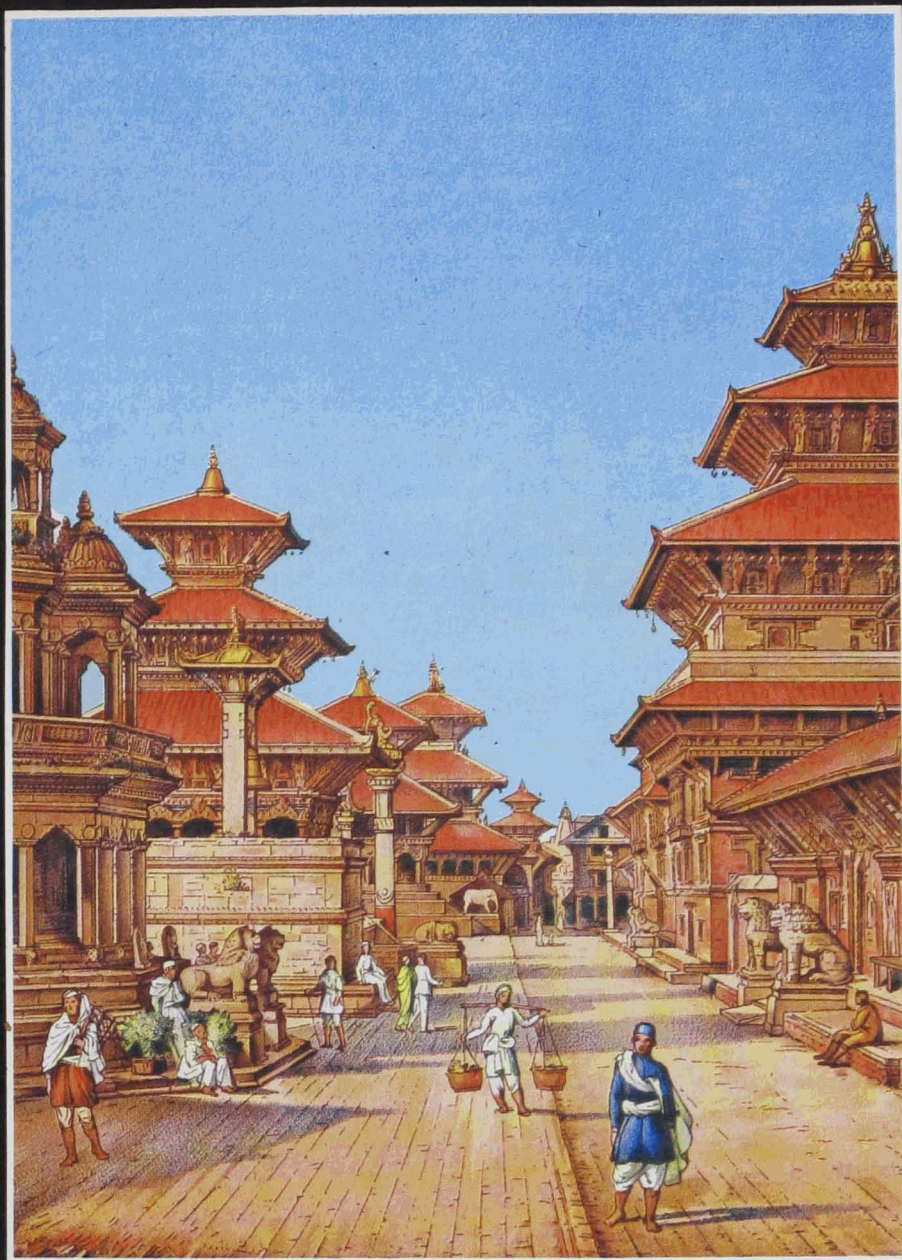


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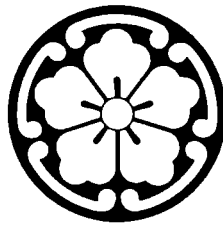
VOYAGE TO NEPAL

ITINERARIA ASIATICA

NEPAL

NEPAL

VOLUME II



WHITE ORCHID PRESS, BANGKOK 1986

VOYAGE TO NEPAL

by

GUSTAVE LE BON

assigned to an archeological mission to India
by the Ministry of Public Instruction

published under the direction of
Mr. Edouard Charton
and illustrated by our most well known artists

Original text and drawings

Translated by

Niloufar Maoven and Cecilia Leslie

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INTRODUCTION

The first contacts between France and Nepal barely date back to the 17th century.

Two French words, the origin of which remain mysterious, "Automne" and "L'Hyvert", figure among about fifteen passages engraved in 1654 on a large stone fixed into the old palace of Kathmandu by the King Pratap Malla.

At about the same time, two Jesuit fathers, going from Peking to Rome, penetrated "Necbal" after having visited Lhasa. One of them, Father d'Orville, died soon afterwards; but the account of their peregrinations was published by his companion Father Gruber, who portrays the good reception they were accorded in "Cadmendu".

Jean Baptiste Tavernier, in the "Third Book" of his "Travel in India", makes only one distant and brief allusion to "Domains of the Raja of Nupal which are only woods and mountains..... and which go as far as the borders of Boutan".

Next some Capucins, including Francois-Marie de la Tour, were finally authorized to stay in Nepal, and founded a hospice at Kathmandu and missions at Patan and at Bhatgoan. They were however expelled in 1769 by King Prithvi Narayan, founder of the present dynasty.

One must also cite the arrival of French artillery officers called to advise the Nepalese army. Until a short time ago military music itself included in its repertoire some old French airs.

However, at the beginning of the 19th century, the British, privileged interlocutors of Nepal, were the only outsiders permitted to maintain a permanent residence in Kathmandu.

It was not until the middle of the 19th century that official relations were established between Nepal and France. These were inaugurated by the famous Jang Bahadur Rana, the Prime Minister who made official visits to England and

to Napoleon III's France, where he received a memorable welcome.

Since, then, only a few French travellers could enter Nepal, since the country was always forbidden to outsiders, and invitations were exceptional.

Thus it was that Gustave Le Bon, assigned to archeological studies in the least known regions of the Indian sub-continent had the rare privilege to be able - first Frenchman on a scientific mission to visit the valley of Kathmandu.

This scholar (1841-1931), a man of science, psychology, and philosophy.....with encyclopedic knowledge, was one of the thinkers who marked the beginning of the 20th century.

For many years, he had travelled throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and India. Out of about forty published works, we shall note particularly here:

- "The first civilizations of the Orient"
- "The civilizations of the Arabs"
- "The civilizations of India"
- "The monuments of India", an important but difficult-to-find work which contains a certain number of photographs - among them the first on the monuments of the valley of Nepal, and finally,
- "The voyage to Nepal", published in 1886 and translated here for the first time.

This latter account, which first appeared as a popular publication in "le Tour de Monde" contains certain comments which reveal the atmosphere and special conditions of a trip which can indeed be likened to a veritable exploration.

It is in any case remarkable, especially because of its illustrations - etchings and drawings made from photographs of the time, and which

evoke with admirable precision the principal monuments of the valley of Kathmandu at the end of the 19th century.

Within the framework of the campaign launched by UNESCO for safeguarding the monuments of the valley of Kathmandu, the Government of H.M. King Birendra, with the co-operation and the help of several foreign countries, has given itself the mission to keep safely,

and if necessary restore, this patrimony which is in the end recognized as composing part of the cultural heritage of humanity.

For the help given in realizing this publication thanks are due to Mr. H. K. Kuloy, editor-in-chief of the series *ITINERARIA ASIATICA*, and to Mr. Pierre Duverger, Founder-Secretary of the "Amis de Gustave Le Bon" in Paris.

May 1981

T. N. Upraity
Former Royal Ambassador
of Nepal to Paris



Georges Lebrec
President of the France-Nepal
Association, Paris



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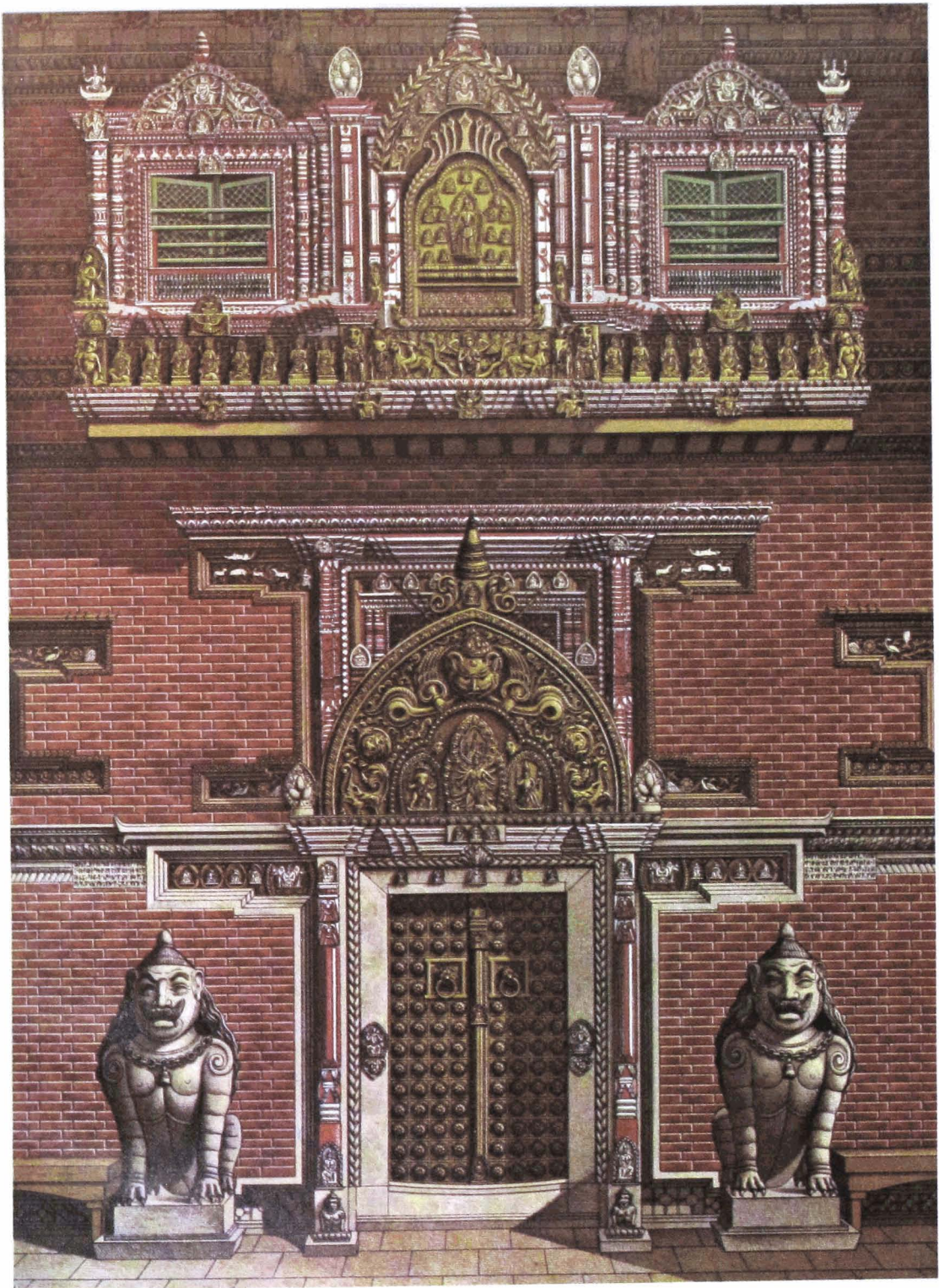
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CHAPTER



Difficulties of a journey to Nepal - Preliminary negotiations to obtain the permit to the territory - Arrival in Motihari - Gathering of the necessary coolies to cross the Himalayas - Beauty of the scenery - Arrival in the valley of Nepal - Enchanting aspect of temples and palaces - Sojourn in Kathmandu - Curiosity of the inhabitants - Their ideas on France - Meeting with the Emperor.

The archeological studies I had been assigned by the Ministry of Public Instruction were to lead me one after the other to the least explored regions of India. Among those regions that were the most tempting to my curiosity, was mysterious Nepal. I knew that the ancient empire, isolated from neighbouring countries by the formidable barrier that the giants of the Himalayas form around it, is situated in one of the most picturesque and imposing areas of the world. I also knew that there were marvelous cities, the fabulous architecture of which is totally different from what we know in the West. But I also knew that one could get there only by overcoming difficulties of all kinds, and that a strict order, carefully respected by the Government of India, absolutely forbade any European, British or otherwise, except the British ambassador, to enter the territory of this empire without a special authorisation from the emperor. Now such an authorisation is very seldom granted. Long ago Jaquemont had to give up the idea of visiting Nepal. No Frenchman had entered it yet. Some years ago, the German Schlagintweit succeeded in entering the country, only after prolonged diplomatic negotiations, and by using very powerful influences. These various difficulties made a visit to this peculiar country even more tempting. It would be of no interest to the reader to know how my difficulties were finally smoothed over, after approaches made by different people who were kind enough to take an interest in my

undertaking. I am glad to state that the Government of the Viceroy lent me, as it indeed did in all circumstances during my stay in India, the most gracious assistance and took responsibility for all the required negotiations with the court of Nepal.

The last English town of India bordering Nepal is Motihari, in northern India; I had arrived there coming from Patna. It was there that I had to get ready for the journey and gather the forty coolies required to carry, through the Himalayas, the provisions and the necessary baggage. Motihari is a little town inhabited mainly by rich Indigo growers. I was welcomed by one of them, Mr. Edwards, whom I had met by chance, and was accorded the lavish hospitality offered so commonly in India by upper class Englishmen.

The Europeans who have visited only the big cities of India - Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, etc. - situated on the main railroad lines, do not guess the difficulties of an exploration journey in Hindustan. The important monuments are located mainly in deserted jungles, infested by ferocious beasts, where one finds no way of subsisting. One has to take everything along, from flour, needed for bread-making, to all kinds of camping equipment. Moreover, to carry these, there are no means other than elephants or horses that only local Princes or Provincial Governors can provide. The traveller, left to himself, cannot go far away from the main roads or railroad tracks. It is partly for this reason that the ancient monuments of India, which can nevertheless match our most

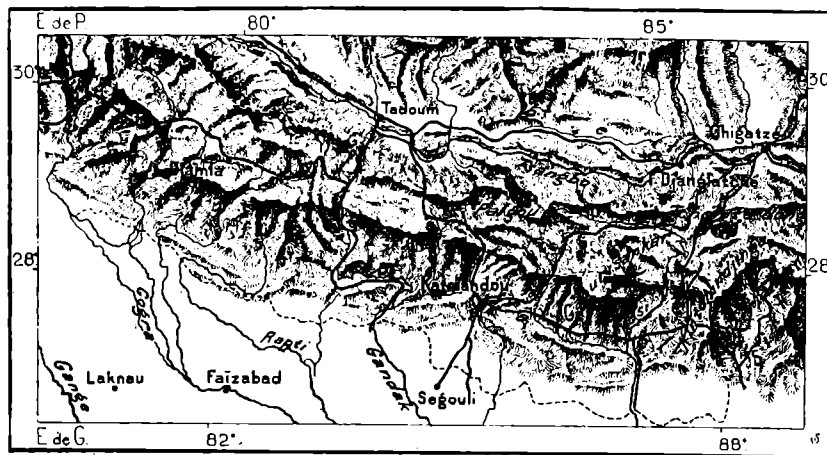


Fig. 1 Map of a part of Nepal, borrowed from the new edition of *Geographie Universelle*, by M.E. Reclus.

marvelous products of Gothic art, are not frequented by Europeans residing in the region. The monuments of Ajunta and Khajurao, to name only the most famous ones, see no more than one visitor per year. Udaipur, one of the most interesting capitals of the Indian kingdoms, sees a European roughly once every three years.

The English magistrate being away from Motihari, the only coolies that I could hire were about forty horrible rogues. Certainly, I would not have liked to meet in a European forest any of these characters that were out of necessity to be my road companions for several nights in the solitude of the Himalayas. My long travel experience has taught me that fatalism is the wisest of philosophies. I accepted, for lack of any better, this unpleasant escort.

Then at the beginning of January 1885, I left Motihari. From this city to Kathmandu one has to travel about one hundred and sixty-three kilometers, mostly through the advance ridges of the Himalayas, which border the south of the valley of Nepal. The journey is partly done in a palanquin, partly in a sort of hammock called a dandy, carried by four men, who can, if needed in narrow paths, go in single file. Since nothing can be procured on the road, the number of coolies necessary to carry the provisions is about forty. They trot all the way and take turns without slowing down, about every five minutes.

The most dangerous region to go through, because of the deadly miasmas it contains, is the

thick swampy forest called the Terai, located at the foot of the Himalayas. When one crosses it at night, torches have to be lit to keep away ferocious beasts which swarm there like rabbits. The forest starts near the village of Semelbasa. Pretending to go and buy torches, my coolies left me there a whole night, hoping that tigers and panthers would eat the traveller but spare the bags of rupees he had. A number of candles, taken from a food basket I always had with me, saved me from the ferocious beasts. A benevolent deity, Visnu probably, preserved me from the miasmas that I feared more than tigers. The night had to be spent working on the palanquin, turned into a writing desk, to keep the candles from burning out. When, in the morning, the gang of my kind companions returned to see if there was anything left of the European, a speech, short but energetic, made them understand that the revolver is an instrument specially created by Siva to smash the heads of refractory coolies in the Himalayas.

The two passes of the Himalayas that one has to descend towards the valley of Nepal are those of Sisaghiri and Chandragiri, both very difficult. One has to travel several times on paths sometimes no broader than a few centimeters, carved in the sides of the mountains and overlooking depths at the bottom of which one can hear a roaring torrent. The splendid view one has from these heights is beyond description. The cloudy summits of the Himalayas, dominated by the gigantic bulk of Gaurishankar, creates around

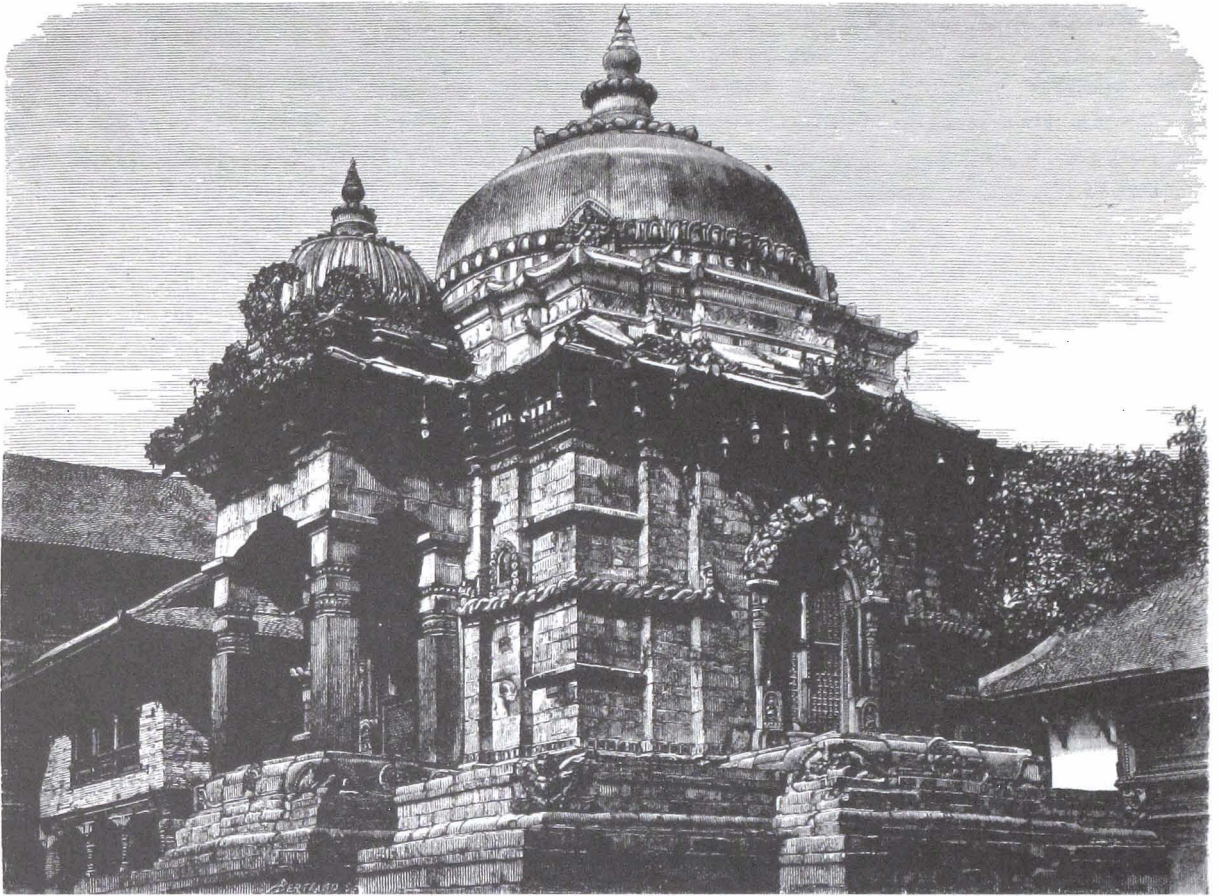


Fig. 2 Stone temple in Kathmandu. Etching of A. Bertrand from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

you a crown of snow, while at your feet spread green valleys and forests. Compared to such a spectacle, the most beautiful sites of Switzerland or those imposing regions of the Tatra mountains, which I had the opportunity to describe here previously, were to me nothing but a pale display.

The weariness and the troubles of the journey were by far compensated by the beauty of the Himalayas, even more so by the spectacle which the cities of Nepal - Kathmandu, Patan, Bhatgaon, Pashpatti - would offer.

After having crossed the last range of mountains, we reached a point above the valley, where, in a small space, lie the capital and the most important cities of the country. The valley gave an incomparable impression of fertility. The slopes we were descending, at points crossing swift streams, were covered with the most beautiful trees. The villages, hidden under this exuberant

vegetation, were revealed only when we were close to them. With their little temples, their wooden houses all sculpted, each of them looked like a cluster of pagodas.

We entered Kathmandu with the escort sent to meet us by the resident. A large crowd had gathered in the streets to witness our arrival, which had long been announced. I could see what an event it was in the country, and also realize from the start the rough and embarrassing curiosity which is typical of the Nepalese. Wishing to go to the resident's house, we had to cross the whole city. Our escort was doing its best to push away spectators who were pushing us from all sides, but it was useless.

My relationship with the British ambassador, previously a little tense in the correspondence we had exchanged before I started my journey, became courteous. The relations I

had with the excellent Dr. Gimlette, surgeon at the Embassy, were most friendly; this learned colleague was my providence during my stay in Kathmandu. He offered me all sorts of kindnesses and I am glad to be able to thank him here. It is thanks to him, among other things, that I could

des Italiens. I could never take a photograph or point my theodolite to the top of a monument to measure its height, without being surrounded by a thick crowd, part of which would climb on the rooftops to observe me even better. The soldiers who were escorting me were hard put to push

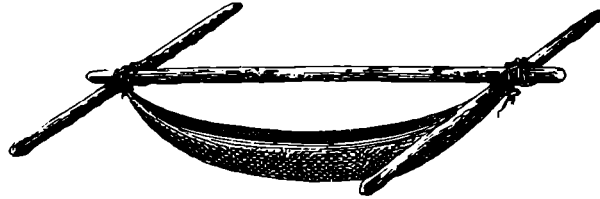


Fig. 3 *Dandy: hammock used to travel in the Himalayas.* Drawing by the author from a sketch.

check and complete the diverse information I gathered in the particular way I use in all my travels, from the inhabitants of numerous villages I had the opportunity to visit and from all the persons with whom I came in contact. I could, also thanks to him, correct information found in publications on Nepal written by some officials who had stayed in Kathmandu, information true at a certain time but not so anymore.

I had settled in a tent, some distance from the city, in the countryside. The arrangement could be considered decent; I would have felt quite well, was it not for the cold at night and the too frequent visits of jackals coming to devour our provisions. I was depending mainly on the food my servant could find despite the reluctance of the Nepalese to sell anything to a European. From time to time, the British ambassador and especially Dr. Gimlette would send me some food.

Whether a simple visitor or the British envoy, no European can move about in a city in Nepal without being escorted by two soldiers from the emperor's guards. The latter follow you like your shadow and are not supposed to lose sight of you under any pretext. Theoretically, they are supposed to protect the European from the supposed hostility of the inhabitants, but in practice they do nothing but keep an eye on him. Those who came along with me were most useful in pushing back the thick crowd that would gather as soon as I wanted to examine a monument. A European visitor in Nepal as rare as a Canaque in Paris and provokes the same curiosity as the latter if he were to stroll in his primitive costume on the Boulevard

away the curious, despite thrashing in all directions with an ease I tried in vain to temper.

Judging the variety of people I met on my way, this curiosity seemed common to all classes of the population. In order not to hurt the British ambassador's sensitivities - indeed he did not seem convinced of the scientific purpose of my journey avoided any visit to the emperor or his ministers. The mountain did not go to Mohammad, but Mohammad went to the mountain, and I could not make a step without meeting a person from the court who would approach me and ask, though very kindly, the same questions. Chinese affairs were of a great interest to the Nepalese at that time, who had had to fight many wars against their dreaded neighbours. Every one knew there was, in the west, a powerful Rajah at war with China. It was therefore obvious that if a subject of this Rajah had come to Nepal, it could only be to convince the Nepalese Government to declare war on China and thus create at the back of the Celestial Empire a useful diversion. It was useless to try to prove to a Nepalese that a European could come from such a distance and cross the difficult passes of the Himalayas, just to visit their monuments. A professional statistician could not have answered all the questions asked about the French Rajah. How many soldiers did he have? Did he have many elephants? How many tigers had he killed? How many wives did he have? It was not an easy task to persuade these brave people that France was not a vassal of England. I have some remorse not to have declared to them that the Rajah of France would himself cut off the

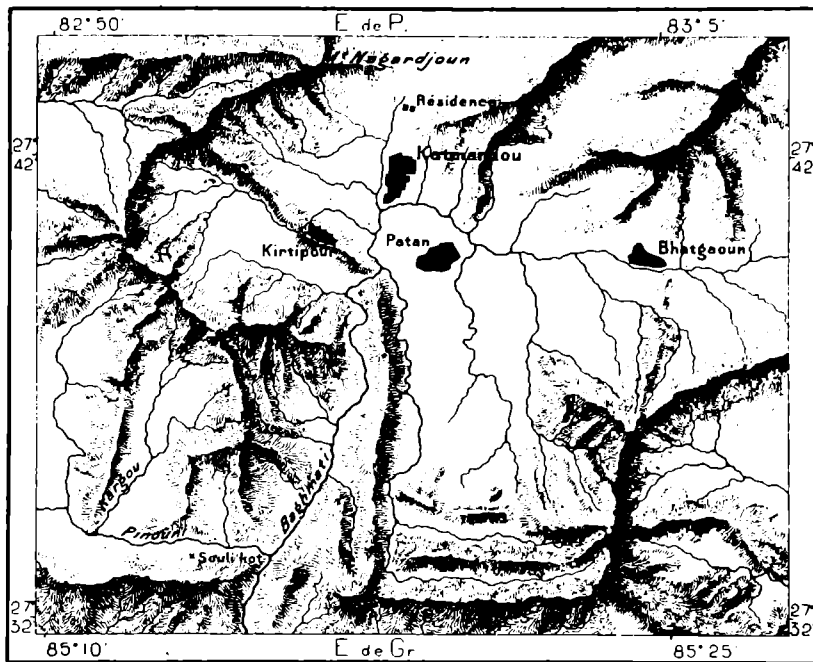


Fig. 4 Valley of Nepal. Map borrowed from the new edition of *Geographie Universelle*, by M.E. Reclus.

heads of his stubborn ministers, with as much ease as the famous Nepalese minister Yang Bahadur once did. The ease with which this minister beheaded, with his own hands, people who were inconvenient to him has assured him in Nepal, a popularity equal to the one Napoleon had in France, though he killed fewer people. In Nepal, as in Europe, the best way to gain popularity and the attention of historians, is to kill as many people as possible.

To go back to the Nepalese and resume what were my relations with them, I would say that by a happy chance, while in Bhimpedi, on my way back, I had an encounter with the sovereign of Nepal himself, whom I had refrained from visiting. The young king and his ministers, overthrown since then by one of these revolutions as

frequent in Nepal as in Europe, was on his way back to Kathmandu, followed by his lords and the women of his court. Riding a white horse, and wearing a violet cape, he really looked grand under a parasol, also violet, held above his head by slaves. The women were following in palanquins or in hammocks, carefully hidden behind silk veils. But feminine curiosity being as developed in Nepal as it is in the West, the rules of royal ceremonial could not keep any of these graceful daughters of Eve from putting their heads outside to see the face of this foreigner who had intrigued the whole country for a few days. I could see that, despite the obvious mixture of Asiatic blood, and the tatoos on the forehead, the Nepalese women from the royal harem were most beautiful.





Fig. 5 *Nepalese porters.* Drawing by Zier from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

CHAPTER

II

Aspects of the country - Its geological formation - Its natural defences - Valley of Nepal - It used to be a lake in by gone days - Lack of knowledge relative to the geography of Nepal - Climate of Nepal - Beauty of the area - Fauna and flora.

India, as is known, is separated from the rest of Asia by the gigantic barrier of the Himalayan mountains, which from the Brahmaputra to the Indus, forms an uninterrupted chain. Among the mountains which constitute this barrier, there are valleys inhabited by various warrior tribes or little kingdoms. The best known and illustrious of these kingdoms is Kashmir. The most interesting, the most powerful and at the same time the least known, is Nepal. The length Nepal occupies in the Himalayas is about 700 kilometers, that is to say, a third less than the length of France. Its width is hardly more than a hundred and fifty kilometers. Its area has been estimated at about 147,000 square kilometers. This estimation is of course done in a very unreliable way.

It is the only Indian kingdom which kept a total independence, and it has never been stepped upon by a foreign conqueror; and the only one escaping the Muslim invasion. The Chinese from one side and the British from the other, have tried but in vain to seize it.

Nature has bestowed upon Nepal natural defences much more powerful than those which could be made by men. At the very feet of the mountains that one has to cross before entering the country, lies a stretch of swampy forests, the Terai, where miasmas are fatal to man during most of the year. After this terrible area, one is confronted by the bulk of the Himalayas, which at certain points form a sheer wall that one can penetrate only on small paths barely a few centimeters wide, carved in its flanks. On the Tibetan side, the barriers are no less awesome.

All the principal cities of Nepal, notably Kathmandu the capital, are grouped in a valley that could be compared to the bottom of a vast basin whose walls are formed by the mountains of the Himalayas. The valley is 30 kilometers long and 20 kilometers wide. It is the area the inhabitants call the valley of Nepal. It is the only civilized part of the region. The summits of the mountains which encircle Kathmandu, thus forming a surrounding crown of everlasting snows, are the highest peaks of the Himalayas. Amongst them rises Gaurishankar or Mount Everest, at 8840 meters, almost double the height of Mont Blanc. From each part of the valley one can see its incredible bulk which no human foot has ever crossed.

It seems probable that formerly the valley of Nepal was a lake. The top soil is an alluvial soil made of fragments of the surrounding rocks, mainly sandstone and granite. The assumption, drawn from the study of the geological configuration of the country, can be confirmed by local legends. According to them, the valley was a lake and the mountain barrier to the flow of the waters was cut southwards by the slash of the sword of a god.

Moreover, the valley of Nepal is the only known area of the country. No European, including the British resident in Kathmandu, has the right to go beyond its limits. When the British general staff wanted to complete the map of India with one from Nepal, it had to send Hindu pandits who travelled under different disguises; but the information brought back is very sketchy and the

map drawn up from this information is quite incomplete.

Because of its altitude, about 1300 meters, and the mountains which protect it, the valley enjoys an excellent climate and very beautiful vegetation. Its mild temperature, the beauty of its sights and the picturesque aspect of the cities have rendered Nepal one of the most seducing regions of India. One does not witness the enormous temperature variations, those rotations of heat, rain and of drought which make staying in other parts of India so difficult for Europeans. Summer is not very hot and winter is never very cold. In January, although living under a tent, I suffered but little from the cold at night.

Thanks to the mildness of its climate, Nepal is covered with vegetation all year round. I have seen some varieties of roses in bloom in January. Orchids, begonias, and rhododendrons bloom everywhere. The middle mountains are covered with forests of conifers. The inhabitants cultivate wheat, barley, rice, "plantin", mustard, garlic, saffron, pineapple, ginger, potatoes, sugar cane, etc. Fruit trees, notably lemon, apple,

apricot, peach and orange trees are in abundance and form deep thickets, surrounding the villages with greenness and fragrance.

The fauna of Nepal is as rich as its flora, but its richness is mainly in harmful animals. No region of India has as many ferocious beasts. Leopards, tigers, rhinoceros, and snakes are very numerous. Leopards infest the jungles of all mountains and do not hesitate to attack human beings as well as livestock. In any case, the Nepalese barely fear them. When they meet them in broad daylight, they attack these animals with ordinary hunting knives.

Wild elephants live in herds at the foot of the Himalayas, in the Terai. Those employed in the rest of India are mainly from this area.

Cattle are scarce in Nepal due to lack of pasture which can only be found at the foot of the mountains. Buffaloes, sheep, goats, etc. are imported from Tibet. On the other hand, there is a great deal of poultry. They feed while wandering during the day in the paddy fields and they are kept in at night.

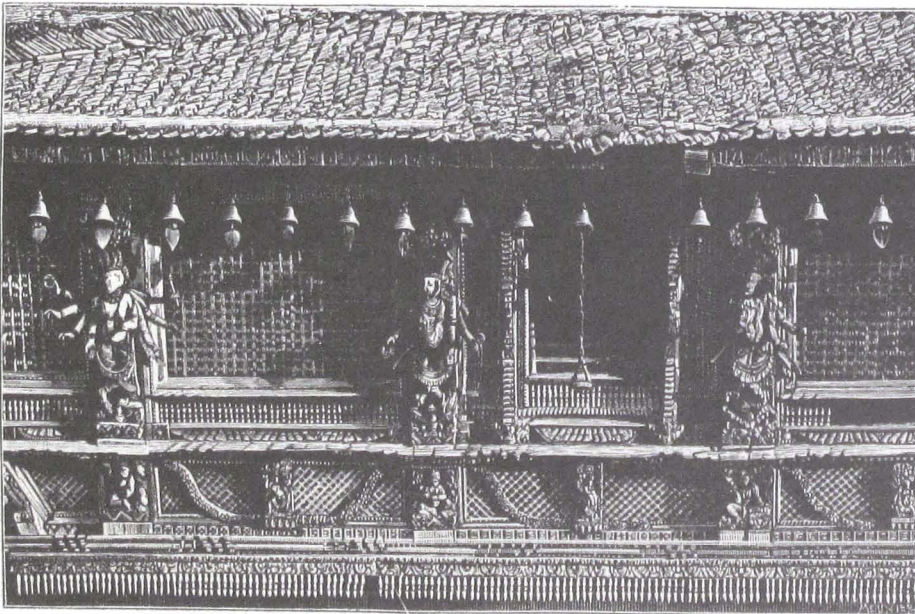


Fig. 6 *Balcony of a house in Kathmandu.* Etching by Meunier from a photography by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

CHAPTER

III

Kathmandu - Population - Monuments - Temples and palaces - Inferiority of the monuments of Kathmandu compared to those of the other cities of Nepal - Summary of the studies made by the author on the architecture of Nepal - Classification of its temples - Visit to the temple of Sambunath - Indra's thunderbolt.

No sooner had I finished settling down in the tent which the British minister had had pitched for me, than I started my archeological studies, commencing with Kathmandu.

Kathmandu, the current capital of Nepal, is a city of roughly 60,000 inhabitants. According to local traditions, it was founded in 723 A.D. In two respects, cleanliness and architecture, it is very inferior to the other main cities of Nepal; Patan and Bhatgaon. The palace of the emperor, for instance, totally lacks in interest. The famous minister Yang Bahadur had it built in a vaguely Italian style. The different parts of this monument in stone, brick or wood - give the most disharmonious effect. Nevertheless, one can notice in the city some old palaces of rich noblemen, with magnificently sculpted facades. Some rich houses are furnished in European style; but the furniture imported at high cost from British India, is set out in the most strange disorder. Most of the time, the owners do not know where the furniture belongs. It is said that Nepalese have been observed sleeping on pianos, which they thought were canapes with music boxes.

Kathmandu is interesting particularly because of its religious architecture. One estimates the number of temples at six hundred. Their style is precisely that of the pagodas with superimposed roofs, which we shall describe later and which deserves no particular comment here. The most important ones are located in a big square in front of the palace. The biggest one was built around 1550. Some of these temples are seen

in our photographs. We also show a stone temple whose dome reveals a Muslim influence. It is almost the only monument of the sort in the city.

To avoid repetitions that description of similar monuments would provoke, I will now give a general description of the different sorts of monuments in Nepal, and briefly sum up my research on the architecture of this area.

If the moral level of a people could be measured by the development of its religious beliefs, and if the latter could be evaluated by the number of buildings dedicated to worship, one could assume that the Nepalese are the most virtuous people of the universe. Indeed there is no region in the world where one can see as many temples in such a restricted space. In the very specific area which we described as the valley of Nepal, there are more than two thousand temples; Kathmandu and Patan each have six hundred, Bhatgaon has two hundred and fifty.

The temples are dedicated to Buddhist or Brahmanist deities, or built to commemorate a celebrated site, or even to preserve the ashes of some important person. The construction of these temples is classified into three basically different types that we shall describe in turn.

The first type, in chronological order, consists of big hemispheric constructions, made out of mud and bricks, similar to the tope of central India, especially the one in Sanchi; but the carved pillar balustrade which encircles those latter structures is replaced here by a low circular plinth going around the base of the monument,

and in contact with it. At each cardinal point there is a little sanctuary consisting of a niche with sculptures.

On the hemisphere rests a square tower which is in turn crowned by a pyramid or a cone. Around the temple there are a number of small religious buildings, sanctuaries, statues, etc.

This category of temples is dedicated exclusively to the Buddhist cult; but, in Nepal,

The second type of Nepalese temple consists of buildings in brick and wood, built according to an absolutely characteristic type, and more Tibetan- or Chinese-looking than Hindu. These buildings are rectangular, consisting of upwardly recessing storeys, each one with a roof. Each of these superimposed roofs is smaller than the one underneath, thus creating a pyramidal shaped monument. Each roof is slightly turned up at its



Fig. 7 *Temple in Kathmandu.* Etching by A. Bertrand from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

Buddhism and Brahmanism are so mingled that symbols of the two cults can be found indiscriminately in the temples, regardless of the religion to which they are consecrated. In Buddhist temples the most represented statues are those of Buddha and his previous incarnations, the Buddhist trinity (Buddha, Dharma, Sanga) but the Brahmanist gods, Visnu, Ganesa, etc. are also present.

corners, as in Chinese buildings, and is adorned with countless little bells. The part of the roof which projects outward is linked to the rest of the monument by wooden struts completely covered with sculptures.

