas, on the southern slopes of that immense mountain range, her welfare and progress in economic development are closely and perhaps inevitably linked with the region to the immediate south, the states of Assam and West Bengal in India, to which she has now gained access and indeed with India as a whole. Her characteristic way of life and her belief in a pattern of democratic tradition further implies an interweaving of destinies with the people of India who have always had the same respect for religion, culture and freedom. This profound and instinctive understanding between Bhutan and India thus exists on an identity of interests and objectives. On the part of India this similarity of interests presupposes a clear recognition of Bhutan's national separateness: India has demonstrated her purpose in word and action by assisting Bhutan in her quest for economic development and progress as also seeking every opportunity to place her on a footing of equality in the comity of nations.

Bhutan's attitude towards India and her appreciation of Indian assistance to the country's development are expressed in a statement to the press by the Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, in May of 1966, at the conclusion of an official visit to Delhi:

I am deeply touched by the sympathy and understanding with which the Government of India views our problems. The help and advice furnished by the Government of India are of great value to us and are appreciated by my Government and my people. I took this opportunity to apprise the Prime Minister of the social and economic progress which Bhutan had made in the last five years with the Government of India's generous assistance and of the great demand for not only continuing but extending economic development activity in our country. I am heartened by the Prime Minister's assurance that India will continue to provide the necessary technical and financial assistance to Bhutan in the years to come.

Even so India's policy towards Bhutan is governed by two main factors: responsibility for the conduct of Bhutan's external relations by virtue of the Indo-Bhutan treaty of 1949 and, in addition, her role as the "defender" of Bhutan, a view explicit in Prime Minister Nehru's statement in Paro in September 1958. This is a logical extension of India's own defence measures. India cannot afford an aggressive or hostile Bhutan, or a neighbouring country under Chinese domination. The significance of this stands out when one realises that Bhutan has a 200 mile frontier in the south with the Indian states of West Bengal and Assam and the eastern wing of Pakistan is in the proximity, just a few miles of Indian territory separating the two. India's defence frontier should therefore realistically lie along the Himalayan watershed which divides Bhutan from Tibet.

Bhutan likewise, in her own interests and aware of the imperative need to preserve her culture, institutions and territory from the menace of China, fully recognises India's responsible role and appreciates her attitude. With India's support Bhutan can always call a halt and remind China of this fact whenever there is aggression on the frontier or uncalled for meddling in Bhutanese state affairs. Once Bhutan has abandoned her isolation and established contact with the rest of the world she will inevitably be drawn into the main stream of world events, and before long she will claim her place in the community of nations.

Relations with Northern Neighbours

IN the early history of Bhutan we were made aware of specific affinities in the traditional, religious and cultural spheres which linked Bhutan and Tibet, her closest neighbour in the north. Nevertheless it was clear, even during this period of history that the individualistic Bhutanese were hardly conducive to be servile to others. Believing in and adhering to their own particular type of lamaistic Buddhism, they retained their freedom independent both of the Tibetans and the Chinese. However, a brief study of a more recent phase of the relations between Bhutan and her northern neighbours will perhaps give the reader a clearer understanding of her present attitude.

Between the withdrawal of the Younghusband Expedition from Lhasa in 1904 and 1910, the Manchu Empire of China made a supreme effort to revive claims to suzerainty with the intention of making Tibet a province of the Empire. China almost succeeded, at least for a brief spell. During this phase of aggrandisement China did not stop short at the boundaries of Tibet. Some time in 1907, the Chinese Amban or representative in Lhasa addressed an indignant

letter to the Chiefs of Bhutan which read as follows:

The Bhutanese are the subjects of the Emperor of China, who is the Lord of Heaven. You, Deb Raja and two Penlops, think you are great, but you cannot continue without paying attention to the orders of your Ruler. Bhutan is the gate on the south which prevents entry (by the British). The Popon will inspect your climate, crops, etc. The Deb Raja should endeavour to improve the trade of the country and the condition of the peasants. If you want any assistance, let me know.

Also about this time a Chinese official representative stationed at Gyantse visited Paro, the principal town of western Bhutan; and there resulted considerable Chinese propaganda in Bhutan. The three countries, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim were in fact described by the Chinese as “molar teeth lying side by side in a man’s mouth”. Further, the Chinese also attempted to “order” the circulation of Chinese currency in Bhutan.

Even after the conclusion of the treaty of 1910, signed between the Bhutanese and the British, the Chinese attempted, on more than one occasion, to intervene in Bhutanese state affairs. Sir Charles Bell who was then the British Political Officer in Sikkim made this comment:

Possessed of a temperate climate and a fertile soil, less than a quarter of which was occupied by the Bhutanese themselves, Bhutan offered a tempting field for Chinese penetration and expansion. Not immediately, but later on and by degrees, Chinese colonists might well have followed, for the climate and soil would have been appreciated no less by the southern Chinaman than the plains of Mongolia are by the Chinese of the north. It would have been natural for China to have sought this relief for her overflowing population. For she appears to regard the Mongolian peoples that border on her own and the Tibetan frontiers, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and even Burma, as within her natural sphere.

However, protected by the treaty of 1910, the Bhutan Government accepted British authority as regards her foreign affairs and agreed to be guided by the advice given by the British Government and also to refer any disputes to British arbitration. The allotted payment of Rs. 50,000 was doubled. That which made this deal possible was the British Government’s undertaking not to interfere in the domestic administration of Bhutan. The treaty proved important as it put an effective stop to Chinese attempts at any further “colonisation” of Bhutan. China’s quiet withdrawal from this scene was all the more remarkable as, in 1909, she had made strenuous attempts at populating the inhospitable tracts around Batang in eastern Tibet, not far from the northern borders of Bhutan.

Though thwarted in her attempts at direct intervention in Bhu-

tanese affairs, China continued in the following years her efforts at dealing directly with Bhutan through written communications, also by sending presents to the rulers. Such efforts at establishing direct contacts came to notice in 1943, 1947, 1951 and 1953. These approaches were in contravention of the treaty of 1910 with the British Government and later the Indo-Bhutan treaty of 1949. It was evident in terms of these treaties that the foreign relations of Bhutan were subject to the guidance of the government of India and any such moves were the concern of India.

Indian Prime Minister Nehru in a communication to the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai, in September 1959, dismissed any doubt pertaining to this matter. To quote his words:

It is not clear to us what exactly is the implication of your statement that the boundaries of Sikkim and Bhutan do not fall within the scope of the present discussion. In fact, Chinese maps show sizeable areas of Bhutan as part of Tibet. Under treaty relationship with Bhutan, the Government of India are the only competent authority to take up with other governments matters concerning Bhutan's external relations, and, in fact, we have taken up with your government a number of matters on behalf of the Bhutan government. The rectification of errors in Chinese maps regarding the boundary of Bhutan with Tibet is therefore a matter which has to be discussed along with the boundary of India with the Tibet region of China in the same sector.

Bhutan had already accepted this interpretation of the terms of the Indo-Bhutan treaty of 1949 when she repeatedly requested the Government of India to take up with the Chinese Government questions pertaining to her boundaries and her vital interests in Tibet. In 1960, the Bhutan National Assembly was unanimous in pointing out the obvious discrepancies in the boundaries of Bhutan appearing in official Chinese maps of her country. This left no doubt as to Bhutan's amicable relations with India and India's responsible role for her foreign affairs.

Consistent with this view the government of India reminded the Chinese government, in a note dated 25 April 1960 that Bhutan's foreign relations were under treaty obligations the concern and responsibility of India. The note further asked the Chinese government to restore Bhutan's control over her enclaves in Tibet¹. There was no positive response to this note but on the same date Premier Chou En-lai stated at a press conference that "China respects India's relationship with Bhutan and Sikkim." Some time later the Chinese

¹ Eight villages in western Tibet around Mount Kailash belonged to Bhutan. These were a gift sometime during the XVI century to a Bhutanese lama by the then King of Ladakh. The Bhutanese lama is credited to have cured the King's son of grave illness through the use of miraculous powers. The lama passed on the properties to the rulers of Bhutan. China seized the villages in 1959.

Government tried to misinterpret and disregard the Premier's statement. Today, Chinese maps still include about 300 square miles of Bhutanese territory within her own boundaries while her troops have been stationed at various points on Bhutan's frontier with Tibet.

Throughout the centuries, Bhutan has zealously guarded the sovereignty of her kingdom and has repeatedly denied and spurned any suggestion which might be construed to mean that she was subordinate to either Tibet or China. For instance, in 1885, Bhutan ignored a demand coming from the Chinese Amban at Lhasa for the restoration of a chieftain expelled by the Penlops. Again, in 1888, at the time of the Sikkim controversy Bhutan declined to accept a Tibetan request for assistance. This rebuttal was repeated again when the Tibetans asked the Bhutanese to come to Phari to concert measures against the expected British expedition.

At the time of the Younghusband expedition to Lhasa in 1904 Bhutan regarded herself as only an intermediary in order to help bring about a solution to the dispute which had arisen between the British Government and Tibet. Even in May 1911 a Chinese official who arrived at Paro did not succeed in having an interview with the Paro Penlop. There were many later Chinese attempts, but their total failure in establishing any kind of link with Bhutan is further evidence of the country's desire to repudiate all Chinese attempts at interference.

In 1961, Bhutan, in a significant gesture, turned down China's offer of assistance for economic development but accepted India's aid instead. Furthermore she also agreed to India assuming responsibility for her defence. The Maharaja (Druk Gyalpo) of Bhutan openly stated in Calcutta in February 1961 that Bhutan had received these Chinese offers but had totally rejected them. Later that same month Prime Minister Nehru, speaking before Parliament declared that India had agreed to assume full responsibility in regard to measures for the defence of Bhutan. Nehru also affirmed on this same occasion that any aggression on Bhutan would be direct aggression on India. The statement was well received and met with general approval in Bhutan. Still, China seeks to keep tension alive and adopts, from time to time, menacing postures against Bhutan. The most recent instances of China's belligerent attitude were incursions in April and September 1966 by her troops into the Dokang-la area in the south-western corner of Bhutan, near the tri-junction with Sikkim and the Chumbi valley of Tibet which drew protests from the government of India at the request of Bhutan. Nevertheless, Chinese aggressive actions make little impact on the Bhutanese.

More About the People

BHUTAN has an estimated population of some 900,000. The majority of the Bhutanese are of the Indo-Mongoloid race whereas about 20 per cent of them derive from Nepali origins. The country as a whole is sparsely populated, an average of 50 persons to a square mile. It differs however in the southern regions, where the Nepali settlers predominate and there it is more densely populated especially in the southern central region of Chirang. In addition, there are about 3,000 Tibetans who have sought refuge and rehabilitation living in Bhutan since 1959.

The Bhutanese are remarkable for their capacity for hard work. They are a tough, hardy people, seem well disciplined and organised and a strong feeling of national pride unites them. Endowed with a keen sense of humour, they are courteous and cooperative as well. Since they have been isolated from the world for many centuries, they have inevitably developed their own language, culture and social customs without external influence. But, though united culturally and by religion, Bhutan has several distinct language groups. The Bum-

¹ No official census of the population has ever been taken.

thaps, the Sharchups, the Kurtepas, and the Khengs speak dialects which are different from those spoken by the Wangs, the Shapas, the Paropas and the Hapas. The largest number comprise the Sharchups who live in the eastern and south-eastern part of Bhutan. They are believed to be the original inhabitants who settled and founded the country. The Sharchups and the Kurtepas are not only good farmers they also breed and raise cattle and engage in trade as an occupation. Along with these two original groups are the Khengs and Bumthaps who are supposed to have inhabited the country long before the Christian era. The people living in the Wang-chu, Paro-chu, Ha-chu and Punakha valleys are considered newcomers even though they have been in their own habitats for nearly 2,000 years. The language spoken by the western Bhutanese is closer to Tibetan. Even so it has undergone some linguistic mutation. This language is called Dzongkha and is currently the official language of Bhutan.

Religion

The original religion of the country is said to be Pön (also spelt Bon) or Animism which is the belief in and worship of spirits and ghosts combined with the practice of sorcery. Indeed it was a curious mixture of witchcraft, sorcery and the worship of snakes. Spirits hovered everywhere, in trees, rocks, on mountain tops and in the skies; some were good but many others were evil. These spirits had to be worshipped and propitiated with simple offerings, such as a stone, a rag, or the twig of a tree. A sorcerer or sorceress had the power to bring about good instead of evil. The established rituals of pönism in fact consisted of expelling demons who they believed brought sickness and other calamities and propitiating various spirits through the sacrifice of animals and sometimes even of human beings.

The Guru Padma Sambhava, literally the Lotus Born, also known as the Guru Rimpoche, a teacher of mysticism at the Nalanda University, and a scholar of Tantricism, brought Buddhism to Bhutan about the end of the eight century A.D. The religion which evolved from this influence was a superb amalgam of Mahayana Buddhism with some fragments of Pön, furthermore enriched by Tantric practices as regards meditation, pranayama, asanas and mantras.² Thus from primitive rituals and sorcery it led to prayers and congregational worship culminating in various forms of altruism and renunciation. The present day Bhutanese belong mainly to the Nyingma-pa and Kargyu-pa sects. The Gyalwa Karma-pa heads the latter.

² Sanskrit terms in Hindu philosophy describing certain postures and positions for meditation, recitation and incantation of prayers or sacred texts.

The lamas are the dominant factor in the religious life of the people and there are about five thousand of them in the country. They are celibates and devote their life to meditation and prayer. There is a constant drain on the country's resources, since they are wholly supported by contributions made to them by the government or the people. Since the Bhutanese are deeply religious they willingly accept this financial burden of supporting the numerous lamas. Each village or sometimes a group of villages has its own monastery. The duties of the lama are divided in time spent on religious ceremonies held in the monasteries and on the celebration of numerous festivals which take place throughout the year. Some of the finest structures in Bhutan are the old monasteries which by the elaborateness of their architecture show the reverence and importance given to the lamas. The lamas are understandably exempt from the payment of taxes.

Form of Dress

The robe of the lamas consists of garnet or magenta coloured garment thrown loosely over the left shoulder, over a sleeveless shirt which leaves the right arm bare. The ordinary man's garment is the Kho, a long, loose, knee-length robe, very much resembling a kimono which wraps around the body and is secured at the waist by a cloth belt. The upper part of the Kho is pulled up and tucked down, forming a large fold which serves as a pocket, in which the daily necessities such as a tea-cup, a pan box, a scarf and a dagger are carried. It is of colourful cotton, woollen or brocade, the dominant colours being red and yellow in a narrow striped pattern. Here as elsewhere social status is determined by the richness of the material used. A legging of red broad-cloth is attached to the boots which are made of hide, and is secured by a cloth garter tied under the knee. Officials carry a sword on ceremonial occasions.

The women's dress is made up of a piece of handwoven cloth also in coloured stripes, draped round and fixed in position by metal clasps on the shoulders and held tight by a *kera* or waistband. The custom for both men and women is to have short hair cropped close and pigtailed are never worn. The Bhutanese women usually wear heavy silver necklaces with coral, turquoise and other precious stones. Finger rings and ear-rings adorned with pearl and turquoise are also popular with the women as well as amulet boxes which form part of their necklaces. Yak wool coloured with vegetable dye of different shades is used for the making of a coarse long wearing woollen material for the clothes of both the men and the women.

Food and Beverages

The main food of the Bhutanese is rice, wheat meal, barley and potatoes and the meat of yak, beef and pigs and at times chicken is

eaten. Dried meat and yak cheese are favourite items. Yak cheese is kept soft in wooden jars or allowed to harden in small pieces and strung on cord like a row of beads. The food of the upper classes and the lamas consists of the flesh of yak and pork, cooked as a curried dish or dried and at times grilled accompanied by rice. *Arak* and *chang* are common drinks brewed of millet, maize, barley, rice or fruit. The *arak* or *chang* is sometimes served in long bamboo containers. The poorer classes generally live on *sathu*, a cooked mixture of wheat and barley, with salt and chillies to add flavour. The Bhutanese are extremely fond of chewing *pan* and betelnut and the ample folds of the *kho* invariably hold a *pan* box.

Births, Marriages and Deaths

The birth of a child, except for the first born, calls for no particular rejoicing. For the first child, however, the family celebrates the birth on the third day with a small gathering of friends. A lama casts the horoscope and gives a name to the infant when it is a month old. This is also the occasion when the infant is taken to the nearest *gompa* or monastery, where offerings are made for its well-being.

Marriages are formal contracts by mutual agreement of both parties but, as is the custom, are blessed by a lama. Polyandry, in different degrees, where several brothers share one wife or the wholesale alliance of the brothers of one family with the sisters of another still exists in Bhutan. Polygamy, an ancient custom, is also accepted. In many instances, the instinctive desire to preserve family property governs and plays an important part in the marital arrangements. In all arrangements horoscopes have first to be consulted and the services of a middlemen might often be used to conduct the negotiations.

Bhutanese women enjoy a sense of freedom and equality with men, though the married are at some disadvantage. This happens because generally speaking the husband lives in his wife's house whereas the wife seldom goes to her husband's home. A contract of marriage can be terminated whereby the woman leaves to join her family or the husband sends her to live with another member of his family group. All marriages have now to be registered with the trimpon or ramjam, the sub-divisional officer and a fee paid to government. If a marriage is broken a sum of money has to be paid to the injured party as decided by a court. However, in recent years, the Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, has been instrumental in introducing a general reform of the marriage system and both polygamy and polyandry have been abolished. The permissible age for marriage now is 16 years for girls and 21 for boys. Child marriage which was once prevalent, has been outlawed.

Death and the funeral ceremony are solemn occasions. Prayers

are chanted by lamas and great respect is observed especially if the deceased is an adult. Corpses of infants and children are thrown into deep water or the river but adults are usually cremated and on rare occasions left to the vultures to devour. A funeral feast at great cost is almost obligatory and interminable prayers are chanted at the same time to drive away the evil spirits and to protect the surviving members of the family of the departed.

The System of Labour

There is a "compulsory" system of task work called Chuni Dome which provides workers for government or monastic construction. One out of the twelve adults of a family has to work as required by the authorities and no refusal is accepted. The government usually pays low wages for such labour. Old women and children are exempt from this system of task work and a wealthy man can sometimes hire a proxy to fulfil his obligation. Slave labour which was once prevalent in the larger feudal estates has more recently been abolished.

Arts and Crafts

The traditional arts and crafts of Bhutan seem influenced by Tibetan forms and designs. The craftsmen excel in bronze casting and fine metal workmanship especially in silver, copper and brass. Wood-carving is a traditional art and exquisite carvings can be seen in many of the monasteries. There are also excellent craftsmen producing temple bells, swords and daggers. A particularly high degree of skill is shown in the embroidered or painted *tankas*.³ Every well established home shows pride in a large workroom given to weaving, and woollen, silk and cotton textiles as well as floor carpets are produced which are of excellent quality and unique design. In eastern Bhutan, basketwork and matting from split cane are also important items. Each creative craftsman leaves the imprint of his individuality on his work. Royal patronage of the finest craftsmen has been a major factor in keeping the high level of artistic traditions alive.

The Bhutanese display considerably more originality in the construction of their dzongs, the fort-monasteries, and residential buildings than perhaps in any other branch of their domestic activity. Dzongs are the most impressive architectural structures in Bhutan. Usually they have high whitewashed walls made of earth or stone, deeply set ornamented windows and the pagoda-shaped roofs are adorned at the corners with dragon heads. A dzong houses both the headquarters of the local civil administration as well as the monastery. The halls and chapels used for worship and meditation are

³ Religious scrolls.

filled with exquisite figure sculptures and *tankas*.

Family houses are built with a lower or ground floor, where cattle are sheltered, then a first and in some cases a second floor with balconies projecting beyond the walls. The upper floor with its living quarters, kitchen and meditation or prayer room, called the *chokang*, generally occupies three or four rooms and is used by a single family. The walls are of earth or clay, and the rest of the structure is made of wood. A few grander houses have decorations in gay colours on the outside. The fireplace is similar to the common *chulah* in India. There are no chimneys and the dweller lives in an atmosphere saturated with odours due to bad ventilation and the ceilings are blackened with smoke and tar. There is not much furniture in the rooms, except for a few low divans and tables of pinewood, artistically carved and painted. Woven rugs and yak skins are spread on the floor. The prayer room usually has some religious figures and *tankas* on a table or shelf alongside the wall. One climbs to the first or second floor by a steep staircase or a primitive ladder consisting of a heavy wooden plank on which notches are cut for steps. The roof is a flat terrace of earth or a pent roof formed of fir planks. These planks are laid across solid wooden beams and are kept in place weighted down with stones. In the dzongs and houses not a single nail is used in the construction.

Pots and pans of clay and metal are stored on wooden shelves in the kitchen and sometimes are placed in the main living room. This might signify the wealth of the family. Wooden ladles are used and wooden tubs serve as receptacles for water, milk or wheat flour. Cats and Tibetan dogs are some of the favourite domestic animals.

Music and Dance

The traditional music of Bhutan which is mostly heard at religious festivals and celebrations, is a weird combination of trumpets, some almost eight feet in length, conch shells, horns, cymbals, gongs, flutes and the beating of a variety of drums. Singing is a monotone chant based on either religious or folklore themes. The pantomime and religious dances follow a repetitive pattern with a rhythmic stamping of feet and a slow-lateral movement sometimes linking arm in arm to form a circle. The bright and gaily coloured costumes, the gorgeous masks depicting the faces of animals, birds and demons, the embroidered banners and the movement of the dancers, mingled with the humour of the buffoons, create a fantastic, unforgettable picture, a most unusual experience for the visitor. Colours that predominate in this festive array are turquoise blue, scarlet, green, yellow and pink.

Other Popular Customs

Bhutan is a friendly and hospitable country. Greetings or pre-

liminary introductions are generally accompanied with an exchange of silk or cotton scarves. At times, if the status of the guest is much below that of the host, the scarf is just presented and its acceptance is a sign of welcome. Buttered tea and saffron-coloured rice are served but one is not obliged to eat or drink them, though a gesture of doing so is a recognition of the hospitality. This ceremonious welcome becomes more informal as soon as local beer called chang, fruit or other food are served. Gifts, when presented, have to be reciprocated.

In Bhutan, archery is the most popular sport and such demonstrations lure crowds of people. For sheer pageantry Bhutan's archery competitions which continue throughout the day are very impressive. Individual or group prowess is displayed on festive occasions. When the arrow is shot the archer, dressed in his traditional gaily coloured costume, dances himself to help his arrow wing its way to a distant target, over a hundred yards away. The winner of an archery contest is awarded a sash and the public acclaims him by dancing in his honour. Whole villages turn out for such events and enliven the occasion with remarks of approval or disapproval, voiced in choruses with words set to music by the local girls.

A typical feature of the countryside in Bhutan which one can hardly overlook is the innumerable stupas, either known as the 'chorten' or 'tsalkhang' or small temples, called 'mani lakhang', which are an integral part of the landscape. Everywhere in Bhutan one sees either in front of a *dzong* or by the roadside, or going along the passes, these stupas surrounded by poles flying prayer flags. A 'mani lakhang' literally means a house which keeps the mani or prayer wheel within. The religious minded Bhutanese would never pass a mani lakhang without entering and giving the prayer wheel a turn in homage and devotion. Every morning just after sunrise there is another common religious observance in the form of a smoke offering made by lighting small fires which produce thick columns of smoke. They believe the smoke offerings will appease the spirits and also atone for their sins.

Chapter XIV

The Government and General Administration

THE distribution of Bhutan's population, numbering 900,000, is centered in few towns but spreads out taking in the people living in the many small villages. A basic and somewhat self contained system of administration exists in almost every village, or a group of villages. In authority, there is the headman called a Gapp, who is elected for a period of one to five years, a term which differs from area to area. In the Nepali areas which are mainly the southern regions of Bhutan, the village administration is taken over by the Mandal. The Gapp, or the Mandal, is responsible for carrying out orders received from the Zimpon, or the authority of the district.