Each temple is surrounded by a veranda supported by finely carved wooden pillars. The whole building is based on a stone substructure consisting also of a few recessing storeys. On one

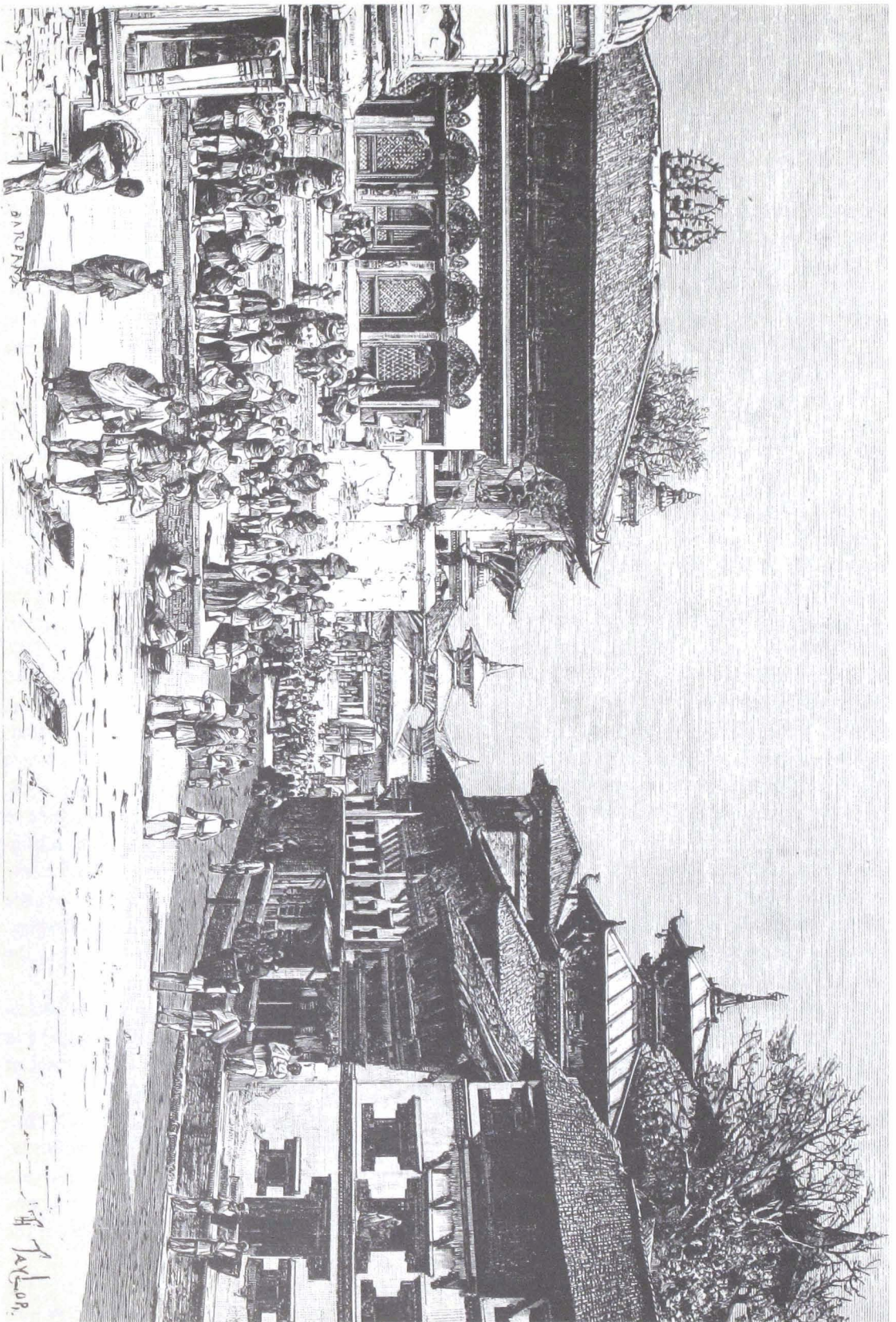


Fig. 8 Main square in Kathmandu. Drawing by Taylor from a photograph by Bourne and Shepherd.

side of the substructure there is a staircase leading to the temple. This staircase is flanked on each side with statues representing monsters, deities or human beings.

The third type of Nepalese temple consists of stone monuments totally different in shape from the previous ones and possessing a remarkable stamp of originality. The Chinese influence is almost non-existent; the Hindu one evident, but not enough to smother their stamp of originality. They are the only ones where one could sometimes observe some traces of Muslim influence. Moreover, this influence can only be seen by the occasional presence of domes.

It is impossible, as one can see from our drawings, to link these stone temples to one unique style. Their only common characteristic is that they are built on multistoreyed substructures, on which the staircase is similar to the previously described temples. The staircases are also flanked with animals and figures. These stone temples have nothing in their construction reminiscent of the slightly barbaric aspect of the brick temples, with superimposed roofs, which we have described above. The temple in Patan, in front of the King's palace, which will be described in a later publication, could be included, because of its shape, among the most interesting monuments of India. Transported to any capital in Europe, it would be considered quite remarkable. The levels, each recessing from the one below it (this seems to be the dominant principle of the architecture of Nepal), are adorned with pavilions which give it a graceful aspect. The northern Indian Hindu influence can barely be observed in the convex face of the pyramid which tops the monument.

The architecture of Nepal obviously took its origin in India, but in the new surroundings, it changed rapidly. This fact helps to prove that differences of race, as far as architecture is concerned, have an influence much stronger than do similarities of creed.

It would be most difficult, even approximately, to date the various temples of Nepal. In general, one could say that some of them are very ancient, that is to say contemporary with the first centuries of our era, and some others are relatively new, i.e. built after the 15th century A.D. But the

age of those that could be in between, if one admits their existence, (which seems very doubtful to me) remains indeterminate.

The most ancient among these temples are the big hemispherical "topes" in brick and mud that we have described. Based on the fact that Buddhism was introduced to Nepal around the first century of our era and that these monuments are similar to the topes of central India, I would be tempted to say that these constructions could, at least for their essential parts, date to the 2nd century A.D. Unfortunately the inscriptions that cover the monuments are too illegible to prove the truth of this hypothesis.

The temples in brick and wood, on the contrary, are very recent. The non-durable material of which they are made prevents them from lasting long. In any case, the date of construction of the most notable ones is known, and generally does not go back beyond 1700.

The stone temples could certainly be much older, but various indicators seem to convince me that they are not, and I do not believe that any of those which I visited have been built before 1500.

The architecture of Nepalese houses and palaces is very similar to that of the brick temples. They are built, as the temples, in brick and wood; they have a few storeys; but these storeys are not recessing and the building has only one roof. What really is specific to them is the abundance of carvings with which they are covered. The column of verandas, door and window frames, and struts that link the projecting roof with the building, are adorned with intricate and admirable carvings. Certainly no people has gone as far as the Nepalese in the art of wood carving.

The windows are usually closed by lattice-work, the use of glass not being very frequent in Nepal. One can only see glass at the windows of the emperor's palace in Kathmandu.

The main part of the house generally consists of a courtyard surrounded by a veranda, under which live the servants. The rooms are small and poorly lit. They are connected from one storey to the next by trap doors, which make the defence of each floor easy.

Temples, palaces and houses of the big cities of Nepal are covered with sculptures and

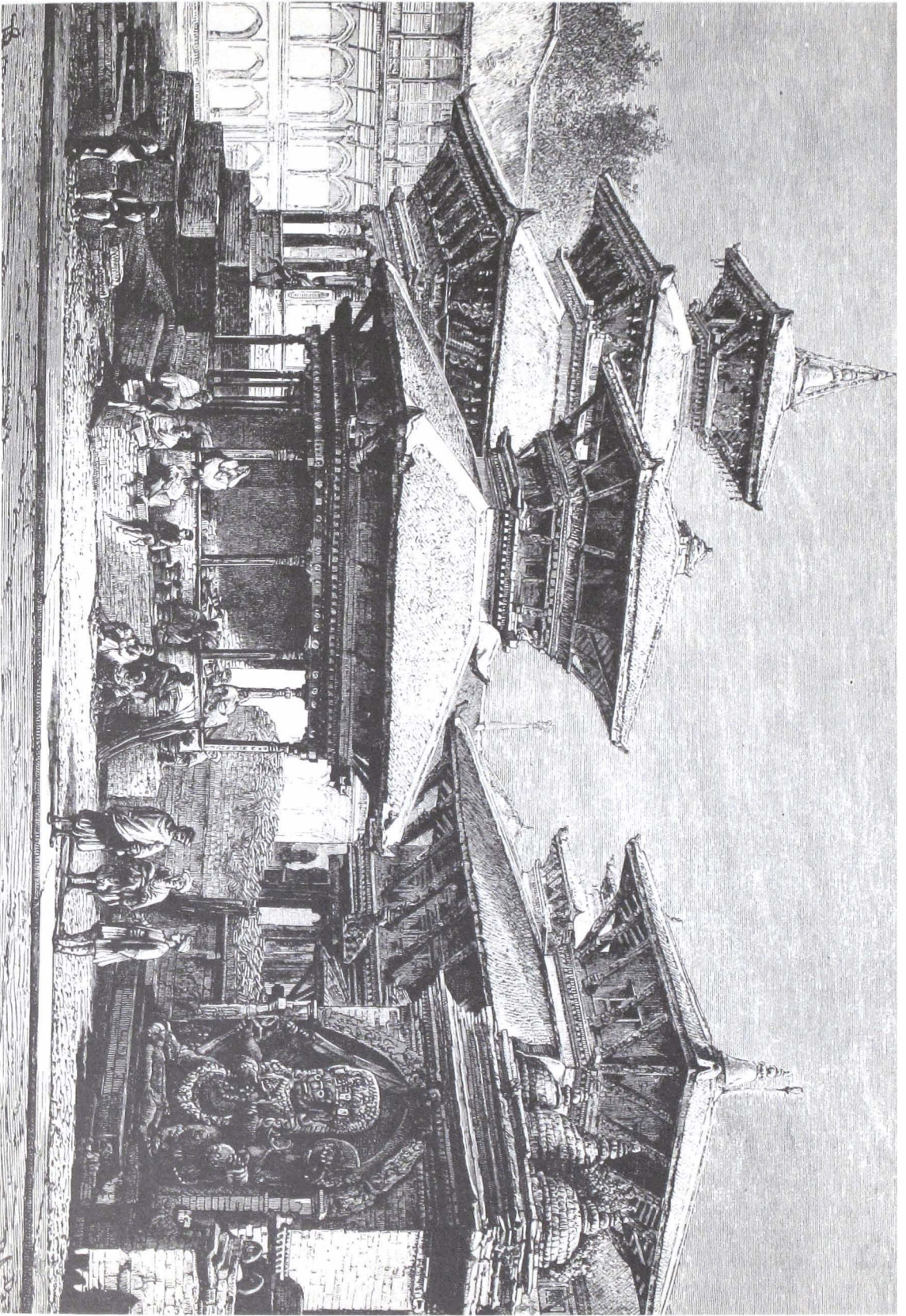


Fig. 9 Temples in front of the King's palace in Kathmandu. Drawing by Barclay, from a photograph from Bourne and Shepherd.

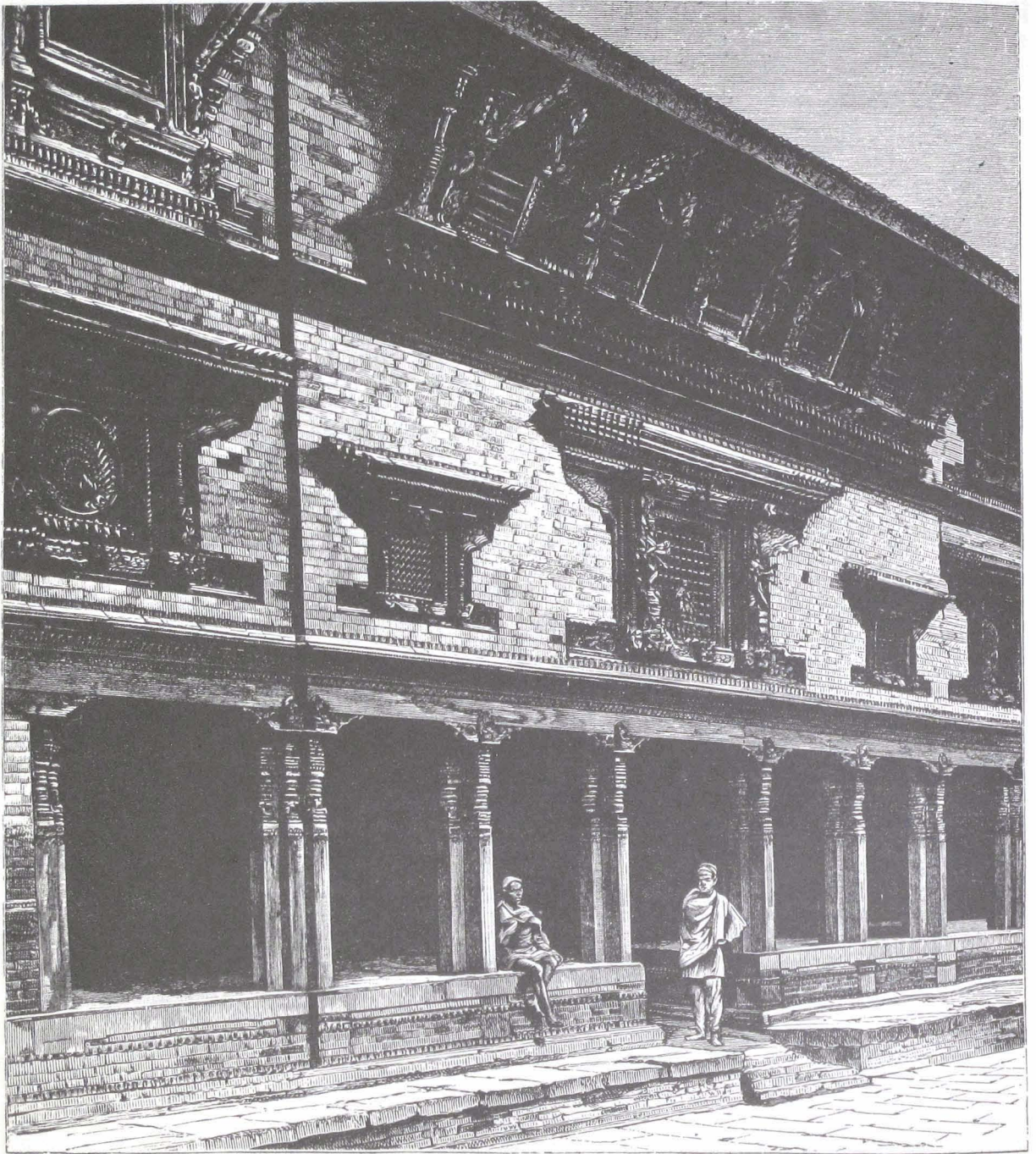


Fig. 10 *Facade of a nobleman's house in Kathmandu.* Etching by Ch. Barbant from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

paintings in bright colours. The doors of palaces are often made out of bronze sheets delicately chiselled. In front of the doors are erected monoliths, very often topped with a statue. These different monuments are most often concentrated into a very small space and give a very picturesque general effect. The details are sometimes barbaric, although the carved columns are above the criticism of the most exacting artist. The whole possesses, as I indicated above, a strikingly original stamp.

After having gone thoroughly through the city of Kathmandu, and studied its temples, I had to visit the other cities of the valley of Nepal. They are generally quite close to the capital. The landscape lying between them is almost the same everywhere. It is a country whose ground, not very undulating, sometimes forms little hills, cultivated in terraces. Woods and magnificent groves of trees alternate with the rivers. The roads that link one city to another, passing through many villages, are mere paths. The one from Kathmandu to Bhatgaon is the only one kept with any care. The general aspect reminds one of the plains of northern Italy, but with a richer vegetation and a more southern character.

My first visit was to the village of Sambunath. The road that takes you there goes by a big river, the Visnumati, much broader than the Seine between the quays in Paris. The bridge that lies across it is not very reassuring. Just imagine a sequence of little planks, about fifteen centimeters wide, nailed on pegs which have been dug into the bed of the river, which thank God is not very deep. Since I am not an acrobat by profession, I had one of my coolies walk in the river so I could cross the narrow gangway leaning on his shoulder.

The temples of Sambunath or Swayambhu, an epithet of the Buddha meaning "the Self-Existing one", are situated on top of a hill about a hundred meters high, overlooking a village west of Kathmandu.

The hill is covered with trees. One reaches its summit by climbing a stone staircase of more than five hundred steps. A gigantic statue of Buddha, raised in 1637, marks the entrance.

The temples are located on the top of the hill. At the upper part of the staircase, one can see

immediately before one a carved stone pedestal, on which lies a piece of bronze, one and a half meters wide, named "Indra's thunderbolt". This emblem is as holy to the Buddhists of Nepal as the cross to Christians. This sign appears among the sculptures of most Nepalese temples. The one we are describing here was built in 1640, but its stone stand is certainly much older. The sculptures which cover it are quite remarkable, as you can see from our photograph. The twelve animals circling the pedestal represent the twelve months of the Tibetan calendar. The months are named after these individual animals.

The summit of the hill is covered with little sanctuaries and numerous statues, but most of the platform is occupied by the main temple, a pilgrimage spot for people coming from the remotest parts of Tibet. It is a hemisphere in mud and brick, similar to the tope in Sanchi, but topped with a square tower, and crowned by a cone made of circular slats, which are parallel and superimposed vertically. On each of the four sides of the tower the eyes of Buddha are painted in red, white and black. The base of the tope is cylindrical and stands out a little; it is paved with flagstones.

At each of the cardinal points of the tope stands a little sanctuary, whose facades are covered with chiselled bronze, containing inside a carved stone slab.

The little sanctuaries we just mentioned, the tower which tops the tope, and most of the many constructions built on top of the hill are barely older than two hundred years. Most of them were built between 1650 and 1750, according to the many inscriptions with which they are covered. The oldest one dates to 1593. If all the accessory parts of the temple are relatively new, this cannot be said of the temple itself. Its analogy with the topes of central India, and the time of the introduction of Buddhism to Nepal, lead us to the conclusion that it must have been built during the first centuries of our era. Although the temple is exclusively Buddhist there is more than one Brahmanist emblem. Thus in the surrounding sanctuaries is a temple dedicated to a goddess who can cure her worshippers of small-pox. This is one example of the situation you can see at every step

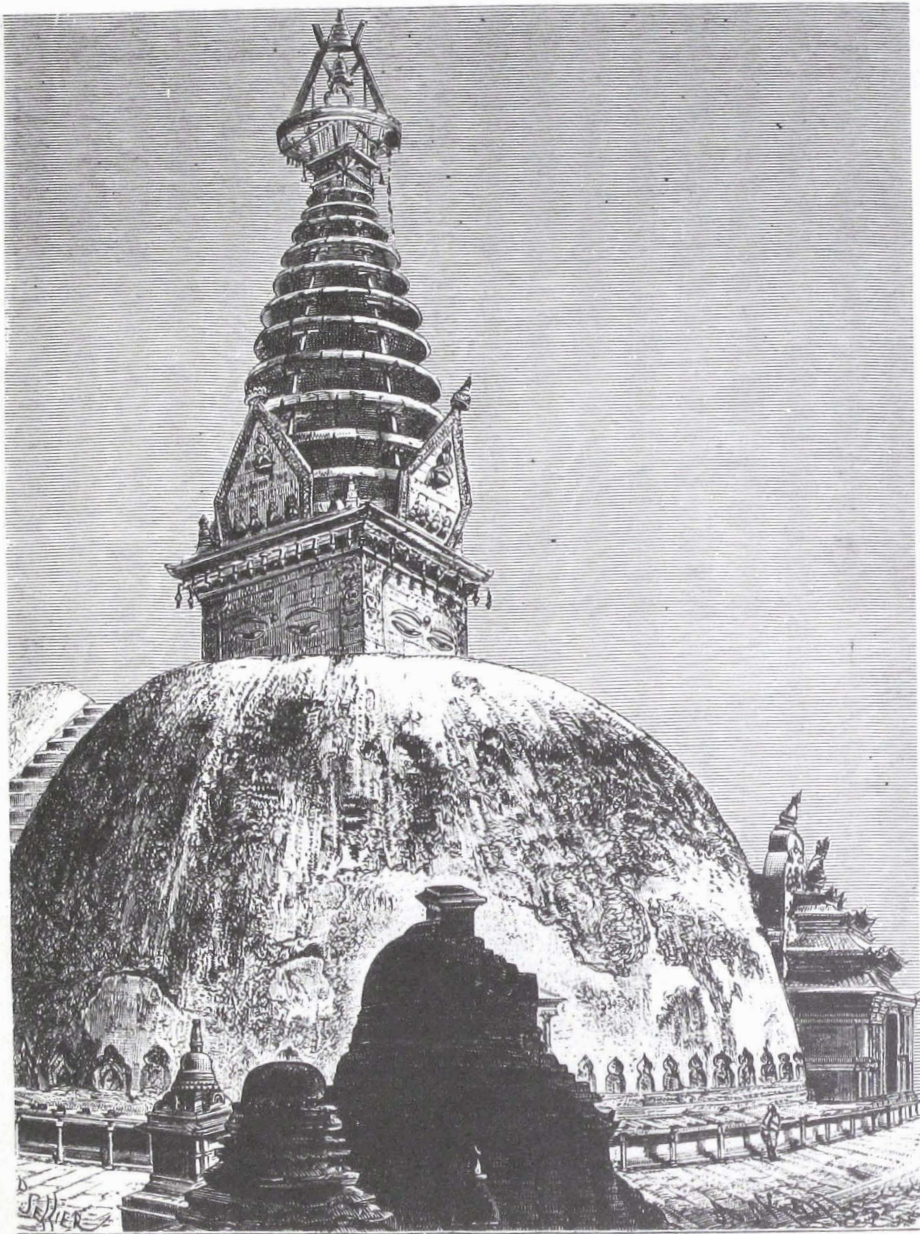


Fig. 11 *Temple of Buddha in Sambunath.* Drawing by P. Sellier from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

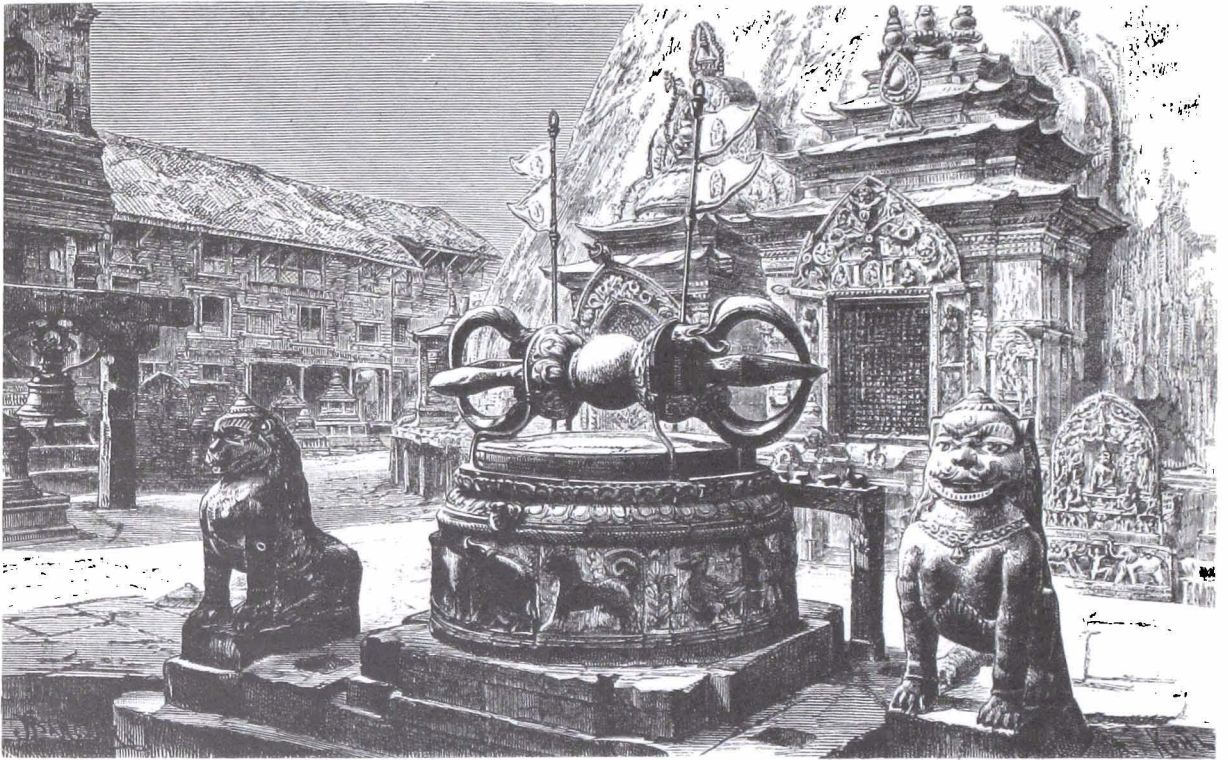


Fig. 12 *Indra's thunderbolt in front of the temple of Buddha in Sambunath.* Drawing by Barclay from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

in Nepal - the mixture of the two cults. The statues of the gods of the Hindu Pantheon live very well beside the statues of the Reformer, who denied the existence of all gods.

The other small constructions which surround the temple are votive monuments, or dedicated monuments, built to the memory of different venerable persons. In one of the houses

built around the big tope lives a family of Tibetan Lamas in charge, since time immemorial, of the sacred fire, the symbol of the deity who in by gone days came from the sky. The fire should never die. Moreover all temples of Sambunath are placed under the religious guidance of the Tibetan lamas.



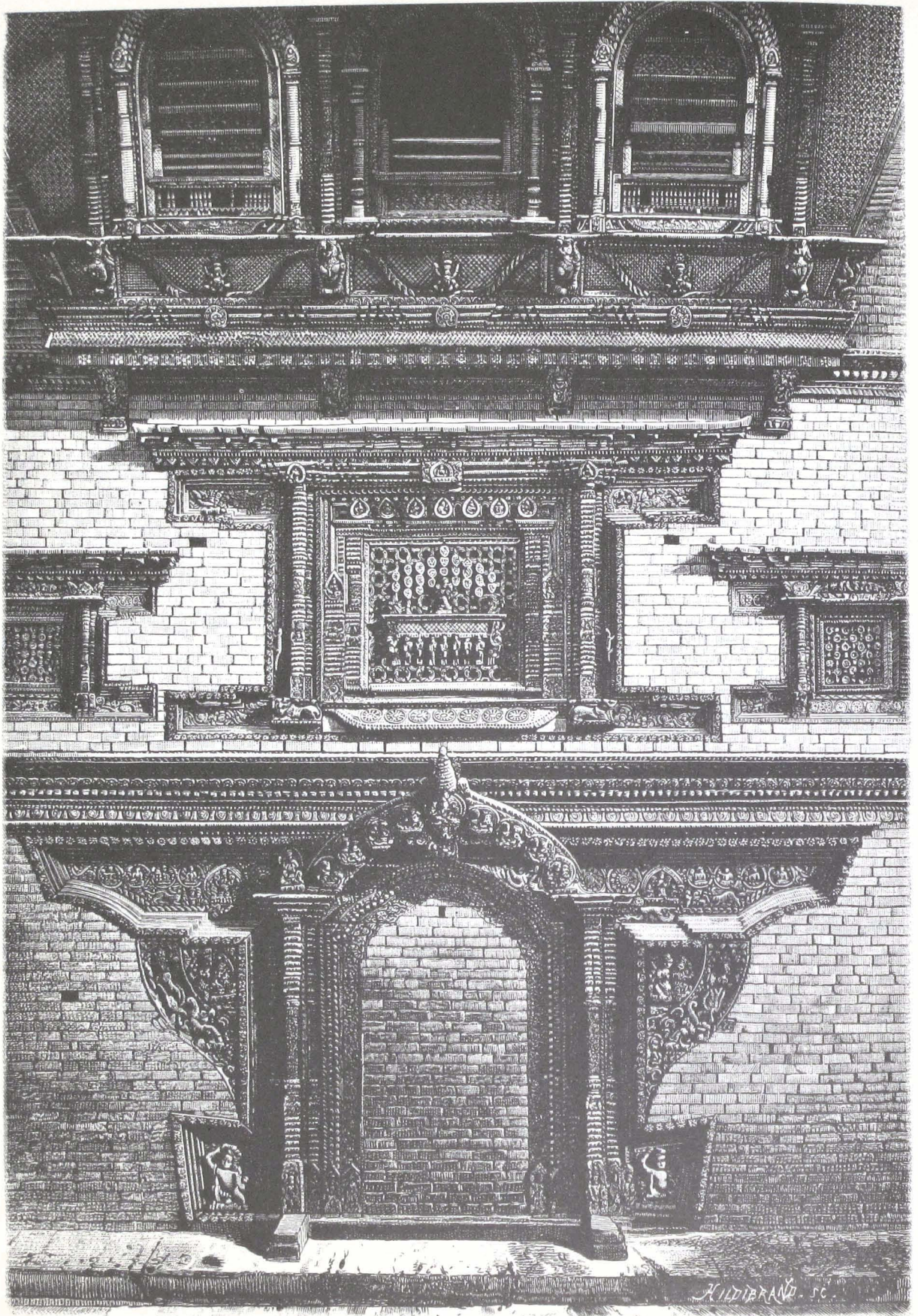


Fig. 13 *Decoration of the facade of a palace in Nepal. Etching by Hildibrand from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.*

CHAPTER

IV

Population of Nepal - Its Hindu and Tibetan origins - Gurkhas and Newars - War-like character of the Gurkhas - Agricultural and artistic aptitudes of the Newars - Languages of Nepal - Newari and Parbattia - Psychological characteristics common to all Nepalese - Vivacity of religious beliefs and superstitions - Weakness of morality - Total lack of truthfulness - Very keen development of patriotism and sense of independence.

Nepal is inhabited by a large number of very distinct tribes, each speaking a different dialect. Some are of Tibetan origin, others come from the interbreeding of Tibetans and the first inhabitants of the area with populations which had come from various parts of Hindustan. Among those immigrants some were Rajputs, i.e. representatives of the upper echelons of the people of India. The others, on the contrary, were supposed to be half-savage people, similar to the Kohls of Chota Nagpore and Orissa. To the first interbreeding belong a population called the Gurkhas about whom we shall talk later. It is probably from the second group that the tribes of Nepal neighbouring Sikkim are drawn.

The main part of the population inhabiting the valley of Nepal (the limited area surrounded by mountains and containing the large cities of Nepal), consists of two very distinct groups. The first, the Newars, are the descendants of the ancient population which ruled over the country until the second group, the Gurkhas, conquered the land at the end of the last century.

Before becoming the masters of the valley of Nepal, the Gurkhas were one of the warrior tribes that dwelt in Nepal. They claim descent from the Rajputs who long ago migrated to the country, fleeing the Muslim conquest. They are obviously of Hindu origin, but I seldom met any who had no visible trace of Tibetan blood.

The word Gurkha does not at all determine a definite race. It is used in Nepal to designate the

descendants of any class or origin who at the end of the last century left the Nepalese province of Gurkha to exert their power on the rest of Nepal. They form, according to their origin, different castes. The highest one, the Ksatriya, descends from an alliance between Rajputs, as I mentioned before, and women of a primitive tribe called the Khus. The Gurkhas are the nucleus of the warrior population of Nepal. To this nucleus are added other tribes, Magars, Gurungs, etc. among whom the Mongoloid type is more obvious than among the Gurkhas. These are the tribes which migrate to serve in the British armies where they are designated under the generic, but inaccurate, name of Gurkhas.

It is thanks to the Gurkhas, as I said, that the unification of Nepal under one ruler was done. These people are characterized by their military abilities and are very brave. They have no mercy for their enemies and do not ask for any. Unfortunately their qualities are limited to war matters. They are disdainful of industry, agriculture and trade and they are remarkably deprived of artistic sense. These aptitudes are exactly opposite, as we will see, to the qualities found among the Newars.

The religion of the Gurkhas is Brahmanism. Their language, Parbattia, is a dialect of Sanskrit mixed with Tibetan words, and is written in Sanskrit script.

The Newars constitute the main group of the inhabitants of the valley of Nepal. They were ruled for long centuries by rajahs belonging to

their own race. Under their domination the cities of Nepal were filled with remarkable monuments.

The Newars, like the Gurkhas, come mainly from intermarriage among Hindus and Tibetans; but their Tibetan element is stronger. When I entered the valley of Nepal, I had a servant in my escort, who had followed me in various parts of India without the slightest idea about where I was taking him. But when we entered the first Nepalese village at the border, he immediately asked me if we had not arrived in China. The people looked to him very much like the Chinese he had met in Bombay.

The Newars speak Newari, a language distinct from Parbattia, although it also consists of a mixture of Sanskrit and Tibetan. It is the only language of Nepal that has a literature.

The Newars have none of the warrior instincts of the Gurkhas, but they have what the others do not - agricultural, industrial and remarkable artistic aptitudes. It is to them that we owe the curious temples covered with admirable sculptures which are so numerous in the valley. The art of wood-carving is so developed in them that I have not found a match for them in any modern European people. Unfortunately since they are not very encouraged by their present rulers, the Gurkhas, who are totally deprived of artistic sense, the Newar artists are gradually disappearing and right now in the whole valley there are no more than a dozen people capable of carving wood skilfully. I had in mind to have a column of an ancient temple copied in wood, to take back to Paris. It was impossible to find a craftsman at any price. The few people capable of undertaking such a task were at that moment employed by a local person. When the last of these artists expires, the art of wood-carving in Nepal will die with him. The art of bronze casting in Nepal is already almost lost.

Architecture is equally declining in Nepal.

Almost all the remarkable monuments described here in this work have been built before the Gurkha domination.

A third of the Newars belong to the Hindu religion. They are followers of the Sivaite sect; the two other thirds are Buddhists. Brahmanism and Buddhism have kept the caste system.

We did mention before the differences between Gurkhas and Newars. The former are pugnacious arrogant and warlike, disdainful of agricultural and manual occupations. The latter are peaceful, good workers and agriculturists. Now we must say what are the characteristics common to both races. Two fundamental characteristics are common to all Nepalese, Gurkhas or Newars. One is their religiosity, the other, their sense of independence. The Nepalese are probably the most religious and the most superstitious people in the world. Their temples and the priests who attend them are proportionately more numerous than in any other spot in the world.

Ceremonies and religious celebrations take most of the time of the people. The astrologists, chosen mainly from the priests, play a major part in all acts of life; and, as with the Romans, no Nepalese will start a journey, or do business without choosing the auspicious moment.

Despite their religious sense, the morality of the Nepalese is quite weak. They totally lack sincerity. It is rare that a Hindu speaks the truth, and yet he might sometimes do so, but a Nepalese never does.

A fundamental point where the Nepalese are totally different from the Hindus is their patriotism and their feelings of independence. These two sentiments, up to now so unknown in the rest of India, are very strong in all the Nepalese population. These feelings give rise to extreme suspicion towards foreigners, and to the resolution to forbid absolutely their entrance to their territory.



CHAPTER



History of Nepal - Occupation of the country by the Rajputs - Former divisions of Nepal into kingdoms and principalities - Its reunification under the Gurkhas in the last century - Struggles of Nepal with England and China - War of 1814 - Installation of an English minister at the court of Nepal - Difficulties of his position - His isolation - Suspicion of the inhabitants towards him - Isolation of some British civil servants in various areas of India.

The mythological history of Nepal begins with the history of the heroes of the Mahabharata; but its real history is as unknown to us as that of the rest of India. Before 1300 B.C. we do not know anything precise about the country except that Buddhism was introduced there around the first century A.D. Its population at that time was most probably mainly Tibetan. After the sack of Chittor by Ala-ud-din in 1306, the Rajputs, fleeing Muslim domination, settled in the mountains of Nepal. There, they were followed in 1336 by other Rajputs from the kingdoms of Oudh and Kanouje, who were also fleeing the new conquerors. This Rajput immigration gave birth to a population called Gurkha. They formed in Nepal a small independent principality, which remained so for a few centuries. By 1765 the Gurkhas were feeling quite powerful and thought of unifying Nepal. After four years of struggle, they succeeded in overthrowing the three kingdoms of which Bhatgaon, Patan and Kathmandu were the capitals. These kingdoms had been ruled since the beginning of the fourteenth century by dynasties of rajahs descending from a common ancestor and belonging to a race called Newar, of Mongolian origin, which is still the foundation of the population. After seizing the three capitals, the Gurkhas overthrew in turn the numerous little principalities, similar to our old fiefs, into which the country was then divided. Since that time Nepal recognizes no other authority than that of the sole

sovereign and has only one capital, Kathmandu.

The independence of Nepal was often threatened by its two powerful neighbours, the Chinese and the British, and Nepal had to fight bloody battles against them. Even if Nepal has been vanquished a few times, no outsider has yet been able to reach the capital and the country has always preserved its independence.

The most formidable war Nepal had to fight was the one against the British. They were attacked by the British in 1814. First the Nepalese inflicted upon them a bloody defeat and killed their general, Gillespie; but in 1816, the British did come as near as three days walk from Kathmandu with an army of forty-six thousand men. The small state, which bravely withstood a heroic fight against one of the most gigantic empires that ever existed in history, had, after many battles, to suffer peace. The main clause of the treaty was that the Nepalese government would accept the presence of an English ambassador in its capital. This condition, although quite harsh for the Nepalese, was not putting them, in fact, in any position other than that of all the European powers, the British envoy being just an ambassador, with no right to interfere in the country's affairs. "The British envoy", writes Dr. Wright, former surgeon at the embassy in Kathmandu "has no right whatsoever to interfere in the Government of the area. In fact, his functions are just those of a consul such as would be

found in a European city. The Nepalese are particularly proud of their independence and do not admit a foreigner interfering in their business."

The Nepalese have a saying which explains their hostility towards foreigners and which is justified by the history of other areas of India: "With the British merchants come the muskets, with the Bible come the bayonets."

Thus, the position of a British minister in Nepal is not very enviable. His only companion during the many years he sometimes has to spend in the country, is a doctor, the only European authorised to stay with him in Nepal. He cannot officially take a step out of his residence without being escorted by Nepalese soldiers, ostensibly in charge of protecting him but in fact of reporting his doings immediately to the court. The British minister lives in a building built by one of his predecessors, a few kilometers from town. There is everything needed to live there, including a bakery and butcher's shop. A guard of sepoy is there to protect against the attacks of the inhabitants. One has to have a taciturn temper and be cast out of a strong mould, as British civil servants are, not to die of boredom in such living conditions.

They do not die of it at all and it is not only in Nepal that one can meet British living isolated, for years, among populations either indifferent or hostile. In such a lonely life they kept their manners and the British way of life up to the point of wearing evening dress and white tie for dinner even if their only companion for dinner were their own image, reflected in the mirrors of the apartment. Moreover this silent companion is enough for them, up to the point that many of these solitary British do not leave India without great regret. I have known some of them who had been living like this for twenty-five years and who were speaking with sorrow of the time when they would have to retire. No people is as capable as the British of bearing silence and solitude. Visiting the marvelous city of Bijanagar, ancient capital of southern India, as big as Paris although totally deserted today, and which is nothing but a heap of imposing ruins located in the jungle, the only

inhabitants being tigers and snakes, I met among the remains of a temple a learned engineer, Mr. Black. Under the pretext of archeological studies he has been living there for two years with no companion except a Hindu servant, with whom he communicates only by signs, and the panthers with which he communicates only with gun shots. This temple being nothing but a roof held by columns, nothing protects him from the friendly visits of these animals. During the first fortnight of his stay, Mr. Black killed fourteen panthers which came at night to steal the food he had hidden under his bed. Besides his struggle with these fearful hosts, the only distraction of this solitary man was to collect in big boxes all kinds of harmful beasts. From the first box he opened, without a word, since he was a silent person, I saw protruding the head of an enormous python, which was at least five to six meters long. "Very dangerous" said Mr. Black quietly when he saw me recoil, and then he explained to me in monosyllables that one day this python had tried to surround him and choke him and that as a result of this testimony of affection, he had had to stay in bed for a whole month. The other boxes contained dozens of scorpions, cobras, and a varied collection of pretty little animals specific to India and whose bites were always mortal. One rapidly becomes a fatalist when travelling, and I have slept often enough in jungles full of dangerous animals, and crossed rivers full of crocodiles, to know that one ends up by not noticing the dangerous animals anymore than the microbes which pollute the air of a big city. But what seems difficult to adjust to, in my opinion, is to be for years the only inhabitant of the ruins of a city as big as Paris. I would like to see in such solitude our young pessimists in their books, so disgusted with life. If they sometimes really think what they write and if the world is as much a bore to them as they claim, then I would advise them to go and bury themselves in one of the many abandoned cities of India. There, they could freely unburden themselves of their complaints on the futilities of this world and prove by their example that they have gone beyond all these vanities.





Fig. 14 *General view of Pashpatti.* Drawing by Barclay from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.



Fig. 15 *Jang Bahadur, former Prime Minister of Nepal.* Drawing by P. Sellier from a sketch by M. Wright.

CHAPTER

VI

Government of Nepal - Different concepts of sovereignty in Europe and Nepal - Absolute sovereignty of two provinces bestowed on a subject - The emperor and his prime minister - History of Jang Bahadur - A Nepalese Richelieu - Government revenue - Nepalese army - Military power of Nepal.

The Gurkhas's conquest at the end of the last century united under one sceptre all kingdoms and principalities of Nepal, principalities whose organisation was quite similar to that of the states of Rajasthan. The kingdom has since become an absolute monarchy, but in fact its political constitution is less simple than what it may seem at first glance. It includes varied forms of evolution, depending on the area, starting from the simplest one in the tribal organisation of most valleys. The concept of sovereignty is, moreover, quite different from the one we have today in Europe and resembles more closely the feudal concept. For example, never would it occur to a European monarch to give a part of his territory with the title of king and absolute sovereign, to one of his subjects, as the emperor of Nepal did in 1855 to Jang Bahadur and his descendants. The sons of Jang Bahadur still own, with the title of maharajah (great king), two provinces, given to their father with absolute right of life and death over all their subjects.

Moreover, the authority of the emperor of Nepal is merely nominal. The supreme power is in fact wielded by a kind of palace mayor, or prime minister, having under him a council consisting of the main lords of the country. The Prime Minister is omnipotent, but his omnipotence does not prevent his destiny from being, sooner or later, murdered by some competitor. One can say of Nepal, more than of Russia, that it is ruled by absolute monarchy moderated by murder. Jang Bahadur succeeded in escaping this destiny by having anybody he perceived as a rival beheaded.

Sometimes he would do it himself. Unfortunately, the Nepalese are very suspicious and a minister can succeed in the struggle to seize a rival's head only if exceptionally skilful. Thanks to these summary executions, this Jang Bahadur, who was for more than thirty years the absolute sovereign of Nepal, died a natural death only a few years ago. He certainly was the most interesting example of Asian despotism one could dream of. Of a really superior intelligence, he did a great deal for his country. He knew the ways of the West, had visited London and Paris, and introduced wise reforms in his country. Gifted with remarkable strength he could ride a hundred and sixty-five kilometers in sixteen hours. He could cut a panther in two by just one sword blow and would himself behead, without a word, the lords who were plotting against the safety of the state. He had no more enemies, having exterminated them all. The important public offices were held by members of his family, numerous enough since he had more than a hundred sons.

During his long domination, the country enjoyed high prosperity and its wealth increased. He knew how to avoid war with his neighbours and this oriental Richelieu, who during the sepoy revolt, sent regiments to help the British, at the same time gave refuge to Nana Sahib. He is considered now in Nepal as the most important figure in the history of this country.

Although Nepal has an army of thirty two thousand men, the country does not have a high public income. It does not reach in fact more than twenty millions. This amount, rather small by

European standards, is quite large in a country where thirty centimes a day is quite sufficient for the upkeep of an individual.

The public income is derived from land taxes, customs and various monopolies. The army is mainly paid by temporary grants of land belonging to the State.

In Nepal everything connected with martial arts is subject to special attention. The major part of the income is allocated to military expenses: manufacturing of arms, cannons, uniforms, etc.

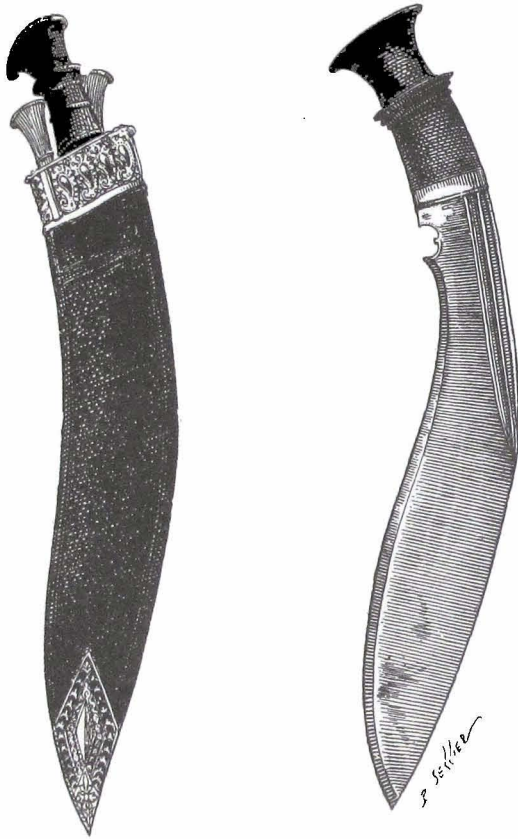


Fig. 16 *Kukhri*. Drawing by P. Sellier from the collection of Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

The regular army is not of a hundred thousand men as it is said in a recent geographical work, but has only sixteen thousand men, divided among twenty-six regiments. The irregular army has about the same number of men. The cavalry has but one hundred men, quite a sufficient number for such a mountainous country. The colour of the uniform is blue: the headgear is a small turban.

The arms are a bit heterogeneous and

belong to different systems. Each soldier carries, like all the inhabitants of Nepal, the standard kukhri, a large knife with a curious shape. The artillery consists of quite a number of mountain pieces, mainly manufactured in the country.

One should not judge from the above mentioned manpower the importance of the Nepalese troops. According to a very clever calculation, the soldiers are allowed to migrate and volunteer in the British regiments in India, where they are trained in the European manner. They are the best soldiers England has in India. When they come back to Nepal, thus educated and trained, they form a group of population that could instantly become an excellent army. In the mountains this army would certainly be terrific and would challenge any invasion. At a time when they did not have such a special factor of success, the Nepalese army inflicted serious defeats on the first British troops sent against Nepal.

Since it is almost impossible to cross with an army the passes of the Himalayas leading to the capital, and because of the value of the well-trained soldiers and mainly because of the sense of independence of the inhabitants, it is evident to me that Nepal has nothing to fear from its powerful neighbour. An internal revolution, if followed by a call for help to British troops by an ordinary chief, who would facilitate access to the capital, alone could make Nepal lose its independence.

The army is not only used in combat; it is constantly employed in public utility works, especially in the mending of roads, or rather paths. On my way to Kathmandu, I met a whole regiment, led by a general, busy building a bridge over a stream.

The army is recruited by voluntary enrollment and almost exclusively consists of Gurkhas, or fellows from warrior tribes we mentioned before. The Newars do not enroll. The promotion of officers is totally left to the goodwill of the government. There are twenty-five year-old generals, forty year-old colonels and grey haired lieutenants. Sons of high noblemen, still sucking their mother's milk, are sometimes even appointed general. One can see in Nepal generals who have no teeth yet and lieutenants who do not have any left.



CHAPTER

VII

Inhabitants' resources - Importance of agriculture - Methods of farming in Nepal - Value of the land-tax - Industry and trade in Nepal - Trade with India and Tibet - Workers' wages - Low cost of living in Nepal and India - Weak aptitudes of Hindus to bear fatigue.

Agriculture is the main source of income of the inhabitants of Nepal, and few families do not have some land whose produce is enough to live on. The system of farming, although quite primitive, since the plough, properly speaking, is still unknown in Nepal, is quite well adapted to the needs of the country. The irrigation is skillfully arranged. The least piece of land is cultivated. To make work easier, mountain slopes have been turned into horizontal terraces, so that each rise is a sequence of steps, each bearing a cereal field: from afar one could mistake them for gigantic staircases. Wheat and rice are planted during the hot season. Potatoes, red pepper, garlic, radishes, etc. are planted during the cold season. One usually harvests two crops a year.

The major part of the land belongs to the government and, as said before, is given to the soldiers as pay. The remaining land belongs to individuals who can do as they please with it. The tax on land is proportional to its value, ranging from fifteen to fifty francs per hectare.

The industry of Nepal is of little importance. They nevertheless manufacture woollen and cotton fabrics, paper, gold and silver ornaments, bronze idols, iron objects, and arms. There are, one should rather say there were, for they are rapidly disappearing since the Gurkhas' conquest, craftsmen working beautifully in bronze, wood and stone, as can be witnessed in the temples and palaces of the country.

Trade is of equally little importance. Rice, grains, gums and spices are exported to India and Nepal imports from India woollen and cotton

clothes, muslins, metal objects, salt and luxury items. This trade, possible only on man's back and through horrible paths, is of course very limited. The Nepalese receive from Tibet, through paths no less difficult, salt, borax, woollen blankets, musk, gold, tea, sheep, spices and precious stones. Nepalese exports to Tibet are silk and satin materials and various precious items received from India.

The Gurkhas are only concerned with military affairs. Trade and industry are in the hands of the Newars, as well as Kashmiris established in Kathmandu. These latter even import goods from Europe. In Lhasa there is a colony of three thousand Nepalese trading between Tibet and Nepal.

Those who have taken to agriculture, trade or industry and who cannot work for themselves hire themselves out as workers, artisans, etc. Their earnings are low. The wages of an agricultural worker are about six "sous" per day. The most skilful artist can with difficulty earn fifteen "sous". These amounts are in fact sufficient, since, with twenty "centimes" per day, one can eat. Besides the big cities of India, such as Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, I have not found a region in the whole peninsula where these wages would be higher. For twenty francs a month one can hire a domestic servant almost anywhere, and for this amount he has to feed and clothe himself. I was paying mine the amount, excessive in India, of fifty francs a month. This princely generosity was due to the fact that he could speak English, Hindustani, Bengali and Tamil, and that he was daily



Fig. 17 *Little bell from a Buddhist temple of Nepal.*
Drawing by P. Sellier from the collection of
Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

endangering his life by following me in areas infested with fevers and dangerous animals. The poor chap would have gladly left me before the end of the journey if he had only the faintest idea about the roads to take to get back home. After having followed me for more than four thousand leagues and finished my supply of quinine to fight the fever caught in the jungles, he made a vow to

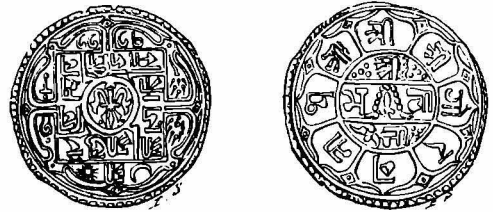


Fig. 18 *Silver coin from Nepal.* Drawing by P. Sellier
from the collection of Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

Vishnu never again to serve any of these European devils. The Hindus, when tired, are much less resistant to their climate than one would think. My first servant, who had to stay with me eight to ten hours a day under the sun in a temperature fluctuating around fifty degrees, to help me handle my scientific instruments, died of sun stroke after a fortnight.



CHAPTER

VIII

The city of Patan - Fairy look of the city - Beauty of its monuments - The king's palace and its bronze door - Ancient monasteries - Stone temples and many-storeyed pagodas - Pillars topped with statues - Visit to the city of Pashpatti - its monuments.

The third locality I studied after Kathmandu and Sambunath was Patan, one of the ancient capitals of Nepal. This big city is certainly one of the most interesting cities of Asia. I doubt that an opium-eater has ever dreamt, in his wildest dreams, of a more fantastic architecture than the one of this strange city. Although I have visited Europe, from London to Moscow and the whole of the classic Orient, from Morocco to Egypt and Palestine, I had until then never seen a more striking scene than the main street in Patan. Of course, some architectural details are sometimes barbaric, but the whole is dazzling. If the reader does not get this impression while looking at our drawings, it is because the latter lack the colour which contributes beautifully to the strange effect of the monuments. These palaces, of an intense red, with roofs of brick and copper held up by thousands of gods and goddesses wearing the brightest colours, and with bronze doors, guarded by stone monsters shining in a bursting light, defy a reproduction. I have tried in my book on the civilisations of India to convey an idea through coloured lithographs, but it is still far from the reality.

Patan is a city of forty thousand inhabitants, located south-east of Kathmandu. It seems the city was founded around the year 300 A.D. It is one of the ancient capitals of the kingdoms forming Nepal in by-gone days. Its streets are generally lined by brick and wood houses with wonderfully carved columns and window frames. The square with the royal palace and the temples facing it offers one of the most picturesque views in the

world. As one can judge from our drawings, the king's palace is quite remarkable, as is the big bronze chiselled door through which one enters. Since the conquest and the sack of Patan by the Gurkhas, the city has lost much of its importance and a great number of its monuments are falling into ruin. The temples are even more numerous here than in Bhatgaon. Several monasteries are linked to these temples, but their original purpose has long since disappeared and they have been turned into ordinary shops. Moreover, as far as architecture is concerned, they are merely two storey houses, similar to the other dwellings of the city.

One can see near Patan several big hemispheric topes similar to those in Buddnath and Sambunath and probably as old. The local tradition attributes their erection to Asoka at the time of his supposed pilgrimage to Nepal, about two hundred and fifty years B.C. Their inscriptions are too spoilt to be readable.

Patan, as well as Bhatgaon, has several stone temples. One of the most important and at the same time possibly one of the most remarkable in India in its originality and the elegance of its forms, is located in front of the king's palace. It is portrayed in detail on one of our plates (see p.). One can see that it is built on three platforms, each receding from the one below. The building consists of a rectangular two-storeyed building, topped by a kind of pyramid.

Each floor is surrounded by a veranda and has on each side three little pavilions with a dome. I cannot be sure of the age of the temple, since I

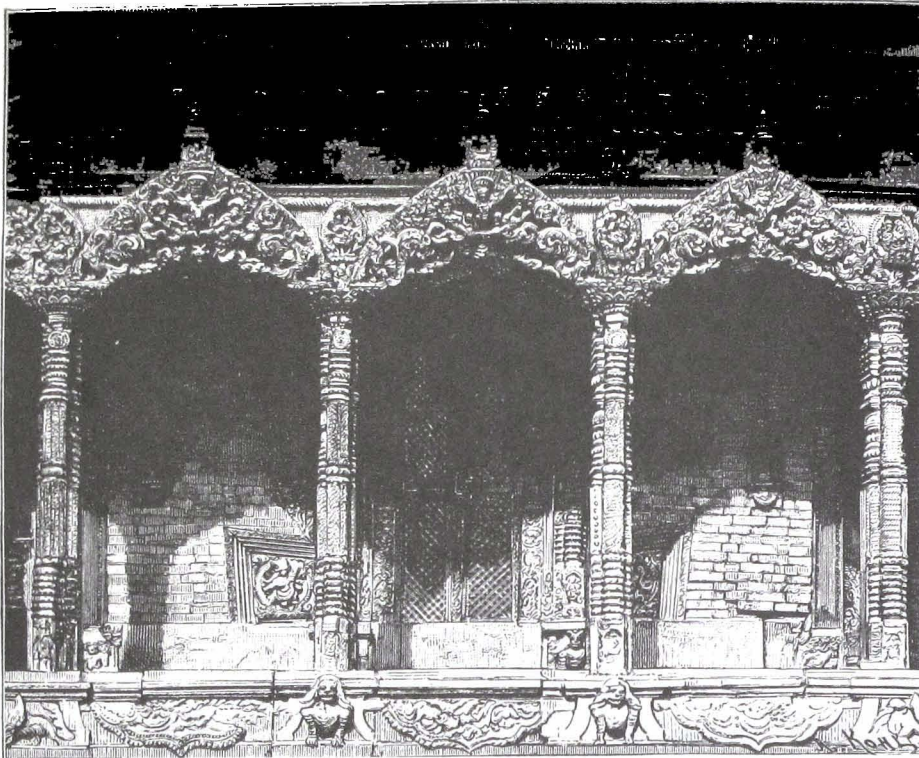


Fig. 19 Architectural details of a temple in Patan. Etching by Kohl from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

could not visit the inside, as any European who would even pretend to enter it may be quite assured of being murdered on the spot by the populace. Nevertheless, I don't think it could be much prior to the beginning of the 16th century.

In Patan, as well as in Bhatgaon and Kathmandu, one can often see in front of the temples, pillars surmounted by statues, usually representing the rajahs who have founded the temples. On one of these pillars, that we portray, the figure is kneeling, a bronze snake is above his head, and on the snake's head there is a little bird.

In Patan, the pagodas with tiered storeys are identical in style to the ones in Bhatgaon. To describe them in detail would be repeating what I will describe further on concerning Bhatgaon. Therefore I will restrict myself to depicting the most interesting ones.

I measured the most important pagoda of Patan, the one at the entrance of the street where the king's palace is. It is about twenty meters high and fourteen meters wide.

After finishing the study of Patan I went to Pashpatti. This city lies on the left bank of the Baghmati river, north-east of Kathmandu. There are many temples in stone or wood. To reach it,

one crosses a river with two bridges. On the other side, there is a hill covered with trees, from which one has a general view of the city, as can be seen in our photograph (see p. 23). On the right hand side, on the second level, one can see the temple of Pashpattinath, one of Nepal's most venerated temples, near which no foreigner can go. Its doors are of chiselled silver, in the same style as those of the rajahs' palaces in Bhatgaon and Patan portrayed in our engravings. Near this temple there is a place set aside for the suicide of widows who want to be cremated on the body of their dead husbands.

The temples of Pashpatti are recent and date from the end of the 17th century. The typical component of these stone constructions is the bell-shaped dome in stone. In fact, stone temples are in great minority in Nepal, but as one can see by those portrayed, the architects seem to have tried, except in Pashpatti, never to copy a temple from another one. In the case of the brick and wood temples, the exact contrary seems to have happened. Indeed all the stone temples are noticeably different one from the other, while all the brick and wood temples seem to have been built according to an identical plan.



CHAPTER

IX

Manners and customs of Nepal - Modes of living of the Nepalese - Food - Costumes - Slavery - Doctors and diseases - Lawyers, Justice - Penal code in Nepal - Importance of sacred cows - The family - Absolute authority of the father - Successions - Marriage in Nepal - Strictness of conjugal links among the Gurkhas - Method used to suppress adultery - Suicide among women - Weakness of conjugal links among the Newars - Option given to Newar women to divorce at will - Festivals in Nepal - Animal sacrifices.

Isolated from the rest of the world, not having to suffer the Muslim invasion, totally untouched by the influence of Europeans who cannot enter the territory, the Nepalese have kept, through the ages, their manners and customs. They give us a reliable image of what India might have been like around the 7th century of our era, when it was divided into little kingdoms, and undergoing the major religious transformation which Nepal is going through now, and which resulted in the disappearance of Buddhism.

Among the various ethnic groups of Nepal, the Gurkhas are those who kept best the manners and customs of ancient India, since they are principally offspring of Hindus who fled the Muslim domination and took refuge in the valley of Nepal.

The food eaten by the Nepalese is the same as in India, with the difference that the consumption of meat is quite widely spread, at least among the well-to-do class of the population. Mutton, goat, poultry, game such as deer, wildboar, pheasant, etc., are part of the daily food. The poorest people feed themselves with rice and vegetables (garlic and radishes mainly). The most wide-spread drink, as everywhere else in India, is water. They nevertheless make an alcoholic beverage called rakhi, obtained by the distillation of fermented rice and flour. The use of tea, that came from Tibet, is quite widely spread. Intoxication is very rare.

The dress of the people consists of a blue or

white cotton tunic. At the waist one can invariably see the fearsome kukhri, of which I give a drawing above (see p. 26) and which is a weapon special to Nepal. It is used indiscriminately to cut heads, chop wood or cut a beefsteak.

The women wear a kind of tunic and a jacket. They are, like all the Hindus, covered with ornaments, necklaces, bracelets, chains, earrings, rings in the nose, flowers in the hair, etc. They go out unveiled and in villages, I have seen shops kept by them, something totally unheard of in the East from Morocco to China.

The caste system exists in Nepal as in the rest of India. The part played by it is so considerable that we thought it necessary to devote a whole chapter to it (see p. 37).

Slavery still survives in Nepal. Each wealthy person always has a great number of slaves. There are at least forty thousand in the area. Many of them are the offspring of slaves; others, free originally, were sold after they committed certain crimes, especially crimes against laws governing the caste system. The price of a female slave is about three to four hundred francs; a male slave, two to three hundred francs. They are generally well treated and as in all countries where they are not subjected to Christians, quite happy with their fate.

Doctors are numerous in Nepal, but their position would not be enviable for their European colleagues. Indeed the Nepalese do not pay them until they are cured. If this practical custom were

followed in Europe, I should think that the medical practice would become much less profitable.

Among diseases one can see the most often, I would mention goitre. This disease occurs endemically, as in all mountains which have the same geological constitution as the mountains of Nepal. That disease, along with elephantiasis, syphilis, and calculus, are the most common. Fevers prevail only in the lower region of the Terai, but since they are quickly fatal, the doctors' interventions are useless. This devastating aspect of serious diseases is widespread elsewhere in India: snake bites, fevers, sunstroke, cholera, etc., kill the sick person in a few hours. You make an appointment in the morning for the same evening with a healthy person, and, when you go back to see him at the said time, you learn he is dead and will be cremated soon. One can easily see that in such conditions any therapeutic system would be of little effect.

The Nepalese have lawyers, but they are few and not at all respected: they are considered as people who only complicate matters. Thanks to their small number, justice is rendered without the delays and the expenses which usually accompany them in Europe.

Since the reforms introduced by Jang Bahadur, death sentences are almost never pronounced except for the following crimes: murder of a man or a cow - mainly a cow - treason and desertion.

Holy cows have a considerable part to play in Nepal. The emperor and his ministers are not more respected than these animals. To wound them, even unwittingly, leads to life imprisonment as punishment. Thus cows just wander around in the streets without anyone daring to touch them. The emperor's guards, who escorted me when I was going through a dense crowd which thronged the streets of Kathmandu on market days, would make room for me by distributing stick blows here and there, but when we would come across a cow they would respectfully give way.

The British ambassador told me that the emperor's prime minister warned him to this effect: "To kill a person in Nepal is not of great importance, but I will not be powerful enough to save

the life of anyone who kills a cow." I then understood the warning given to me by the British minister when, in one of his letters, which surprised me a little bit, he said that I should not wound a cow if I met one: a warning to which I had answered by swearing that although not a member of the society for the protection of animals, I had never in my life attacked a cow, resigning myself only to eating them in restaurants. The warning of not touching them was not totally useless, since in India these animals are particularly hostile towards Europeans. They are, with the snakes, crocodiles and bees, the only living beings with whom I was forced to have frequent disputes. Their persisting hostility eventually convinced me that there must be some truth in the transmigration of souls.

The family is rather well structured in Nepal, at least among the Gurkhas. The father's authority is absolute. The mother's authority, although only moral, is much respected by her children. After marriage, the sons keep on living at their father's house until the growth of their own family forces them to find a new home.

The laws on inheritance are the same as in India. The eldest son receives the major part of the paternal inheritance, but the other sons and the daughters themselves do get some of it.

The father, being absolute master to his progeny, has the right to sell them as slaves, but he seldom uses this right, except in a case of extreme poverty.

The women are well treated and enjoy much more freedom than in the rest of India. They are neither veiled nor locked up. The marriage links, very strong among the Gurkhas of Hindu origin, are very weak among the Newars, where Tibetan blood predominates. The matrimonial habits of these two groups being very different, they should also be described separately. We shall start with those of the Gurkhas.

Like all Hindus, the Gurkhas are polygamous and very strict as far as the fidelity of their wives is concerned. Adultery, when the case is brought before the court, is punished with life imprisonment for the wife, and the deceived husband has the right to kill the lover when he meets him. Most often in fact, the revenge is the

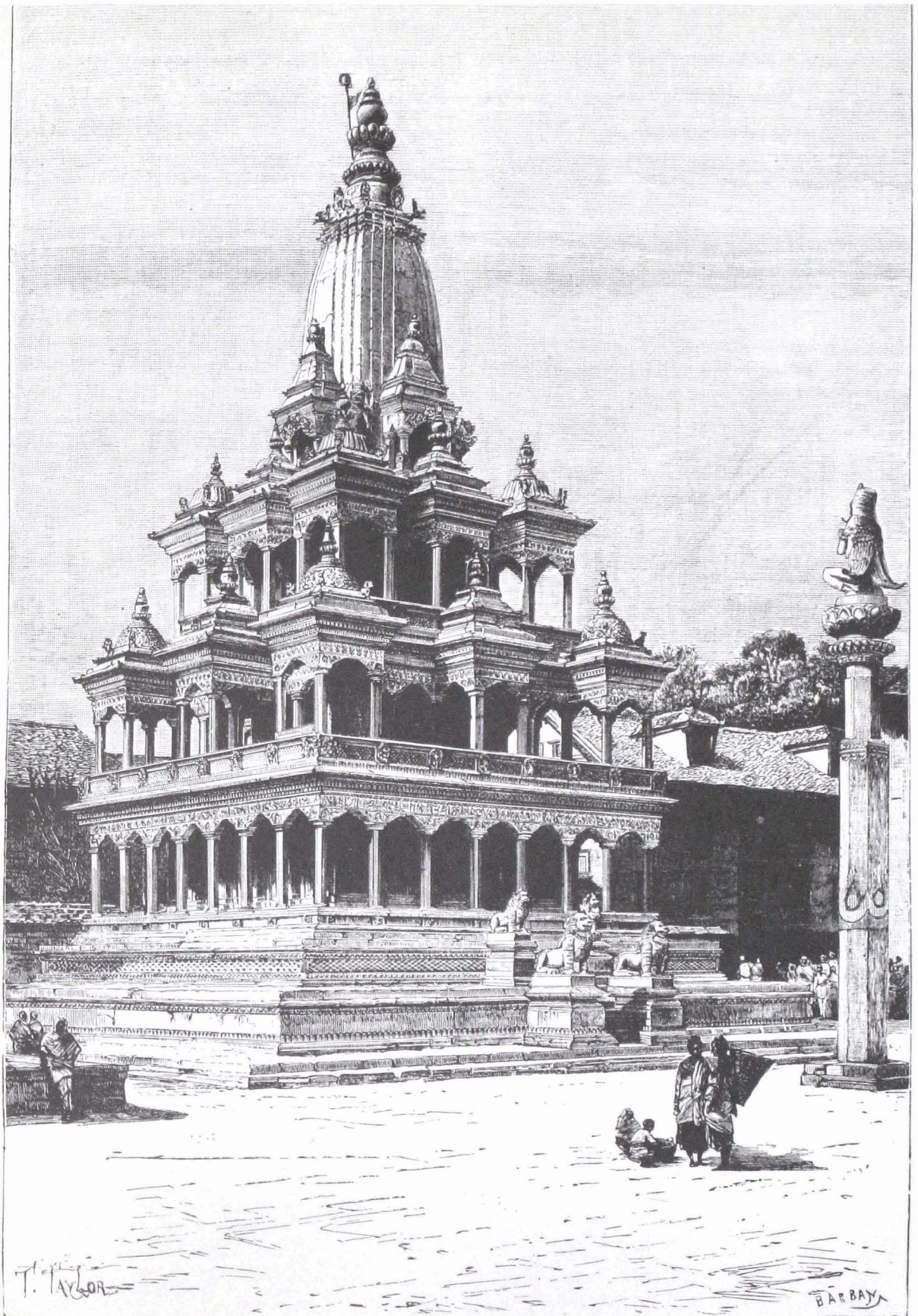


Fig. 20 *Big stone temple in front of the King's palace a Patan.* Drawing by Taylor from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

simplest and surest one. The offended husband cuts off the nose of his wife and expels her from his home. She thus loses, at the same time, her house, her wealth, and her nose. This conduct, hasty but efficient, which if introduced in Europe would make some trials less frequent, has made adultery rather rare in Nepal.

The Gurkha woman loves her husband very much in fact, despite his polygamy. One could see that by looking at the desperate stubbornness by which, not very long ago, a woman wanted to be cremated with her husband on the same pyre. One knows that the British tried hard and succeeded in abrogating the custom of widow's suicide in India. Jang Bahadur tried to introduce the same reform in Nepal, but his efforts met with only partial success. The opposition came, as in the rest of India, from the women themselves, who absolutely did not want to outlive their husbands. After the death of this minister, three of his wives were cremated on his corpse. This testimony of conjugal love might seem a bit exaggerated in the West, where widows rather easily outlive their husbands. One can nevertheless not deny that affection of this level, rendering living without the beloved one intolerable, is very moving.

The marriage links are as weak among the animal sacrifices. One of the most important is Newars as they are strong among the Gurkhas. The woman can divorce whenever it pleases her. She shows her intention simply by putting under her husband's pillow a betel nut, and then just

leaving the conjugal house without any further ado. In such conditions, adultery could not be considered as an important matter. The Newar women have, like Gurkha women, to cremate themselves after the death of the husband, but they do not take advantage of their right.

One can see from the above that marriage among the Newars is nothing but a temporary link, the duration of which varies according to the two partners' will. They take a wife as one would take a mistress in France, and when they don't please each other anymore, they separate. The only difference is that in Nepal the children remain the charges of the father, who has to raise them. Since the women abused somewhat the facility they had to change husbands at will, Jang Bahadur established that they could only divorce with the explicit authorisation of the husband; but this authorisation is seldom refused.

Religious festivals are one of the main occupations of the people of Nepal. One can state without fear of exaggeration, that they spend at least a third of their time in ceremonies of this kind. These religious festivals consist of processions, banquets, especially banquets, visits to the temples, illuminations, etc. I did not have the opportunity to attend any of these festivals, but a former surgeon at the embassy, Mr. Olfield, has left a description which gives a sufficient idea on these kinds of ceremonies. The walls of the houses were decorated with coloured drawings of all kinds. It was probably not without amazement

that he saw next to Buddhist deities, figures of Napoleon, of the Holy Virgin and of a Parisian harlot. Through which chance of trade and through which windings of a country without relation with Europe and where never a Frenchman had entered, had such images appeared? I still wonder. Napoleon, without a doubt, must have been considered by the Nepalese as a Hindu deity, some avatar of Visnu, and the French damsel an important goddess, because of her dress.

The display of Nepalese religious festivals is not unfortunately always harmless. There are some which are accompanied with quite repulsive Dassera, intended to celebrate the victory of Durga over the monster Mahasuha. The festival lasts ten days and several thousand buffaloes are sacrificed. The buffaloes, killed outside the temple, are beheaded by a single sword blow, which requires extraordinary strength and skill. Those killed inside the temple are slaughtered in a most

ferocious way. The author I just quoted attended one of these slaughters. The buffalo being well tied-up to keep it from moving, it is skinned alive around the neck and the underlying muscles are slowly and carefully dissected for a length of about thirty centimeters, in order to isolate the jugular vein well. This operation finished on one side, it is started on the other, despite the bellowing of the animal. Then the poor animal is lifted, put in front of the god's altar, and then in each jugular a little opening is made, in order to let the blood flow by very small spurts on the altar and to let the animal die extremely slowly. The act is indeed ferocious, but one has to remember that the Nepalese are in the depth of the Middle Ages, and at that time it was not animals but human beings who were tortured in Europe and then much more cruelly. Not three centuries ago did we still burn unbelievers and witches, after having them clad with a sulphurous shirt. This kind of operation the Nepalese have never done.



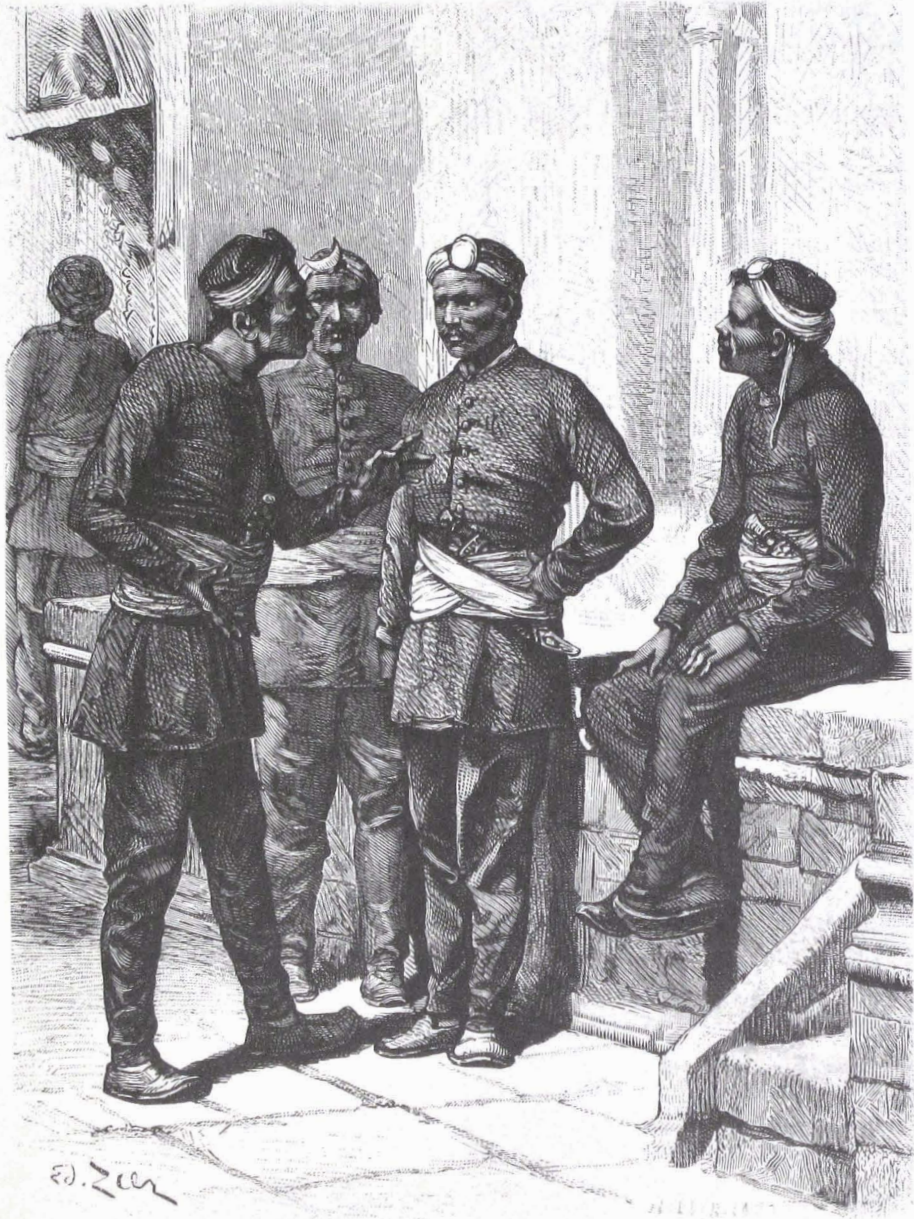


Fig. 21 *Nepalese soldiers.* Drawing by Zier from a photograph.

CHAPTER



Caste system in Nepal - Its existence among the Buddhists and the Brahmanist - Importance of the caste system in the whole of India - Its origins and effects - Why it has been adopted by the British in India.

The caste system is as deeply rooted in Nepal as it is in the rest of India and as much among the Buddhists as the Brahmanists. It is a common misconception, but one that should be corrected, that Buddhism ever preached the discontinuation of castes. Buddhism proclaimed all men equal in regard to fate, and that it is through their behaviour that they make this same fate. It blended all men in the same temples during their life and in the same repose after their death, but did not go beyond this. The Buddhist writings of Nepal, the oldest ones we have, abundantly prove that the caste system as a social distinction has never been shaken by Buddhism.

The caste system, among the Buddhist or Brahmanist populations of Nepal, is maintained with as much strength as in the rest of India. For a Nepalese to lose his caste is to lose everything at the same time. The man who is deprived of caste following a decision by the supreme clerical court, in charge of all disputes concerning caste problems, loses at the same time family, friends, and social status. He is in the same situation as the excommunicated man was in the Middle Ages. In India, the loss of caste, although involving the social consequences I already mentioned above, has no more nowadays a penal sanction. In Nepal loss of caste is accompanied by various penalties, among others, jail. In more serious cases, the culprit can be sold as a slave. At death, his body is thrown in the fields to be devoured by birds of prey and jackals.

The caste system has been the corner-stone of all social institutions in India for the last two thousand years. It has such an importance, and

this importance is so generally unknown, be it in Europe or in our colonies of India, that it will not be useless to briefly explain its origins, developments and consequences. A system whose result is to allow a handful of Europeans to keep two hundred and fifty million men under strict law, deserves full attention by the observer and the historian. The details we are going to give from personal observations apply as well in Nepal as in the rest of India.

The caste system in India has existed for more than twenty centuries. It most probably originated from the knowledge gained by observing the fatal laws of heredity. When the white-skinned conquerors, that we call Aryans, entered India, they found, besides other invaders of Turanian origin, a black population which they dominated. The conquerors were semi-pastoral, semi-sedentary tribes, subject to chiefs whose authority was only counterbalanced by the almighty authority of the priests, whose responsibility was to assure the protection of the gods. Their occupations divided them naturally into three classes: the Brahmans, or priests, Kshatriyas or warriors, and Vaisyas, labourers or artisans. The latter may have been formed of invaders prior to the Aryans, whom we mention previously.

These divisions correspond, as we can see, to our ancient castes: clergy, nobility and Third Estate. Below this elite was the aboriginal population, the Sudras, forming three-quarters of the total population.

Experience soon revealed the inconveniences which could result from the mixtures of the superior races with the inferior ones, and all

the religious regulations tended then to prevent the inconveniences. "Any country where races of mixed blood are born", said the ancient lawgiver, the wise Manu, "is soon destroyed along with those who live in it." The decree is harsh but it is impossible to ignore its soundness. All superior people who mixed with a race inferior to them were soon either degraded or absorbed by it. The Spanish in America, the Portuguese in India, are proofs of the sad results such mixtures can produce. The descendents of the proud Portuguese adventurers who in the past conquered part of India have become today nothing but mere servants and the name of their race has become an expression of contempt.

Engrossed with the importance of this anthropological truth, the code of Manu which has been the law in India for so many centuries, and, as for all codes, the result of long preceding experiences, does not neglect anything to assure the purity of blood. The most harsh sentences are given to any mixture of superior castes especially with the Sudras. There are no awful threats which are not used to prevent such mixtures: if the Sudra should speak of his master with contempt his mouth was burnt, should he listen to the reading of the Holy Book, boiling oil was poured into his ear. As far as the offspring of the union between a Sudra and the wife of a Brahman was concerned, he was considered as the scum of creation; his fate, according to Manu, was to clean gutters, bury decaying carcasses and feed himself from them. In fact, the unlucky Sudra, had nothing but duties and no rights. Even to get out of his condition was impossible for him, since Manu said: "Who can liberate him from a condition which is natural to him?" The only reward he could foresee vaguely was to be born again in a better condition.

But natural needs were, in the centuries to follow, to triumph over these extraordinary interdictions. However inferior by caste a woman can be, she still has her charms. Despite Manu, the mixtures were numerous and one does not have to go through India for long to recognize that the populations of all classes are quite mixed nowadays. The number of people white enough to be able to claim that their blood is without mixture

is quite small. The word caste, taken in its primary meaning, cannot any more be considered as synonymous to colour, as in Sanskrit in the past. If caste was only created to bring forward ethnological reasons previously explained, then there is no reason for it to exist anymore. In fact the original caste divisions have long since disappeared. They have been replaced by new ones, of which origin is other than difference of race, except for the Brahamans who are still the least mixed-blooded population.

In the new reasoning which perpetuated the caste system, the law of heredity played the main part. For the Hindu aptitudes are inevitably hereditary; and inevitably as well the son should follow the father's profession. The principle of professional heredity being universally accepted, it has resulted in the creation of as many castes as there are occupations, and today in India there are thousands of castes. Each new profession has as immediate consequence: the creation of a new caste. The European who comes to live in India soon discovers how multiple the castes are, when he sees how many people he is forced to employ to be served, each of them absolutely refusing, regardless of the wages offered, to do other things than what the laws of his caste allow him to do. Never would a cook who prepares the food consent to go and bring the water he needs to cook the food; the groom who takes care of the horses will at no cost sweep their stables. The result is that the most humble civil servant has to have a dozen servants to help him, whereas one or two Europeans would be more than enough.

To the two above-mentioned causes of cast formation, ethnological origin, very weak nowadays, and occupation, still very powerful, are added political functions and heterogeneity of religious beliefs.

The caste born for political functions can, if need be, be classified with the professional castes; but those created by diversities of religious beliefs cannot be classified with any of the above-mentioned. Theoretically, i.e. judging exclusively from books, India should be divided into only two or three great religions but practically speaking, religions are counted in the thousands. The primitive cults from which they are derived being

so resilient, their outlines so irresolute, that any incidental belief can be connected to them without altering their apparent unity. One could compare them to the various branches of a tree, different from one another, without changing the nature of the tree they come from. Each day new gods considered as mere avatars of ancient gods are born and die and their followers soon form a new caste, as strict in their exclusions as the other castes can be.

Two fundamental signs limit the conformity of the caste and separate its members from all other individuals. First of all, those who belong to the same caste can eat only among themselves; secondly, they can only marry among themselves.

These two regulations are absolutely essential, the first being no less important than the second. In India you can meet by the hundreds Brahmans who are employed in the post office or in the railroad at twenty-five francs wages per month, or even live the life of a beggar. But this civil servant as humble and as miserable as he might be would rather lose his life than sit at the table of the Viceroy of India. Even the most powerful Rajah, if he is of a lower caste - it is possible to be a king and from a lower caste, the rajah of Gwalior being one example - would step down from his elephant and bow to him.

The status of Brahman is hereditary, as a nobility title is in Europe and it is not at all synonymous with priesthood as often believed, because it is only from this caste that priests are recruited. One is born Brahman as one is born a duke or baron in the West. This title, which nowadays has lost a lot of its value, was so highly considered in the past that being a king was not enough to allow you to ask a Brahman's daughter in marriage. In the drama of *Sukuntala*, composed by Kalidasa around 5th century A.D., when Duchata, king of Hastinapura, meets Sakuntala, he worries whether she is a Brahmin or not, because if she were he could not marry her.

Under British rule, the set of rules upholding the castes has no legal sanction; but there is no need for it if such rules are so deeply rooted in peoples' minds by tradition. They have become subconscious feelings, part of the

inheritance given by birth and against which man is powerless to struggle. The Hindu would rather die than violate the rules of his caste. A judge of the Orissa coast told me that during the last famine, thousands of the inhabitants starved to death for not having accepted rice cooked by Europeans. Those who, triggered by hunger, agreed to accept some rice, formed a new caste whose members can only marry and eat among themselves. One of the main difficulties of the Indian government, when they planned to send Indian troops to Sudan, was to provide each regiment with enough provisions and utensils so that individuals of each caste could prepare their food separately and eat by themselves. I was then in India, and by reading the newspapers I could see how big a problem this was. Carelessness on such a fundamental point could have had serious consequences. It was such a carelessness which caused, or at least was a determining reason for, this sepoy revolt which almost cost England its huge empire.