The districts are grouped in provinces, the head being the dzong-pon who has, as his deputy, the dzongsap. In earlier times all Bhutan was under the control of three, at times four, Penlops, the local governors, but today with the exception of the Paro Penlop, who is the brother of the Druk Gyalpo, the remaining provinces come under the jurisdiction of the dzongpons.

There is a National Assembly or Tsongdu for Bhutan: some of

the representatives nominated by the Druk Gyalpo and others elected. Each important village, or group of villages, elects and sends a representative. The monasteries have also independent representation in the Tsongdu. The principal district officials and key officers are ex-officio members of the National Assembly. The Tsongdu has in all 130 representatives. Those elected serve for five years. The National Assembly is not only concerned with important matters relating to national policy but also discusses various administrative problems. Through his Chief Secretary, the Druk Gyalpo plays an active role by opening discussions and presenting draft bills or proposals for the consideration of the Assembly.

The political situation in Bhutan is uneventful since political parties do not exist in this country thereby eliminating any controversial politics. The National Assembly, which meets at least twice a year, or more often in case of emergency, functions as a platform for open discussion on every question that concerns or affects Bhutan. The Druk Gyalpo has an Advisory Council of nine members in addition to the National Assembly. The Council has two members representing the monasteries, three are from the civil authorities, the Chief Secretary, the Deputy Chief Secretary and the Adviser to the Druk Gyalpo and the remaining four represent the people. The Advisory Council assists the Druk Gyalpo on foreign and important domestic issues which arise, whereas the Tsongdu discusses matters chiefly of day-to-day concern to the country. Complete freedom of speech prevails in the National Assembly and members are given the assurance that any criticism, even of the rights of the throne, will not be subject to punishment. The Chief Secretary is the Speaker of the Assembly. As yet there is no written constitution although an effort is being made to draft one. Since 1964, when Jigme Dorji, the Bhutan Agent and principal adviser to the Druk Gyalpo, was assassinated the Druk Gyalpo took over the duties temporarily of the chief executive as well. Today, even with an Advisory Council and a National Assembly, the Tsongdu, the accepted traditional concept of authority is still vested in the person of the Druk Gyalpo who remains the living symbol of responsibility for the country's well being and progress.

The government's administrative secretariat functions in the capital, Thimphu, directly under a Chief Secretary, or the Gyaldon as he is referred to, who is the principal adviser to the Druk Gyalpo on all domestic matters. Lower, in the pyramidal structure of administration, are the dzongpons and other provincial or district officers who in turn are responsible to the Chief Secretary. Below the dzongpons and the trimpons or magistrates are the ramjams, the subdivisional officers who, as explained before, are assisted by the Gapps and the Mandals. There are 14 districts in all and in some of the larger ones the dzongpons have also the help of nyerchens or revenue collecting officers, as also dronyers or protocol officers.

The Judicial System

In Bhutan the executive and the judicial authorities are combined. Minor criminal offences are judged by Gapps and Mandals. The trimpons and the ramjams have powers equivalent to those of district magistrates and magistrates and are limited to their own specified areas. There exists a written code of law and all cases are decided according to that code. Punishment varies from fines to years of imprisonment depending on the crime committed and also to capital punishment carried out by a firing squad or tying and dropping the sentenced person into a river. Trimpons can sentence a criminal to a maximum of 10 years of imprisonment. Any appeal against a heavy sentence imposed by a trimpon has to be submitted to the Chief Secretary. The Druk Gyalpo makes the final decision on all appeals, and he alone can award capital punishment. Fortunately, the Bhutanese character is not prone to crime or violence.

Revenue Administration

Revenue officers are in charge of the collection of local taxes. The total revenue of the country amounts to about Rs. 90 lakhs and land tax is the principal source of income. Other taxes include a tax on cattle, fees for grazing, taxes on housing and income from the sale of lumber from government lands. Taxes on land account for a half of the total revenue. In earlier times, taxes used to be collected in kind, that is to say in the produce of the land or heads of cattle. However, an effort is now being made to collect taxes in cash and reassessment of the rates of taxation is also being considered.

Education

It has always been traditional for the lamas to supervise the teaching and to be responsible for the education of children both in their academic studies as well as in the arts and crafts. During the past few years, however, other schools based on a system of secular education are being promoted. A programme with a director of education in charge has been drawn up and the number of such schools both primary and secondary, has greatly increased. Prior to the inception of the first five year plan for Bhutan there were 59 primary schools of which 29 were run by the Government of Bhutan. At the end of the plan period, 1966, the total number of schools had increased to 106 of which 83 were primary and 23 middle and high schools. The total number of students in these establishments was 14,540 (11,600 were boys and 2,940 girls). The aim of the current plan is to intensify education rather than to increase the number of educational establishments. Education in this country should, I

feel, be given vocational direction; in other words, its chief objective should be to provide Bhutan with its future requirements of technical and administrative personnel. About 500 Bhutanese youth, both boys and girls, are completing their studies in schools and universities in India; many are on scholarships granted by the Government of India.

Public Health

Even though the general standard of health is good in the country, dysentery, goitre and venereal diseases are prevalent in various parts. The southern part of the country is malarial but a real advance has been made in eradicating malaria. Today, the Public Health Department functions directly under a Chief Medical Officer in Thimphu, the capital. A number of hospitals have been set up in each of the four principal towns and over 20 health clinics have been opened in various parts of the country. The supply of fresh water and proper hygienic drainage systems are also being programmed. With these improvements the health standard of the people is rapidly undergoing a change. Rather than follow the earlier superstitious practices of consulting the witchdoctor, the local oracle, the pawo, or the lama-astrologer the people now prefer to seek medical help and advice in a clinic or health centre. Today, unfortunately there is still a great shortage of nurses and doctors in Bhutan who have the qualifications necessary to implement the health programme.

Communications

Until quite recently, it took six or seven days of strenuous travel, either on mule or horseback, to go from the Indian border town of Phuntsholing to Paro or Thimphu. The construction of a proper paved road was begun in 1959, when the Government of India agreed to provide the necessary funds for the purpose. Three highways, running mainly in a north-south direction were the first to be programmed. In order of priority: Phuntsholing to Paro and Thimphu, Gelekphu to Tongsa and Darranga (Samdrup Jongkhar) to Tashigang Dzong. Later, an east-west road, Tashigang Dzong to Thimphu, was added to the highway system.

The highway from the border town of Phuntsholing, along the river Amo-chu, then the Wong-chu and on to Thimphu, the capital, was opened to traffic in 1962, a branch of this same road leads to Paro, an important town in western Bhutan. Since then the road has been greatly improved and today it is possible to cover the distance of 116 miles in some seven hours. About a 100 miles from Phuntsholing the two rivers, the Wong-chu and Pa-chu join: on the right side of the Wong-chu is Thimphu and on the left Paro, along the banks of

the Pa-chu. As one travels along this highway which rises from the deep valleys of the lower regions, which can be intensely hot and humid at times with their dense vegetation, the climate of the country changes at the higher altitudes, the slopes are less steep and the air becomes cooler and less humid and more agreeable to the traveller.

From Thimphu the road winds its way to Wangdiphodrang, while the branch that leads to Paro is now being extended to Ha, a smaller town further to the west. At the eastern end, Tashigang is linked with Darranga, also known as Samdrup-Jonkhar, on the border of India and thence with the Indian highway system. The distance from Darranga to Tashigang Dzong is 120 miles. From Tashigang, the road turns westwards and when it is completed will join with Wangdiphodrang, a town more in the centre of the country. In the central area, a 190 mile long road, also running in a north-south direction, will link Sarkhang on the border with Gelekphu and Tongsa, both towns in Bhutan. About 500 miles of first-class paved roads are being built and this phase of the programme should be completed by 1971. The construction of these roads is a responsibility shared by the Indian Border Roads Organisation and the Bhutan Engineering Services.

Moreover, besides these principal arteries, several shorter roads which will connect the southern towns of Bhutan with the Indian highways, are also under construction. Throughout the country numerous tracks and paths criss-cross over the mountains, still providing a means of communication among the scattered villages by mule or horseback. Some of these tracks are being widened to allow the use of jeeps.

There are several helipads for the use of helicopters in various parts of Bhutan and a single airfield is located at Paro.

Most of the district headquarters are linked with Thimphu by wireless circuits, while the telephone and the telegraph connect Paro and Thimphu with Phuntsholing and then with the Indian communication systems. Thimphu and Paro have small but efficient automatic telephone exchanges for the township and the administration. A programme for the extension of the telegraph to various parts of the country is under way.

The Armed Forces

Bhutan has a formidable task of defence, if the northern and most vulnerable part of its frontiers is alone taken into consideration. The almost inaccessible mountain ranges which are traversed by passes at high altitudes, make this task even more arduous. There is an overall shortage of manpower for such activities as highway construction and this has made recruitment for the defence services difficult. Even so, the armed forces are now being re-equipped and re-

organised by an Indian Training Team into a modern, efficient fighting force. The Paro Penlop, Namgyal Wangchuk, brother of the Druk Gyalpo, is the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces which have their headquarters at Lungthenphu, near Thimphu.

Currency and Postage

Bhutan has its own currency; a rough coinage has in fact existed from 1928. Tibetan coinage was also in circulation until a few years ago. When the Government of India decimalised its currency, Bhutan did the same and, in 1959, introduced a series of coins in copper and nickel, called the zangtrum, matrum, chetik, tikchung and druktrum equal to 1, 5, 25, 50 paise and one rupee, respectively. The coinage is at present minted by the Government of India. Indian currency, especially paper notes of higher denominations are also in circulation and are legal tender in Bhutan.

Bhutan has its own postage and issues attractive stamps, which are in demand by collectors. The values of the stamps, as those of coins, follow the Indian currency units.

Trade

Trade routes have existed for many centuries on the north and west between Bhutan and Tibet and on the south between Bhutan and the neighbouring provinces of Assam and Bengal in India. The high altitude of the passes to the north and west, of which Lingtu and Phari are the main ones, were not especially conducive to trade. Furthermore, the economy of the Bhutanese, even as it is to a large extent today, is seemingly self-sufficient. Control of the trade routes was once the principal cause of acute rivalry among the warring chieftains. The products carried either from or in transit through Bhutan were grains, sheepskins, woollen cloth, felt, and horn and antlers. Cotton textiles came chiefly from India together with some small amounts of "foreign" manufactured goods. Salt, raw wool, articles in copper and other metals, also porcelain and tea came from Tibet and China. Yearly market fairs were held at Rangpur and Darranga in India and to these Bhutanese merchants regularly brought their wares and bartered them for what was available and needed in Bhutan.

With the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959-60, the trading pattern entirely changed and all trade with Tibet and China virtually came to an end. Now Bhutan has to export her products consisting of woollen handwoven material, carpets, fruit, etc. to India which also supplies items required by it.

Some Random Observations by the Author:

For the benefit of the reader some comments on the present administration of Bhutan are included in this chapter. Though there

is a certain trained element of top-level Bhutanese administrators, in the middle and lower rungs there is a lack of training and efficiency. The administration generally suffers from being centralised with all the tendency to over-emphasize political or administrative power and authority. There is a large gap in the middle class element in contrast especially with the "top" class of lamas and landlords, and the lower class of peasants. The problem of building up a group of trained administrators in every category, men of integrity and ability, is therefore, all the more difficult. However, one hopes that in time these shortfalls will be remedied especially when boys and girls of all ranks of Bhutanese society who are now going through school and college, take their place in this important role of contributing to the life and responsible management of their own country.