Different causes, irrelevant to be mentioned here, can make a person lose caste. But one of the most serious is the fact of having accepted food, be it just a glass of water, from somebody of another caste. When Jang Bahadur returned to Nepal after having visited England, there was a conspiracy which almost cost him his life, and the cause of it was that since he had had food with foreigners he had lost his caste.

The caste system has such a power in India, it is so well established through the yoke of tradition and custom that it imposed itself upon all the conquerors. The Muslims more or less adopted it in practice, although the basics of their religion do condemn it. The British themselves have adopted it and in a much more absolute way than anyone who has not studied India carefully might think. Of course its principles are not included in their code, but their own society forms in fact a caste as strictly closed as the most closed caste of India. Like the persons of the other castes they eat and marry only among themselves. Bygone are the days when British civil servants would marry local women. The European who marries a Hindu - an occurrence extremely rare - is banned from the society and all doors are closed to him. A simple soldier would consider himself dishonoured by

contracting such a marriage. "Would you allow one of your men to marry a Hindu woman?" I once asked a British colonel with whom I was dining in Benares. "I could of course not prevent him, but I doubt any of my soldiers would ever think of asking me such a permission", he answered.

This total separation of the new conquerors from the conquered people is new, and even thirty years ago, marriages between the two were not rare. The consequence of such unions was the formation of an Anglo-Indian population, called Eurasians, having all the faults of the Hindus without the qualities of the British, a race without tradition, without a past, without morality and deeply despised by the two communities from which they issued. Having no place in the society, they cause the new masters of India the most serious worries.

The dangers of such unions, very well understood previously by the Aryans, and which must have been at their time the origin of the caste system, were eventually also clearly appreciated by the British. Since the same needs always cause the same effects, they had to adopt, without writing it down in their codes, the absolute separation between the conquerors and the conquered, a situation which seems an inevitable anthropological necessity when people too different from one another are confronted. Thus a gap between the two communities was created, a gap that the British are doing their best to make unbridgeable. In all the main cities of India, the European part, the cantonment as it is called, is always located at a great distance from the indigenous town and one can very seldom see a European in the latter. Even

in the railroad line, the separation between Europeans and natives is totally established.

Undoubtedly, today the natives have, theoretically at least, the same rights as the British to apply for the highest jobs and some of them succeed, especially in the magistracy. However the British have nothing but official contacts with the locals. European society is totally closed to them.

It is especially towards the Eurasians, offspring of unions between European and Hindu that the caste prejudices are harsh. There are some Portuguese bankers in Paris, cross-breeds of Hindu blood, accepted in all the salons but who are never allowed in India, aside from in the big half-European cities, to sit down in front of a British person, nor of course to eat at the same table.

I do not have here to look for what might be right or wrong in such an organisation. One is sure not to be wrong when you just limit yourself to writing the observed facts. One is always certain to give a superficial or wrong judgement when one wants to judge a solely theoretical point of view of institutions twenty centuries old. They outlived all revolutions, and they must be powerful since a nation, one of the most civilized of the world, although condemning them, has adopted them without reservation. One of the most useful advantages of travel is the fact that we learn that people do not choose the institutions they want, but inevitably suffer those imposed by necessities of race and milieu. These institutions are independent from the choice of men and they are always more powerful than human will.



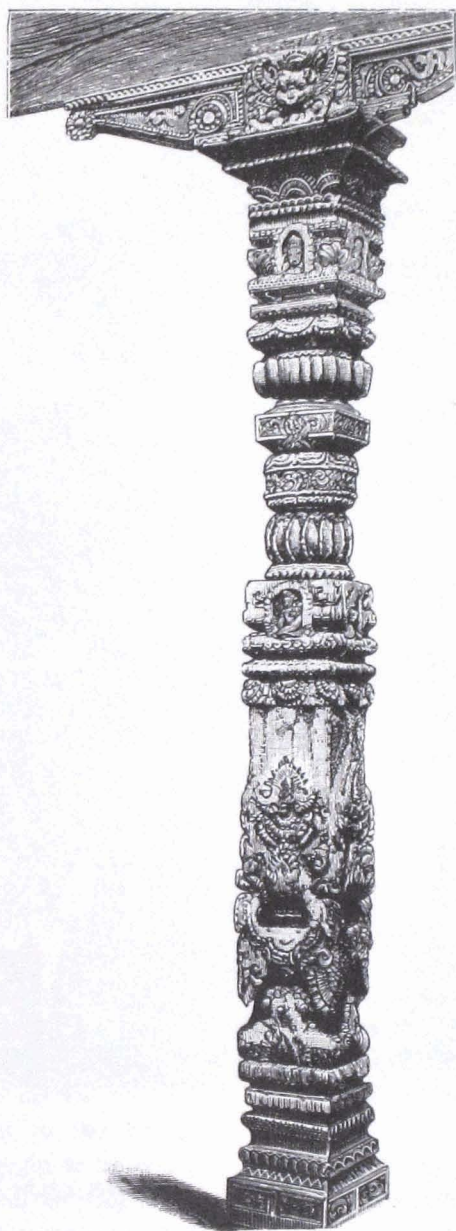


Fig. 22 *Pillar from a house in Patan:* Etching by Kohl from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

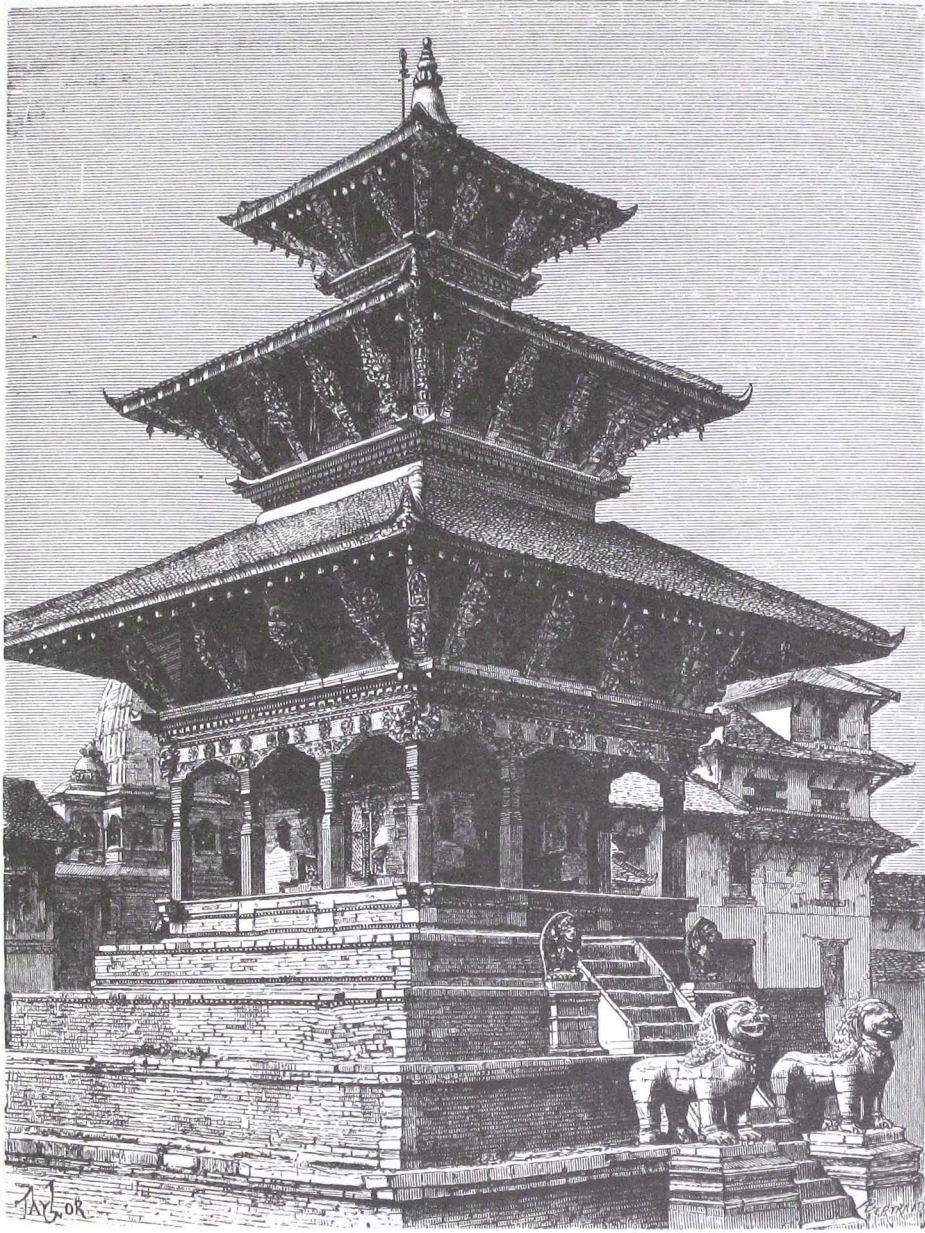


Fig. 23 *Pagoda in Bhatgaon.* Drawing by Taylor from a photography by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

CHAPTER

XI

The town of Buddnath and its big temple - Meeting with Tibetan pilgrims - Diabolical dance - The town of Bhatgaon - Importance of the temples and palaces of this ancient capital - King's palace and the golden gate - Analogies of the Nepalese monuments with those of India at the time of Megasthene.

Among the famous localities of Nepal is found Buddnath. It is, as a matter of fact nothing but a village, but it includes the biggest temple of Nepal, visited by Nepalese as well as by their neighbours, the Tibetans.

Upon arriving close to the temple, I then and there met a group of pilgrims - men, women and children who had come from Tibet. I got near them to examine the peculiar animal skin clothes the men were wearing and the jewels covering the women. One of these jewels looked interesting to me and I wanted to buy it. The negotiation was rather complicated. It was, assured the owner, a magic talisman at least contemporary to Buddha and assuring all kinds of prosperity to its owner. Confronted with such prospects, I could not refuse to pay for a silver item with its weight in gold. During this bargaining, these good pilgrims, at first a bit frightened at the sight of my scientific instruments, grew bolder step by step; soon I was surrounded by a hundred individuals. At a signal of one of them a circle was made around me and three little monsters, which after careful observation I recognized as belonging to the human species, but who I had first thought to be young gorillas, because of the animal skin covering them, started to perform. While stamping their feet in rhythm and howling in a horrible way, they executed a sequence of frenetic contortions, which composed the strangest dance I had ever seen in my life. The distribution of a few rupees turned the contortions into something absolutely diabolical.

The big temple of Buddnath consists, like

the one in Sambunath, of a big hemisphere of brick topped by a square tower, itself crowned by a pyramid. At its base there is a circular plinth in which had been carved recesses containing Buddhist statues. The temple is different from the one in Sambunath in that it is erected on a platform consisting of three levels recessing successively. The total height of this platform is almost equal that of the hemisphere. On each side there is a little sanctuary.

The temple of Buddnath surpasses by its dimensions other similar construction in Nepal. It is almost ninety meters in diameter and approximately forty-two meters high. This temple is at the center of a sort of square surrounded by houses which used to serve as monasteries but in which now live merchants of copper idols, jewels, charms, prayerwheels etc. One of these houses, as in Sambunath, belongs to Lamas in charge of the sacred fire. Like in Sambunath, there are around Buddnath temple a certain number of little religious buildings but they are of no importance.

The last city of Nepal that I visited was Bhatgaon. It lies on an elevation at fifteen kilometers from Kathmandu. Its founding goes back to the ninth century A.D. It used to be the capital of one of the three kingdoms which were Nepal. Its temples and palaces can be considered with those in Patan as the most remarkable of the area.

Only a third of the population is Buddhist in Bhatgaon. The larger part being Hindu, the main monuments are dedicated to Brahmanist deities.



Fig. 24 *Nepalese deity in bronze.* Drawing by P. Sellier from the collection of Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

Before the conquest of Nepal by the Gurkhas, the king of Bhatgaon was more important than those of Kathmandu or Patan. Since the city surrendered at once when besieged by the Gurkhas, its monuments were spared and therefore are much better preserved than those of the two other cities. The city is still flourishing.

I have not found ancient monuments in Bhatgaon. The materials - brick and wood - with which they are built, prevents them from becoming such. I do not think the oldest one is more than two to three centuries old.

The most important temples of Bhatgaon are found together in a big square, one side of which is totally occupied by the royal palace. We give a general view of the square in one of the illustrations done from one of our photographs (see p. 49). At the center can be seen a one-storey temple whose wood carvings covered with ivory are quite beautifully done.

At the left of the reproduction one can see,

half hidden by a modern construction, a stone temple, enlarged in another illustration (see p. 56). Its lines are very graceful. It has been built, like the wooden and brick temples, on a series of superimposed recessing platforms. One has access to it by a staircase lined with stone monsters. The stone columns of this monument are exact copies of wood columns of the other temples. But there stops the analogy; the temple itself has no resemblance whatsoever with the brick temples with superimposed roofs. It has the shape of a pyramid with rounded sides, a form that can be seen in temples of northern India. The similarity with these latter ones is only in the general aspect, as I have just explained.

We should point out, incidently, that at the time of Megasthen's embassy, i.e. third century B.C., Hindu palaces were built in bricks and wood; stone monuments were very rare. Nepal is in the transitional stage that the rest of India passed through a little while before our era. The

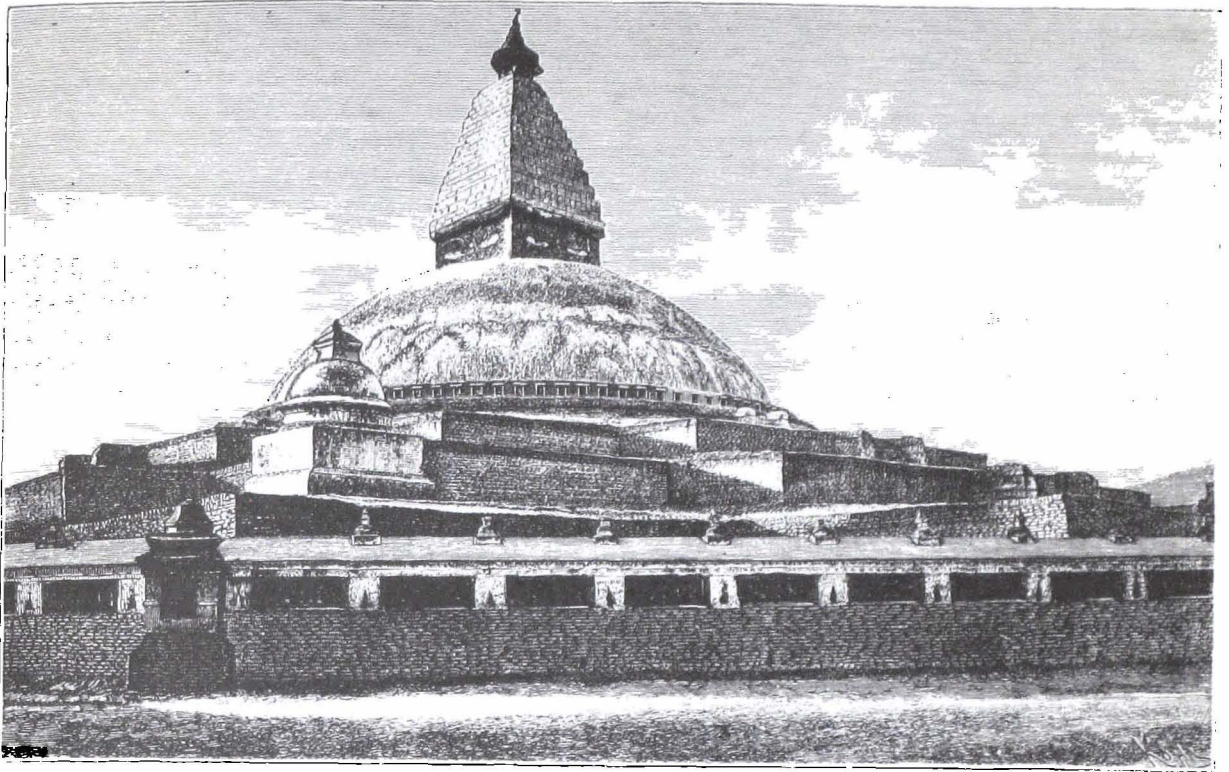


Fig. 25 *Big temple of Buddnath.* Etching by Kohl from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

scrupulous care with which the temple stone columns are copied from wooden columns seems to confirm the general opinion that the first stone monuments of India were copies of older constructions built out of wood.

Among the important monuments of Bhatgaon there is a large five-storeyed temple in brick and wood, represented on p. 63 and drawn from one of our photographs. It is, at least in its dimensions, the most important one in Bhatgaon. It is not more than two hundred years old. It was erected by a king who lived at the end of the 17th century.

Like all temples of the third category we have mentioned, it rests on a rectangular base, made of a series of platforms, recessing one upon

another. On one side of the temple there is a stone staircase; its sides are adorned at the platform level with stone statues, representing monsters, human beings and deities.

On the left of the general view a part of the royal palace can be seen. A larger part can be seen on p. 53 from another photograph. This palace is entirely built in red brick. Doors and windows are framed with marvelous wood carvings. One enters the building through a bronze door, called the Golden Gate (see p. 46). This palace had been built at the end of the 17th century by a Rajah to whom we also owe the main temple of Bhatgaon. The stone monolith which stands in front of the main palace door was erected by the son of this prince.



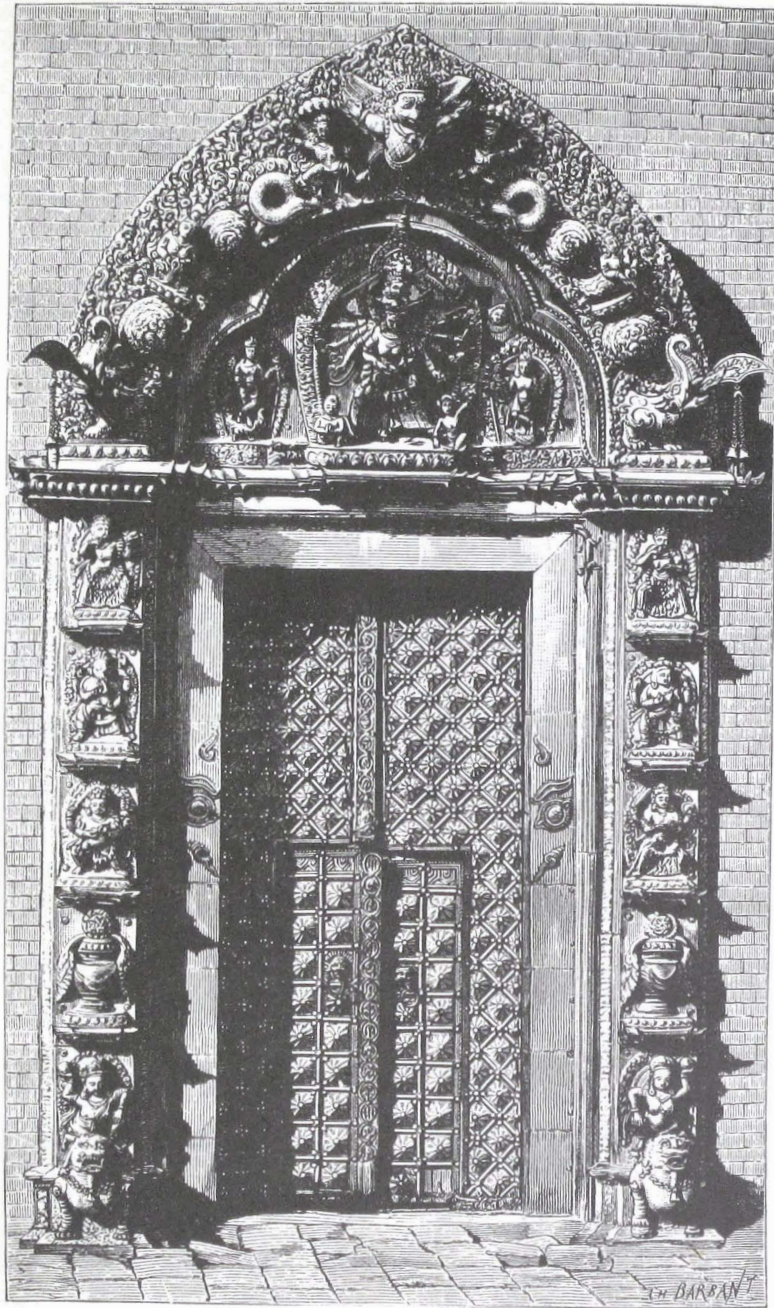


Fig. 26 *The golden door of the King's palace in Bhatgaon.* Etching by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

CHAPTER

XII

The religions of Nepal - Importance of the study of Buddhism in Nepal to understand the mechanism of the disappearance of this religion in India - Wrong concepts of the Europeans on Buddhism - Its alleged atheism - Lights shed by the study of various monuments of India on the causes of this disappearance - Results of the author's research - Nepal representing India around the 17th century of our era - Merging of Buddhism and Brahmanism in Nepal - The Buddhist trinity - Future of Buddhism in Nepal.

The first object of my visiting to Nepal was to study its architecture. The second one was to try to solve a problem which long confounded historians and to which I had started finding an explanation by studying and comparing various monuments of India. I would now like to discuss the causes of the disappearance of Buddhism in India. I consider the solution to this interesting problem as one of the most important results of my journey.

It is well known that, after spreading from India to the rest of Asia, after invading China, Russian Tartary, Burma, etc., Buddhism which has become today the religion of five hundred million human beings (a third of mankind) had almost totally disappeared, around the seventh or eighth century A.D., from the country where it was born. It survives in India only on the two extreme borders of this vast empire: on the north in Nepal, and Ceylon in the south.

Hindu books remain silent as far as this disappearance is concerned. Up to now, in order to explain it, one had to resort to the hypothesis of violent persecutions. If one concedes that the tolerant character of the Hindus is compatible with the idea of religious persecutions, and that persecutions can destroy a religion instead of making its propagation easier, according to whatever is learnt through history; if, I say, one concedes these unlikely hypotheses one would still be confronted with a difficulty: why, in a country divided like India was, into numerous little

kingdoms, all princes would suddenly renounce a religion practised by their forefathers for centuries and would force their subjects to follow another one?

I started to have an inkling of the cause of the disappearance, or rather of the transformation, of Buddhism as soon as I started studying the ancient monuments of India. I clearly understood its mechanism when I visited Nepal and recognized how wrong the proposed explanations have been up to now. After having studied carefully most of the important monuments of India, I came to the following conclusion: Buddhism simply disappeared because it gradually melted into the religion from which it had been born.

This transformation was very slow, but in a country where there is no history, when there are lapses of time lasting five to six centuries about which we know nothing, there is no way to link the extreme ends of phases which become suddenly apparent to us. Confronted with them, we are like the old geologists who, considering the various transformations undergone by various layers of the globe and its inhabitants, and not seeing the intermediary periods of this transformation, assumed the transformations were due to violent cataclysms. More advanced knowledge proved to them that these gigantic transformations were provoked by a series of imperceptible evolutions which produced gigantic transformations.

The monuments of India tell us clearly, when one examines with some care the bas-reliefs

and the statues they contain, the history of the transformation of Buddhism. They show us how the founder of Buddhism, who disdained all gods, became a god himself and ended up after not being represented in any temple, by being represented in all sanctuaries. They show us how he gradually got mixed with ancient Brahmanist deities, and how, after having dominated that crowd, he ended up being blended slowly in it up to the point of becoming only a secondary deity. Finally he was absorbed into their number.

It is not in books, but indeed in the monuments, that one has to study what Buddhism was in by-gone days. What monuments tell us is quite different from what books teach us. Monuments prove to us that this religion, which modern scholars wanted to make an atheist cult, was on the contrary the most polytheist of all cults.

Without any doubt, in the first Buddhist monuments, eighteen to twenty centuries old, such as the balustrades in Bharhut, Sanchi, Buddha Gaya, etc., the Reformer is represented only in a symbolic way. One worships his footprint, the image of the tree under which he reached supreme wisdom, but soon we see the Buddha becoming god and represented in all sanctuaries. First he is alone, or almost alone, like in the oldest temple in Ajunta. Then gradually he mingles with Brahmanist gods: Indra, Kali, Sarasvati, etc., as can be seen in the Buddhist temples of the series of monuments in Ellora. Lost in the crowd of gods he once dominated, he ended up after a few centuries by being considered as nothing but an incarnation of Visnu. That day, Buddhism was dead in India.

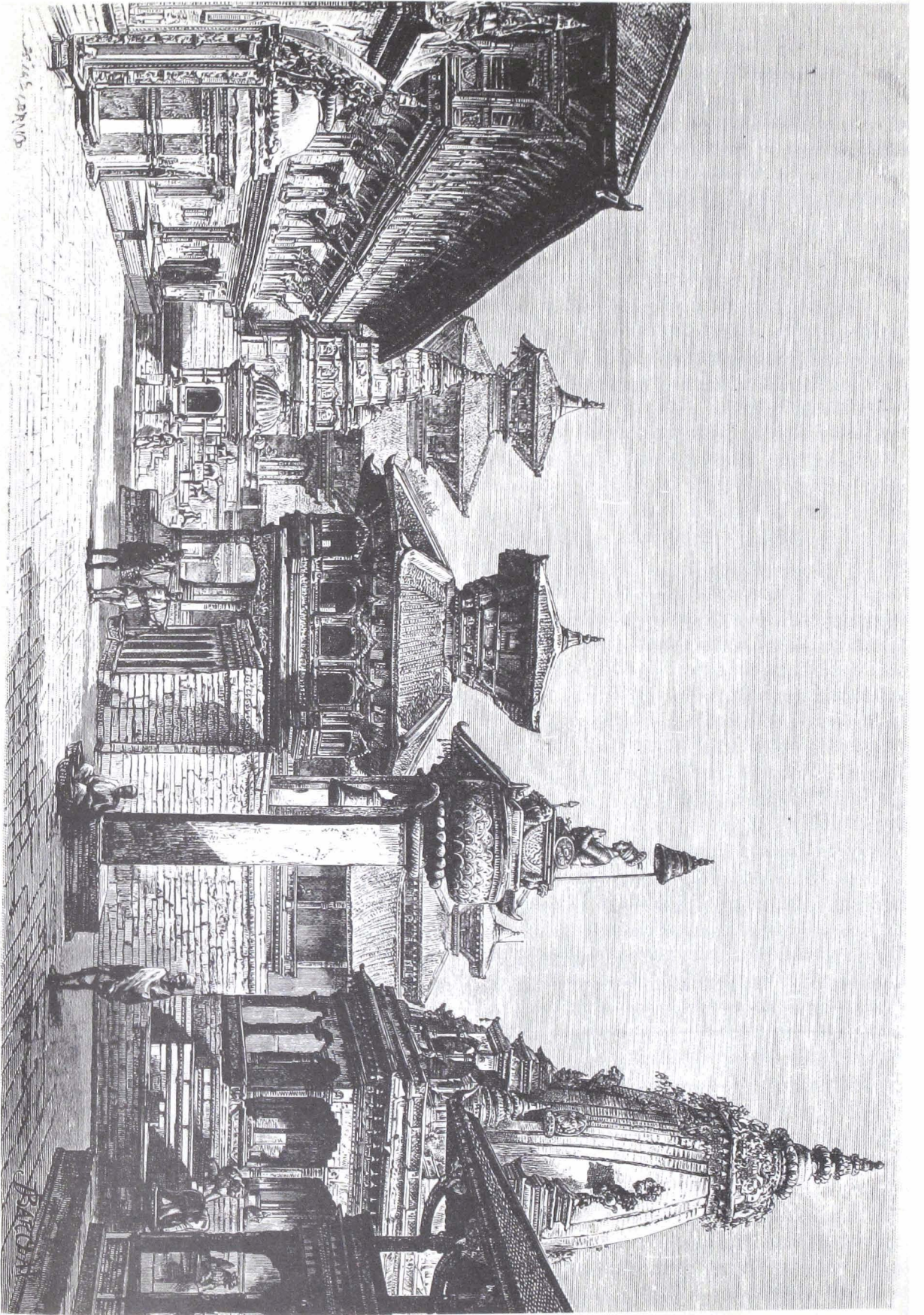
The disappearance, or rather the transformation, which has just been indicated in a few lines took a thousand years to be accomplished. The numerous monuments which recall its history were erected from the third century before Christ up to the 7th of our era. During this long period, Buddha never ceased to be worshipped as an almighty god by his followers. Legends show him appearing to his disciples and granting them favours. Because of a long initiation one of the most learned men in Buddhism in India, the pilgrim Hiouen-Thsang, who visited the peninsula in the seventh century A.D., tells that he saw Buddha appearing before him in a sacred cave.

Legend and monuments are therefore

perfectly obvious, and if the study of Buddhism had first started with them, one would definitely have an idea of this religion other than the one prevailing now. Unfortunately the study of the monuments of India has been totally neglected up to now by European scholars. The Indianists who made us discover Buddhism had never visited India. They had studied this religion only in books, and an unfortunate chance made them come across books written by philosophical sects at least five or six centuries after the death of Buddha and totally different from the religion actually practised. The metaphysical speculations, which so much amazed the European by their depth, were nothing new at all. Since books of India are better known, they were found again in books of philosophical sects which developed during the Brahmanist period. Atheism, contempt for existence, a morality independent from religious beliefs, the world considered as a mere appearance, etc., are found again in the philosophical books called the Upanishads, two hundred and fifty of which are known, going back to all periods. One can find in these books the same doctrines as the ones written in Buddhist philosophical writings. They also teach the doctrine of Karma, the fundamental basis of Buddhism as well as of all religious sects of India, the doctrine according to which the deeds accomplished in this life determine the condition of man in his future lives. This is also the basis of Manu's code. The ultimate end or these rebirths is the absorption in the universal principle of things, the Brahma of Manu, quite closely related to the Buddhist Nirvana. The soul is then - and only then - relieved from rebirths.

To reach this final stage of absorption, Buddhist and Brahmanist equally teach the suppression of desire, the renunciation of worldly goods, and the life of contemplation of a hermit.

The philosophical theories of the Buddhist age were therefore the same as those of the preceding Brahmanist age. Those theories were developed parallel with the religion taught by priests and practised by crowds, but essentially different. To consider these doctrines as Buddhism itself is to commit an error as large as to confuse the theories of the Upanishads with Brahmanist ones. Buddhism became known in Europe first only through the philosophical speculations of



some of its disciples; naturally these speculations were considered as Buddhism itself. It would not be difficult to imagine however that one does not find a religion with 500 million followers with cold philosophical speculations alone. Nevertheless such errors can be excused among scholars who, having spent their time studying books, had no time to study men. In two or three thousand years when the center of civilization will move elsewhere, when our books and our languages will be forgotten, then there will probably be some professor who, having discovered the English language and translated the first books he has found such as *First Principles* by Spencer or *Origin of Species* by Darwin, will present them as the explanation of doctrines professed by Christians in the 19th century. To suppose that Hindus might have practised a religion without deities is an assumption of people who never bothered to observe the Hindus. No God for a Hindu! But the world is full of them according to him. He prays to the tiger devouring his cattle, to the railroad built by a European, and if need be to the European himself. You can make him, if you so wished, learn by heart this catechism of southern Buddhists, recently written with the help of Europeans, which teaches that the world has no creator, that everything is but illusion; but this will not prevent him from feeling the need to worship the great Buddha and all the gods of the Pantheon where he reigns. The most ancient of Buddhist books, the *Lalita Vistara*, eighteen hundred years old and therefore about five centuries prior to Buddha, contains a certain amount of essays on illusions and of vanity of worldly belongings. But to whom does the Buddha teach these truths? To the gods first, to those innumerable gods about whom it is written in each page of the book and who, with Brahma leading, preside at the birth of the reformer destined to become a god in his turn, go with him everywhere and end up by worshipping him. Of course contradictions abound on each page of the book, but for the Hindu these contradictions do not exist. His thought is moulded in a form completely different from ours. Our European logic does not exist for him. There is not one of his books, from the ancient epics of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to the philosophical works mentioned above, which is not full of these

prodigious contradictions. Logic does not lack all the time, but it is a totally feminine logic. Pressed to its extremes in its deductions some times, it never bothers about contradictions.

To understand Buddhism one has to put aside the philosophical speculations which are superimposed without consideration of the gods. The religions of India cannot do without gods. Buddha did not try to shake the Brahmanist Pantheon; nor did he try, contrary to the error so many times repeated, to touch the caste system. No reformer would have ever been mighty enough to shake this conerstone of the social constitution of India.

What Buddha brought to the old Asian world was a spirit of charity which has not been surpassed. Never was a purer morality taught to mankind. A reknowned scholar, Max Mueller, proclaims it loudly, as more than one missionary before him had done. "The purest morality which had been taught to mankind before the advent of Christianity (this is a Christian speaking) was taught by men for whom gods were useless shadows, by men who did not raise altars, not even to unknown gods."

The assertion is of course not exactly true as far as gods and temples are concerned, since India is covered with their ruins. It is true, on the contrary, regarding morality. No religion had sweeter words for all creatures, or deeper compassion for the human condition. It tried to find methods to withdraw men from their harsh fate, and men came to it. This king's son, who became a beggar to share the misery of the masses, and to teach them charity is one of the greatest bewitchers who ever reigned on earth. Wherever the religion that would bear his name was implanted, it conquered souls, and it did so specially by its kindness, charity and the abnegation of the missionaries who were teaching it. It softened the customs of Asia and turned bloody barbarians into peaceful men. These fierce Moghols who used to pile up pyramids of human heads have become, under its influence, cultured and learned. One could say about Buddhism that it is the highest religion ever known by the world, if it were not, at the same time, the one which best submitted mankind to servitude.

It is easy now to realize that Buddhism is

nothing but a simple evolution of Brahmanism since it kept all the gods and just changed the morality. Undoubtedly, it is only after a few centuries that it differentiated itself a bit more clearly from the old cult, and most probably it was not even considered a new cult for a long time. Nothing shows that Asoka ever thought himself preaching a new religion. Buddha is hardly mentioned once or twice in the many religious edicts with which this emperor covered India, and of which a great number still remain. He recommends the greatest tolerance for all religious sects; Buddhism to him must have been then just a recommendable sect, especially because of the charitable spirit of the well known king's son who preached it.

Buddhism simply disappeared, as said above, and as will be proved below, by gradual absorption into ancient Brahmanism, but not without deeply changing the religion from which it had been born. In areas other than India where it was established, such as Cambodia, Burma, etc., the Brahmanist Pantheon went along with it as well. But this Pantheon never occupied a major place, there were no Brahmins interested in giving back its supremacy, and Buddha always preserved the importance he lost in India. It was discussed at length whether the well known monuments of Angkor were Buddhist or Brahmanist, because of the mixture of Buddhist and Sivaite emblems that can be seen there. These discussions would certainly not have happened had the scholars who studied the monuments of Cambodia, studied first those of India and especially, Nepal. They would have found there the same mixture of the two cults. They would have also found it in a neighbouring area, Burma. Mr. Wheeler, former British civil servant in that area, remarks that the Burmese, Buddhist as one knows, worship also Vedic gods, notably Indra and Brahma, and that the king of Burma has some Brahmans at his court. He also remarks that the Moghul Khans of Asia, in the neighbourhood of the Altai Mount, also worship Vedic gods.

From what has already been said, one can clearly see that the deep gap which formerly was supposed to exist between Buddhism and Brahmanism, even though Buddhism was only known through books, has never existed. It is only the preconceived idea of this separation which

kept us from seeing the mechanism of the disappearance of Buddhism which I described. One of the most piercing European observers who ever lived in India, Hodgson, citing some Sivaite images that can be seen in Buddhist temples of India, gives himself a great deal of trouble trying to explain their presence. One could not admit even a moment of fusion between two cults so deeply set apart from each other, according to him, as the sky is from the earth. Hodgson was, moreover, a British envoy to Nepal, and he could have just cast an eye around him to see up to what point Buddhist and Brahmanist gods were confused in the temples of the area in which he was living. But at that time the two religions were considered so distinct from each other, that the idea of their having something in common could not occur.

This example of preconceived doctrine masking the evidence is even more curious since this approach is precisely explained in a book "On the extreme resemblance that prevails between many of the symbols of Buddhism and Sivaism" where the author shows through many examples how learned Hindus themselves confuse the Brahmanist and Buddhist images in the ancient temples. The reason for this confusion is easy to understand if one goes back to what I previously said about the confusion established between Buddhism and Brahmanism.

In order to justify completely the theory expounded above to explain the mechanism of transformation and then the disappearance of Buddhism in India, one should be able to go back to about the 7th century of our era, or find a country in a stage corresponding to the one India went through at that time. Now Nepal, one of the cradles of Buddhism, happens to be the area where Buddhism resisted most effectively the causes of the transformation that threatened the religion wherever it was confronted with ancient Brahmanism. This country is precisely now going through the phase where Buddhism has already mixed with Brahmanism but has not yet merged with it. The Hindu and Buddhist gods are so mixed in the temples of Nepal that it is often difficult to say to which cult a temple belongs. That is moreover what was acknowledged, without being explained, by the British scholars who studied Nepal. The fact which seemed so unaccountable,

when not enlightened by the study of the ancient monuments of India, is, on the contrary, very easy to conceive when the latter have been carefully examined. One can see then, as stated above, that the same confusion of deities happened everywhere, at a certain time, and one understands then easily how ancient temples can be attributed, even by Hindu scholars, sometimes, to one cult and sometimes to another.

The same explanation makes us understand the fact, so strange at first sight, and frequently observed in India, of Buddhist, Jain or Brahmanist temples built side by side during the same periods. If one goes back to the phase when the two cults, already well mixed, were close to being confused, one easily understands that a king would bestow his generosity upon them with as much impartiality as a king in the Middle Ages would have toward churches devoted to various saints.

There is only one account left of a traveller in India at the mentioned time, the one of the Chinese pilgrim Hiouen Tshang, and there we can precisely see a Hindu sovereign sharing equally his generosity in a festival between the main cults, giving presents on the first day to the followers of Buddhism, and on the second day to those of Brahmanism. One was then already in that phase where these various cults were very conciliable, a phase which preceded the merger.

The study of the current religion of Nepal easily shows how this fusion occurred.

The time when Buddhism was introduced to Nepal goes far back. According to tradition, Buddha himself went there. In any case, it is in the monasteries of Nepal that the oldest manuscripts on the Buddhist religion were discovered. According to the same tradition, Asoka, king of Moghada, who ruled during the 3rd century B.C., made a pilgrimage to Nepal to visit the temples of Sambunath, Pashpa-ti, etc., which we have already mentioned. He would be, according to the same tradition, the founder of the city of Patan, of which the Newari name is Lalita Patan, corruption of Pataliputra, Asoka's capital in India. Several temples in the shape of tumulus are attributed to him since immemorial times.

Nepal was therefore one of the cradles of Buddhism and this religion is supposed to have

ruled there for more than two thousand years. If the isolation of this region of India preserved Buddhism from the disappearance observed in the rest of the peninsula, it did not keep it from suffering (the same causes producing always the same effects) the same transformation which made it disappear elsewhere. Because of the circumstances found in Nepal, the process of disappearance was slow, and it is, thanks to this slowness, that we can observe now what Buddhism was in India around the 7th or 8th century of our era, when its ancient monastic institutions had disappeared, when the priestly functions had become hereditary again, and when ancient deities had recovered their domination.

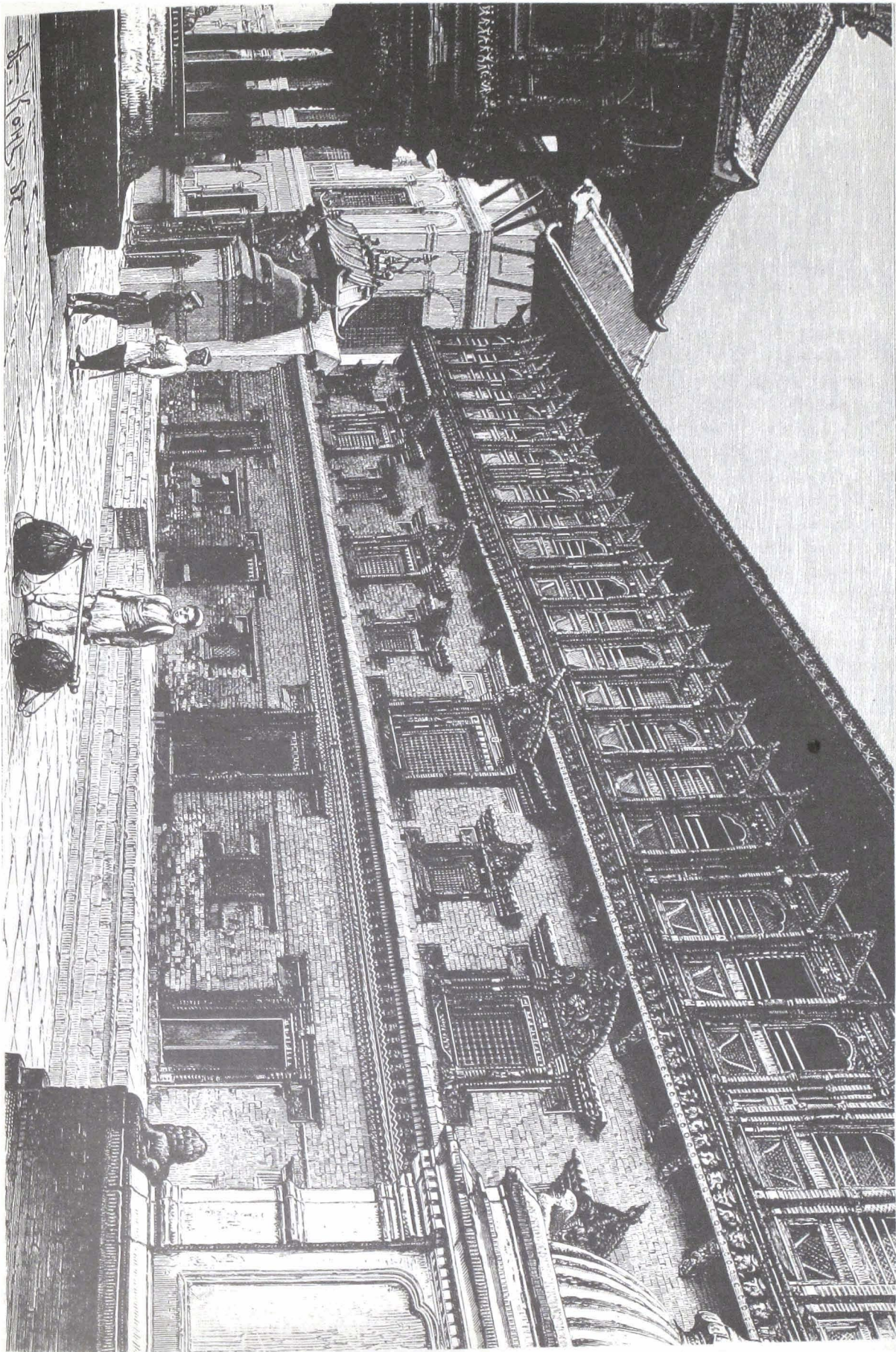
Buddhism and Brahmanism today in Nepal, as in the India of the 7th century, form two religions distinct in name; but they have for each other that tolerance, which after the above facts, must have existed in the rest of India before the phase of disappearance of Buddhism. This tolerance, which sufficiently explains the similarity between the two beliefs, goes so far that followers of both cults, as we shall see, have a certain number of temples, deities and festivals in common.

Instead of considering, along with certain philosophical Buddhist sects, the world as merely an everlasting substance gifted with creative qualities, and forming the only deity of the universe, the Buddhism of Nepal offers to its devotees a supreme trinity consisting of:

- 1) The Adi-Buddha, the principal figure, who represents mind.
- 2) Dharma, representing matter.
- 3) Sangha, representing the visible world produced by the union of mind and matter.

This trinity, already mentioned in edict of Bhabra by the king Asoka - which proves it was worshipped by Buddhists in the third century B.C. - is very close to the Brahmanist trinity (Brahma, Visnu, and Siva). It has as a symbol a triangle with a dot in the center. This center is the emblem of the Adi-Buddha, considered, definitively as the first cause.

Below this superior trinity are the gods of the ancient Brahmanist Pantheon: Visnu, Siva, Ganesa, Laksmi, etc. Simple emanations of the



H. K. S. R.

supreme power, they are created by it to govern the world. Although lowered from the superior rank they possessed in the Brahmanist religion; they still hold an important rank, important enough to have the right to the worship of all mortals.

The theories of the Buddhists of Nepal on the human soul do not differ appreciably from the ancient Brahmanist theories. The soul is considered, as well in fact as that of each animal, as an emanation of the Adi-Buddha, and after many transmigrations, it has to go back to the womb of the supreme being it came from. The deliverance from this long series of transmigration through absorption in the womb of the Adi-Buddha is the supreme goal offered as reward to all followers. The number and nature of these transmigrations depend totally on behaviour during life, the acts of human beings inevitably deciding their future destiny.

As far as the founder of Buddhism himself is concerned, he would be like all other Buddhas who are supposed to have come before him, a holy person sanctified by previous long existence and to the point of reaching the supreme absorption.

The most important temples of Nepal, especially the one in Sambunath, are dedicated to the Adi-Buddha. In all of these temples, the Buddhist trinity (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha) is represented in seated statues, crossed-legged on a lotus leaf. Buddha has two arms; Dharma and Sangha generally have four. Of this trinity Dharma alone, goddess of matter, is represented in a feminine aspect.

After the Buddhist trinity, the most favourite objects of worship are the images of the founder of Buddhism and those of his predecessors, divine or mortal. Then come the gods of the Hindu Pantheon: Mahenkal (avatar of Siva), Kali (Siva's spouse), Indra (god of heaven), Garuda (god with a bird's head, king of the birds), Ganesa (elephant-headed god, divinity of wisdom), etc. The latter is one of the most venerated; his image is at the entrance of all temples and it is after the worship of this purely Brahmanist deity that all Buddhist ceremonies start.

On all temple sculptures, one can see a thunderbolt represented, which Buddha is sup-

posed to have snatched from the god of heaven, Indra. This emblem is often represented in bronze. We have printed in this work one of the most remarkable ones of Nepal, the one in front of the Adi-Buddha's temple in Sambunath.

The Hindu linga has also been adopted by the Buddhists of Nepal, but after totally changing its meaning. Instead of considering it as the symbol of Siva's male creative power, it is regarded as the emblem of the lotus in which the Adi-Buddha revealed himself in the shape of a flame to the Buddhists. Its shape has also been modified. Four images of Buddha have been carved on its sides and its top is adorned like Buddhist caityas.

From what has been said, one can see how much the Buddhism of Nepal is mixed with Brahmanism. The people's religion, supposedly Brahmanist, is also mixed with Buddhist influences. Buddha is frequently represented in temples dedicated to Siva, and several temples holding deities common to both religions are equally visited by followers of the two cults.

This fusion of the two religions observed in temples is found again in the legends which abound in the Nepalese literature, and in the religious festivals. About some of these, it is really impossible to say whether they are Buddhist or Brahmanist. Pilgrims go nevertheless with the same trust to the temples of both religions.

Such is now the Buddhism of Nepal; and one can easily foresee from the aforesaid, that it will be melted into Brahmanism within two to three centuries. The future traveller who might not know the evolutionary phase this country is going through, could attribute the disappearance to violent causes, as is done by modern writers of Buddhism in India. The ruins of temples with which Nepal will then be covered, would also be used to demonstrate how violent the supposed persecution was.

But, if the traveller I imagine does not restrict himself to the study of only one region of India and has the patience to go through the various areas of the huge peninsula, the idea of evolution would have penetrated his mind too deeply for him to be tempted to commit such an error. On this point of view, the study of India has more value than all historical books put

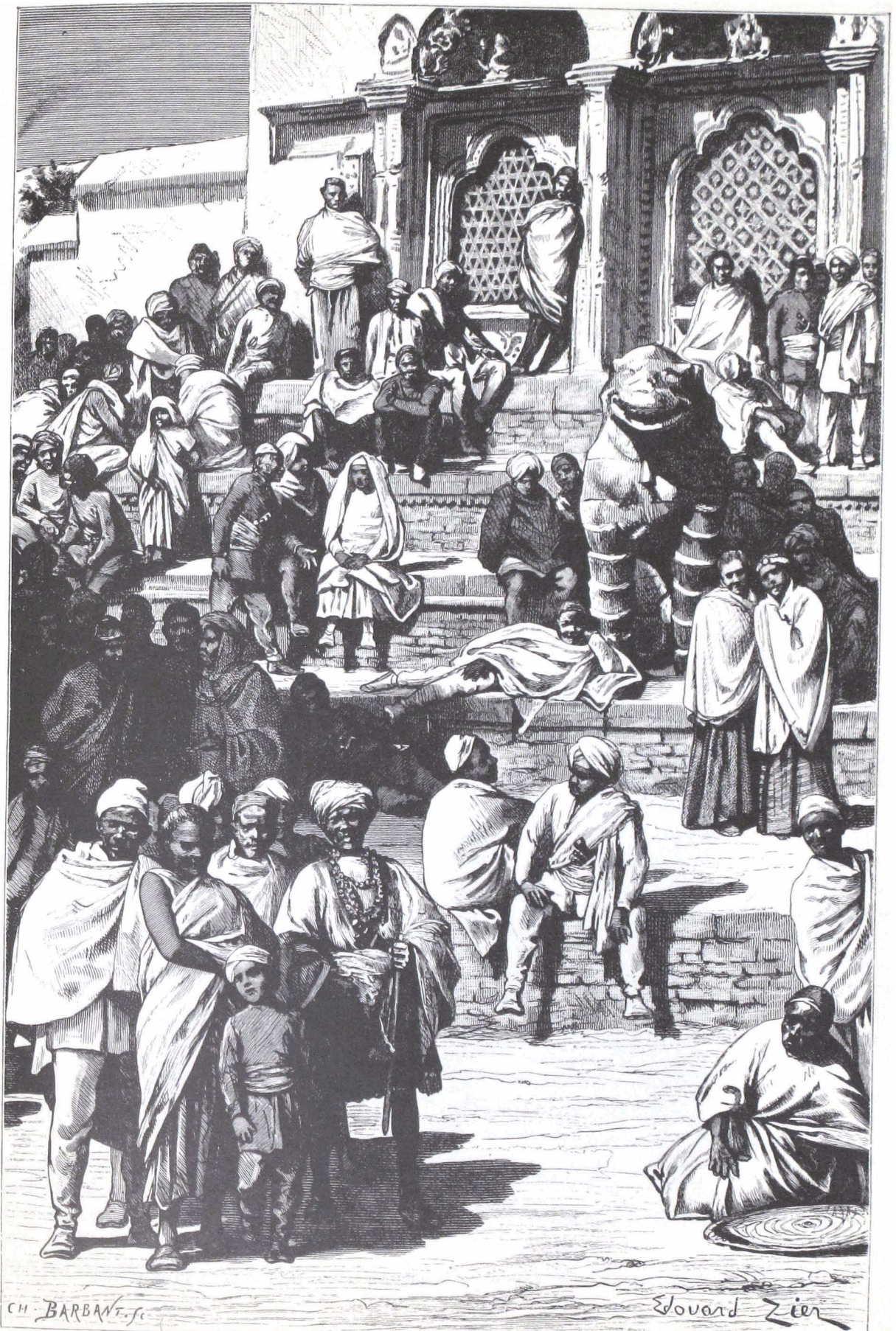


Fig. 29 Nepalese types. Drawing by Zier from photographs.

together. It is the only country in the world, where by just moving around, one can see again the whole series of the successive forms which humanity went through from pre-historic ages up to modern times. This live study quickly shows

the observer the preceding transformations suffered by institutions and beliefs, whereas books show us most often nothing but their extreme phases.

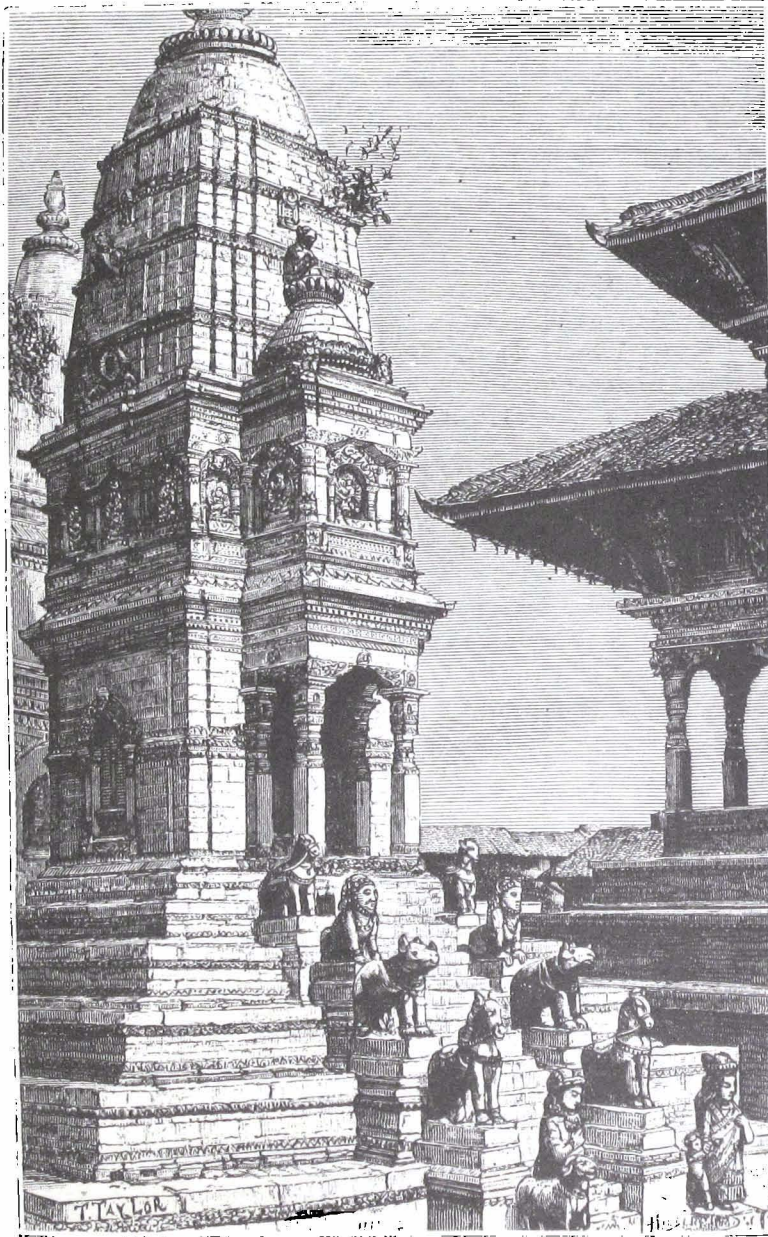


Fig. 30 *Bhatgaon: stone temple.* Drawing by Taylor from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.

CHAPTER

XIII

Literature of Nepal - Its importance - It is through its study that the knowledge of Buddhism in Europe has come - Extracts from various Sanskrit works published in Nepal - Buddhist hymns - Meditations of the Buddha under the wisdom tree.

The literature of Nepal is certainly one of the most important of all literatures of Asia. It is from manuscripts found in the ancient monasteries of this area that the first precise information on Buddhism have been drawn. Before this, in Europe we had the most incomplete information on the religion followed by the majority of mankind.

It was Mr. Brian Hodgson, British envoy to the court of Nepal, who discovered, in 1821, some of the many Buddhist manuscripts existing in Nepal and sent them to Calcutta and Europe. Burnouf then spent a few years translating one of the most important, *The Lotus and the Good Law*. Some others were then published, notably the *Lalita Vistara*, legendary life of Buddha, the best version of which is due to Babu Rajendralala Mitra. It is generally admitted that this work was written in Nepal by a Buddhist monk around the first century A.D. It would therefore be the most ancient Buddhist work reaching us. The number of Nepalese manuscripts translated up to now is very limited. The reader interested in this subject will find much information, quite complete, in the Sanskrit literature of Nepal, in a work by the Hindu scholar mentioned above (*The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*); published in Calcutta in 1882.

It is not in such a short travel account that I can pretend to make known a literature that is in hundreds of volumes, of which the main part is still manuscript. To give just an idea of its importance, I will present a translation of two hymns and a peculiar philosophical essay.

I borrow the first from manuscripts published by Mr. Hodgson. The essay that follows is an extract from the *Lalita Vistara*. I did the translation from a version given by Rajendralala Mitra in his book on Buddha Gaya. I tried to render as much as possible, in the translation of the hymns, the characteristics of biblical majesty which distinguish these literary compositions.

Hymn to the Adi-Buddha

1. In the beginning there was nothing; everything was empty and the five elements did not exist. Then, Adi-Buddha, the immaculate one, revealed himself in the form of a flame or of light.
2. He, in whom are the three Gunas, who is the Mahamurti and the Visvarupa (form of everything) manifested himself: he is the great Buddha self-existing, the Adinatha, the Mahesvara.
3. All beings enclosed in the three worlds have their cause in him, and it is also he who makes them exist. By him and through his deep meditation did the universe arise.
4. He is self-existing, he is the Isivira, the compound of all perfections, the infinite, that has neither members nor passions. Everything is his image and yet he has no image; he is the form of all things and yet he has no form.
5. He cannot be divided; he has no visible face; he is the source of his own

might; grief cannot reach him; he is everlasting in his nature, but he is not everlasting in his manifestations. I prostrate myself before him.

6. Adi-Buddha had no beginning. He is perfect, essentially pure; he is the essence of wisdom and of absolute truth. He fathoms the past and his words are unalterable.
7. Nobody resembles him. He is present everywhere. He is dreadful for the wicked as the devouring lion is for the shy deer.



11. The delight of Adi-Buddha consists in making happy all sentient beings; he loves tenderly those who serve him. His majesty fills hearts with awe and respect. He is the comforter of those who are tormented.
12. He has the ten virtues and gives them to those who honour him; he reigns upon the ten regions of heaven; he is the lord of the universe. He fills up with his presence the whole extent of the skies.



15. He is the creator of all Buddhas and Bodhisatvas he cherishes. With the help of Prajna, he created the world. He himself did not have a creator. He is author of virtue. He makes everything go back to nothingness.



Hymn to Adi-Prajna, or Dharma

1. I bow before Prajna Paramita, the supreme wisdom. It is that, which by its omniscience, makes only the Sravakas, those ascetics thirsty of eternal peace, who finally have their

beings absorbed in the womb of divine essence. That, which by knowledge of all paths open to human activity, directs each person in the path that suits his/her genius best. From that, the wisemen say, come all interior and exterior diversities of animated nature. It is the mother of Buddha, to whose service all the Sravakas and all the Bodhisatvas are devoted.



3. I bow to Prajna, the universal mother.
4. O, Prajna, thou resemblest Akasa, immaterial and impenetrable. Thou art above all human desire; thou art established through thine own power.
5. O, thou, almighty object of my worship. Thou, Prajna, thou art the compound of all good qualities and the Buddha is the guide of the world. The wisemen do not make difference between thou and the Buddha.
6. O, thou who hast at thy mercy thy servants, the men of goodwill, knowing that thou art the source of all excellence, reach in worshipping thou the perfect bliss.



8. The Buddha, gathering his disciples, teaches them how, despite thy unity, thou takest thousands of forms and names.
9. Thou comest from nowhere and goest towards no place, and nevertheless the wisemen do not find thee?



11. Which language will praise thee, thou who manifestest thyself only through thine own will. No purana reveals attributes through which thou canst be known with certainty.



13. O Prajna Devi. Thou art the mother of all Buddhas, grand-mother of Bodhisatvas and ancestor of all creatures. Thou art the great goddess.



Here is now a passage of the *Lalita Vistara* mentioned above.

Meditations of the Buddha under the Wisdom Tree:

“When he had triumphed over Mara, Prince of Demons, the Bodhisatva, at sunset, sank into meditation which lightens the mind, and he finished it when the first watch was over. He then undertook the meditation of ecstasy which he accomplished during the second watch. Then he entered the meditation that has no object, the simple but absolute concentration of the mind on itself. This one ended with the third watch. Finally, he started the meditation where neither pleasure nor pain is involved, and which is the perfect knowledge.

“Thus the Bodhisatva acquired perfect knowledge and then became a Buddha. These are the thoughts that were in the saint’s mind, at sunrise, just after the end of the fourth meditation?”

“Truly, did he think, it is painful that men are born, live and die, disappear and multiply. Yet they do not even realize that they are prey to an infinity of grief. Alas, they do not know that old age, disease and death are nothing but manifestations of a single infinity of suffering.”

And then he dreamt again:

“But from where do decrepitude and death come, what is their cause?”

“Decrepitude and death come from birth: birth is therefore their cause.

“But from where does birth come, and what is its cause?”

“Birth comes from the universe; the universe is therefore its cause.

“But from where does the universe come and what is its cause?”

“The universe comes from the elements:

the elements are therefore its cause.

“But from where do the elements come and what is their cause?”

“The elements come from desire: desire is therefore their cause.

“But from where does desire come and what is its cause?”

“Desire comes from sensation: sensation is therefore its cause.

“But from where does sensation come and what is its cause?”

“Sensation comes from contact: contact is therefore the cause of grief.

“But from where does contact come, and what is its cause?”

“Contact comes from the six organs of sense; therefore the six organs are its cause.

“But from where do the six organs come, and what are their causes?”

“The six organs come from the name and the form: name and form are therefore their causes.

“But from where came name and form, and what is their cause?”

“Name and form come from consciousness: consciousness is therefore the cause of name and form.

“But from where does consciousness come, and what is its cause?”

“Consciousness comes from concepts: concepts are therefore the cause of consciousness.

“But from where do concepts come, and what is their cause?”

“Concepts come from illusion: illusion is therefore their cause.

“Thus illusion is the cause of concepts; concepts the cause of consciousness; consciousness the cause of name and form; name and form the cause of the six organs; the six organs the cause of contact; contact the cause of sensation; sensation the cause of desire; desire the cause of the elements; the elements the cause of the earth; the earth the cause of birth; birth the cause of decrepitude, of death, of grief, of anxiety, of despair, of

anguish, of desire of being relieved and from there comes the totality - yes, really, the totality of this infinity of suffering.”

And the Buddha also thought:

“But through which circumstances can diseases and death be suppressed? What should be destroyed for disease and death to be destroyed?

“If there is no birth, there can be neither disease nor death. If birth is destroyed, disease and death will therefore be destroyed.

“But how can birth not take place? What should be destroyed for birth to be destroyed?

“If there is no world, there cannot be birth. If the world is destroyed, birth then will be destroyed.

“But how can intuitions not happen? What should be destroyed for intuitions to be destroyed?

“If there is lack of illusion, there cannot be intuition. By destruction of illusion, intuition will therefore be destroyed. By destruction of illusion, consciousness will

be destroyed. Thus by the annihilation of birth, disease, death, sorrow, anxiety, distress, empty hope and the source of disease will be destroyed; and thus, truly, will be destroyed the great infinity of suffering.

“Thus became evident to the Buddha the light of religion, unknown before, which spreads always by concentration of the mind which produces judgement, vision, science, understanding, memory and knowledge.

“Thus did I learn, oh religious men, what grief is, the vastness of grief and the means to make grief go away. I went through the misery of desire, the misery of existence, the misery of ignorance, and the misery of sight. I learned how all these miseries can be vanquished at last and how they disappear without leaving any trace. I also learned what illusion is, the vastness of illusion, how it can be destroyed and how it disappears without leaving any trace behind.”



CHAPTER

XIV

Departure from Nepal - Disagreeable incidents of the journey - Crossing the Himalayas on a dark night - Return to Motihari - Departure for new explorations among the monuments of India.

If it is hard to enter Nepal, it is not much easier to leave it. You have serious chances of being murdered while crossing the Himalayas if you do not have an escort, the kind colonel 'X' had said to me, in Motihari. "You can cheer up, he did add, by thinking that if you are murdered, this regrettable accident would provide, without any doubt, the British Government with an excellent excuse to try to annex Nepal."

Escort, I had none beside my porters, who seemed to me more inclined to attack than protect me, and the prospect of my disappearance from this world being avenged by the problematic annexation of Nepal seemed a meagre compensation; but, since I could not stay indefinitely in this country, I had to attempt to get out.

The dismal prospects forecast by my friend the colonel did not materialize, but it was only due to the fact that I used some bad will to let them happen. Hardly four kilometers away from Kathmandu, my porters, whom I had payed in advance, according to the colonel's advice, I still do not know why, scattered in all directions. It was only thanks to a brave Nepalese soldier who had to put together the authorities of a few villages to catch the fugitives, that I recovered my troop at night. The delay provoked by this little man hunt, made us arrive at the first Himalayan barrier in dark night. Though we had no more torches, I decided, despite the porters' refusal and the big difficulties of the operation, to attempt the crossing immediately. Between the risk of falling in a precipice and that of being attacked by a group of looters, the first one seemed yet less dangerous to me. I had first everybody pass in

front of me, to avoid any new escape. Since it was a matter of following paths simply made out of cuts, a few centimeters wide, along the sides of the mountains, I would have felt even in broad daylight, quite incapable of accomplishing such a task. I had recourse, not to the hammock I mentioned at the beginning of this work, but to a sort of apparatus entrusted to me by Dr. Gimlette and which reminds one by its look of the narrow "périssoires" of the Seine. There were moments when the périssoire rocked terrifyingly on the porters' shoulders and all the equilibrist skill of these mountaineers was needed to cross, in a pitch dark night, passages that would certainly in day time frighten our most experienced alpinists.

We took some rest in a little hut located on the summit of the first pass and the next day we walked the whole day, stopping only when strictly necessary to take a simple meal. At night we reached Bechiakok, in front of a miserable barn, which was the limit of the distance for which my wretched porters were hired. That was where other porters were supposed to take over, porters who would come from the British border. Would they be there? Would they not be there? I was asking myself those questions with a fearful worry.

They were not there, and the Nepalese porters were refusing, at any cost, to go further, a legitimate refusal nevertheless, since that was not part of the contract. I had sixty kilometers left to go, in a country deprived of roads, through jungles, forests, swamps, rivers full of all kinds of beasts and infested with fearful miasmas. The situation was rather critical and I anxiously

wondered how I could get out of it. Walking the way trusting the compass and swimming across rivers, carrying the strictly necessary supplies, was possible at a pinch; but to abandon my baggage for a few days that was to lose it for sure. Furthermore, in the baggage were all my notes, my instruments, and my photographs; the idea of losing the harvest of so much work seemed to me exasperating.

I spent the night thinking of a way to get out of this disastrous situation. It had to be decided quickly, since the food had almost reached its end and dry rice was the only food I could get in that wretched hamlet.

By asking about the area's possibilities I discovered that at some distance local people owning buffaloes and a cart could be found, but nobody was capable of driving. I immediately thought of buying two of these animals, a cart on which I would load my baggage and of trying to guide myself a recalcitry team. The matter being decided, I tried to go to sleep and at sunrise, I sent my servant to attempt the negotiation, although I could not really see how I could manage the buffaloes, those ugly beasts with a particular aversion for Europeans. The art of driving them had never been part of my education.

Happily it was written that I would get out of this difficult step as well. My messenger soon came back, happy to announce that he had discovered, at some distance, by the greatest chance, the porters sent from Motihari. With the stupidity inherent to the coolie class of India, they

were patiently waiting for me to guess their presence. The baggage was quickly loaded and the same evening after a quick walk of eighteen hours, our sixty kilometers were covered and we were again in Motihari on English soil.

I immediately left for Calcutta, where I was supposed to set out for a visit to the temples of the Orissa coast, then go towards south and central India. I left the country full of marvels of nature and art but I was soon to visit other marvels and to keep on exploring the world of temples and fantastic palaces, which seemed a splendid evocation of the *Thousand and One Nights*. Even today I cannot close my eyes without seeing, in the dark depths of pagodas, a whole crowd of gods, monsters, graceful goddesses, threatening or terrible. In the sparkling but cold lights of modern science, the gigantic epics of gods and heroes which take place in all these mysterious sanctuaries, become pale ghosts, and the world where they were born, a vain mirage. It is nevertheless from this world, so poetically strange, that our modern world is born. The ruthless hand of time, even more ruthless than the hand of men, destroys every day the remaining debris of monuments accumulated by centuries of beliefs. One has to hurry to study these traces of epochs which mankind has left behind forever. These traces of a forgotten world where contours are blurring and disappearing in the mist of ages, tell us again of the feelings and thoughts of races which civilized ours and talk to us in a language man will soon understand no more.



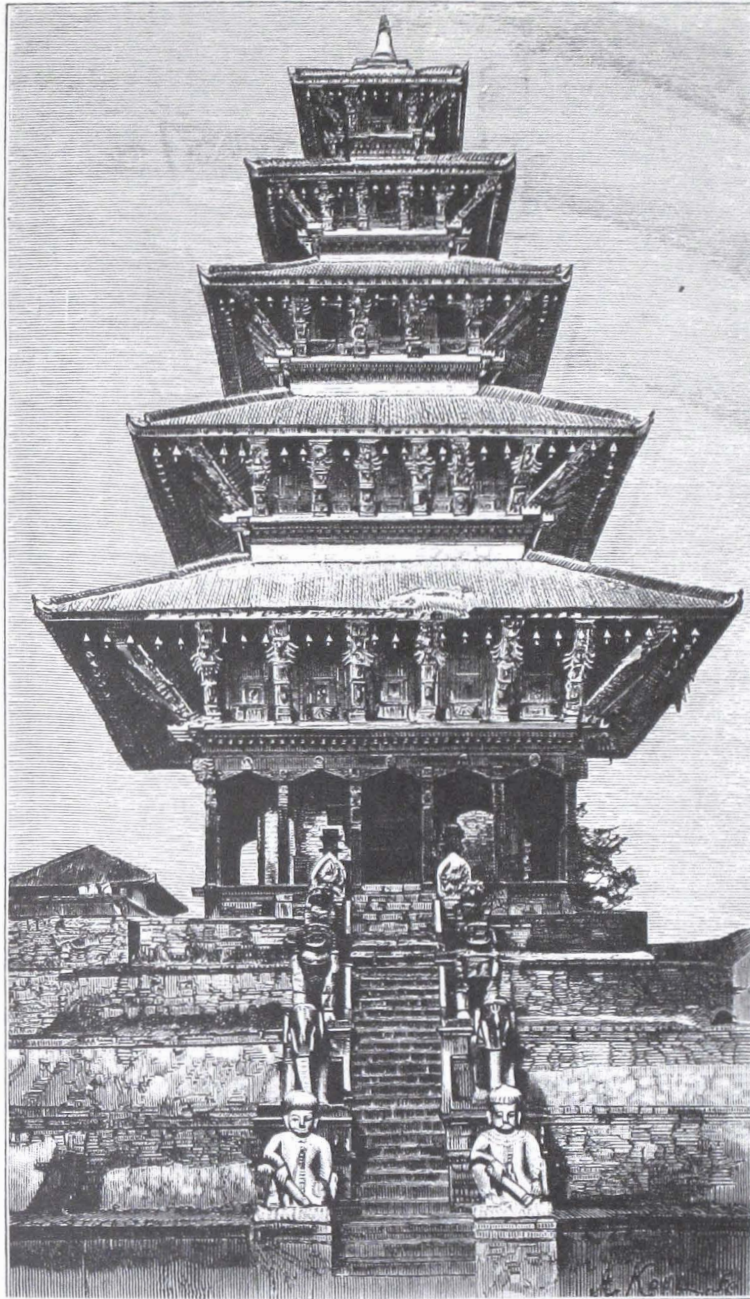


Fig. 31 *Five storeyed pagoda in Bhatgaon.* Etching by kohl from a photograph by Dr. Gustave Le Bon.



**THE INDO-TIBETAN
ARCHITECTURE OF NEPAL**

CHAPTER



HISTORICAL NOTIONS

Placed between India and Tibet and separated from the subcontinent by the gigantic spurs of the Himalaya, Nepal forms a great independent kingdom. Having always strictly forbidden entrance of foreigners to its territory, it lived in isolation for centuries. Because of this, the principal elements of its civilization, notably the arts and beliefs have remained in phases of evolution which India passed through more than ten centuries ago.

Because of these different elements, the study of Nepal is of prime interest. One has to go to Nepal to solve the most interesting problems related to the ancient civilization of India; to understand, for example, the history of the mysterious disappearance of Buddhism from the country of its birth; to see clearly how stone monuments could, at the time of Asoka, be substituted for wood and brick construction; to witness once more that architecture is much more the daughter of race than of beliefs.

To these elements of powerful interest one could add many more. The imagination of the most whimsical artist could not dream of images anywhere near those offered by some of the main cities of Nepal - especially Patan and Bhatgaon. The big polychrome temples covered with brightly colored statues and protected by monsters bizarrely shaped, the shining bronze covering the palaces, the marvellous sculptures of the buildings; all give the cities of this ancient empire the most fantastic look. It is not the barbaric China, and neither is it

civilized India; it is something semi-barbaric and semi-civilized, something never seen before: dream-cities one could not even guess existed and which are deeply striking because of the new sensations they evoke. If one adds to it the fact that these peculiar cities are surrounded by the giants of the Himalayas, alongside which the most savage mountains of Europe would look quite petty, one would then easily admit that solitary Nepal is maybe one of the strangest and probably the most picturesque region of the universe.¹ But what, archeologically speaking, is even more interesting, is the fact that among these wonderful buildings in brick and wood, one can find monuments in stone whose main parts, especially the columns, are exact copies of wood monuments. In the plates, I have shown, side by side, monuments having wooden columns and others having stone columns. Despite the striking complexity of the wood carving, the stone columns are so faithfully copied that the latter could be considered s molds of the first ones.

One can thus witness on the spot the mechanism of the transformation of wooden monuments into stone ones. The latter were nothing but the exact copies of the former. A European artist would most certainly be stopped by the difficulties of copying in stone a work done in wood. A Hindu artist will certainly not be stopped by that. The perforated stone windows of the most complicated designs so commonly found in the oldest temples of India, are proof of the

facility with which this work is done by people for whom time does not count and whose patience seems infinite. I did not find in Nepal the perforated stone windows, but there I found the wooden prototypes which formerly must have been used as patterns.

Before starting the study of the architecture of Nepal, I will first say a few words about its geography and history.

Nepal consists of a double row of mountains, 700 kms long, separated by wide valleys. This row in fact includes almost a third of the huge range of mountains which under the name Himalayas, separates, from the Indus to the Brahmaputra, India from the rest of Asia.

The location of Nepal has always rendered access to it very difficult and thus granted its independence. One can reach Nepal from India only after passing through a large swampy forest, the Terai, rife with deadly miasmas a great part of the year, then through a few mountain chains with extremely difficult mountain passes. From the Tibet side, the access is still more difficult. The entrance to Nepal is in any case strictly forbidden to Europeans, including the British, and few explorers ever succeeded in entering the country.²

All the main cities of Nepal, notably the present capital, Kathmandu, are gathered in a valley comparable to the base of a huge basin, the sides of which are formed by several rows of Himalayan mountains. It is called the valley of Nepal by the inhabitants. It is only 30 kilometers long and 20 wide. When you arrive there, after crossing the mountains surrounding the valley, you find yourself surrounded by a chain of snowy

summits visible from each spot of the valley. Among these summits Mount Everest or Gaurishankar can be seen, the giant of the Himalayas, whose height reaches almost 9000 meters, i.e. twice as high as Mount Blanc. Thanks to its minimal altitude, which does not exceed 1300 meters, the valley of Nepal enjoys an excellent climate. Its territory is very fertile and very well farmed. Besides the main towns, Kathmandu, Patan, Bhatgaon, there are many villages and the valley is thickly populated.

Nepal is one of the very few regions of India that was not invaded by the Muslims. It therefore always remained outside their influence. One has to examine Nepalese monuments carefully in order to find in them patterns borrowed from the Muslims.

The original population of Nepal seems to have been Tibetan; its present population is formed by a mixture of Hindus and Tibetans. The architecture of the country shows, at first sight, the existence of both elements.

The mythological history of Nepal starts with the heros of the Mahabharata, but its real history is as unknown to us as that of the rest of India. Before 1300 A.D., we do not know anything definite about Nepal, except the fact that Buddhism was introduced there around the first century A.D. After the sack of Chittor in 1306, the Rajputs fleeing the Muslim domination took refuge in the mountains of Nepal. They were followed there in 1326 by other Rajputs from the kingdoms of Oudh and Kanouje, also fleeing the Muslim conquest. This population of the Rajput race would be the origin of the race called Gurkha. After founding an independent kingdom, and thus living for a few centuries on good terms with their neighbours, the Gurkhas thought of conquering them. In 1765, the Gurkhas succeeded after fighting four years in seizing all Nepal, and in overthrowing the three kingdoms of which Bhatgaon, Patan and Kathmandu were the capitals. These three kingdoms were ruled, since the beginning of the 14th century, by dynasties descending from the same ancestor and belonging to a race called Newar, of Mongol origin, which still is the basis of the population. After seizing the three capitals, the Gurkhas overthrew suc-

1. The reader who examines the plates contained in this chapter will find, no doubt, the monuments represented are lower in quality than their description. Unfortunately, as I have said elsewhere for the Taj, there are monuments, which by their color, details, or environment, will never lend themselves conveniently to photography or drawing. In my history of the civilization of India, I had given a color plate of the king's palace square, in Patan, but I found its quality too far below the reality to reproduce it here.
2. One can find in *Le Tour du Monde*, from part 1318 onward, an illustrated account of my journey to Nepal. The reader should refer to it for anything concerning civilization, creeds, customs and habits of this region.

cessively the numerous small principalities, similar to our old feudal fiefs, which shared the country among themselves and which recognized the authority of the ruler of each kingdom. Today the whole of Nepal is united under the government of a sole ruler, and has only one capital, Kathmandu. The Gurkhas, who founded the current Kingdom of Nepal, form a much superior race by their

martial qualities, compared to the other inhabitants of the country; but they are far from having any agricultural or industrial aptitudes and certainly do not have the artistic dispositions of the race they conquered. Since they became masters, the major part of the country's monuments are not maintained, any more, and are falling into ruin.



CHAPTER

II

GENERAL FEATURES OF NEPALESE ARCHITECTURE

If, contrary to what observation proves, the moral level of people could be judged by the depth of their religious beliefs, and if the latter could be estimated by the number of temples, one could assume that the Nepalese are the most virtuous people on earth. Nowhere else in fact, can one see as many temples in such a small area. This very restricted area described above under the name of the valley of Nepal, has more than two thousand temples; Kathmandu and Patan each have six hundred, Bhatgaon two hundred and fifty. These temples are either dedicated to Buddhist or Brahmanist deities, or are built to commemorate an illustrious event or even to preserve the ashes of some important person.

The religious buildings of Nepal could be classified into three essentially different categories described below.

The first type, chronologically the oldest, consists of big hemispherical constructions built of mud and bricks, similar to the stupas of Central India, such as the one in Sanchi; but they are not surrounded, as is the latter, by a stone-sculptured balustrade. This balustrade is replaced by a small circular plinth going around the base of the monument. At each cardinal point there is a small sanctuary consisting of a recess containing sculptures. The hemisphere is topped by a square tower which is crowned by a pyramid or a cone. Around the temple are erected in varying numbers small religious buildings, sanctuaries, statues, etc.

This type of building is exclusively dedicated

to the Buddhist religion, but in Nepal Brahmanism and Buddhism are so mingled today that emblems of both religions can be seen indifferently in all temples irrespective of the religion to which they were consecrated. In Buddhist temples, the most commonly seen statues are those of Buddha, his previous incarnations, the Buddhist trinity (Buddha, Dharma, Sanga): but Brahmanist gods (Visnu, Ganesa, etc.) are also represented there.

It is by witnessing in Nepal how Buddhism gradually merged with Brahmanism, that we can understand how the same phenomenon must have happened around the 7th century A.D. in the rest of India.¹

The type of buildings we just described is the most ancient, but not the most common. The majority of Nepalese temples consists of brick and wooden buildings, built according to a very specific type, much more Tibetan or Chinese than Hindu. They consist of rectangular structures, each having their floors in recess, one upon the other, and each covered by an inclined roof. Each of these superimposed roofs is less broad than the one underneath, in a way that the whole construction is pyramidal. Each roof is slightly turned up at the corners, as in Chinese constructions, and adorned with countless little bells. The roof overhang is linked to the rest of the building by completely carved wooden struts. Each temple is

1. I explained in another work, *Les Civilisations de l'Inde*, using only the study of monuments, the process of the disappearance of Buddhism in India.

surrounded by a veranda supported by finely carved wooden pillars.

The whole structure is placed on a stone substructure, also consisting of a few storeys in recess one upon the other. On one side, there is a staircase leading to the temple. This staircase is lined on each side with statues representing monsters, deities or human beings.

The third type of the temples in Nepal consists of stone monuments, totally different, by their form, from the previous ones, and which represent a certain obvious originality. The Chinese influence here is almost nil, the Hindu influence noticeable but yet not enough to suppress their characteristic appearance. They are the only ones where one could sometimes observe weak traces of Muslim influence.

It is impossible, as one can see by our drawings, to link these temples to any well-defined type. Their only common characteristic is that they are built above several-storied stone substructures, the staircases of which are, as in the above-mentioned temples, lined with animals or persons.

The stone temples have, in their construction, nothing to remind one of the somehow barbaric look of the brick temples with superimposed roofs we described earlier. The one standing in front of the king's palace in Patan (see plate 378) could be counted among the most beautiful constructions of India. If taken to one of the European capitals, it would most probably be very much admired. Its stories in recess one upon the other - which seems to be a dominant principle of the architecture of Nepal - are adorned with pavillions giving the most graceful aspect to the whole. The Hindu architectural influence of Northern India can only be seen in the pyramid embellished with curvilinear facades. In fact, monuments of various parts of India offer many differences, but Nepal is almost the only area of the peninsula where one can see, in the same city, built at the same time, by populations having the same belief, buildings belonging to architectural types so different. One can understand this fact by remembering that the country is inhabited by a very heterogenous population, where two totally different elements prevail, the Hindu and the

Tibetan. These differences in architecture help to prove, once more, that differences of race, artistically speaking, have an influence much stronger than does similarity of belief.