Natural Resources and Development Programmes

THE economy of Bhutan is mainly agrarian; the principal crops are rice, wheat, barley, corn, millet, potato and orange. In some areas of the country wheat and barley are followed by rice; in others wheat and corn alternate with buckwheat. This practice of the continuous growing of cereals has affected the fertility of the soil; but steps are being taken to encourage the use of fertilizer and to change the crop-rotation processes. Until recently, Bhutan was self-sufficient in cereal production, and in fact offered a small surplus for export. Various factors, not the least of which is the pace of development, the consequent need to import labour from outside and the generally higher levels of consumption that are being attained within the country have made the demand for food outrun its supply. Restrictions pertaining to arable land are not harsh. Nearly everybody owns some land, and each village has the legal rights to the adjoining forest lands. The average Bhutanese is a self-providing individual, growing his food, rearing his cattle, weaving his cloth for garments and even building his own house. He cares little for the

acquisition of luxuries.

To some extent the land available for cultivation is limited by the natural character of the terrain, especially since steep hillsides cannot be used. There are large areas which remain as virgin forests or can only be used for grazing cattle. Cultivation of crops is mainly carried out by terracing the land. Water for irrigation is conveyed from the river or the spring by bamboo or stone aqueducts. Of the three distinct zones mentioned before, the central one has fertile valleys with the largest cultivated areas. Both the tropical and temperate varieties of food and other crops are grown in Bhutan because of the wide variation of climate and elevation. More progressive methods of agriculture are, however, slow in being accepted. A land reform has only recently been promulgated, and individuals are now restricted to owning a maximum of 30 acres of land.

There is ample wealth of livestock in Bhutan and both poultry and dairy animals hold an important place in its rural economy. The types of domesticated cattle are the yaks, found in the extreme north, at altitudes of above 12,000 ft., and the Mithun and Siri varieties of the lower regions. Unlike the practice in the Assam hills, the Mithun is preferred as a milch animal for though the milk yield is less, its fat content is proportionately higher. The general standard of the indigenous sheep is poor, both as regards the quality and the yield of wool. There are a large number of pigs and poultry in every village.

In a country comprised of deep valleys with mountains of perpetual snow, almost every kind of climate and vegetation prevails. Bhutan is rich in virgin forests, tropical in the lower zones and temperate coniferous, with fir, pine, spruce and larch, in the higher altitudes. The tree line extends to 13,000 ft. Three distinct forest types are identifiable: the tropical and sub-tropical zones, the intermediate zone and the temperate zone:

- (1) The tropical and sub-tropical zone extends from 1,000 to 5,000 ft. above sea level and the vegetation found here consists of the semi-evergreen, broadleaved type. There are also some forests of *sal* at lower altitudes.
- (2) The intermediate zone starts from about 5,000 ft. and rises to almost 7,000 ft. The dominant trees are oaks and other varieties. The special timber variety is the *Michelias*.
- (3) The temperate zone ranges from 7,000 ft. to 13,000 ft. and consists of rhododendrons, conifers, pine, fir and larches.

Extensive and unplanned exploitation of the lumber resources mainly in southern Bhutan, have greatly depleted the supply. One can admit that Bhutan has some of the most beautiful flowers in the world: rhododendrons, magnolias, orchids with a great variety ranging from Alpine to tropical species.

Untapped resources of mineral wealth exist in the country. Reports from the Geological Survey of India, which has carried out preliminary studies in various parts of Bhutan, show that there are large deposits of gypsum in the Kangkur Shumar area in eastern Bhutan. In south-western Bhutan, large deposits of cement grade limestone have also been located. In addition to these, graphite, copper, talc, dolomite and asbestos have also been found in various parts.

The lower mountain ranges abound in animal life. In the Manas area especially, which adjoins the Manas forest reserve in Assam there is an abundance of wild life. The region is the haunt of almost every type of wild animal: elephant, rhinoceros, tiger, leopard, sambar and deer. Even bears are found and the musk deer live in the snow. Pheasants, jungle fowl and other feathered game are in plenty. Bhutan has also long been famous for its sturdy and strong, though small, breed of horses or ponies.

Bhutan's water-power resources are practically limitless. The many rivers that have their source in the Great Himalayas and flow down to the plains of Bengal and Assam could be advantageously utilised to provide electric power for the entire country. Already there are some micro-hydel projects, but undertakings on a larger scale could be developed given the demand and the funds.

In brief, Bhutan possesses both the natural and material resources with a favourable climate for future economic development. There are, however, basic problems which limit the speed of progress: insufficient communications plus very few educated personnel in fields of science and technology to assume responsibility and the challenge of administration for any massive development. Lastly, and equally important, there is the question of financial resources. In the overall problem the question of priorities is always present: where does one begin? What should be placed first in the category of top priorities?

Development Programmes

As previously mentioned, the idea of the economic development of Bhutan was conceived when Prime Minister Nehru visited that country in 1958. Following an invitation from the government of Bhutan an Indian Planning Team arrived there in 1959, and the draft of the first plan was completed by 1961. This first five year development plan was for the period 1961 through to 1966. In this Plan, top priorities were specified for the economic and social development of the country on the following broad lines:

- (1) Investment in the development of sectors crucial for the utilisation of the known natural resources of Bhutan and the augmentation of its revenues;

- (2) Facilities for the training of personnel and investigation of additional resources and their developmental possibilities; and
- (3) Provision of the basic amenities of life which would promote greater efficiency in the overall production.

One of the main problems was the number of technicians required to carry out the development programmes. In a large measure, Indian technicians were drafted to meet the requirements. At the same time, steps were taken to send suitable Bhutanese with scholarships to Indian technical institutions for training.

A major portion of the effort during this period was devoted to basic programmes of communications, agricultural surveys, health, including water supply and drainage, and educational programmes. In most cases an integrated infra-structure for basic and developmental activities had to be set up: directorates for agriculture, animal husbandry, education and health were started, the engineering and forest services were greatly expanded and a Development Wing established for overall control and supervision. A hydel directorate was also formed for the construction of the approved hydel projects. The transport and postal departments were also placed on a firm and sound base for more revenue earning activities. The civil administration of the country had also to be reorganised and geared to the demands of development.

With the work of the first plan largely completed, a second plan to cover the years 1966 to 1971 was drawn up with the following aims:

- (1) The stepping up of agricultural and horticultural output;
- (2) The expansion of the programme of primary and secondary education with emphasis on vocational training;
- (3) Special attention to animal husbandry and poultry projects;
- (4) Extension of communications, roads, transport services and other facilities; and
- (5) Establishing an industrial base linked with the country's forest and mineral resources.

Economic development in Bhutan is a cooperative effort of the Bhutanese and a joint enterprise between India and Bhutan. India gave Bhutan during the first plan period a total of Rs. 17 crores and will give a further Rs. 20 crores approximately in the second plan period. Indian experts and technicians work alongside the Bhutanese in drafting and carrying out these plans. Apart from such help, the Indian Border Roads Organisation has built with its own funds a modern road communication system in Bhutan.

The development of electricity through the use of locally available water power resources is one of the principal objectives of the first and second five year plans. Micro-hydel stations are being set up by Indian engineers at Thimpu, Paro and Byagar. The one at

Thimpu has in fact already been commissioned. Besides this Bhutan has a share in the Jaldakha power project of North Bengal under an agreement concluded in 1961. Access to electric power will hasten the industrial utilisation of Bhutan's natural resources, both forest and mineral. Industrial projects under study include cement, fertiliser, paper pulp and hardboard.

Economic development has introduced into Bhutan contemporary scientific and technological processes, new means of communications and better standards of health and education. Fundamental changes in the traditional social structure of Bhutan are inevitable. A new awareness of life will result leading to a broadening of concepts, perhaps altering present values. The chief aim of the planners is to build a new and progressive system without destroying any of the good values inherent in the traditional social or religious structure. The development of a country like Bhutan is a formidable task considering that, through all its stages, the susceptibilities of traditionally sensitive people have to be borne in mind.

Judging from the results of these past six or seven years, the Bhutanese have been enthusiastic with the changes they see around them. They realise everywhere that development has brought substantial improvement. The widening of opportunities of education has been especially welcome to the people, as is proved by the ever-growing demand for more schools and teachers. The progressive leadership of the Druk Gyalpo and the willing cooperation of the Bhutanese have been decisive factors in achieving these results. As previously stated the Bhutanese have a full voice in the changes that are taking place through the democratic procedure of discussions in the National Assembly. The ultimate wisdom, the final choice of what is good for the welfare of Bhutan and the rejection of what is not lies entirely with the people of that country. India has no intention to compromise or obligate Bhutan in any way; its aid and assistance is a gesture motivated by the desire to promote friendship and goodwill between the peoples of the two countries.

Chapter XVI

Perspective

PROFOUND changes are taking place in the political, social and economic life of Bhutan. After centuries of slumber the Dragon has awakened to a new outlook and to a new experience. These changes became apparent about 70 years ago when Ugyen Wangchuk, the grand father of the present Druk Gyalpo, establishing himself as the undisputed ruler of Bhutan, decided to shape his country's destiny as a national entity, with its distinctive culture, customs and system of government. The task of reconstruction was handed on through his son to his grandson, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, but until India's independence in 1947 Bhutan remained isolated, primitive, and cut off from the rest of the world. Few indeed were allowed to enter or travel within the country; and modern technology or the era of scientific progress, which was reshaping the world between the two world wars, was studiously kept out of Bhutan.

John Claude White, British Political Officer to Sikkim and Bhutan, wrote in 1907:

I remained behind, at the urgent request of the new Maharaja and his Council, to discuss with them many projects and schemes for the welfare

and improvement of the country. These covered a large area, schools and education, population, trade, the construction of roads, the mineral resources of the country and the best method of utilising them, the desirability of encouraging tea cultivation on the waste lands at the foot of the hills, which are excellent for the purpose and equal to the best tea lands in the Duars.

Nevertheless, despite his vision very little was accomplished in the following 40 years.

Then with the independence of India, in 1947, a phase of joint activity and association between the two governments and, gradually, between the peoples of Bhutan and India became a reality. The Ruler of Bhutan, the Druk Gyalpo, was invited to India and India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Bhutan. There started the idea of the economic development of Bhutan, generally following the pattern of the economic development of India, through a series of phased plans. It was envisaged as a cooperative effort between the two countries and intended to usher a so called "silent revolution" in Bhutan.

Paradoxically, across the high Himalayas in the north, Tibet, a country with an ancient spiritual heritage similar to that of Bhutan, was also in the throes of a revolution. This rebellion was against the Chinese, against their domination of Tibet, their ruthless suppression of religious and cultural freedom, their wanton destruction of monasteries and temples and their savage efforts to enslave the people. In 1959 the Dalai Lama fled his country to seek refuge in India, the land of Buddha, and with him came several hundreds of his followers. Many of these refugees traversed the high passes into Bhutan for help from that friendly, hospitable country. They were received with sympathy and understanding and their accounts of Chinese atrocities, and attempts at destroying the Tibetans' way of life brought deep concern to the Bhutanese people.

China in her aggressive acts had shown utter disregard for the cultural heritage of Tibet; she had deliberately cast aside traditional understandings and relations which had subsisted for centuries between Peking and Lhasa. She had even concentrated her army on the southern borders of Tibet which lie just across the Bhutanese frontiers. Though the passes were at high altitudes, they were not inaccessible. An isolated and undeveloped Bhutan might well be a target for subversive activities and Bhutan had no means of self-defence against Chinese aggression.