Among the stone monuments of Nepal, one should also mention the big monolith columns which are surmounted by personages or animals, erected in front of temples and palaces. They certainly remind one of the commemorative columns Asoka erected around two hundred and fifty years before Christ. This custom of building columns is long since lost in India. Nepal alone has kept it along with other vestiges of the past.

It would be very difficult to decide exactly the age of various temples of Nepal. Generally speaking, one could say that there are some that are very ancient, belonging to the first centuries of our era; and some which are relatively new, subsequent to the 15th century. However the age of those which could be in between, if indeed there are any, a fact which seems doubtful to me, remains undetermined.

The most ancient of all Nepalese buildings are the big hemispherical brick stupas we mentioned previously. Since Buddhism was introduced to Nepal around the first century A.D., and since these monuments are analogous with those of Central India - the stupa in Sanchi, for example - I would be tempted to date their construction, at least for the main parts, to the second century A.D. The inscriptions unfortunately are too unreadable for this hypothesis to be verified in any accurate way.

The temples in brick and wood, on the contrary, are very recent; the non-durable materials with which they have been built prevent them from lasting long. Furthermore, the origin of most of them is known; they go back to the 16th and 17th centuries only; but they are, evidently, copies of earlier types.

The stone temples could certainly be older; however there is more than one indication that they are not, and I do not believe that any of those I visited and reproduced here could be older than the year 1500.

The palaces and houses of Nepal are built in brick and mud and have a few stories, but these floors are not in recess one upon the other, as we

have seen for the temples, and the building has but one roof.

What characterises them is the abundance of sculptures with which they are covered: columns of the verandas, the door and window frames, struts linking the overhanging parts of the roof with a body of the building are adorned with these marvellously intricate sculptures. It is certain that no other people has gone as far as the inhabitants of Nepal in the art of wood-carving.

The windows are usually closed by a lattice since glass is not used in Nepal. One can see glass only in the windows of the king's palace in Kathmandu.

The main part of the house consists generally of a courtyard surrounded by a veranda under which live the servants. The rooms are small and poorly lit. Rooms of different floors communicate with each other through trap doors

only, which makes the defence of each floor easy.

Temples, houses and palaces of the big cities of Nepal are covered with sculptures and brightly colored paintings. The palace doors are made of bronze sheets delicately chiselled. In front are erected monolith columns, topped by statues. These various monuments are most often gathered in a very small space, making a most picturesque ensemble. Details are sometimes barbaric - although the sculptures of the columns are beyond the most harsh of the artistic critics -but the entirety has a striking seal of originality.

Ferguson, although he knew the monuments of Nepal only through a few succinct reproductions, expressed the same opinion.

We will now complete the preceding overview with descriptions, and particularly with representations of the monuments of the principal cities of Nepal.



CHAPTER

III

A DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENTS OF NEPAL

Monuments of Sambunath

On top of a hill overlooking a village located a few kilometers from Kathmandu, are the temples of Sambunath or Swayambhu, epithet of the Buddha meaning "the one who is self existing". Leading to it is a path, crossing the Visnumati by a bridge made of planks, a few centimeters broad, and without railings.

The hill is about a hundred meters high. One reaches the top after climbing a stone staircase of more than five hundred steps. A huge statue of Buddha erected in 1637 marks the entrance. It is on top of the hill that the main temple stands. Upon reaching the upper part of the staircase one is immediately confronted with a pedestal in carved stone, on the top of which lies a piece of bronze one and a half meters long, named "Indra's Thunderbolt". The Buddhists consider this emblem as the symbol of Buddha's victory over the king of heaven, and it is as sacred to them as the cross is to Christians. Its image is represented in most sculptures of the temples in Nepal. The one we are reproducing was built in 1640 but its stone base is certainly much older. The sculptures covering it are quite beautiful. The twelve animals encircling the pedestal represent the twelve months of the Tibetan calendar. The months are designated by the names of each of these animals.

The summit of the hill is covered by little sanctuaries and numerous statues but most of the space is occupied by the main temple, pilgrimage spot for people coming from the remotest parts of Tibet. It is a hemisphere in mud and bricks similar

to the stupa in Sanchi, but topped with a cube crowned by a cone made of circular, vertically superimposed strips of metal. On each of the four sides of the tower the eyes of Buddha are painted in red, white and black. The base of the stupa is cylindrical and slightly projected. It is covered with flagstone. At each cardinal point of the monument there is a little sanctuary, the outside of which is chiselled bronze, and which contains a carved stone slab.

These little sanctuaries, the tower topping the stupa and most of the numerous constructions crowning the hill are not older than two hundred and fifty years. The majority were erected between 1650 and 1750, as indicated in the numerous inscriptions covering the structures. The oldest is dated 1593. But if all the accessory parts are relatively modern, this is not the case, without doubt, for the central bulk of the stupa. Its obvious similarity with analogous constructions of Central India and the time of the introduction of Buddhism to Nepal, lead us to think that the fundamental parts of the building must have been made around the second century of our era.

Although the stupa is exclusively Buddhist, one can find there more than one Brahmanist emblem. Thus, one can see for example, in the little surrounding sanctuaries, an altar dedicated to Devi Sittla, goddess endowed with the gift of curing the smallpox of her worshippers. The other little constructions surrounding the stupa are either votive monuments or dedicatory

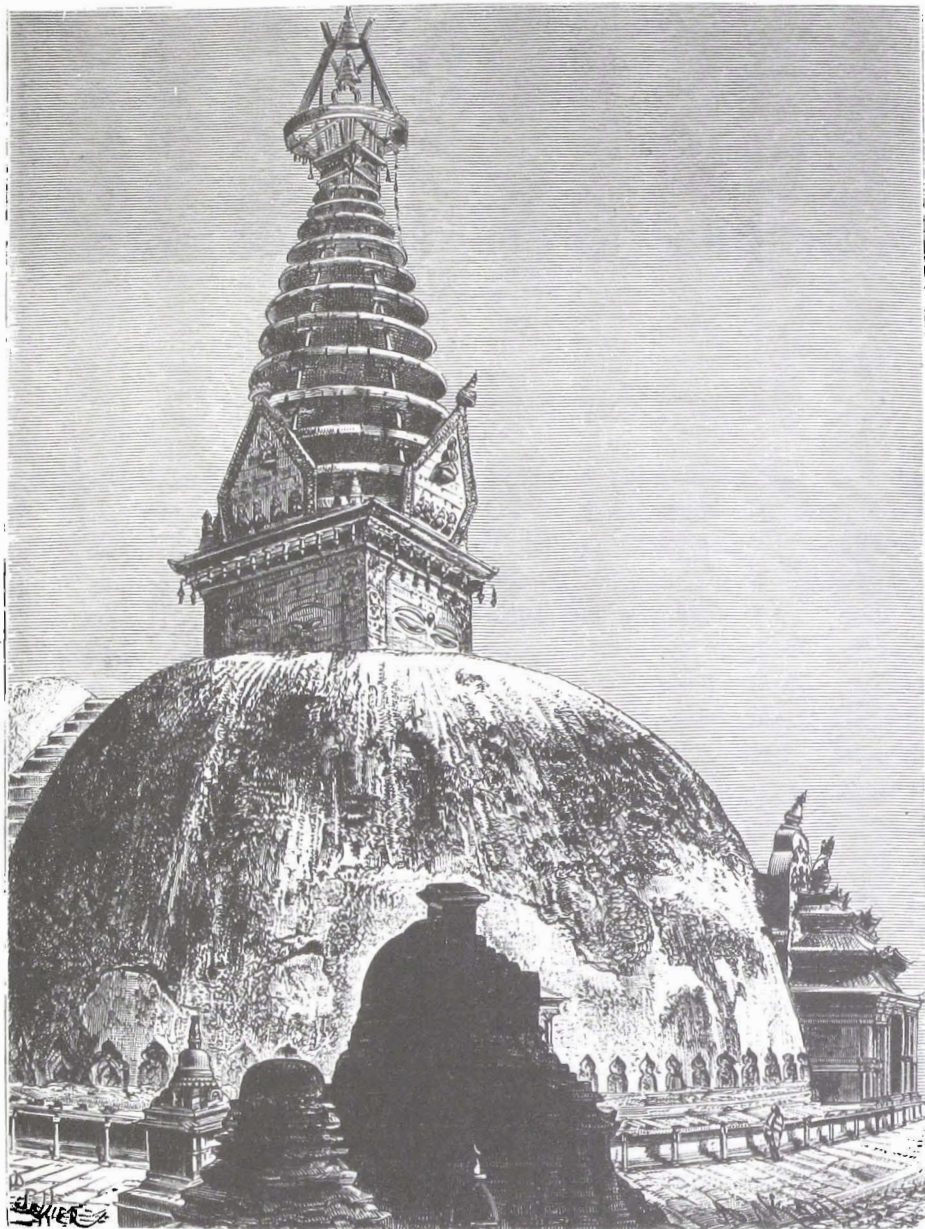


Fig. 32 Sambunath (Nepal). General view of the stupa.

monuments erected to the memory of venerable persons.

In one of the houses built around the stupa lives a family of Tibetan Lamas in charge, since

time immemorial, of keeping the sacred fire, the symbol of the deity. This fire is supposed to have come in bygone days from the sky and it has never died since.

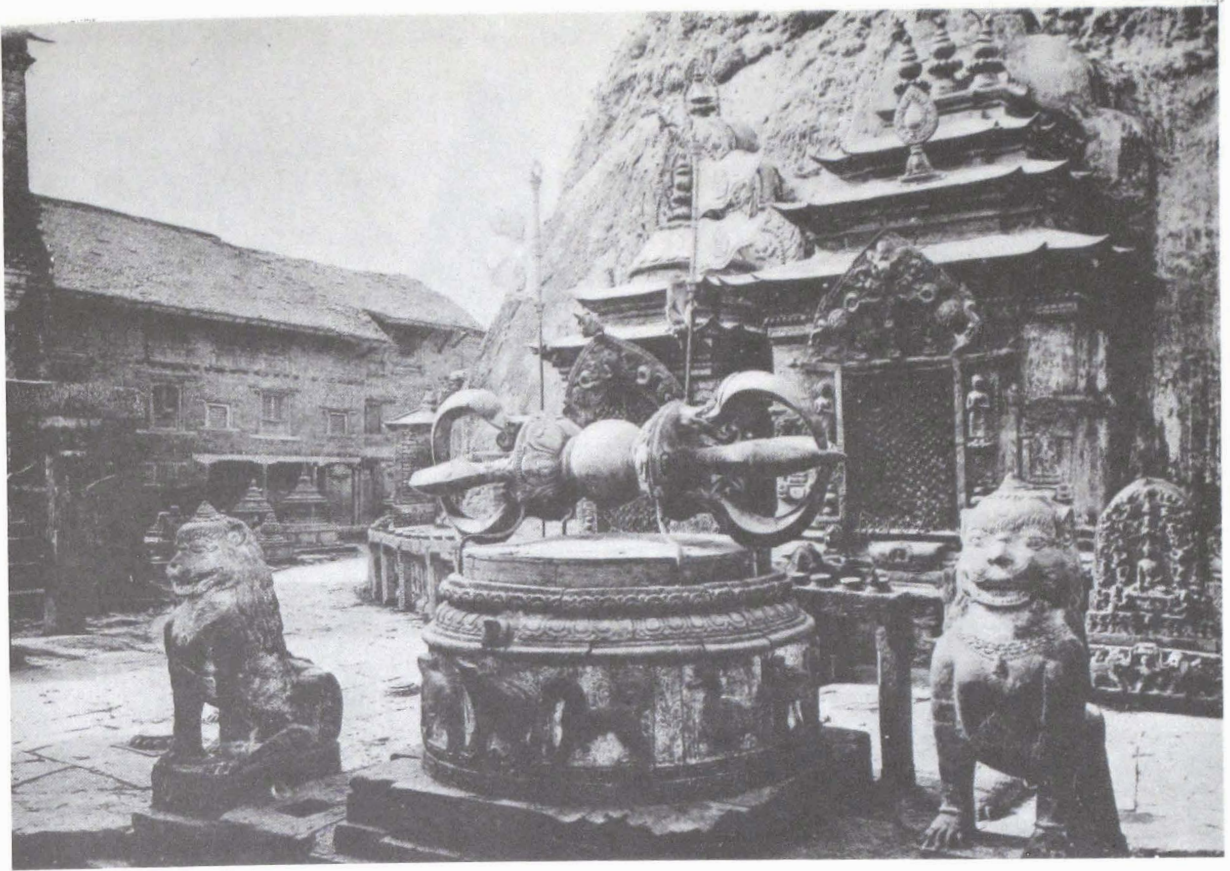
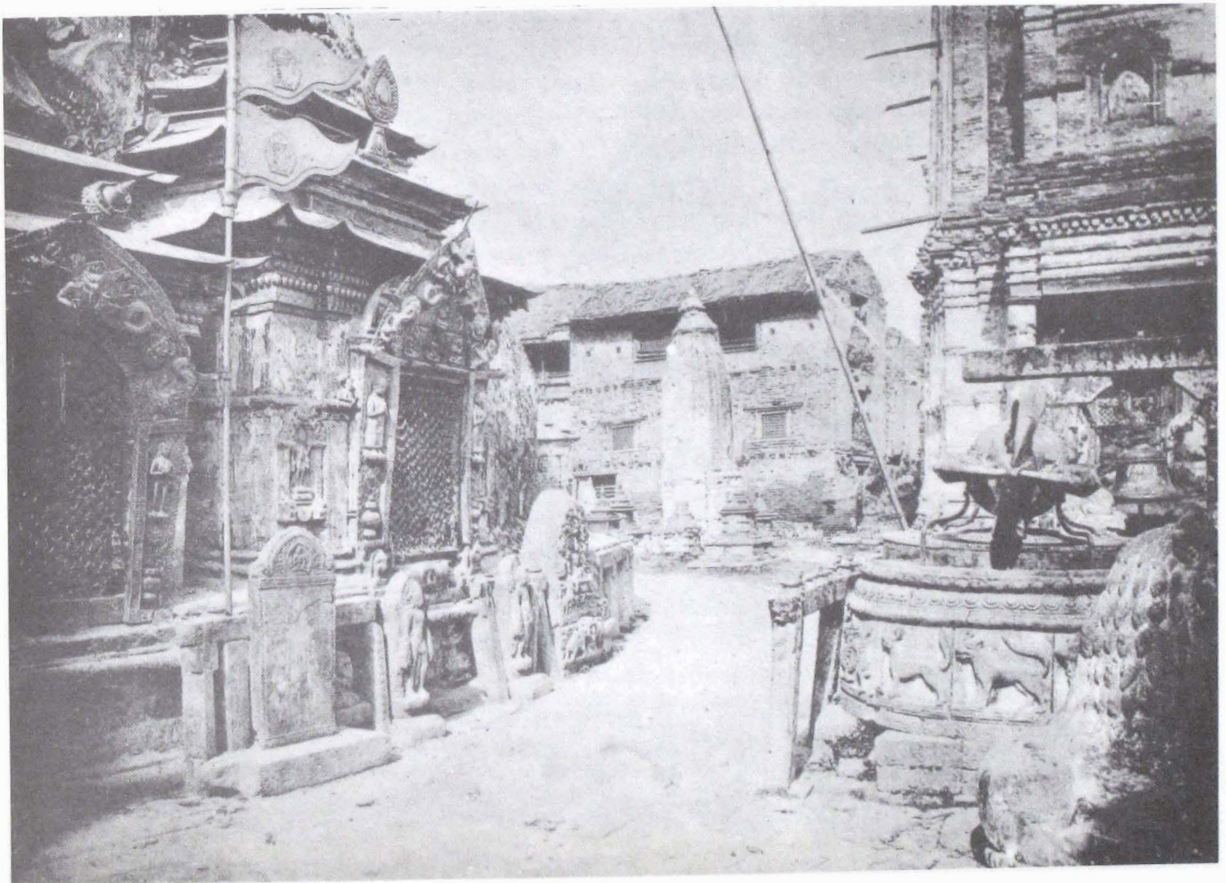


Fig. 33 and 34 Sambunath (Nepal). Indra's thunderbolt and various constructions surrounding the stupa.



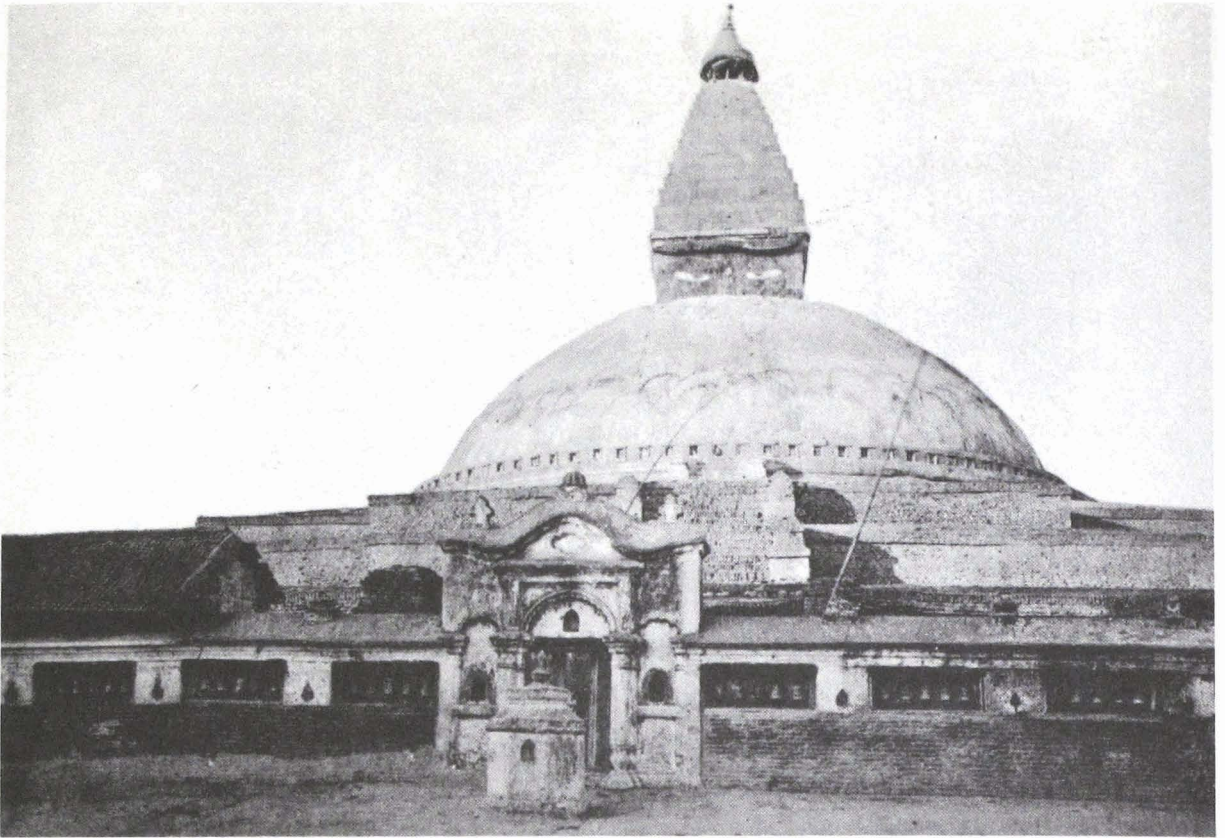
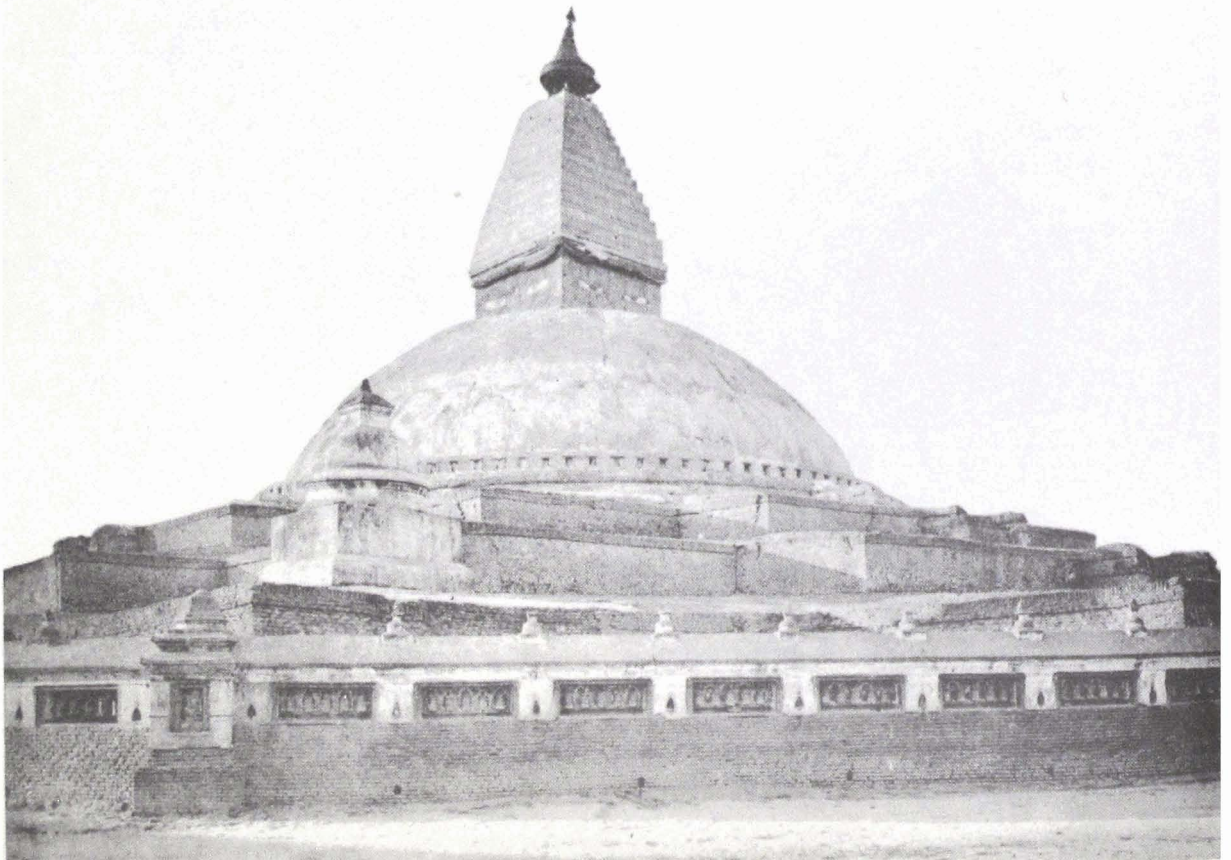


Fig. 35 and 36 Buddnath (Nepal). General view of the stupa taken from two different sides.



Monuments of Buddnath

At about eight kilometers from Kathmandu lies a village called Buddnath, which has a stupa similar to the one in Sambunath, and its equal in sanctity. It consists, as the latter, of a big hemisphere in bricks and stones, and is topped by a square tower itself crowned by a pyramid. At its base is a circular plinth in which are recesses containing Buddhist statues.

The difference from the similar monument of Sambunath, is in the fact that the one of Buddnath is erected on a platform, consisting of three stories in recess one upon the other, whose total height is almost the same as the hemisphere's height. On each side there is a little sanctuary.

This stupa surpasses, by its dimensions, all other similar constructions in Nepal. It is almost ninety meters in diameter and forty-two meters in height. It is erected in a sort of square surrounded by houses which used to be monasteries, but which are today inhabited only by merchants, dealing with idols, jewels, amulets, prayerwheels, etc. One of these houses is inhabited by Lamas, in

charge, as in Sambunath, of the sacred fire. As at the stupa in Sambunath, there are a certain number of little religious constructions around the stupa in Buddnath, but they are of no importance.

I simply do not know when this building was erected. Tales of the inhabitants cannot, any more than elsewhere in India, be taken into consideration. The word old is applied indiscriminately to any building which somebody in the family has not witnessed being built. It is not rare to see them giving the same age to constructions ten centuries old and to others only one century old. It seems obvious to me, that the accessory parts surrounding the building are, like at Sambunath, relatively new; but as for the main part, which is moreover not very accessible, and whose age seems uncertain to me, I would not dare to date it back as far as Sambunath, to the second century of our era. Because of its excellent stage of conservation, I would be tempted to give it a much more recent date.



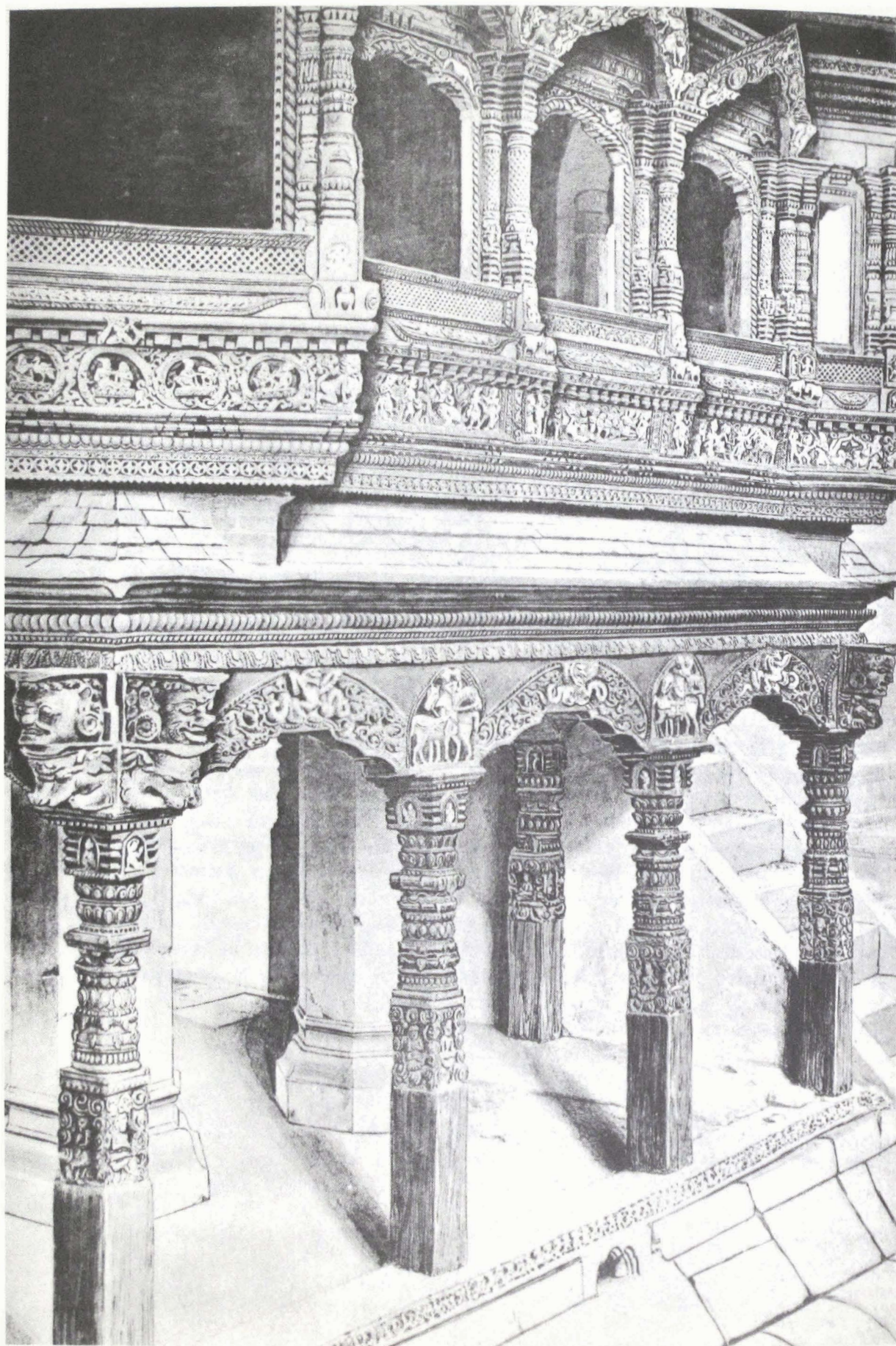


Fig. 37 Bhatgaon. Details of a temple having columns in stone and in wood.

Monuments of Bhatgaon

Bhatgaon is a city of forty thousand souls, located on an elevation fifteen kilometers from Kathmandu. Its foundation goes back to the 9th century A.D. It was once the capital of one of the three kingdoms which formed Nepal. Its temples and palaces can be classified among the most remarkable ones of the area.

Only a third of Bhatgaon's population is Buddhist. Since the majority is Hindu, the most remarkable monuments are dedicated to Hindu deities.

Before the conquest of Nepal by the Gurkhas, the king of Bhatgaon was more powerful than the kings of Kathmandu or Patan. The city surrendered at once when besieged by the Gurkhas, its monuments were spared and thus much better preserved than those of the two other cities. The town is still in flower.

I did not find ancient monuments in Bhatgaon; the materials - bricks and wood - with which they are generally built prevent them from lasting long. I don't think the oldest one is more than three centuries old.

The most important temples of Bhatgaon are located in a square of which a whole side is occupied by the king's palace. One of our plates (plate 370) gives a general view of these temples; other plates represent their details. One can see in the middle of the square a one storey temple, whose wood carvings, covered with ivory, are quite exquisitely done.

At the right in the same general plate, one

can see, half hidden by a small modern construction, a stone temple, reproduced and enlarged in another plate. Its lines are very graceful. It is erected, like the brick and wood temples, on a succession of superimposed platforms, in recess one upon another. One reaches it by staircases the sides of which are guarded by stone monsters. The stone columns are exact copies of the wood columns of the other temples. But there stop the similarities. The temple itself does not look at all like the temples in bricks with superimposed roofs. It has the form of one of those pyramids with curvilinear sides, so common in the temples of Northern India. The similarity with the latter does not go beyond this general feature.

We can call here what we have already said in another part of this work: that at the time of Megasthenes, i.e. three centuries before Christ, monuments were most probably built in wood and brick stone monuments appeared only later and at first as exceptions. Nepal still is in this stage of transition, where India was a little while before the beginning of our era. By examining our plates, one is convinced that the scrupulous care used to copy the forms of the wood columns into stone columns confirms the hypothesis that the first stone monuments are copies of previously erected buildings in wood.

Behind the monuments shown in our general plate stands a big wood and brick temple, five stories high, also represented in another plate. It is, at least by its dimensions, the most important

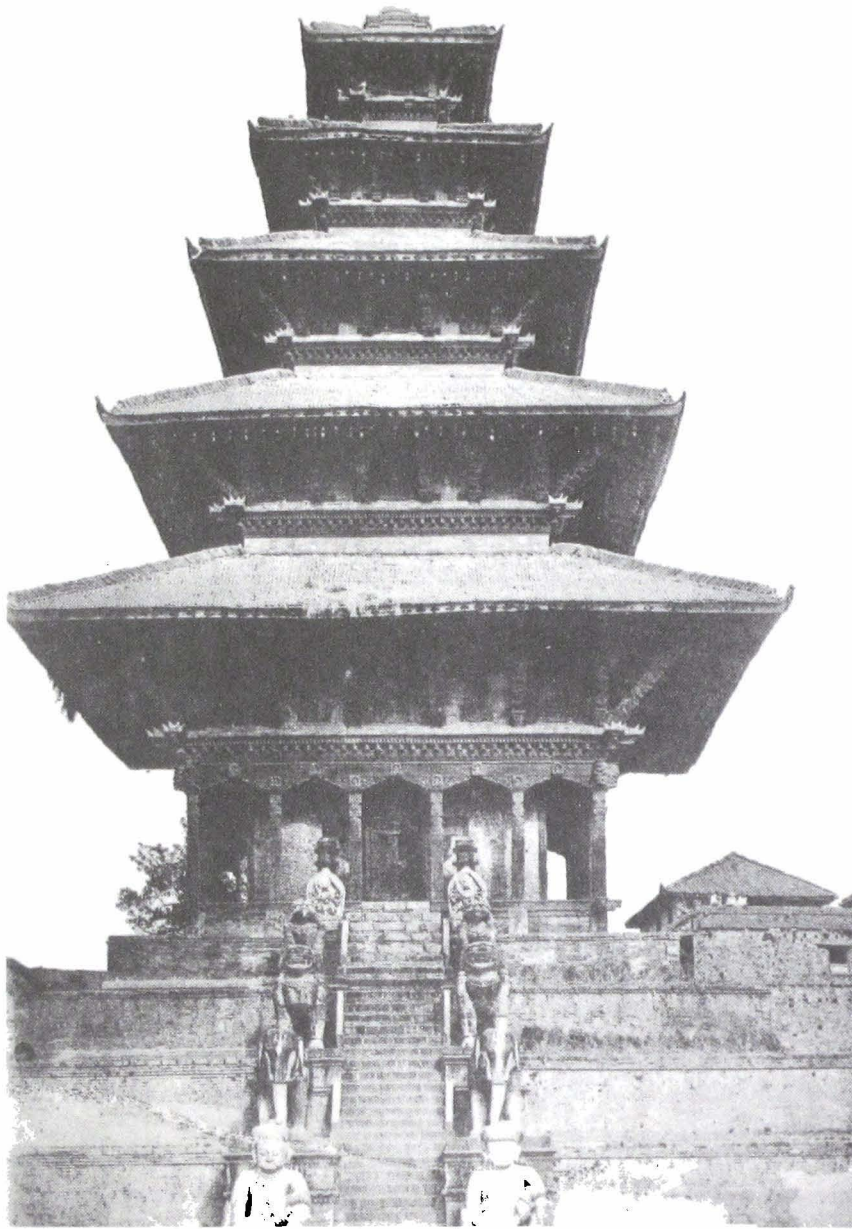


Fig. 38 Bhatgaon. (Nepal). The same pagoda seen from the front.

in Bhatgaon. Its construction goes back only two centuries.

Like all the temples of the same category, it rests on a rectangular base, composed of a succession of superimposed platforms. On one side of the temple there is a stone staircase. Its sides are adorned, at the platform levels, with stone statues representing monsters, human beings and deities.

One can see, on the left of our general

plate, a part of the royal palace. A greater part is reproduced in detail in another plate. This palace, erected at the end of the 17th century, is entirely built in red brick. Doors and windows are framed with marvelous wood sculptures. One enters the building through a chiselled bronze door named the Golden Door, built in 1753; our plates (Pl.369 and 371) show the delicacy of the work. The art of bronze chiselling and chasing is unfortunately almost lost today in Nepal.

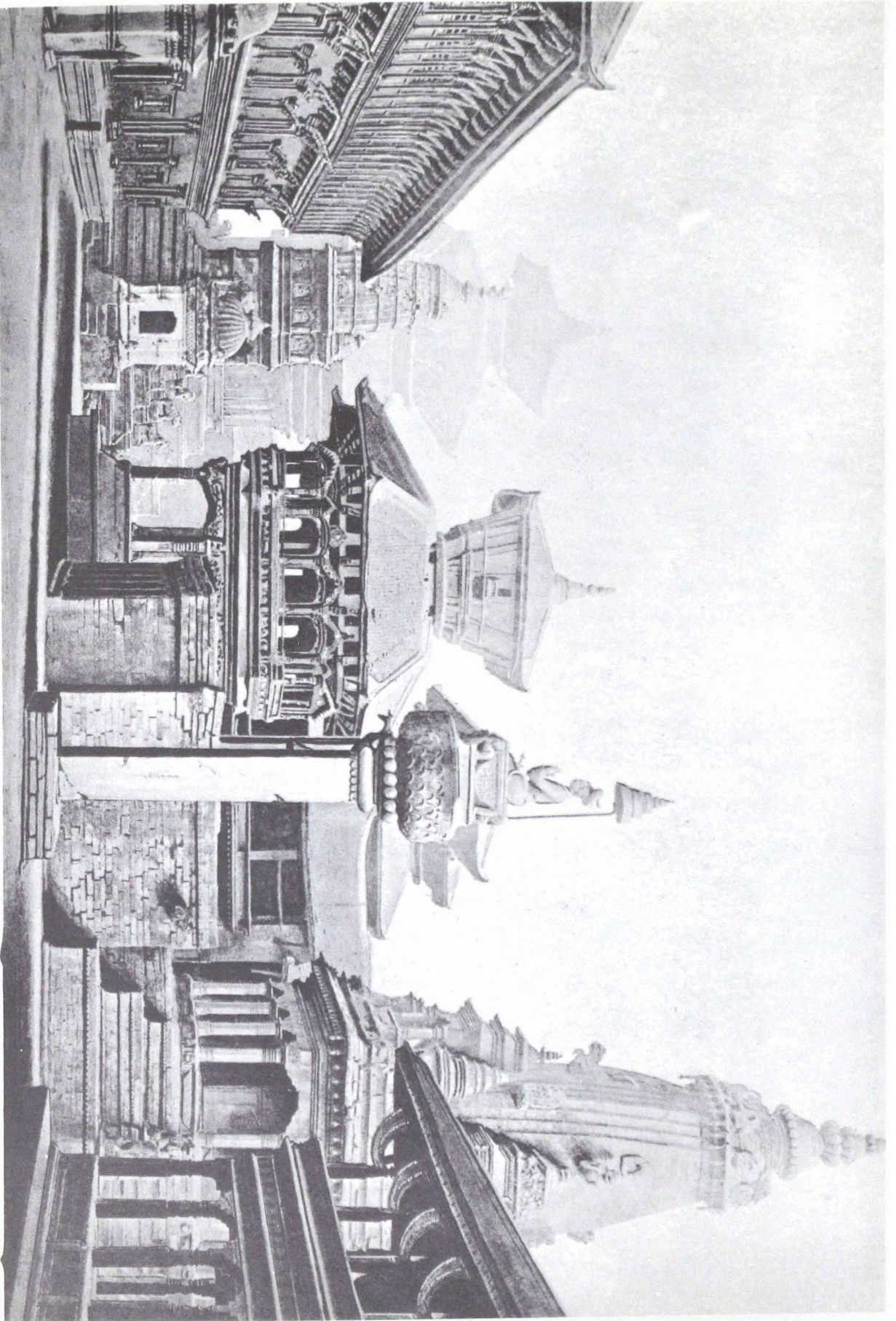


Fig. 39 Bhatgaon. Main square, general view.