These bloody events in Tibet, which held out a threat to Bhutan, brought home the need to change the old order, to move out of isolation and to join the community of the democratic world. Naturally Bhutan turned to India for guidance and sought to strengthen her bonds of friendship, understanding and co-operation that had since 1947 been the guiding lines of mutual relations between the two countries. Friendship between India and Bhutan took on new purpose, a meaning in

depth, when India announced its willingness to assist Bhutan in designing and carrying out its development programmes. The first of these five year plans was completed in 1966; the second is in progress. Bhutan is on the threshold of a new era with the participation of its people; and the haunting fear of the Chinese has been replaced by a sense of assured confidence in their future well being and self determination.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Monasteries in Sikkim

<i>Location</i>	<i>Literal Translation of the Sikkimese Title</i>	<i>Date of construction</i>
1. Sanga Cholling	The Island of esoteric teachings	1697
2. Dubdi	The Retreat	1701
3. Pemiongchi	The sublime perfect lotus	1705
4. Tashiding	The auspicious place	1716
5. Zilnon	The suppressor of intense fear	1716
6. Rinchenpong	The mound of jewels	1730
7. Ralang	The place where the goat leapt	1730
8. Melli	A Lepcha village	1740
9. Rumtek	Our deity has left	1740
10. Phodong	The Manal pheasant	1740
11. Tsun-thang	The meadow of the Jewel Queen	1788
12. Kha-chod palri	The abode of celestial beings	
13. Thang mochhen	The large plain	1788
14. Thulung	The valley of yam	1789
15. Nam-tse	The sky-top	1836
16. Enchey	The high quiet place	1840
17. Phenzong	The name of an orchid	1840
18. Kathok	The beginning	1840
19. Dolling	The thunderbolt	1840
20. Yangang	The ridge of fortune	1841
21. Labrang	The lama's dwelling	1844
22. Ponpo-sgang	The Bon's hill	1850
23. Lhun-tse	The self-created summit	1850
24. Senek	The dip on the ridge	1850
25. Ringon	The monastery hill	1852
26. Lingthem	A Lepcha village	1855
27. Tsa-nge	A place where grass is cut	
28. Lachen	The big pass	1858
29. Gyathang	The great plain	1860
30. Phagyal	The sublime and eminent	1862
31. Nobling	The western place	1875
32. Pabyuk	The place of abundant bamboo	1875
33. Singtam	The tree or wood entrusted	1884

APPENDIX II

*Translation of the Deed of Grant making over Darjeeling to the East
India Company dated 1 February 1835*

The Governor-General having expressed his desire for the possession of the Hill of Darjeeling, on account of its cool climate, for the purpose of enabling the servants of his Government, suffering from sickness, to avail themselves of its advantages, I, the Sikkimputtee Rajah, out of friendship to the said Governor-General, hereby present Darjeeling to the East India Company, that is, all the land south of the Great Runjeet River, east of the Balasur, Kahail, and Little Runjeet Rivers, and west of Rungno and Mahanuddi Rivers.

(Translated)

(Sd.) A. CAMPBELL

Superintendent of Darjeeling
and in charge of Political Relations
with Sikkim

*Seal of the Rajah
affixed to the document*

APPENDIX III

Treaty, Covenant, or Agreement entered into by the Hon'ble Ashley Eden, Envoy and Special Commissioner on the part of the British Government, in virtue of full powers vested in him by the Right Hon'ble Charles, Earl Canning, Governor-General in Council, and by His Highness Sekeong Kuzoo, Maharajah of Sikkim on his own part, 1861

Whereas the continued depredation and misconduct of the officers and subjects of the Maharajah of Sikkim, and the neglect of the Maharajah to afford satisfaction for the misdeeds of his people have resulted in an interruption for many years past of the harmony which previously existed between the British Government and the Government of Sikkim, and have led ultimately to the invasion and conquest of Sikkim by a British force; and whereas the Maharajah of Sikkim has now expressed his sincere regret for the misconduct of his servants and subjects, his determination to do all in his power to obviate future misunderstanding, and his desire to be again admitted into friendship and alliance with the British Government, it is hereby agreed as follows:

1

All previous Treaties made between the British Government and the Sikkim Government are hereby formally cancelled.

2

The whole of the Sikkim territory now in the occupation of British forces is restored to the Maharajah of Sikkim, and there shall henceforth be peace and amity between the two States.

3

The Maharajah of Sikkim undertakes, so far as is within his power, to restore, within one month from the date of signing this Treaty, all public property which was abandoned by the detachment of British Troops at Rinchinpoong.

4

In indemnification of the expenses incurred in 1860 by the British Government in occupying a portion of the territory of Sikkim as a means of enforcing just claims which had been evaded by the Government of Sikkim, and as compensation to the British subjects who were pillaged and kidnapped

by subjects of Sikkim, the Sikkim Government agrees to pay to the British authorities at Darjeeling the sum of 7,000 (seven thousand) rupees in the following instalments, that is to say:—

May 1st, 1861	Rs. 1,000
Nov. 1st, 1861	Rs. 3,000
May 1st, 1862	Rs. 3,000

As security for the due payment of this amount, it is further agreed that in the event of any of these instalments not being duly paid on the date appointed, the Government of Sikkim shall make over to the British Government that portion of its territory bounded on the south by the River Rummam, on the east by the Great Runjeet River, on the north by a line from the Great Runjeet to the Singaleelah Range, including the monasteries of Tassiding, Pemonchi, and Changacheling, and on the west by the Singaleelah Mountain Range, and the British Government shall retain possession of this territory and collect the revenue thereof, until the full amount, with all expenses of occupation and collection, and interest at 6 per cent per annum, are realised.

5

The Government of Sikkim engages that its subjects shall never again commit depredations on British territory, or kidnap or otherwise molest British subjects. In the event of any such depredation or kidnapping taking place, the Government of Sikkim undertakes to deliver up all persons engaged in such malpractice, as well as the Sirdars or other Chiefs conniving at or benefiting thereby.

6

The Government of Sikkim will at all times seize and deliver up any criminals, defaulters, or other delinquents who may have taken refuge within its territory, on demand being duly made in writing by the British Government through their accredited agents. Should any delay occur in complying with such demand, the Police of the British Government may follow the person whose surrender has been demanded into any part of the Sikkim territory, and shall, on showing a warrant, duly signed by the British Agent, receive every assistance and protection in the prosecution of their object from the Sikkim officers.

7

Inasmuch as the late misunderstandings between the two Governments have been mainly fomented by the acts of the ex-Dewan Namguay, the Government of Sikkim engages that neither the said Namguay, nor any of his blood relations, shall ever again be allowed to set foot in Sikkim, or to take part in the councils of, or hold any office under, the Maharajah or any of the Maharajah's family at Choombi.

8

The Government of Sikkim from this date abolishes all restrictions on travellers and monopolies in trade between the British territories and Sikkim. There shall henceforth be a free reciprocal intercourse, and full liberty of commerce between the subjects of both countries; it shall be lawful for British subjects to go into any part of Sikkim for the purpose of travel or trade, and the subjects of all countries shall be permitted to reside in and

pass through Sikkim, and to expose their goods for sale at any place and in any manner that may best suit their purpose, without any interference whatever, except as is hereinafter provided.

9

The Government of Sikkim engages to afford protection to all travellers, merchants, or traders of all countries, whether residing in, trading in, or passing through Sikkim. If any merchant, traveller, or trader, being a European British subject, shall commit any offence contrary to the laws of Sikkim, such person shall be punished by the representative of the British Government resident at Darjeeling, and the Sikkim Government will at once deliver such offender over to the British authorities for this purpose, and will, on no account, detain such offender in Sikkim on any pretext or pretence whatever. All other British subjects residing in the country to be liable to the laws of Sikkim; but such persons shall, on no account, be punished with loss of limb, or maiming, or torture, and every case of punishment of a British subject shall be at once reported to Darjeeling.

10

No duties or fees of any sort shall be demanded by the Sikkim Government of any person or persons on account of goods exported into the British territories from Sikkim, or imported into Sikkim from the British territories.

11

On all goods passing into or out of Tibet, Bhootan, or Nepaul, the Government of Sikkim may levy a duty of customs according to such a scale as may, from time to time, be determined and published without reference to the destination of the goods, provided, however, that such duty shall, on no account, exceed 5 per cent. on the value of goods at the time and place of the levy of duty. On the payment of the duty aforesaid a pass shall be given exempting such goods from liability to further payment on any account whatever.

12

With the view to protect the Government of Sikkim from fraud on account of undervaluation for assessment of duty, it is agreed that the customs officers shall have the option of taking over for the Government any goods at the value affixed on them by the owner.

13

In the event of the British Government desiring to open out a road through Sikkim, with the view of encouraging trade, the Sikkim Government will raise no objection thereto, and will afford every protection and aid to the party engaged in the work. If a road is constructed, the Government of Sikkim undertakes to keep it in repair, and to erect and maintain suitable travellers' rest-houses throughout its route.

14

If the British Government desires to make either a topographical or geological survey of Sikkim, the Sikkim Government will raise no objection to this being done, and will afford protection and assistance to the officers employed in this duty.

15

Inasmuch as many of the late misunderstandings have had their founda-

tion in the custom which exists in Sikkim of dealing in slaves, the Government of Sikkim binds itself, from this date, to punish severely any person trafficking in human beings, or seizing persons for the purpose of using them as slaves.

16

Henceforth the subjects of Sikkim may transport themselves without let or hindrance to any country to which they may wish to remove. In the same way the Government of Sikkim has authority to permit the subjects of other countries, not being criminals or defaulters, to take refuge in Sikkim.

17

The Government of Sikkim engages to abstain from any acts of aggression or hostility against any of the neighbouring States which are allies of the British Government. If any disputes or questions arise between the people of Sikkim and those of neighbouring States, such disputes or questions shall be referred to the arbitration of the British Government, and the Sikkim Government agrees to abide by the decision of the British Government.

18

The whole military force of Sikkim shall join and afford every aid and facility to British Troops when employed in the Hills.

19

The Government of Sikkim will not cede or lease any portion of its territory to any other State without the permission of the British Government.

20

The Government of Sikkim engages that no armed force belonging to any other country shall pass through Sikkim without the sanction of the British Government.

21

Seven of the criminals, whose surrender was demanded by the British Government, having fled from Sikkim and taken refuge in Bhootan, the Government of Sikkim engages to do all in its power to obtain the delivery of those persons from the Bhootan Government, and in the event of any of these men again returning to Sikkim, the Sikkim Government binds itself to seize them, and to make them over to the British Authorities at Darjeeling without delay.

22

With a view to the establishment of an efficient Government in Sikkim, and to the better maintenance of friendly relations with the British Government, the Maharajah of Sikkim agrees to remove the seat of his Government from Tibet to Sikkim, and reside there for nine months in the year. It is further agreed that a Vakeel shall be accredited by the Sikkim Government, who shall reside permanently at Darjeeling.

23

This Treaty, consisting of twenty-three Articles, being settled and concluded by the Honourable Ashley Eden, British Envoy, and His Highness Sekeong Kuzoo Sikkimputtee, Maharajah, at Tumlong, this 28th day of

March 1861, corresponding with 17th Dao Neepoo 61, Mr. Eden has delivered to the Maharajah a copy of the same in English, with translation in Nagri and Bhootiah, under the seal and signature of the said Honourable Ashley Eden and His Highness the Sikkimputtee Maharajah, and the Sikkimputtee Maharajah has in like manner delivered to the said Hon'ble Ashley Eden another copy also in English, with translation in Nagri and Bhootiah, bearing the seal of His Highness and the said Hon'ble Ashley Eden. The Envoy engages to procure the delivery to His Highness, within six weeks from this date, of a copy of this Treaty, duly ratified by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council, and this Treaty shall in the meantime be in full force.

(Seal)

(Sd.) SEKEONG KUZOO SIKKIMPOTTEE
,, ASHLEY EDEN, Envoy (Seal)
,, CANNING (Seal)

Ratified by His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General of India in Council at Calcutta on the sixteenth day of April 1861.

(Sd.) C. U. AITCHISON
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

APPENDIX IV

Convention between Great Britain and China relating to Sikkim and Tibet, 1890

Whereas Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and His Majesty the Emperor of China, are sincerely desirous to maintain and perpetuate the relations of friendship and good understanding which now exists between their respective Empires; and whereas recent occurrences have tended towards a disturbance of the said relations, and it is desirable to clearly define and permanently settle certain matters connected with the boundary between Sikkim and Tibet, Her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the Emperor of China have resolved to conclude a Convention on this subject and have, for this purpose, named Plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, His Excellency the Most Hon'ble Henry Charles Keith Petty Fitzmaurice, G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.I.E., Marquess of Landsdowne, Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

And His Majesty the Emperor of China, His Excellency Sheng Tai, Imperial Associate Resident in Tibet, Military Deputy Lieutenant-Governor.