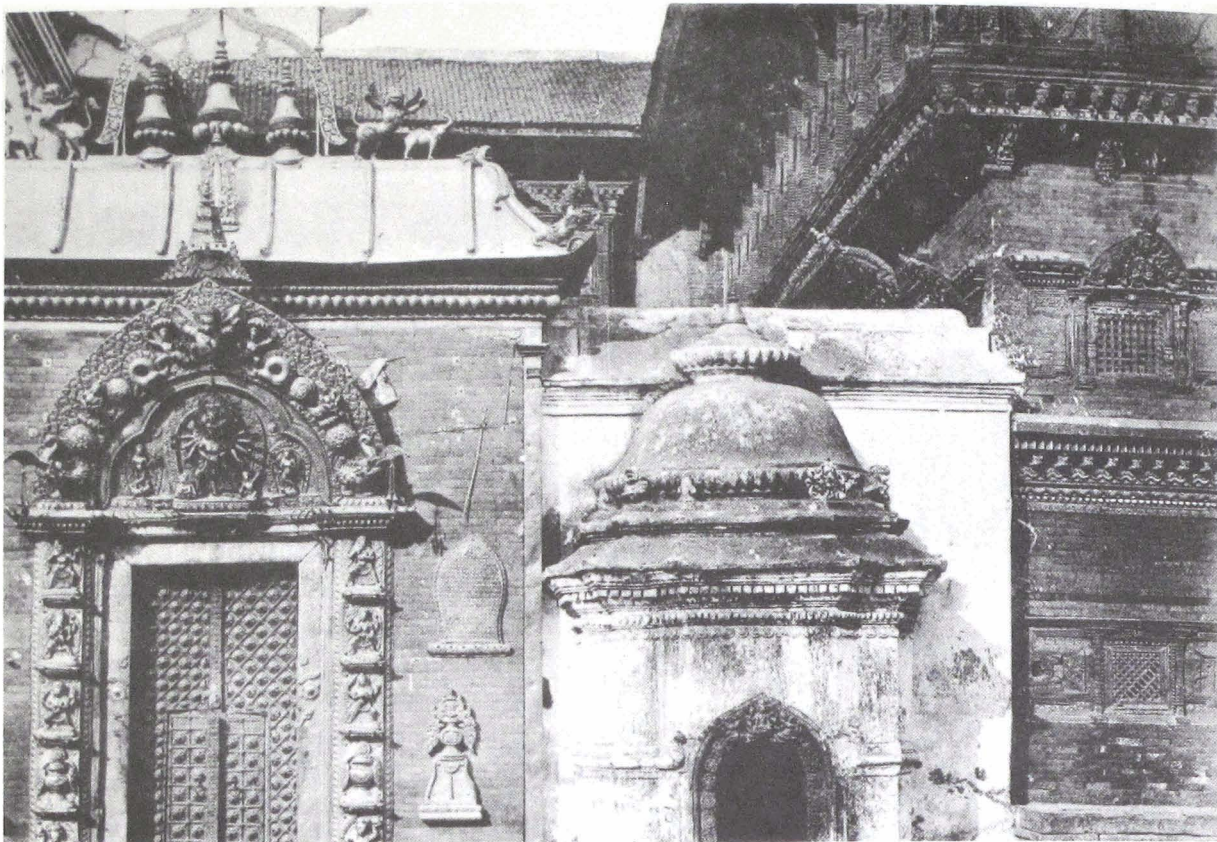
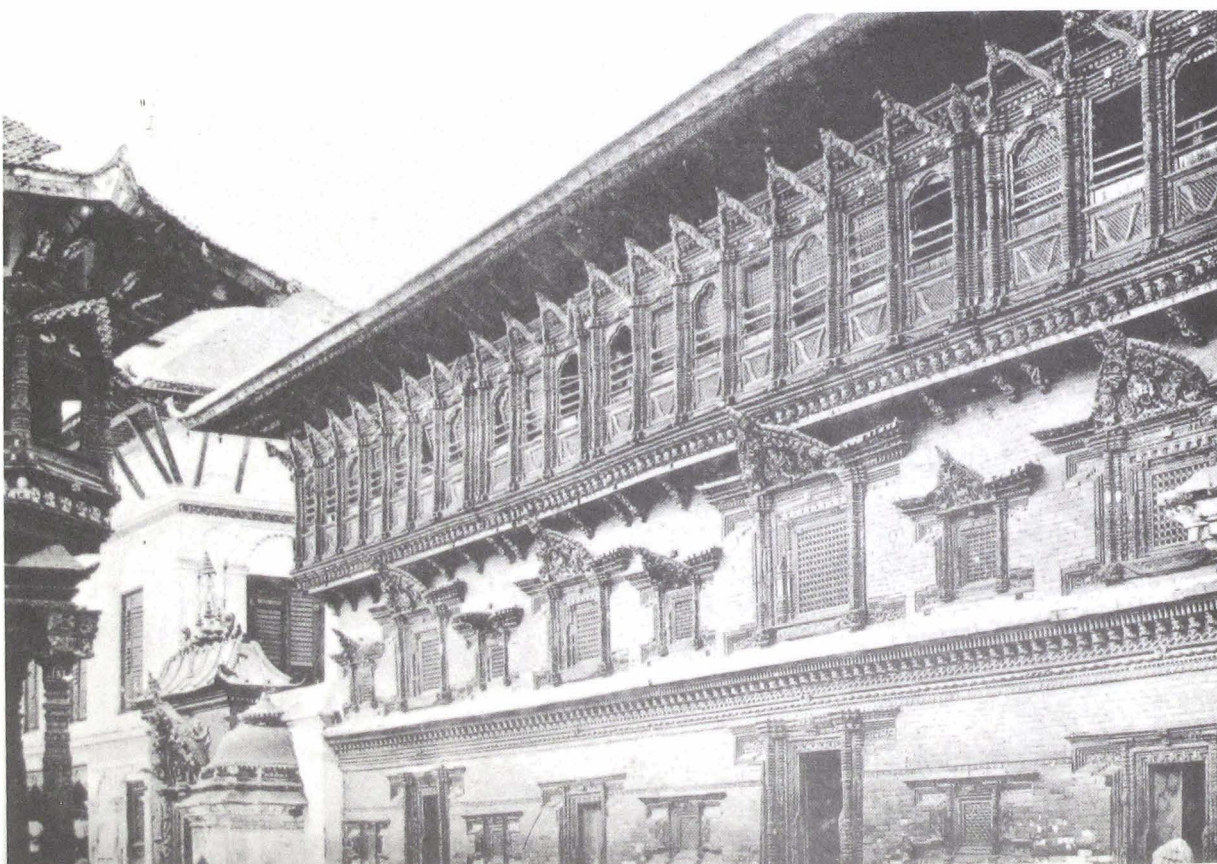


Fig. 40 Bhatgaon (Nepal). Details of ornamentation of one of the doors of the King's palace.

Fig. 41 Bhatgaon. General view of the King's palace.



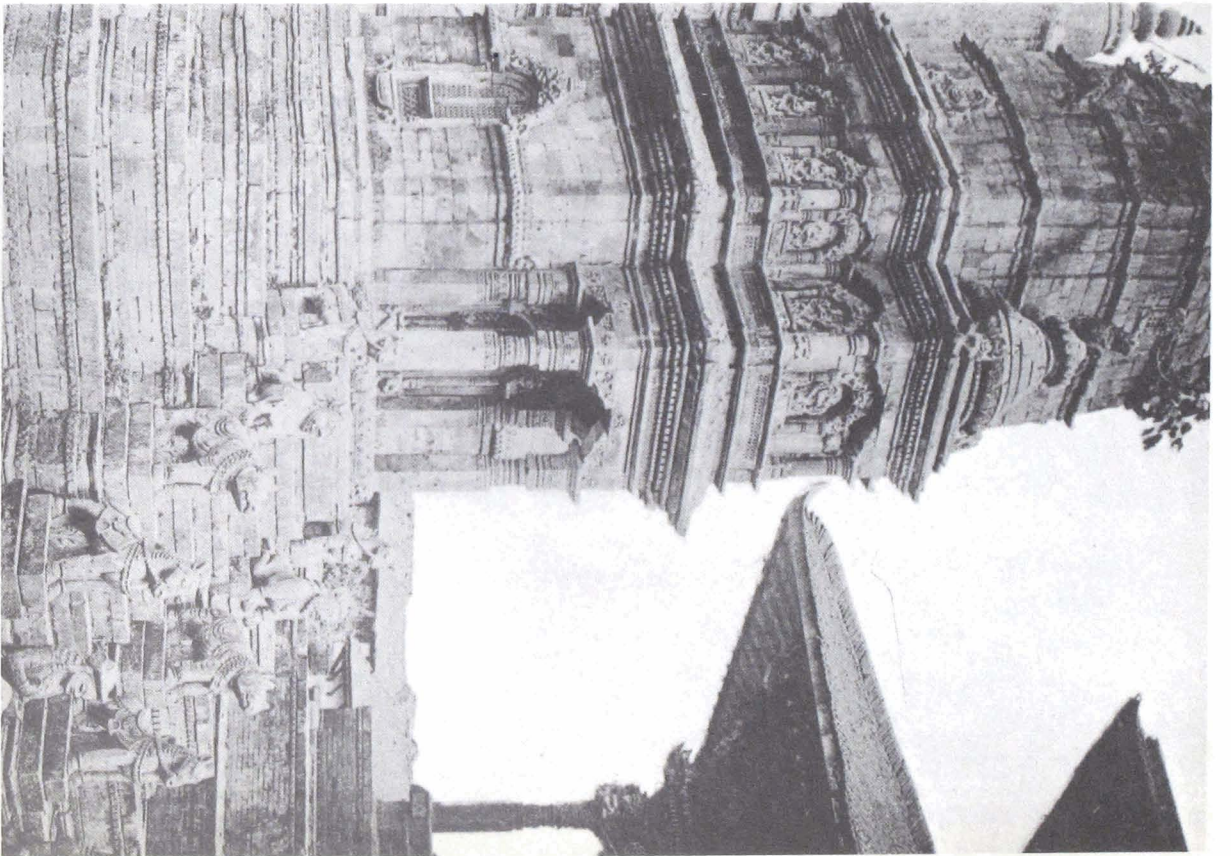
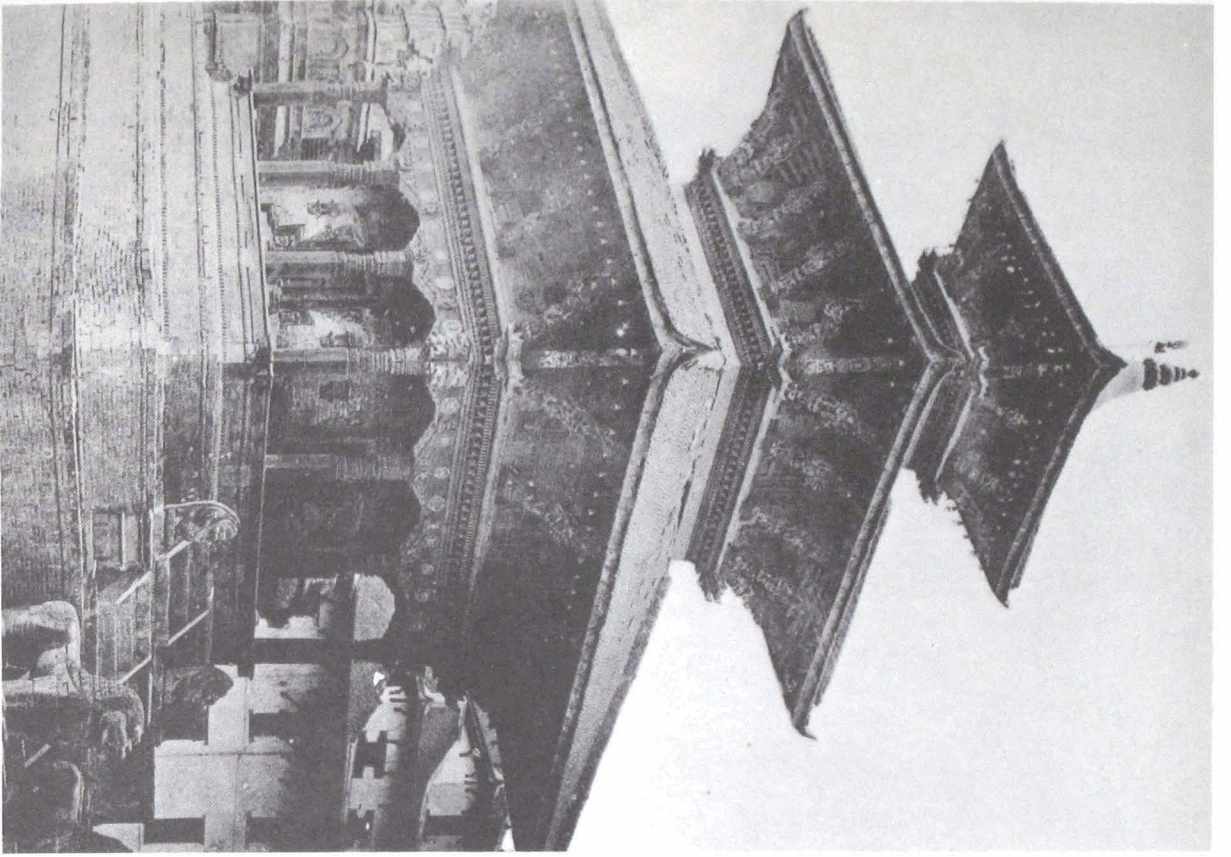
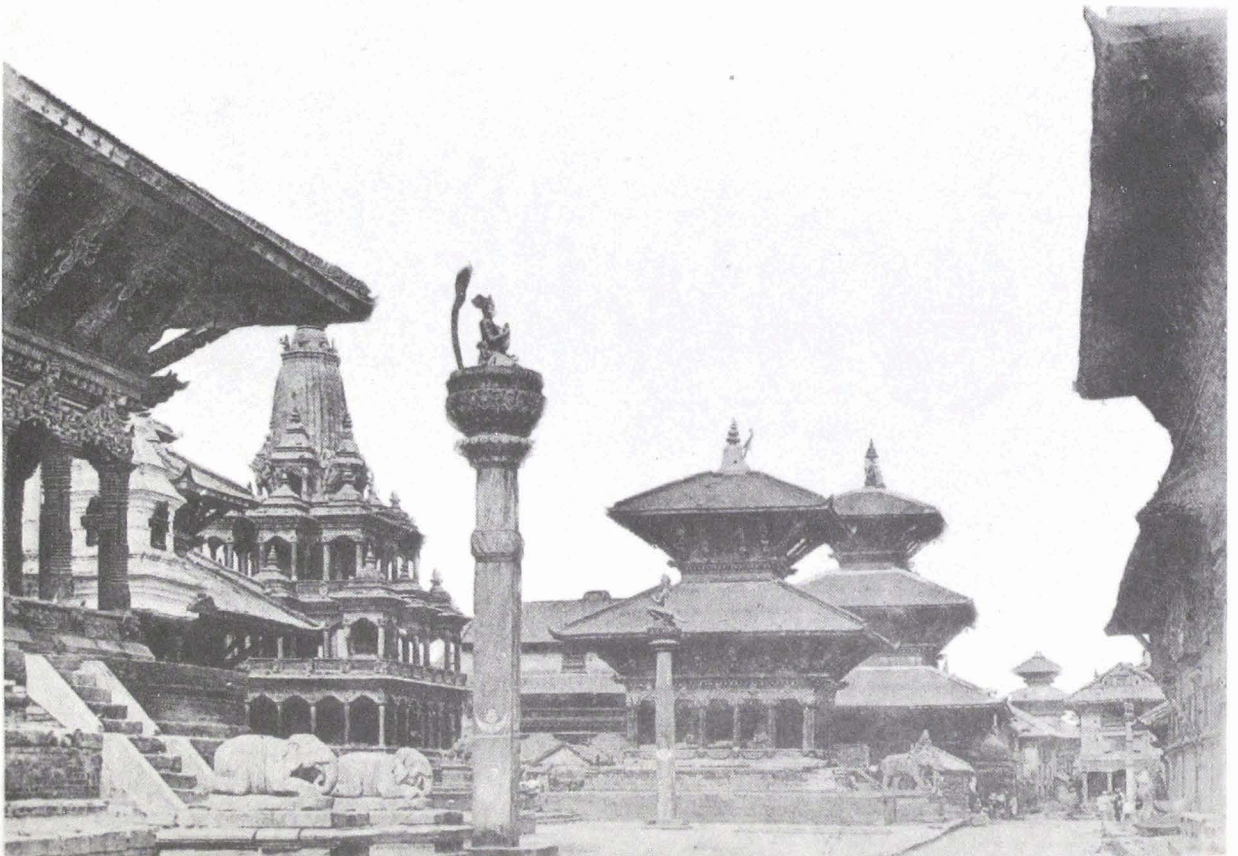




Fig. 44 and 45 Patan (Nepal). Square of the king's palace. Temples and monolith columns. Views taken from opposite sides.



Monuments of Patan

Patan is a city of forty thousand inhabitants, located south-east of Kathmandu, and founded, it is said, around 300 A.D. It is, as we said, one of the ancient capitals of the independent kingdoms of Nepal. Its streets are narrow and lined with brick and wooden houses, of which the columns and window frames are wonderfully carved. The square where the king's palace is situated and the temples facing it, offer without doubt one of the most picturesque sights in the world. Since the Gurkhas' conquest and its sack by the Gurkhas, the city has lost a lot of its importance and a great part of its monuments are falling in ruins.

Since the former royal family of Patan belonged to the Brahmanist religion, although the majority of people were Buddhist, the main temples surrounding the king's palace are Brahmanist. Two-thirds of the inhabitants are at present Buddhist. Several monasteries are linked to temples, but their primary destination has changed since long: most of them are inhabited now by merchants. They are, as far as architecture is concerned, two storied houses, similar to the other houses of the town.

Near Patan there are a few big hemispherical stupas, similar to those of Buddnath and Sambunath. Local tradition attributes their erection to Asoka, during his supposed pilgrimage to Nepal. Unfortunately their inscriptions are unreadable.

In Patan, as in Bhatgaon, there are few

stone temples. One of the most important, and at the same time probably one of the most remarkable in India, for the originality and elegance of its lines, is in front of the royal palace (see p. 89 and 90). It is erected on three superimposed platforms in recess one upon another, and consists of two rectangular storeys each surrounded by a veranda; on each side there are three pavillions covered by a dome. One can recognize in the convex-sided pyramid that tops the temple the Hindu influence of Northern India. But, just by casting an eye on the numerous temples represented here, one can recognize that this temple in Patan has a special seal of originality. In India, I only know of two buildings, the Panchmahal in Futtehpore and the Akba mausoleum in Secundra, which by their recessing terraces, present some distant similarities with this monument. It is most probable that these three buildings came from previous types, now lost.

I could not find documents on the date of construction of this temple. It is impossible to study the interior, since any European who entered it would be murdered at once by the population. I do not believe it would be older than the beginning of the 16th century A.D.

In Patan, as in fact in Bhatgaon and Kathmandu, one can often see, in front of temples, monolith columns topped by a statue, usually representing one of the former Rajahs, founders of these temples. On one of the columns we represent (p. 89) the figure is kneeling; a

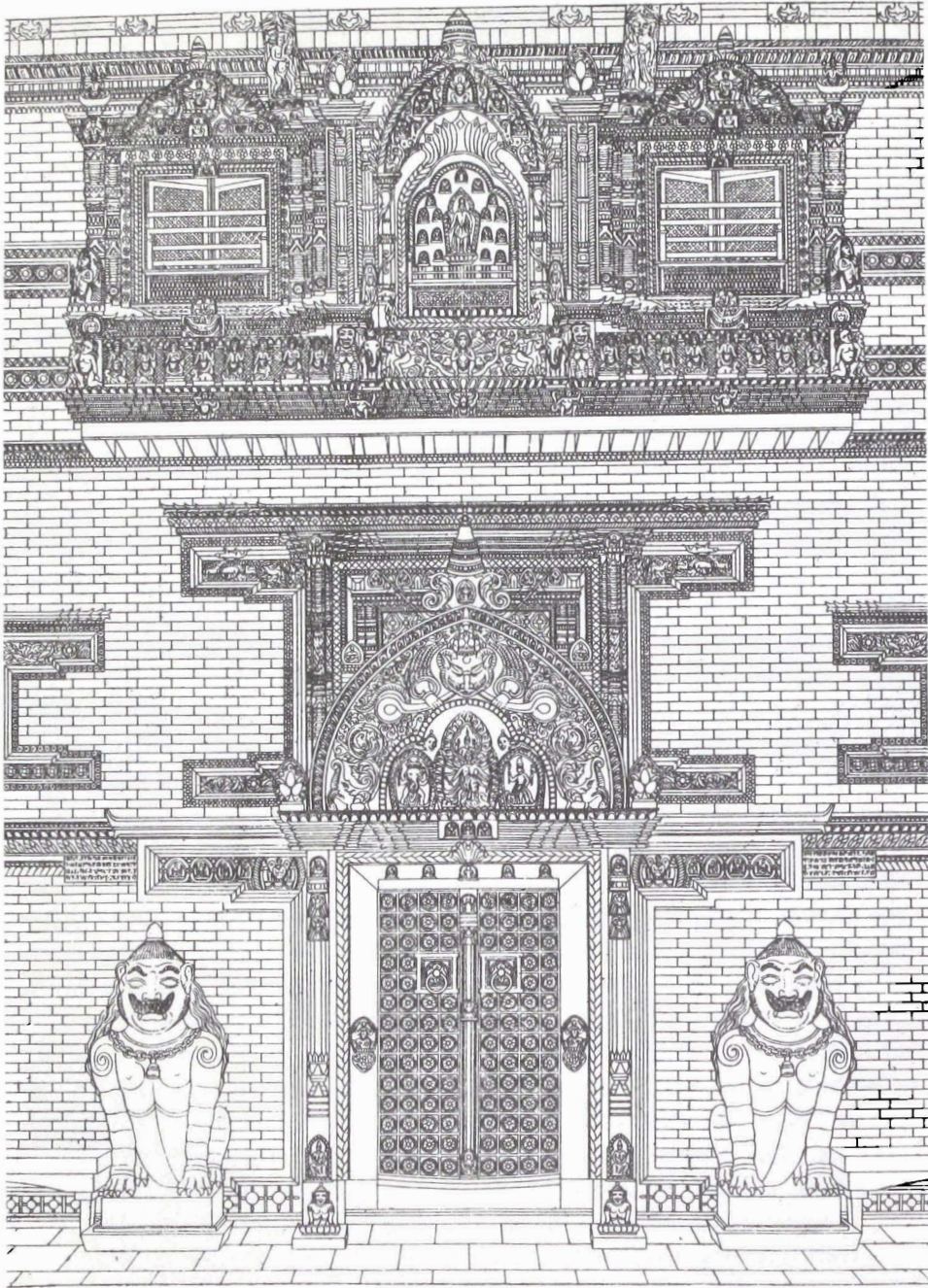


Fig. 46 Patan (Nepal). Design of the bronze door of the King's palace. Scale 10 mm for 1 metre. This same door is represented in figure 49 The design above is to show all the details.

bronze snake is above its head and on the snake's head a small bird is perched. These monolith columns remind one entirely, as I have already mentioned, of the monolith columns of Asoka.

Concerning Patan's pagodas of superim-

posed stories, they are identical in style to the ones in Bhatgaon. To describe them in detail would be repeating what has already been said. The largest one is about twenty meters high.

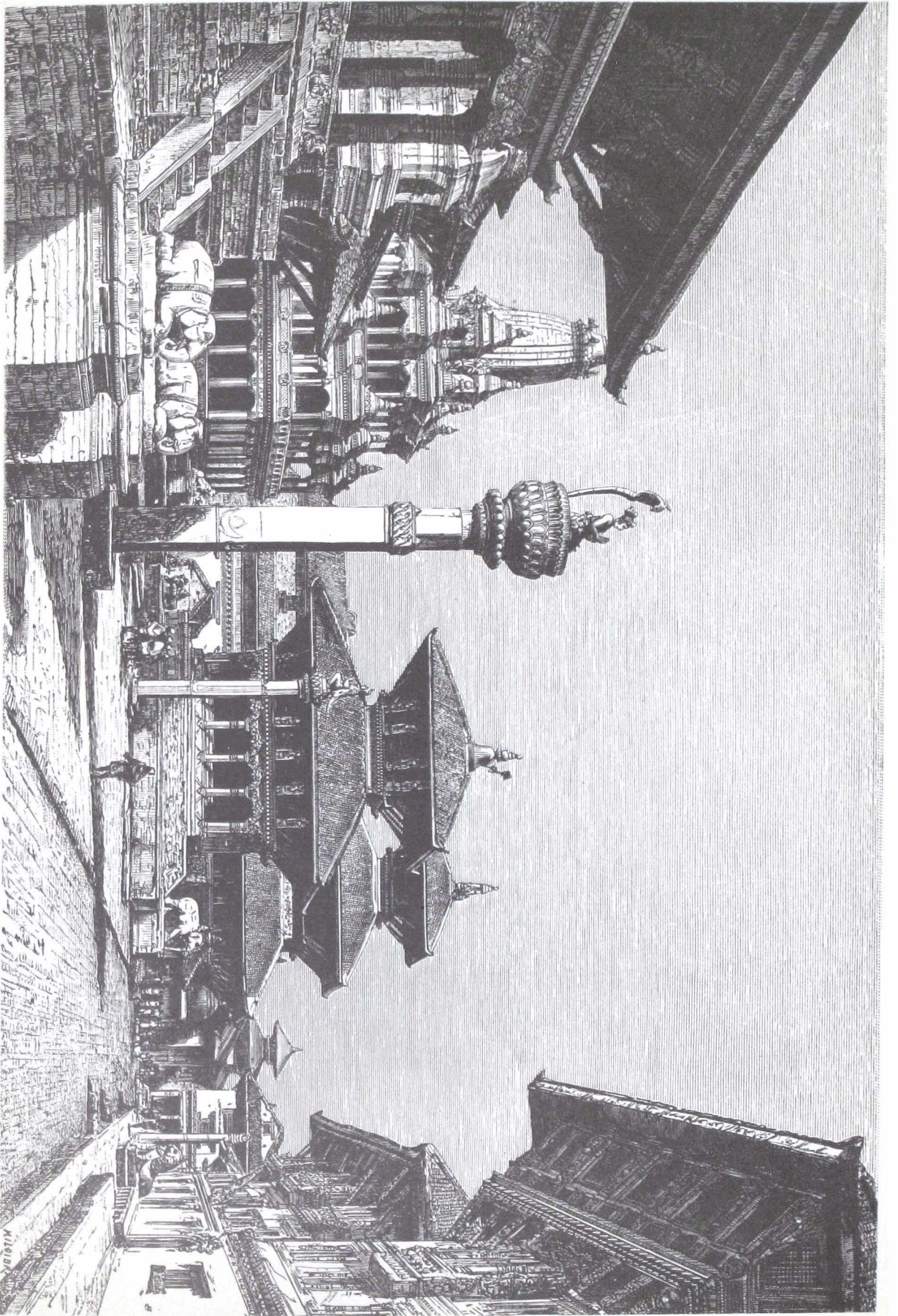


Fig. 47 Patan. Temples and monolith columns erected on the square of the King's palace. General view.

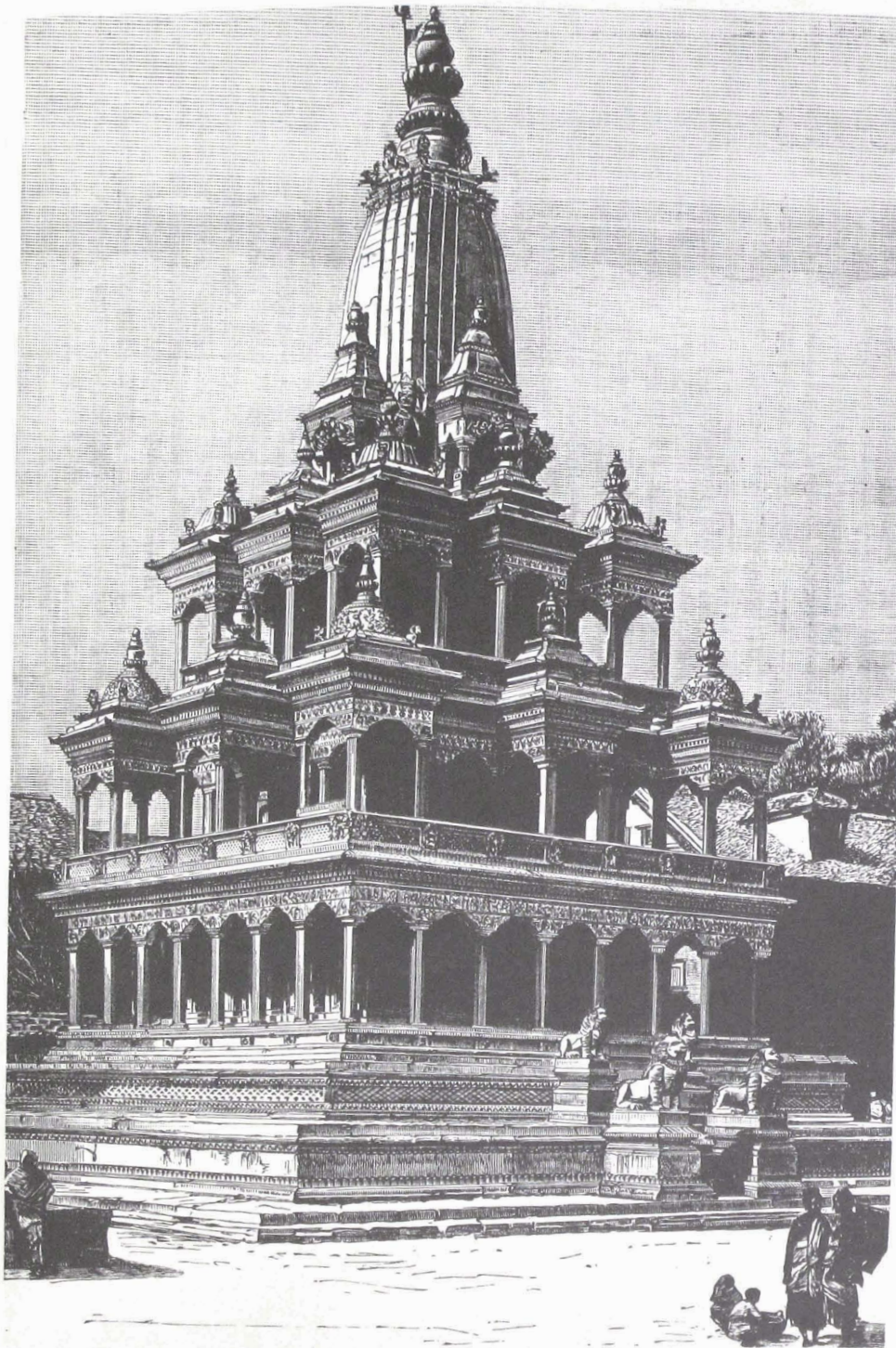


Fig. 48 Patan (Nepal). Large temple in stone opposite the King's palace.

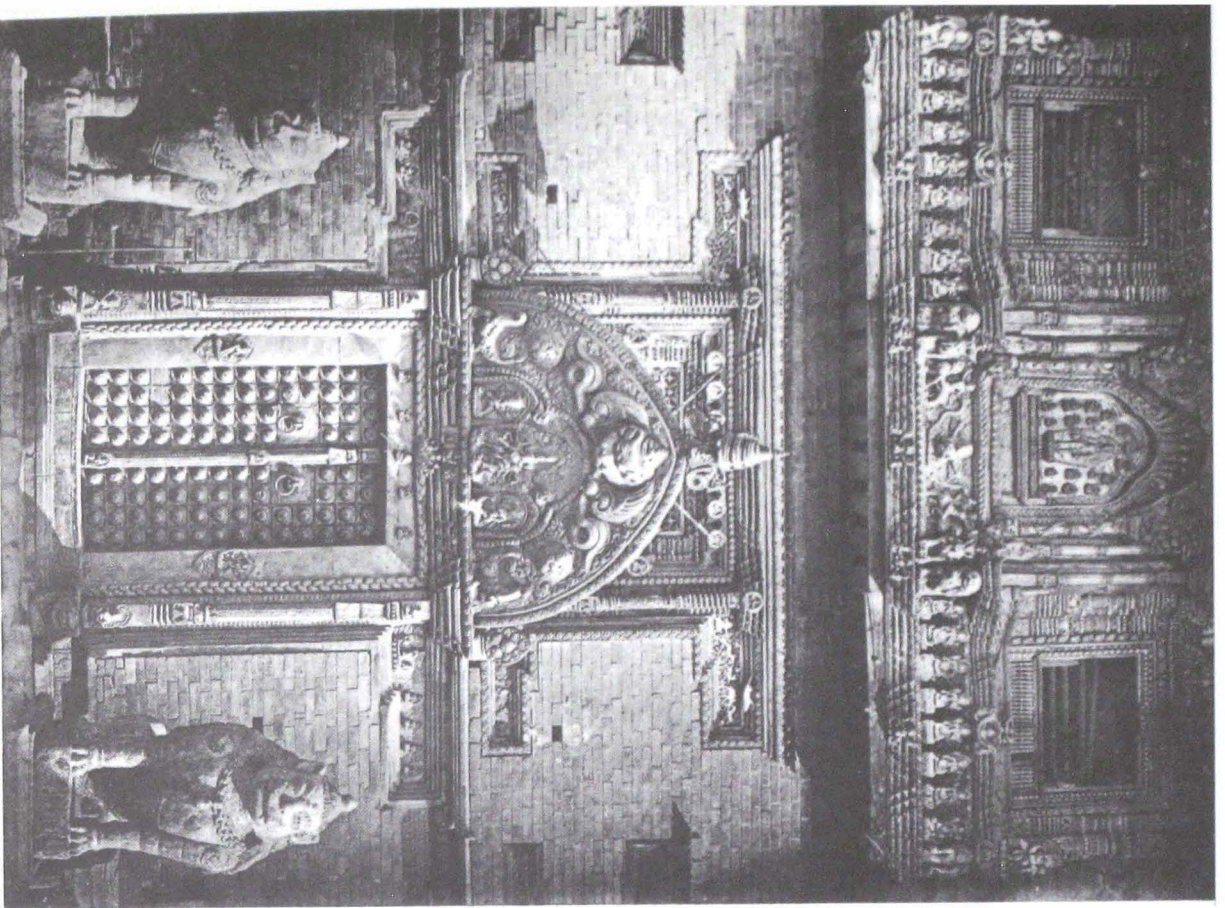


Fig. 49 Patan (Nepal). Details of ornamentation of the facade of the King's palace.

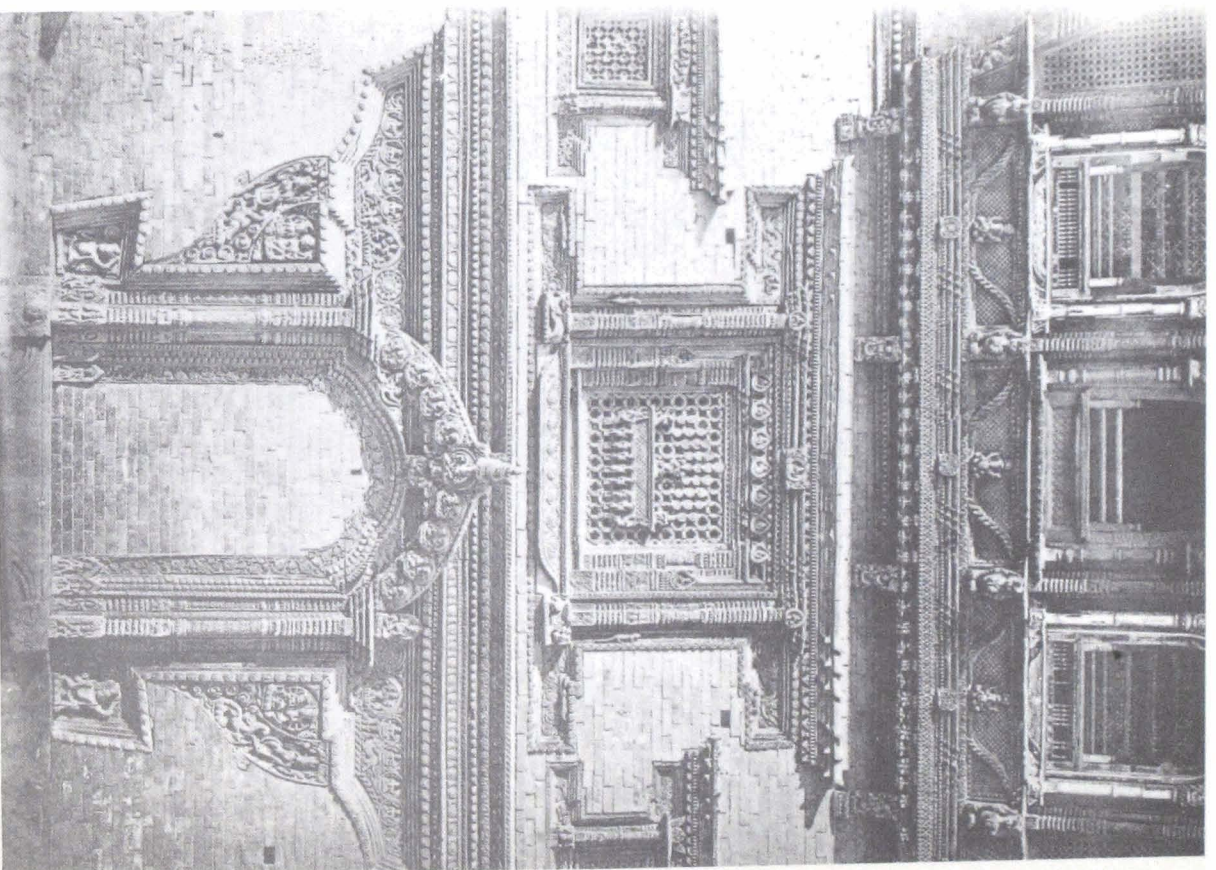


Fig. 50 Patan (Nepal). Details of ornamentation of the facade of the King's palace.

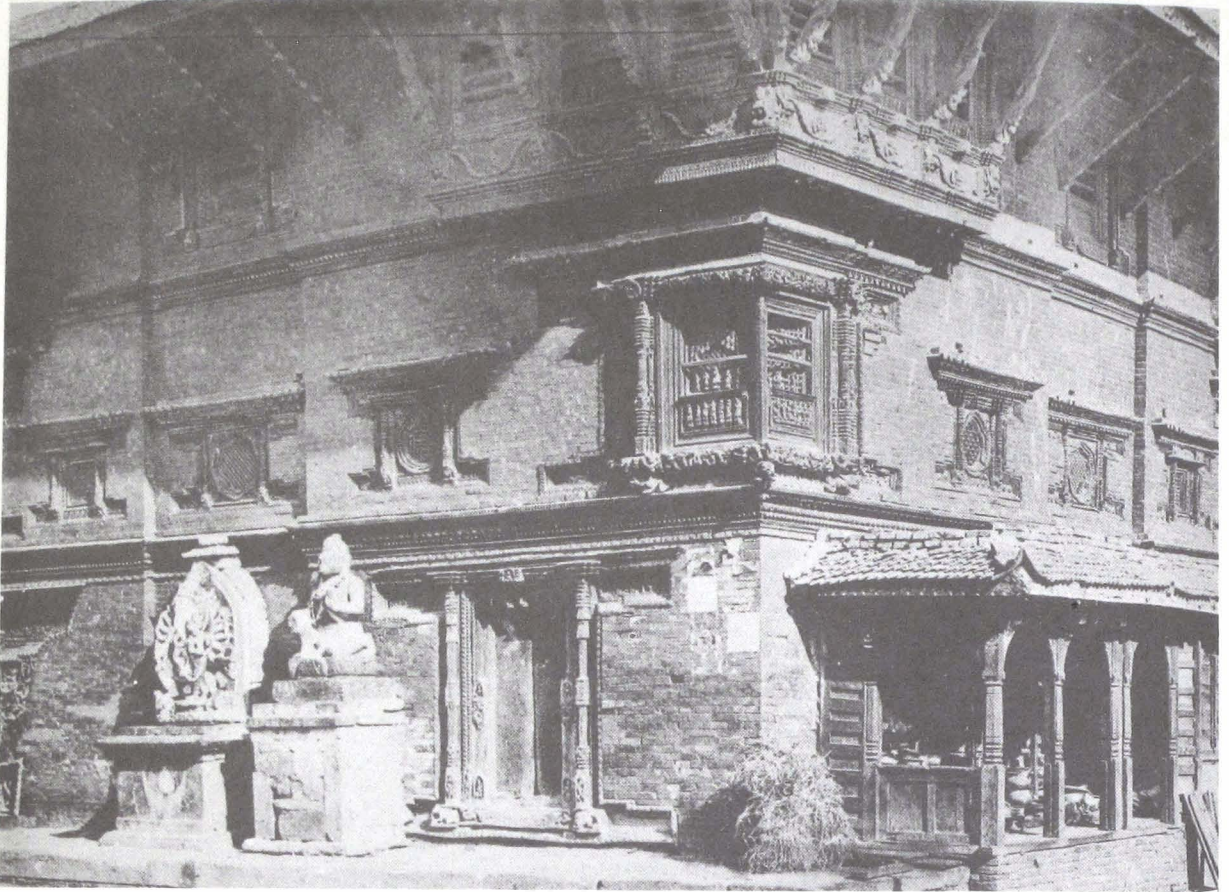
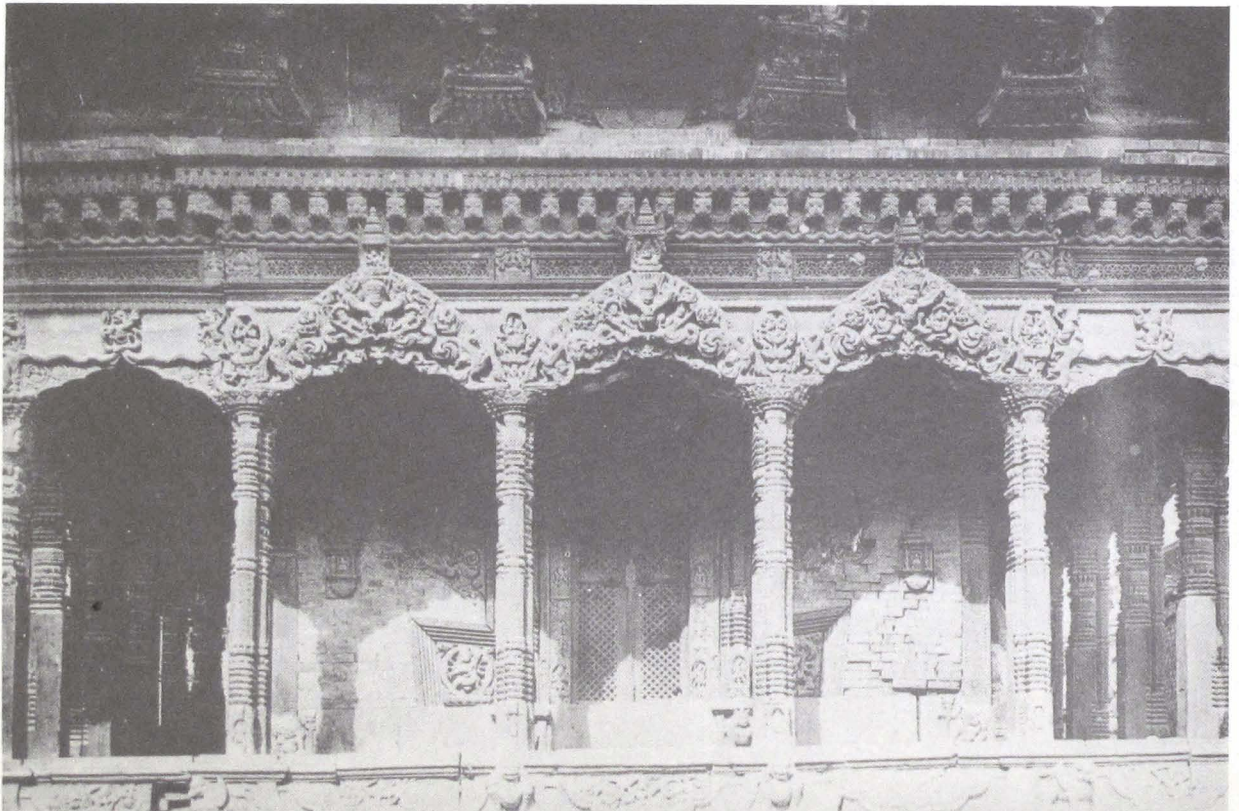


Fig. 51 Patan (Nepal). Details of ornamentation of a corner of the King's palace.