Who having met and communicated to each other their full powers, and finding these to be in proper form, having agreed upon the following Convention in eight Articles:—

1. The boundary of Sikkim and Tibet shall be the crest of the mountain range separating the waters flowing into the Sikkim Teesta and its affluents from the waters flowing into the Tibetan Mochu and northwards into other rivers of Tibet. The line commences at Mount Gipmochi on the Bhutan frontier and follows the above mentioned water-parting to the point where it meets Nepal territory.

2. It is admitted that the British Government, whose protectorate over the Sikkim State is hereby recognised, has direct and exclusive control over the internal administration and foreign relations of that State, and except through and with the permission of the British Government, neither the Ruler of the State nor any of its officers shall have official relations of any kind, formal or informal, with any other country.

3. The Government of Great Britain and Ireland and the Government of China engage reciprocally to respect the boundary as defined in Article I, and to prevent acts of aggression from their respective sides of the frontier.

4. The question of providing increased facilities for trade across the Sikkim-Tibet frontier will hereafter be discussed with a view to a mutually

satisfactory arrangement by the High Contracting Powers.

5. The question of pasturage on the Sikkim side of the frontier is reserved for further examination and future adjustment.

6. The High Contracting Powers reserve for discussion and arrangement the method in which official communications between the British authorities in India and the authorities in Tibet shall be conducted.

7. Two Joint Commissioners shall, within six months from the ratification of this Convention, be appointed, one by the British Government in India, the other by the Chinese Resident in Tibet. The said Commissioners shall meet and discuss the questions which by the last three preceding Articles have been reserved.

8. The present Convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications shall be exchanged in London as soon as possible after the date of the signature thereof.

In witness whereof the respective negotiators have signed the same and affixed thereunto the seals of their arms.

Done in quadruplicate at Calcutta this seventeenth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety, corresponding with the Chinese date the twenty-seventh day of the second moon of the sixteenth year of Kuang Hsu.

(Chinese seal and signature).

(Seal) (Sd.) LANSDOWNE

APPENDIX V

Regulations regarding Trade, Communication and Pasturage to be appended to the Sikkim-Tibet Convention of 1890.

I.—A trade-mart shall be established at Yatung on the Tibetan side of the frontier, and shall be open to all British subjects for purposes of trade from the first day of May 1894. The Government of India shall be free to send officers to reside at Yatung to watch the conditions of British trade at that mart.

Trade
II.—British subjects trading at Yatung shall be at liberty to travel freely to and fro between the frontier and Yatung, to reside at Yatung, and to rent houses and godowns for their own accommodation and the storage of their goods. The Chinese Government undertake that suitable buildings for the above purposes shall be provided for British subjects, and also that a special and fitting residence shall be provided for the officer or officers appointed by the Government of India under Regulation I to reside at Yatung. British subjects shall be at liberty to sell their goods to whomsoever they please, to purchase native commodities in kind or in money, to hire transport of any kind, and in general to conduct their business transactions in conformity with local usage, and without any vexatious restrictions. Such British subjects shall receive efficient protection for their persons and property. At Lang-jo and Ta-chun, between the frontier and Yatung, where rest-houses have been built by the Tibetan authorities British subjects can break their journey in consideration of a daily rent.

III.—Import and export trade in the following articles:—arms, ammunition, military stores, salt, liquors, and intoxicating or narcotic drugs, may at the option of either Government be entirely prohibited, or permitted only on such conditions as either Government on their own side may think fit to impose.

IV.—Goods, other than goods of the description enumerated in Regulation III, entering Tibet from British India, across the Sikkim-Tibet frontier, or vice versa, whatever their origin, shall be exempt from duty for a period of five years commencing from the date of the opening of Yatung to trade; but after the expiration of this term, if found desirable, a tariff may be mutually agreed upon and enforced.

Indian tea may be imported into Tibet at a rate of duty not exceeding that at which Chinese tea is imported into England, but trade in Indian tea shall not be engaged in during the five years for which other commodities are exempt.

V.—All goods on arrival at Yatung, whether from British India or from

Tibet, must be reported at the Customs Station there for examination, and the report must give full particulars of the description, quantity, and value of the goods.

VI.—In the event of trade disputes arising between British and Chinese or Tibetan subjects in Tibet, they shall be enquired into and settled in personal conference by the Political Officer for Sikkim and the Chinese Frontier Officer. The object of personal conference being to ascertain facts and do justice; where there is a divergence of views the law of the country to which the defendant belongs shall guide.

VII.—Despatches from the Government of India to the Chinese Imperial Resident in Tibet shall be handed over by the Political Officer for Sikkim to the Chinese Frontier Officer, who will forward them by special courier.

Despatches from the Chinese Imperial Resident in Tibet to the Government of India will be handed over by the Chinese Frontier Officer to the Political Officer for Sikkim, who will forward them as quickly as possible.

VIII.—Despatches between the Chinese and Indian officials must be treated with due respect, and couriers will be assisted in passing to and fro by the officers of each Government.

IX.—After the expiration of one year from the date of the opening of Yatung, such Tibetans as continue to graze their cattle in Sikkim will be subject to such Regulations as the British Government may from time to time enact for the general conduct of grazing in Sikkim. Due notice will be given of such Regulations.

GENERAL ARTICLES

I.—In the event of disagreement between the Political Officer for Sikkim and the Chinese Frontier Officer, each official shall report the matter to his immediate superior, who, in turn, if a settlement is not arrived at between them, shall refer such matter to their respective Governments for disposal.

II.—After the lapse of five years from the date on which these Regulations shall come into force, and on six months' notice given by either party, these Regulations shall be subject to revision by Commissioners appointed on both sides for this purpose who shall be empowered to decide on and adopt such amendments and extensions as experience shall prove to be desirable.

III.—It having been stipulated that Joint Commissioners should be appointed by the British and Chinese Governments under the seventh article of the Sikkim-Tibet Convention to meet and discuss, with a view to the final settlement of the questions reserved under articles 4, 5 and 6 of the said Convention; and the Commissioners thus appointed having met and discussed the questions referred to, namely, Trade, Communication and Pasturage have been further appointed to sign the agreement in nine Regulations and three general articles now arrived at and to declare that the said nine Regulations and the three general articles form part of the Convention itself.

In witness whereof the respective Commissioners have hereto subscribed their names.

Done in quadruplicate at Darjeeling this 5th day of December, in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three, corresponding with the Chinese date the 28th day of the 10th moon of the 19th year of Kuang Hsu.

Signed:—
(Seal) HO CHANG-JUNG
JAMES H. HART
Chinese Commissioner.

Signed:—
(Seal) A. W. PAUL
British Commissioner.

APPENDIX VI

Press Note of the Ministry of External Affairs, 20 March 1950

The Government of India have had consultations with the Maharajkumar of Sikkim and the representatives of the political parties in Sikkim, who were invited recently to Delhi. The discussions covered the entire field of future relations between Sikkim and India and necessary administrative arrangements within the State, including the association of popular representatives in the Government of the State. Provisional agreement has been reached as regards the future relationship of Sikkim with India and decisions have also been taken regarding the administration.

As regards the status of Sikkim it has been agreed that Sikkim will continue to be a protectorate of India. The Government of India will continue to be responsible for its external relations, defence and communications. This is as much in the interests of the security of the State as of India and is dictated by the facts of geography. As regards internal Government, the State will continue to enjoy autonomy subject to the ultimate responsibility of the Government of India for the maintenance of good administration and law and order.

For the present an officer of the Government of India will continue to be the Dewan of the State. But the Government of India's policy is one of progressive association of the people of the State with its Government, a policy with which, happily, His Highness the Maharaja is in full agreement. It is proposed, as a first step, that an Advisory Council representative of all the interests should be associated with the Dewan. Steps will also be taken immediately to institute a village panchayat system on an elective basis within the State. This is an essential and effective process of education in the art of popular government and it is the intention that these panchayats should, in due course, elect a Council for the State whose functions and area of responsibility will be progressively enlarged.

The Maharajkumar of Sikkim, who was authorised by the Maharaja to participate in the discussions on his behalf, is taking back with him the terms agreed upon. A formal treaty is expected to be signed between the Maharaja of Sikkim and the Government of India at an early date.

APPENDIX VII

Indo-Sikkim Treaty of 1950

The President of India and His Highness the Maharaja of Sikkim being desirous of further strengthening the good relations already existing between India and Sikkim, have resolved to enter into a new Treaty with each other, and the President of India has, for the purpose, appointed as his plenipotentiary Shri Harishwar Dayal, Political Officer in Sikkim, and His Highness the Maharaja having examined Shri Harishwar Dayal's credentials and found them good and in due form, the two have agreed as follows:—

Article I

All previous treaties between the British Government and Sikkim which are at present in force as between India and Sikkim are hereby formally cancelled.

Article II

Sikkim shall continue to be a Protectorate of India and, subject to the provisions of this Treaty, shall enjoy autonomy in regard to its internal affairs.

Article III

(1) The Government of India will be responsible for the defence and territorial integrity of Sikkim. It shall have the right to take such measures as it considers necessary for the defence of Sikkim or the security of India, whether preparatory or otherwise, and whether within or outside Sikkim. In particular, the Government of India shall have the right to station troops anywhere within Sikkim.

(2) The measures referred to in paragraph (1) will as far as possible be taken by the Government of India in consultation with the Government of Sikkim.

(3) The Government of Sikkim shall not import any arms, ammunition, military stores or other warlike material of any description for any purpose whatsoever without the previous consent of the Government of India.

Article IV

(1) The external relations of Sikkim, whether political, economic or financial, shall be conducted and regulated solely by the Government of India; and the Government of Sikkim shall have no dealings with any foreign power.

(2) Subjects of Sikkim travelling to foreign countries shall be treated as Indian protected persons for the purpose of passports, and shall receive from Indian representatives abroad the same protection and facilities as Indian nationals.

Article V

The Government of Sikkim agrees not to levy any import duty, transit duty or other impost on goods brought into, or in transit through, Sikkim; and the Government of India agrees not to levy any import or other duty on goods of Sikkimese origin brought into India from Sikkim.

Article VI

(1) The Government of India shall have exclusive right of constructing, maintaining and regulating the use of railways, aerodromes and landing grounds and air navigation facilities, posts, telegraphs, telephones and wireless installations in Sikkim; and the Government of Sikkim shall render the Government of India every assistance in their construction, maintenance and protection.

(2) The Government of Sikkim may, however, construct, maintain, and regulate the use of railways and aerodromes and landing grounds and air navigation facilities to such extent as may be agreed to by the Government of India.

(3) The Government of India shall have the right to construct and maintain in Sikkim roads for strategic purposes and for the purpose of improving communications with India and other adjoining countries; and the Government of Sikkim shall render the Government of India every assistance in the construction, maintenance and protection of such roads.

Article VII

(1) Subjects of Sikkim shall have the right of entry into, and free movement within, India, and Indian nationals shall have the right of entry into, and free movement within, Sikkim.

(2) Subject to such regulations as the Government of Sikkim may prescribe in consultation with the Government of India, Indian nationals shall have:—

- (a) the right to carry on trade and commerce in Sikkim; and
- (b) when established in any trade in Sikkim, the right to acquire, hold and dispose of any property, movable or immovable, for the purposes of their trade or residence in Sikkim.

(3) Subjects of Sikkim shall have the same right—

- (a) to carry on trade and commerce in India, and to employment therein; and
- (b) of acquiring, holding and disposing of property, movable and immovable, as Indian nationals.

Article VIII

(1) Indian nationals within Sikkim shall be subject to the laws of Sikkim and subjects of Sikkim within India shall be subject to the laws of India.

(2) Whenever any criminal proceedings are initiated in Sikkim against any Indian national or any person in the service of the Government of India or any foreigner, the Government of Sikkim shall furnish the Representative of the Government of India in Sikkim (hereinafter referred to as the Indian Representative) with particulars of the charges against such person.

If in the case of any person in the service of the Government of India

or any foreigner it is so demanded by the Indian Representative, such person shall be handed over to him for trial before such courts as may be established for the purpose by the Government of India either in Sikkim or outside.