Fig. 52 Details of ornamentation of the pagoda represented in Fig. 53



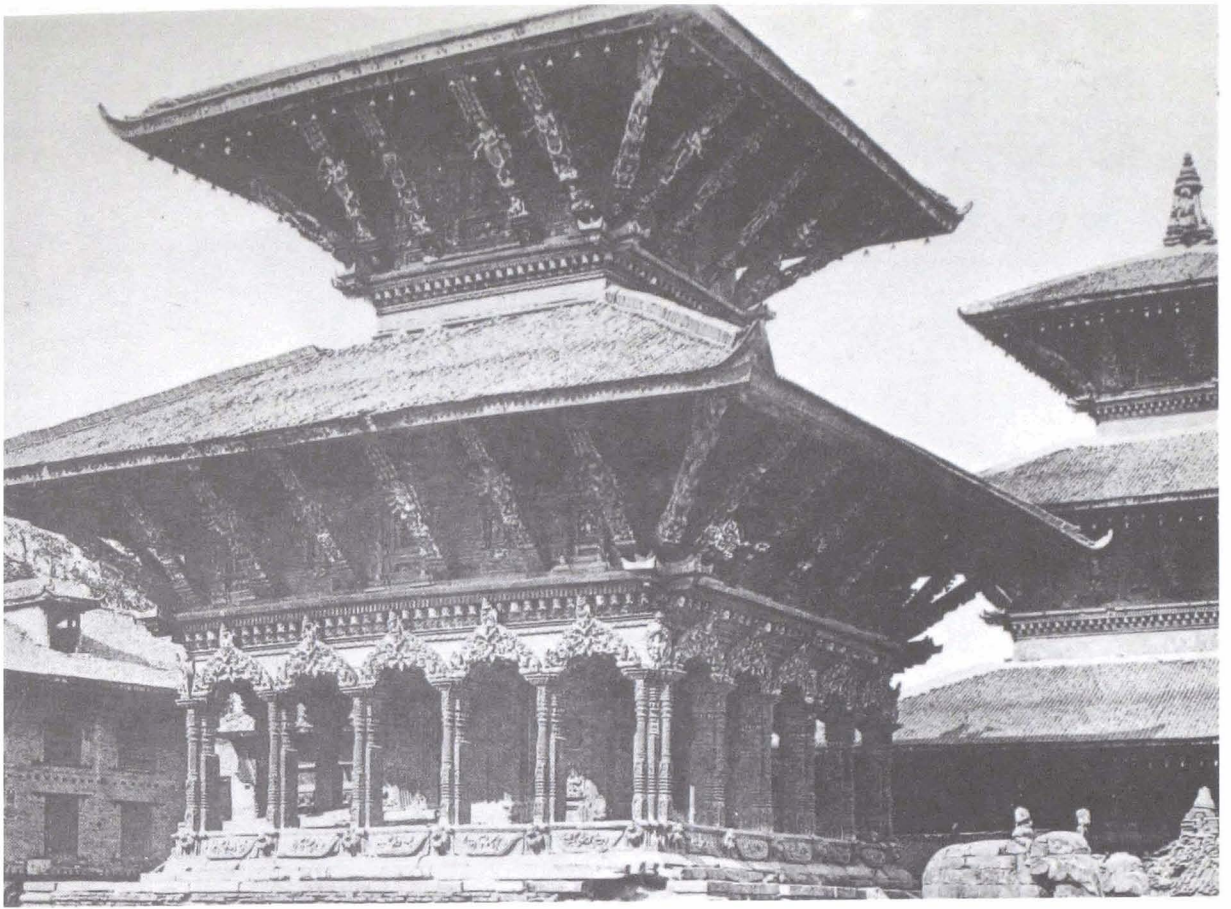
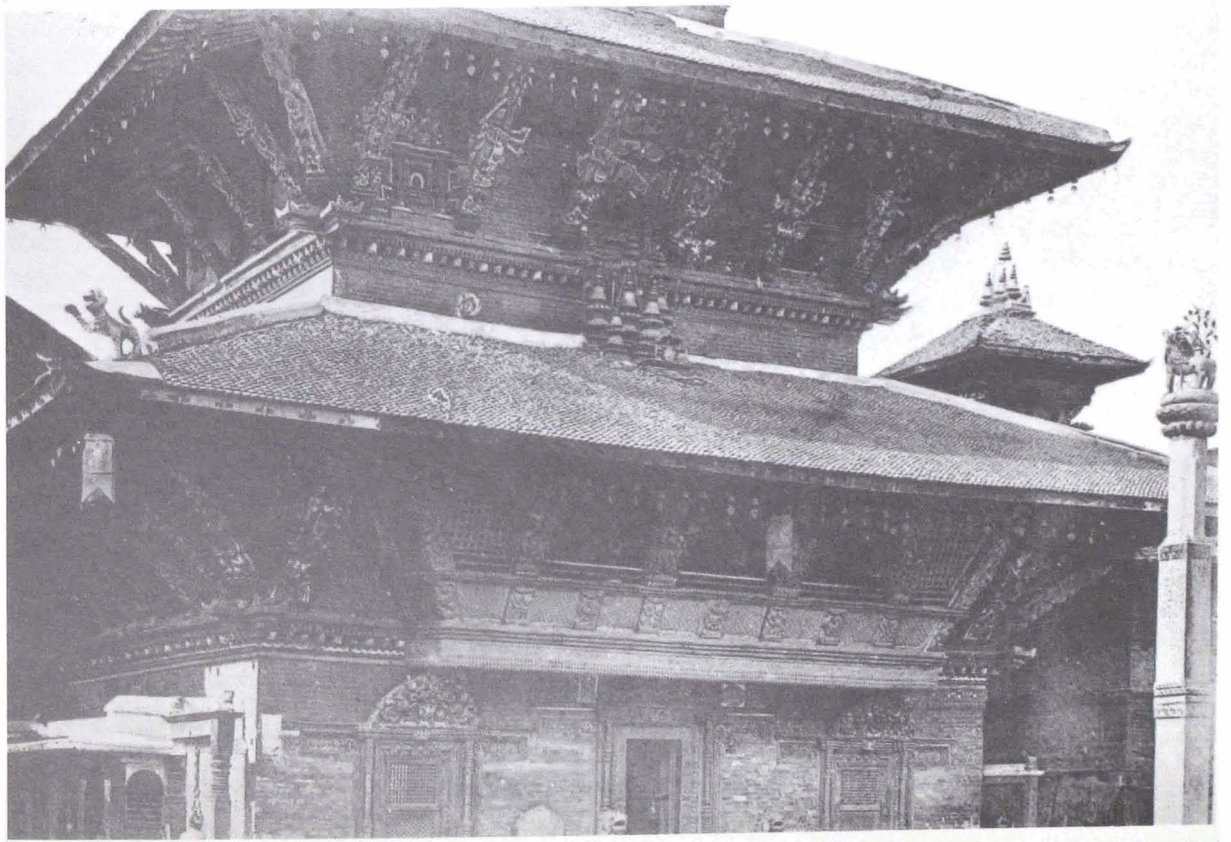


Fig. 53 and 54 Patan (Nepal). General view of two brick and wood pagodas, and a monolith column.



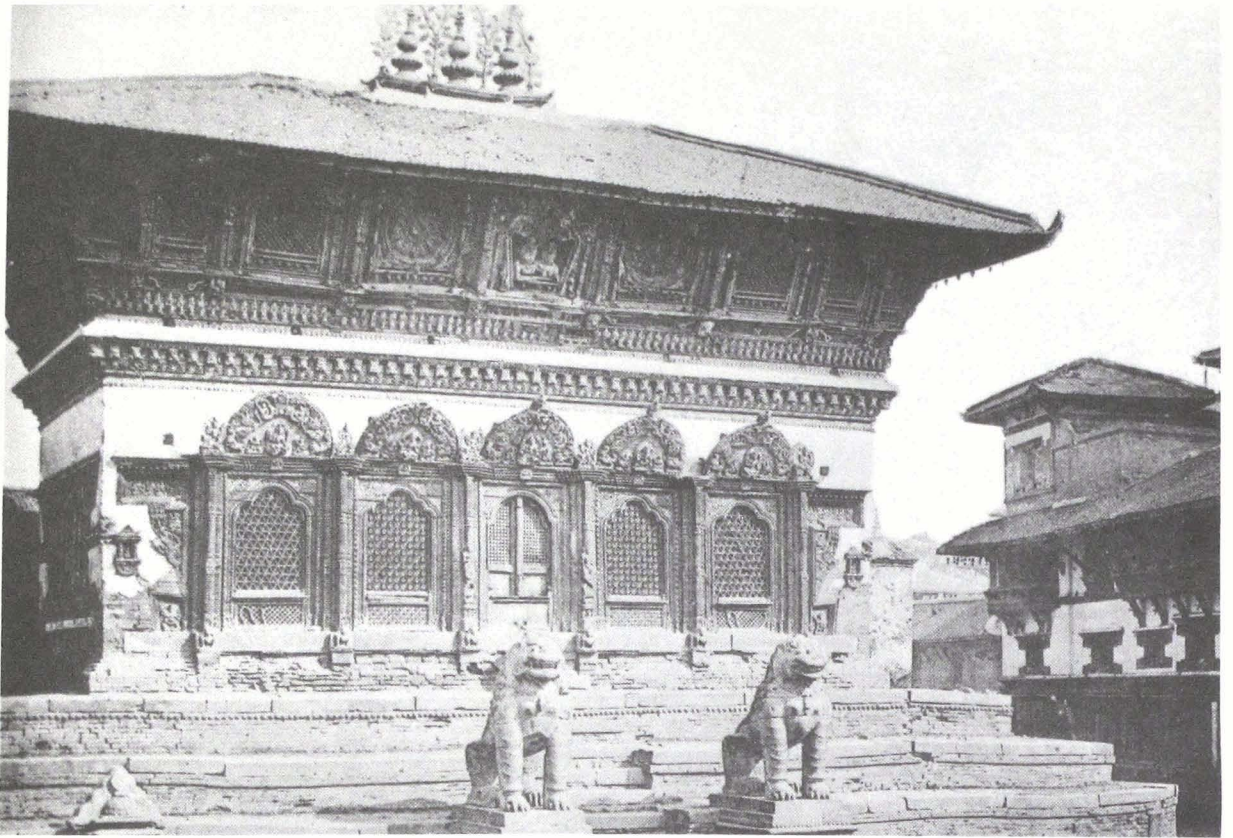
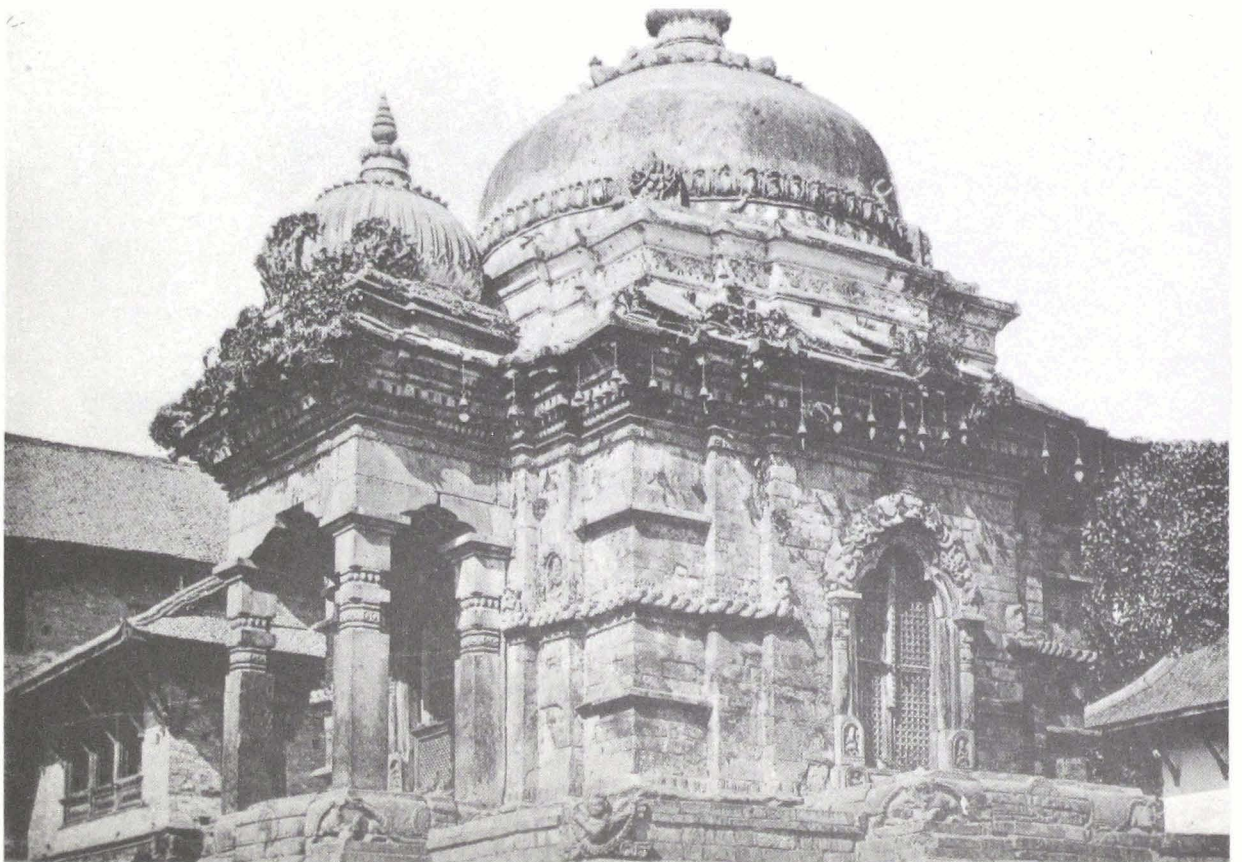


Fig. 55 Kathmandu (Nepal). General view of a brick and wood pagoda.

Fig. 56 General view of a temple entirely in stone.



Monuments of Kathmandu

Kathmandu, the present capital of Nepal, is a city of sixty thousand inhabitants. It was founded, according to local tradition, in 723 A.D.

Kathmandu is inferior, for cleanliness as well as for architecture and picturesqueness, to Bhatgaon and Patan. The king's palace, especially, is a horrid semi-European building, totally lacking in any interest.

The temples of Kathmandu are very numerous, but much inferior to those of the two cities mentioned earlier. There are nevertheless some rich noblemen's houses which have wood carvings as remarkable as those of the palaces in Patan. No people has carried the art of wood-carving as far as the Nepalese have done. Unfortunately it is an art which is losing ground day by day. From information I could gather on the spot, right now there are in the valley of Nepal but about fifteen artists capable of carving wood. When I visited the country, these craftsmen were employed for works lasting several months and it was impossible for me to have, at any price, a commissioned copy of a wood column I wanted to take back to Paris.

The number of temples in Kathmandu is estimated at six hundred. Their style is exactly that of the pagodas with superimposed roofs which we have already described. The most important ones are located in a big square plaza in front of the Palace. The biggest one, the one of

Taleju, was built in 1550.

The temples of Kathmandu are, as in the other cities, Brahmanist and Buddhist. Scarcely half of Kathmandu's population is Buddhist.

We shall give no specific description of these pagodas. Except for a quite remarkable stone temple reproduced further on, they look like those in Patan and Bhatgaon. They are different from one another only by the richness of their sculptures or by their paintings and by the number of stories. The roofs of several of them are covered with bronze.

The houses in Kathmandu are built in a square with a main courtyard, like in the other towns of Nepal. Our plates give an idea of the extreme wealth of their decoration.

Each city temple is of course attended by the followers of the religion to which it had been consecrated. However, there is one located near the city, the temple of Mahenkal (a Sivaist name for the inhabitants of Nepal), which is attended by followers of both religions. The Buddhists claim that the statue, worshipped there by the Brahmanists as an image of Siva, is in fact a previous incarnation of Buddha. In Nepal, as we have already mentioned several times, there is such an intimate mixture of the two cults that it is often impossible, by the sole examination of religious emblems of a temple, to say to which religion it has been consecrated.

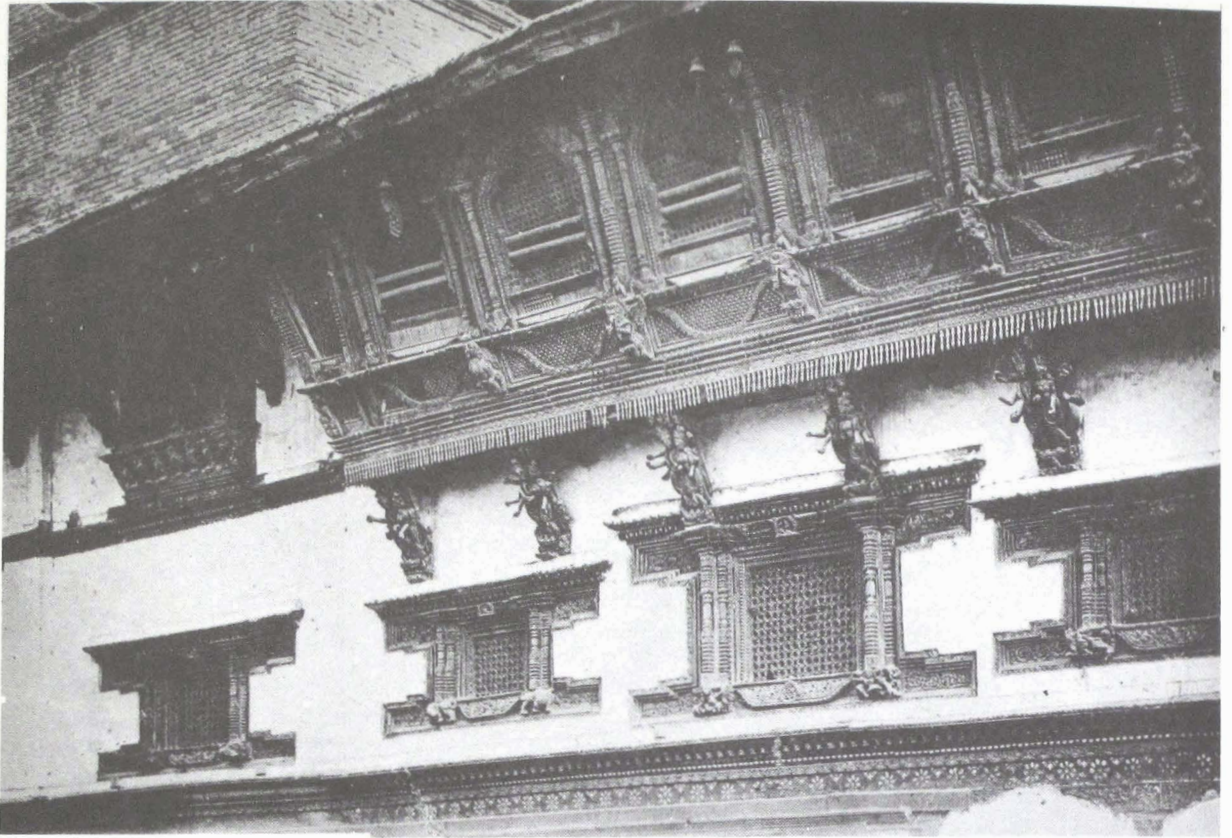
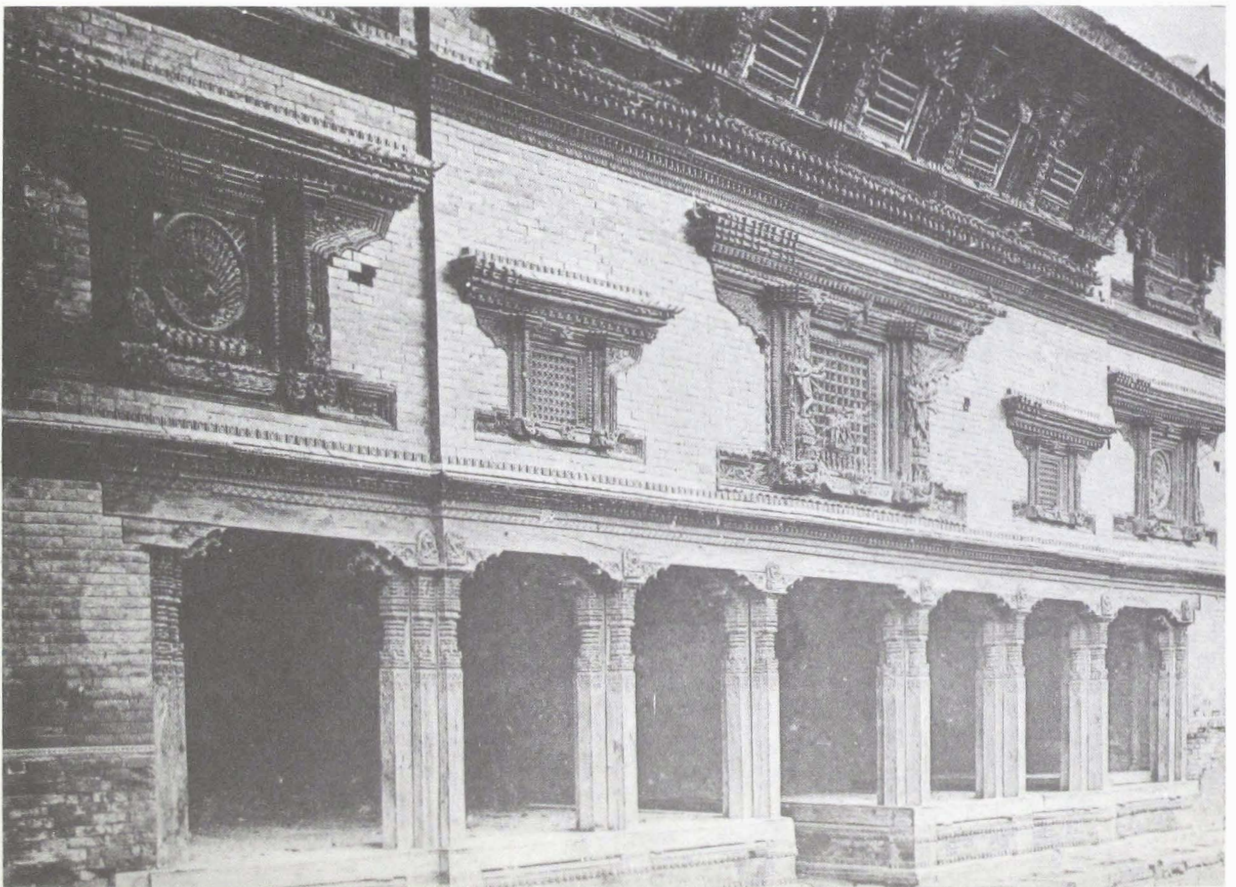


Fig. 57 and 58 Kathmandu (Nepal). Decorative details of the entrance and upper storey of a house.



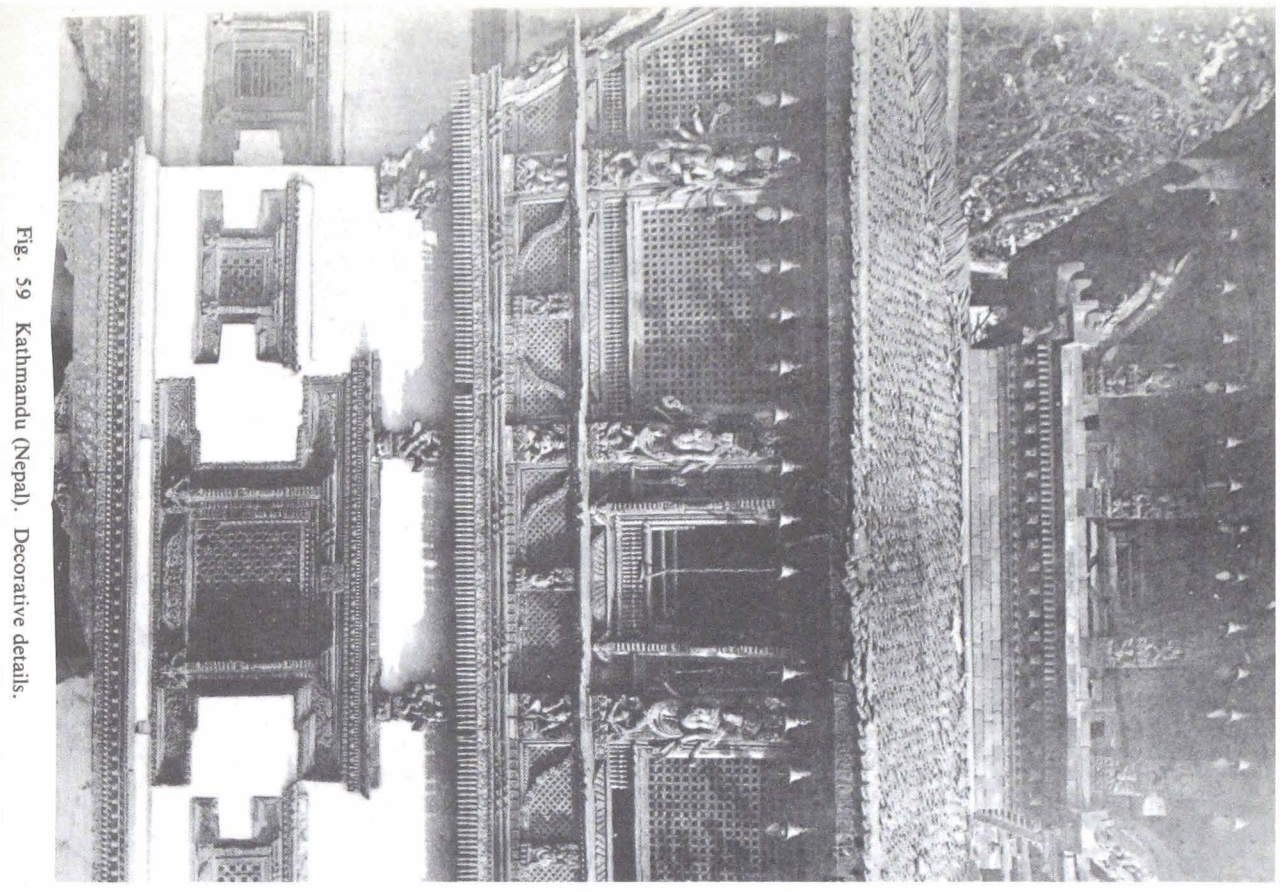


Fig. 59 Kathmandu (Nepal). Decorative details.

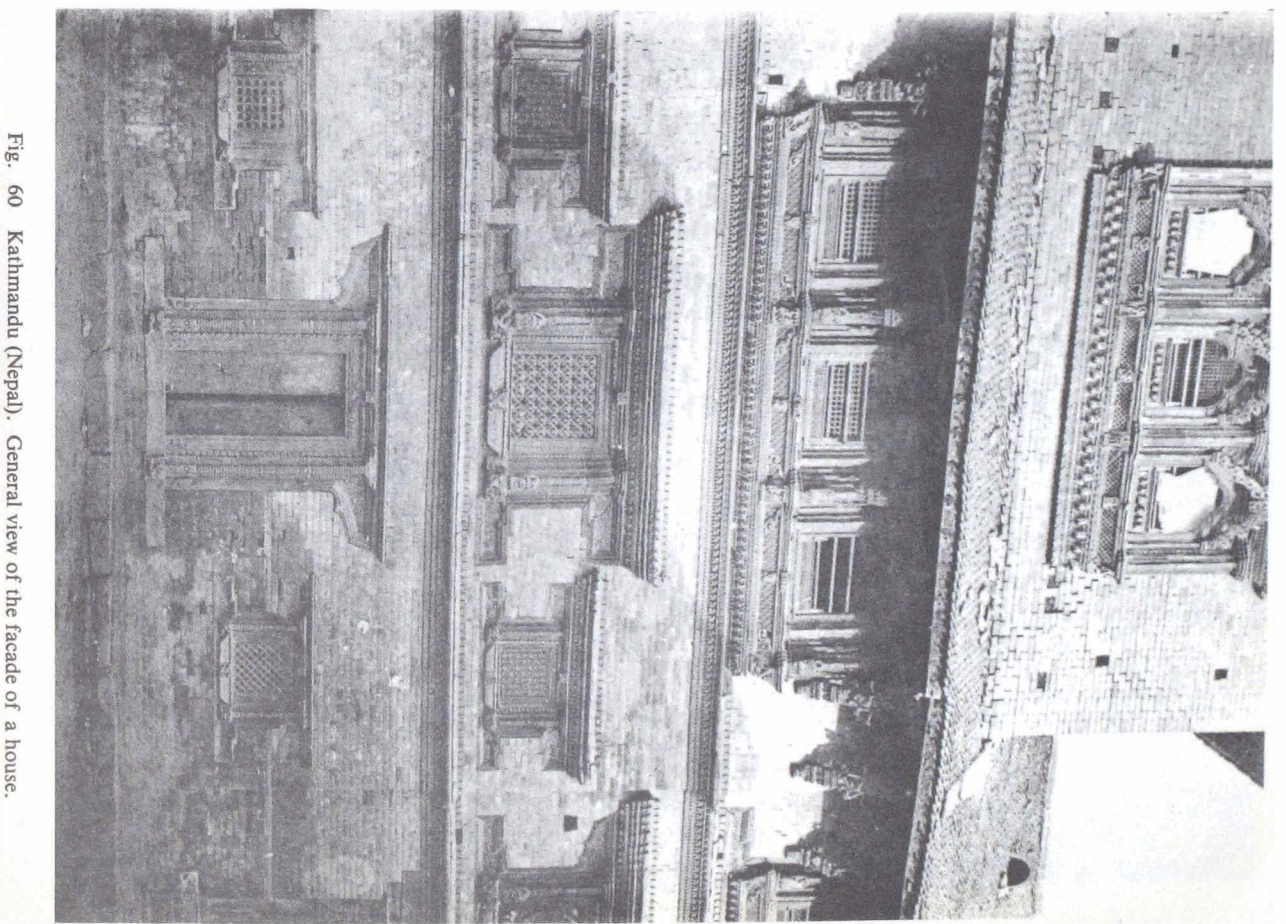


Fig. 60 Kathmandu (Nepal). General view of the facade of a house.

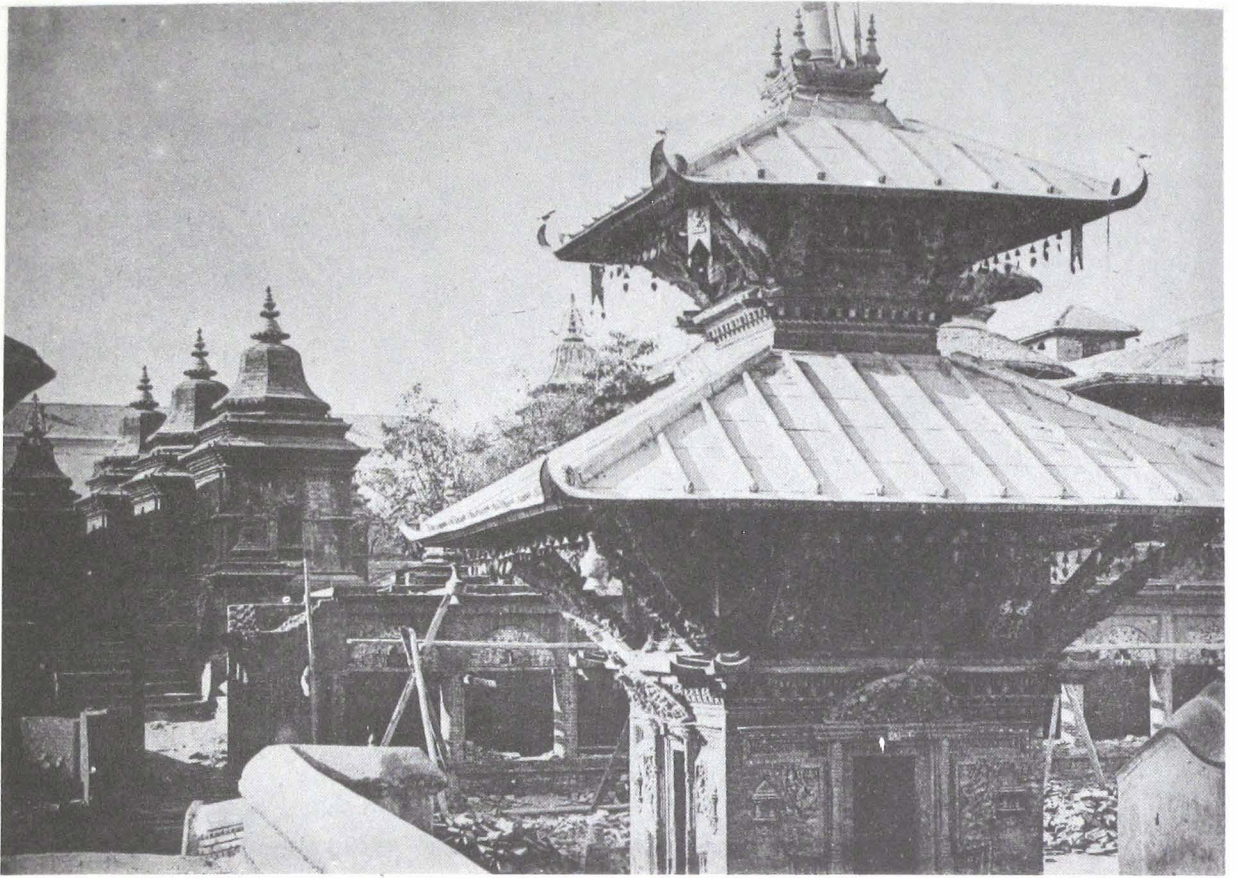


Fig. 61 and 62 Pashpatti (Nepal). View of several temples.



Monuments of Pashpatti

The town of Pashpatti is located on the left bank of the Bagmati river, six kilometers away from Kathmandu. It has many temples in wood and in stone. To get there, one has to cross a river spanned by two bridges. On the other side stands a hill planted with trees, from which one has a general view of the city, as reproduced in one of our plates (fig.396). On the right side, at the second level, the temple of Pashpatti can be seen. It is one of the most revered temples of Nepal, and no foreigner is able to approach it. Its doors are in chiselled silver, in the style of those of the palaces of Bhatgaon and Patan reproduced in this work. In February, twenty thousand pilgrims visit the temple. Near these temple, there is a place reserved for the cremation of widows who want to be burned alive on the body of their dead husbands according to an old practice. This custom is not in use nowadays in India but it is said to prevail still in Nepal.

The temples of Pashpatti seem to date back only to the 17th century. The typical element of these temples, built out of stone, is the bell-shaped dome. In fact, stone temples are a great minority in Nepal; but as can be seen from those reproduced here, the architects seem to have had the task - except in Pashpatti - never to copy a temple from another one. However, the temples in brick and wood seem to have been dominated by the opposite objective.

With Nepal ends our study of the monuments of India, our exploration in a world of fantastic temples and palaces which look like a splendid realization of the *Thousand and One Nights*. Even today, I cannot close my eyes while thinking of India, without visualizing in the dark depths of underground temples and pagodas, a whole crowd of gods, monsters, and goddesses, whose figures, sometimes smiling and graceful, sometimes threatening and awesome, translate faithfully the ideals and dreams of the people who created them. In the sparkling but cold light of modern science, the gigantic epics of gods and heroes, endlessly depicted on the walls of all these mysterious sanctuaries, become pale ghosts, empty mirages. One must still venerate them. For long centuries, thousands of human beings, charmed by the gods born out of their dreams, have forgotten the hardships of existence and suffered misery and death with serenity. Time and human beings destroy day after day the last remains of all the monuments born out of centuries of innocent beliefs. Let us hasten to study these relics of epochs that mankind has probably passed for ever. These remains of vanished worlds, whose outlines fade away and slowly disappear in the haze of ages, tell us again of the feelings and thoughts of races closely linked to our own, and speak to us in a language mankind will soon understand no more.

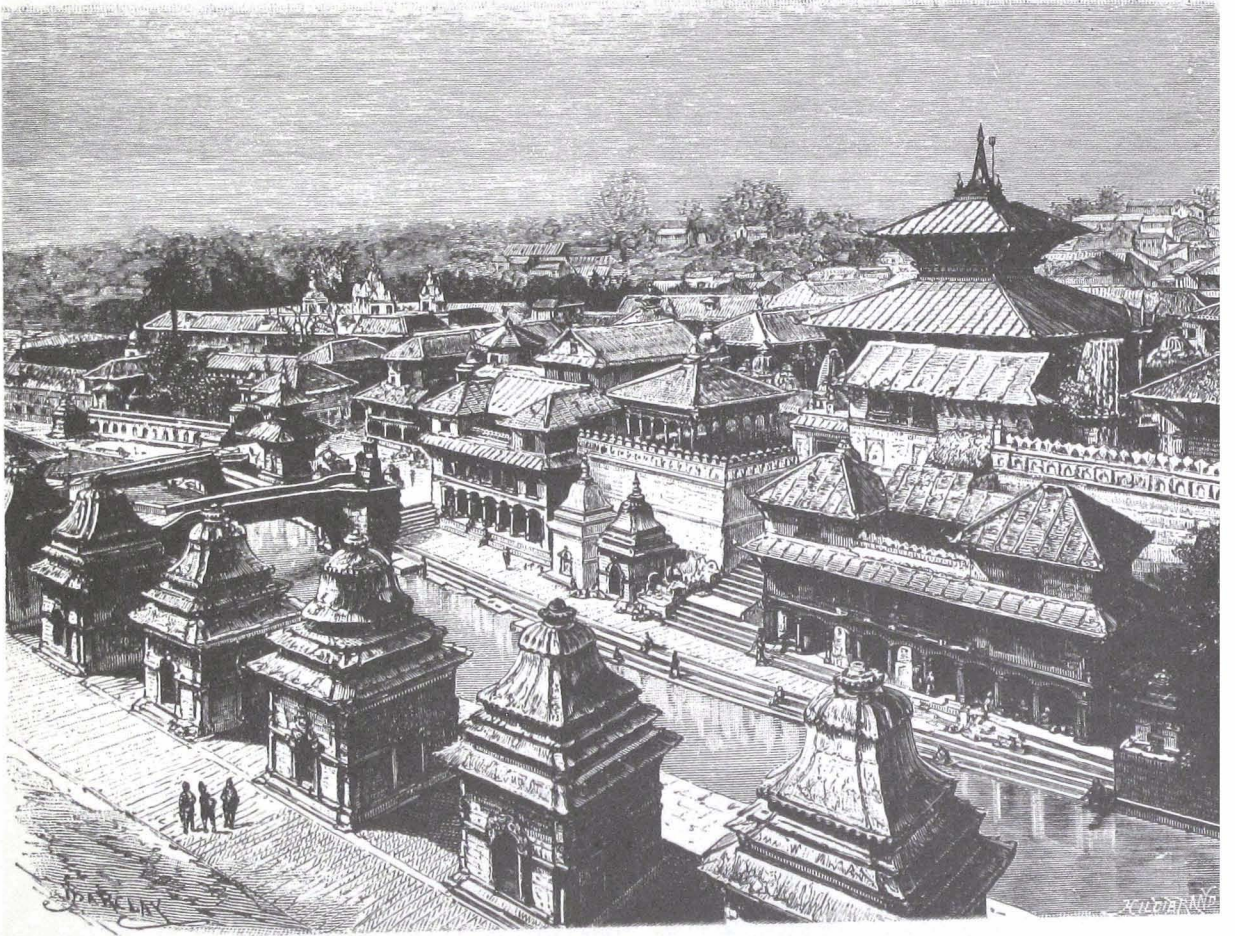


Fig. 63 Pashpatti. General view of temples and of the ghat where widows are burned.



TARTARIA