Article IX

(1) The Government of Sikkim agrees to seize and deliver up any fugitive offender from outside Sikkim who has taken refuge therein on demand being made by the Indian Representative. Should any delay occur in complying with such demand, the Indian police may follow the person whose surrender has been demanded into any part of Sikkim, and shall, on showing a warrant signed by the Indian Representative, receive every assistance and protection in the prosecution of their object from the Sikkim officers.

(2) The Government of India similarly agrees, on demand being made by the Government of Sikkim, to take extradition proceedings against, and surrender, any fugitive offender from Sikkim who has taken refuge in the territory of India.

(3) In this article, "fugitive offender" means a person who is accused of having committed an extradition offence as defined in the First Schedule to the Indian Extradition Act, 1903, or any other offence which may hereafter be agreed upon between the Government of India and the Government of Sikkim as being an extradition offence.

Article X

The Government of India, having in mind the friendly relations already existing between India and Sikkim and now further strengthened by this Treaty, and being desirous of assisting in the development and good administration of Sikkim, agrees to pay the Government of Sikkim a sum of rupees three lakhs every year so long as the terms of this Treaty are duly observed by the Government of Sikkim.

The first payment under this Article will be made before the end of the year 1950, and subsequent payments will be made in the month of August every year.

Article XI

The Government of India shall have the right to appoint a Representative to reside in Sikkim; and the Government of Sikkim shall provide him and his staff with all reasonable facilities in regard to their carrying out their duties in Sikkim.

Article XII

If any dispute arises in the interpretation of the provisions of this Treaty which cannot be resolved by mutual consultation, the dispute shall be referred to the Chief Justice of India whose decision thereon shall be final.

Article XIII

This treaty shall come into force without ratification from the date of signature by both the parties.

Done in duplicate at Gangtok on this 5th day of December, 1950.

(Sd.) HARISHWAR DAYAL
Political Officer in Sikkim

(Sd.) TASHI NAMGYAL
His Highness the Maharaja of Sikkim

APPENDIX VIII

Selected Plan Achievements, 1954-1966

Project	Unit	Existing at the beginning of the year			Location
		1953	1961	1966	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Agriculture & Animal Husbandry:					
Agricultural Farm	No.	—	1	3	Temi, Geyzing, Ribdi
Dairy Farm	„	—	1	1	Tadung
Apple Orchard	„	—	1	1	Lachung
Fruit Nursery	„	—	2	2	Ninth Mile, Lagyap.
Cardamom Nursery	„	—	2*	1**	*Rongli, Gangtok, ** Mangan Singtam
Fruit Preservation Factory	„	—	1	1	Singtam
Demonstration Centres (VLW)	„	—	30	24	
Plant Protection Campaign	Acres	—	5,510	10,000	All Sikkim
Livestock Farm	No.	—	1	2	Tadung, Dentam.
Veterinary Hospital	„	—	1	3	Deorali, Geyzing, Namchi
Veterinary Dispensary	„	—	1	5	Chunghang, Makh, Sorent, Kewzing, Rongli
Mule Breeding Centre	„	—	—	1	Chunghang
2. Minor Irrigation:					
Minor Irrigation Schemes	No.	—	22	32	
3. Forests					
Forest Roads	Mile	55	100	205	

(Contd.)

APPENDIX VIII—(Contd.)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Medicinal Herbs					
Plantation	No.	1	1	2	Saramsa Dikchu
Nurseries	Acre	3	25	55	
Area under Taungya Pltn.	„	150	—	4,428	
Area under Dept. Pltn.	„	300	—	1,666	
Area under Soil Conservation	„	—	1,560	3,070	
Fisheries:					
1. Mirror Carp	Tank	—	3	3	Gangtok, Rin- chenpong, Lachung
2. Trout	Hatchery	—	1	1	
Forest Saw Mill	No.	—	1	1	Menmoicho Rangpo
4. Cooperation & Fair Price Shops:					
Coop. Societies	No.	—	24	27	Dikchu, Kabi, Mangan, Chun- gthang.
Fair Price Shops	„	—	2	4	
5. Power					
Hydel Station	No.	1	1	2	Gangtok, Sang- khola Gangtok
Thermal Plant	„	—	1	1	
6. Industries:					
Cottage Industry:					
Training Institute	No.	—	1	1	Gangtok
Production Unit	„	—	1	1	Gangtok
Weaving Centre	„	—	—	1	Lachung. handed over to Khadi Commission.
7. Roads*:					
Motorable Roads	Mile	1½	43½	92	
Jeepable Roads	„	—	75	207	
Bridle Roads	„	215	177	224	
Village Roads	„	—	138	446	
Bridges:					
1. Suspension	No.	—	3	11	
2. Minor	„	—	1	1	
3. Log	„	—	4	35	
8. Education:					
Higher Secondary Schools	No.	—	2	4	Gangtok (2), Namchi & Geyzing.

(Contd.)

*Figures given exclude 178 miles of National Highway extension roads which are built and maintained by Govt. of India.

APPENDIX VIII—(Contd.)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
High Schools	No.	2*	2**	—	*Gangtok (2); now upgraded **Namchi, Geyzing: now upgraded.
Public Schools	„	—	—	1	Gangtok, partially assisted from Plan.
Specialist Schools	„	1 ^a	1 ^a	2*	^a Pemayangtse *Inchey
<i>Junior High Schools</i>					
1. Government	„	—	—	5	
2. Aided	„	—	1	1	
<i>Middle Schools</i>					
1. Government	„	—	11	11	
2. Aided/Non-Govt.	„	2	2	2	
<i>Primary Schools</i>					
1. Government	„	5	85	98	
2. Aided/Non-Govt.	„	79	79	57	
Training Institutes (Teachers)	No.	—	1	1	Temi
Community Centres	„	—	—	1	Gangtok
Library Centres	„	—	—	3	Namchi, Geyzing, Mangan
Children in schools	„	3,611	6,452	13,831	
9. Medical & Public Health:					
Hospitals	No.	3	5	5	Gantgok, Namchi, Geyzing, Singtam, Mangan.
Dispensaries	„	8	17	24	
Clinics	„	—	1	1	Gangtok (TB Clinic)
T.B. Hospitals	„	1	1	1	Gangtok (Extended in First Plan).
Maternity Wards	„	—	1	4	Gangtok, Namchi, Geyzing, Singtam.
Children's Wards	„	—	1	1	Gangtok
<i>N.M.E.P.</i>					
1. Malaria Unit	„	—	1	1	
<i>Public Health:</i>					
1. B.C.G. Team	„	—	1	1	
2. VD & Worms Team	„	—	1	1	
<i>Water Supply Schemes:</i>					
1. Gangtok	„	1	7	8	
2. Bazar	„	2	11	26	
3. Village/Rural	„	—	4	96	

APPENDIX IX

Place Names

Sikkim	New House
Denjong, Demojong, Demoshong	The valley of rice
Rong-pa	Dwellers in steep country
Mon-pa	Dwellers in low country
Rangit	The Depression in the hills
Rang-nyu (Teesta)	The pure river
Ratong (source of Rangit)	The surging, swallowing one
Sanchal (Shin-shel-hlo)	The damp misty hill
Phallut (Fok-lut)	The bare denuded peak
Singalela (Singilela)	The hill of the wild alder
Sandak-phu	The high ridge
Pankim	The King's minister
Phieungong	The home of the dwarf bamboo
Pashok	Jungle or forest
Yoksam	Meeting place of the Three Lamas
Gangtok	The Summit of the ridge
Lachen	Big pass
Lachung	Little pass
Chola-moo (Tsho-la-mo)	The lake of our lady or the goddess
Bithang-tsho	The lake of the cow yak
Tanitzo (Tanyek-tsho)	The lake of the horse tail
Kangchenjunga	The great snowy mountain of the five treasure houses
Chomolhari	The hill of our lady goddess
Chola	The principal pass
Yak-la	The path used by graziers
Nathu-la	The path of the listening ear
Jelep-la	The easy, level pass
Gnatong	The forest meadow
Lungthu	The descent into the valley
Rhenock	The black hill
Gangtok	The high hill
Rabdentse	The height of the chief residence
Barmie	The rough ridge
Lagyap	The back of the pass
Sebu la	The cold pass
Samdong	The bridge head
Tista (Teesta)	The beneficent rock

APPENDIX X

Indo-Bhutan Treaty of 1949

The Government of India on the one part, and His Highness the Druk Gyalpo's Government on the other part, equally animated by the desire to regulate in a friendly manner and upon a solid and durable basis the state of affairs caused by the termination of the British Government's authority in India, and to promote and foster the relations of friendship and neighbourliness so necessary for the well-being of their peoples, have resolved to conclude the following treaty, and have, for this purpose named their representatives, that is to say Sri Harishwar Dayal representing the Government of India, who has full powers to agree to the said treaty on behalf of the Government of India, and Deb Zimpon Sonam Tobgye Dorji, Yang-Lop Sonam, Chho-Zim Thondup, Rin-Zim Tandin and Ha Drung Jigmie Palden Dorji, representing the Government of His Highness the Druk Gyalpo, Maharaja of Bhutan, who have full powers to agree to the same on behalf of the Government of Bhutan.

ARTICLE I

There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the Government of India and the Government of Bhutan.

ARTICLE 2

The Government of India undertakes to exercise no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan. On its part the Government of Bhutan agrees to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in regard to its external relations.

ARTICLE 3

In place of the compensation granted to the Government of Bhutan under Article 4 of the treaty of Sinchula and enhanced by the treaty of the eighth day of January 1910 and the temporary subsidy of Rupees one lakh per annum granted in 1942, the Government of India agrees to make an annual payment of Rupees five lakhs to the Government of Bhutan. And it is further hereby agreed that the said annual payment shall be made on the tenth day of January every year, the first payment being made on the tenth day of January 1950. This payment shall continue so long as this treaty remains in force and its terms are duly observed.

ARTICLE 4

Further to mark the friendship existing and continuing between the said Governments, the Government of India shall, within one year from the date of signature of this treaty, return to the Government of Bhutan about thirty-two square miles of territory in the area known as Dewangiri. The Government of India shall appoint a competent officer or officers to mark out the area so returned to the Government of Bhutan.

ARTICLE 5

There shall, as heretofore, be free trade and commerce between the territories of the Government of India and of the Government of Bhutan; and the Government of India agrees to grant the Government of Bhutan every facility for the carriage, by land and water, of its produce throughout the territory of the Government of India, including the right to use such forest roads as may be specified by mutual agreement from time to time.

ARTICLE 6

The Government of India agrees that the Government of Bhutan shall be free to import, with the assistance and approval of the Government of India, from or through India into Bhutan, whatever arms, ammunition, machinery, warlike material or stores may be required or desired for the strength and welfare of Bhutan, and that this arrangement shall hold good for all time as long as the Government of India is satisfied that the intentions of the Government of Bhutan are friendly and that there is no danger to India from such importations. The Government of Bhutan, on the other hand, agrees that there shall be no export of such arms, ammunition, etc., across the frontier of Bhutan either by the Government of Bhutan or by private individuals.

ARTICLE 7

The Government of India and the Government of Bhutan agree that Bhutanese subjects residing in Indian territories shall have equal justice with Indian subjects, and that Indian subjects residing in Bhutan shall have equal justice with the subjects of the Government of Bhutan.

ARTICLE 8

(1) The Government of India shall, on demand being duly made in writing by the Government of Bhutan, take proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Extradition Act, 1903 (of which a copy shall be furnished to the Government of Bhutan), for the surrender of all Bhutanese subjects accused of any of the crimes specified in the first schedule of the said Act who may take refuge in Indian territory.

(2) The Government of Bhutan shall, requisition being duly made by the Government of India, or by any officer authorised by the Government of India in this behalf, surrender any Indian subjects, or subjects of a foreign power, whose extradition may be required in pursuance of any agreement or arrangements made by the Government of India with the said power, accused of any of the crimes, specified in the first schedule of Act XV of 1903, who may take refuge in the territory under the jurisdiction of the Government of Bhutan, and also any Bhutanese subjects who, after committing any of the crimes referred to in Indian territory, shall flee into Bhutan, on such evidence of their guilt being produced as shall satisfy the local court of the district in which the offence may have been committed.

ARTICLE 9

Any differences and disputes arising in the application or interpretation of this treaty shall in the first instance be settled by negotiation. If within three months of the start of negotiations no settlement is arrived at, then the matter shall be referred to the arbitration of three arbitrators, who shall be nationals of either India or Bhutan, chosen in the following manner:—

- (1) One person nominated by the Government of India;
- (2) One person nominated by the Government of Bhutan;
- (3) A Judge of the Federal Court, or of a High Court in India, to be chosen by the Government of Bhutan, who shall be Chairman.

The judgment of this Tribunal shall be final and executed without delay by either party.

ARTICLE 10

This treaty shall continue in force in perpetuity unless terminated or modified by mutual consent.

Done in duplicate at Darjeeling this eighth day of August, one thousand nine hundred and forty-nine, corresponding with the Bhutanese date the fifteenth day of the sixth month of the Earth-Bull year.

HARISHWAR DAYAL
Political Officer in Sikkim

Deb Zimpon Sonam
Tobgye Dorji
Yang-Lop Sonam
Chho-Zim Thondup
Rin-Zim Tandin
Ha Drung Jigmie
Palden Dorji

INSTRUMENTS OF RATIFICATION

WHEREAS a Treaty relating to the promotion of, and fostering the relations of friendship and neighbourliness was signed at Darjeeling on the 8th day of August 1949 by representatives of the Government of India and of the Government of His Highness the Druk Gyalpo, Maharaja of Bhutan, which Treaty is, word for word as follows:

* * * *

The Government of India, having considered the treaty aforesaid, hereby confirm and ratify the same and undertake faithfully to perform and carry out all the stipulations therein contained.

In witness whereof this instrument of ratification is signed and sealed by the Governor-General of India.

Done at New Delhi, the 22nd day of September 1949.

(Sd.) C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
Governor-General of India

Whereas a Treaty relating to the promotion of, and fostering, relations of friendship and neighbourliness was signed at Darjeeling on the eighth day of August 1949 by Representatives of my Government and of the Government of India which Treaty is, word for word, as follows:—

* * * *

My Government, having considered the treaty aforesaid, hereby confirm and ratify the same and undertake faithfully to perform and carry out all the stipulations there contained.

In witness whereof I have signed this instrument of ratification and affixed hereto my seal.

Done at Tongsa the fifteenth day of September, 1949.

Seal

(Sd.) J. WANGCHUK
Druk Gyalpo

APPENDIX XI

Places and Centres of Historical or Religious Interest

EASTERN BHUTAN

Sakten (Alt. 9,000 ft.)

A medium-sized village with a population of about 300, in charge of a Drungpa. There is a small Gompa with a Rimpoche and some lamas. River Dangmenchu, a tributary of Manas, waters this area. Wheat, potato and barley are grown but the main occupation of the people is the breeding of cows, yaks, horses and mules. The people of this region, the Mirasaktens, are closely united to the Monpas of the Tawang area of NEFA.

Jhonkar (Alt. 5,000)

A small village also in charge of a Drungpa. It has a monastery.

Tashigang-Dzong (Alt. 3,500)

One of the more important towns of Bhutan, especially from a historical point of view. It has an important Dzong, housing a monastery with some 40 lamas. A new school is being built to accommodate 400 students. Maize, rice, wheat and barley are grown here.

Lhunsi Dzong

Situated on the banks of the Kura-chu, Lhunsi enjoys a warm and equable climate excellent for the cultivation of good rice. It is the headquarters of the Kurtoi area, known also for a special type of handloom cloth. There is a primary school with 130 pupils, a dispensary and leper colony. The estimated population is 5,000.

Yayung (Alt. 3,000)

A small village in charge of a Drungpa.

Mongar-dzong (Alt. 4,500)

The second largest town in eastern Bhutan with a population of about 500. There is a monastery, a middle school with about 200 children, and a

dispensary. Lies on the banks of the river Kura-chu, one of the five tributaries of the Manas river. The people of this area are excellent weavers of baskets, as also firewood carvers and silversmiths. At Lingmethong about five miles away there is a central livestock farm.

Saling (Alt. 5,000)

A small village situated in a densely forested area.

CENTRAL BHUTAN

Senger (Alt. 9,000)

From here start the pasture lands of Central Bhutan—forests of pine and fir abound. A small village with some 20 houses.

Ura (Alt. 10,600)

A large village with a population of 200, in charge of a Drungpa. There is also a small monastery.

Bumthang (Byakar-Dzong) (Alt. 9,700)

Bumthang or the “plain of spirits”, is the most important town in Central Bhutan. Aji Choki, the step-sister of the Druk Gyalpo, stays at the palace of Wangdicholing. The Byakar Dzong is a prominent structure, situated on the banks of the Chamarchu. There are also two monasteries—Tharpaling with about 80 lamas and Nyimaling with 60 lamas. There is a primary school with 110 pupils and also a dispensary.

The Bumthang valley is indeed two valleys—on the right the Wangdicholing area and on the left the Tashicholing. The Wangdicholing area is fed by one of the main tributaries of the Manas, the Chamki-chu. The Bumthaps, the people of this region who number some 15,000, are distinct from the Kurtepas in the north and the Kurmes in the south.

Gyetsha (Alt. 10,000)

Near by is the palace of Tashicholing where the Queen Mother resides. It is a small village of about 15 houses situated in a beautiful valley. In charge of a Drungpa.

Tongsa (Alt. 7,500)

The Tongsa Dzong is an old and historical building. The first dzong, which is not the present one, is stated to have been built over 1,000 years ago by a king called Chushi Myngur. The present structure is one of the finest in the whole of Bhutan. The ruling family comes from Tongsa. There is a middle school with about 100 students, and a dispensary. The population is estimated at 2,500.

Chandibi (Alt. 3,500)

A small village through which the river Nyen-chu flows. In charge of a Pipon. The villages of Nyala and Drungla are in the vicinity. Between Chandiki and Hridang is the Pele-la pass (alt. 11,500) which is the main

route across the Black Mountain range from east to west Bhutan.

Hridang (Ritang) (Alt. 8,000)

Another small village in charge of a Pimon. The river La-chu flows near it. A gompa with six lamas is situated in the village.

Samtengang (Alt. 7,250)

A village with some 40 houses and 200 inhabitants, situated on the borders of a pine forest.

Wangduphodrang (Alt. 4,600)

A centre for the training of Bhutanese Army personnel. There is also a Dzong and a sizeable monastery. The dzong is reputed to be one of the oldest in Bhutan. It has a hospital and a school for about 300 students. The river Sankosh winds its way through the adjoining valley.

Punakha (Alt. 4,800)

Once the capital of Bhutan and the seat of the Dharma Raja. The dzong is a huge structure and is one of the oldest in Bhutan. There are many smaller gompas, as well as the tombs of the various Shabdrungs. Two rivers the Mo-chu and Pho-chu join at this point forming the river Sankosh. There is a school and a dispensary.

Chortenyep (Alt. 7,000)

A big village with a gompa which has a magnificent statue of Maitriya Buddha.

WESTERN BHUTAN

Thimpu (Alt. 7,900)

The new capital of Bhutan is situated along the banks of the Wong-chu, commanding a magnificent view by virtue of its altitude. The Wong-chu runs southwards through the entire extent of the country to Phuntsholing on the border with North Bengal in the Buxa Duar. The Druk Gyalpo's palace is at Dechencholling, three miles from the dzong. The main secretariat and the headquarters of the Bhutanese Army are now established in the dzong, which in addition houses some 300 to 400 lamas. There is also a large hospital in Thimphu under the charge of the Chief Medical Officer and a public school is in the making. A new micro-hydroelectric station has been built and commissioned. Plans are in hand for the construction of a modern township. The main crops in the valley include rice, millet, maize, potatoes and chillies.

Paro (Alt. 7,500)

A centre of administrative and development activities, it is located in the lovely valley of the Pa-chu, a subsidiary of the Wong-chu. The dzong, impressive for its size and solidity, originally built about 400 years ago, was reconstructed about 70 years ago. Rice, wheat, maize, barley and potatoes

are the principal crops in the Paro valley.

Writing of Paro, an early Jesuit traveller, Fr. Cacella, records in 1627: "There must have been some 600 to 700 houses in the valley, all three or four stories. Cattle were numerous and the people seemed, compared with the rest of the Bhootanese, tolerably contented. Just above the palace the Parchoo (Paro-chu) is joined by another stream, which comes from a little valley to the north."

Ha (Alt. 9,100)

Situated on the Ha-chu, now the centre of a military training establishment.

Taksang Dzong (Alt. 9,500)

One of the principal monasteries in Bhutan and considered the holiest, built on the face of an almost perpendicular hillside. Literally means 'the tiger's nest'. Legend has it that Guru Padma Sambhava came there riding on a tiger from India. Statues of the war god are prominent, in the four or five main buildings connected by galleries and balconies.

Duggye Dzong (Alt. 7,600)

This monastery shared with Semtoka Dzong the reputation of being the oldest in the country. Once a huge and massive building, it was destroyed by a fire some 15 years ago.

SOUTHERN BHUTAN

Samchi (Alt. 1,500)

A predominantly Nepali speaking town, across the West Bengal town of Chamarchi, with a population of about 6,000. There are extensive orchards in this area, and a distillery and a fruit preservation factory have been set up here. Apart from being the headquarters of the Conservator of Forests for southern Bhutan, Samchi is also the temporary headquarters of the Geological Survey of India. There is a small hospital with about 20 beds in charge of a doctor. A tuberculosis clinic has just been completed.

Phuntsholing (Alt. 700)

This is the starting point of the first modern road to be built in Bhutan. Population: 6,000. The road, which is over 107 miles long, goes on to Paro and Thimpu, the capital. A number of new offices and other buildings have also been constructed. There is also a small hotel of about six to eight rooms. A technical school has recently been set up and has over 100 pupils. The town is the headquarters of Bhutan's Chief Engineer.

Sarbhong (Alt. 700)

This is the second important Nepali-speaking town in southern Bhutan, with a population of about 4,000. It is an important trade centre where most of the cash crops like oranges, potatoes and cardamom from the Chirang area in the north are marketed. Chirang is an important Nepali area in the north, about 25 miles from Sarbhong, with a population of some

20,000.

Samdrup Jongkhar (Alt. 1,000)

This town is in the area of 32½ sq. miles which were returned to the Bhutan Government at the time of the signing of the 1949 treaty. Some 20 km distant is Dewothang, the headquarters of the Border Roads Organisation in Bhutan. Samdrup Jongkhar adjoins the Indian border town of Darranga in Assam, where every year for about six months from November to April, a mart is held, with Bhutanese from the Tashigang Dzong area bringing handwoven fabrics, cheese, butter, oranges, beeswax, pig's hair, livestock, etc. In turn, they buy and take back with them salt, wool and cotton yarn, clothing, consumer goods and other requirements.

APPENDIX XII

Bhutanese Words and their English Equivalents

Aji	Woman of noble rank
Amsed	Caretaker of temple or monastery
Chipon	Accounts Officer
Chokang	Altar room
Chorten	Shrine
Dasho	Nobleman
Deb Zimpon	Chief Minister
Dronyer	Protocol Officer
Drungpa	Secretary (Village Officer)
Druk Gyalpo	King of Bhutan
Dug Desi	Deb Raja
Dzong	Fort-monastery
Dzongpon	Governor or District Commissioner
Dzongtsap	Deputy Commissioner
Gyaldon	Chief Secretary
Gyalun	Secretary-General
Jey Khempo	Chief Abbot
Khempo	Abbot
Lekhung	Office, Department
Magsi	Commander-in-Chief
Magsi Hogma	Deputy Commander-in-Chief
Mani Lakhang	Temple with prayer wheel
Nyerchen	Tax Collector (Revenue Officer)
Pawo	Oracle
Penlop	Governor of Province
Pipon	Headmen of village
Ramjam	Sub-divisional officer
Thanka (Tanka)	Embroidered religious scroll
Trimpon	Magistrate
Tsalkhang	Shrine
Tsongdu	National Assembly

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