

The
**GURKHA
SOLDIER**

BY
MAJOR H. R. K. GIBBS

(6th Gurkha Rifles)

Deputy Recruiting Officer for Gurkhas

CALCUTTA
THACKER, SPINK & CO. (1933) LTD.

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Second Edition

WITH FIFTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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FOREWORD

I have been privileged to be asked to write a foreword to this book on the subject of Gurkhas and do so with much pleasure and in the hope that the trouble which its author has expended on it may reap a deserving reward.

A long experience in the company of Gurkhas, and especially the experience of the last few years of the Second Great War, has proved beyond doubt that a need exists for a conveniently-sized and concise handbook of information on the whole subject of Gurkhas for the use of officers inexperienced in their ethnology and customs. It is even thought that many of riper experience may care to read the book and check up on, possibly, insufficient information, or facts about which they have previously been uncertain in their minds. Official handbooks and larger and more detailed works of reference are in existence which supply much information but the author's aim in this case has been to condense ordinary everyday requirements in as interesting a form as possible and present them to officers as an incentive for further practical interest in the lives and customs of the men with whom so many of us have been lucky enough to serve. I can vouch for the fact that no one is better equipped to launch a book on the market as the author himself with his lengthy and detailed experience among the tens of thousands of Gurkhas of all sorts and sizes and both sexes who

have passed through our Recruiting Depots portals in the last few years. There have been so many opportunities to collect information from various angles and this is now published in short and palatable form. May the book have circulation it deserves.

G. C. STRAHAN COLONEL,
Recruiting Officer for Gurkhas.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

A second edition of "The Gurkha Soldier" has become necessary and the author has decided to make no major changes as he wishes to preserve the handy size of the book and to keep the subject matter to the essentials that a young officer will want to set him on the way to obtaining a fuller knowledge of the salt of the earth, the Gurkha soldier. A few corrections and slight amplifications have been made and it is hoped that some photographs taken by the author at the Gurkha Recruiting Depots may illustrate the descriptions in the text. With all its imperfections the author hopes that it may fulfil its purpose. He is deeply grateful for the helpful criticism he has received from many British and Gurkha friends.

ABBOTTABAD.

N.W.F.P.

MARCH 1947.

H. R. K. GIBBS

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

This small book has been written to meet a need that has arisen during the great expansion of the Gurkha Brigade since 1939. Many officers have told me that they cannot obtain a concise account of the various tribes and classes enlisted in our Regiments and the official Handbook on Gurkhas written by Major C. J. Morris is out of print. Moreover part II and the appendices of that book are now to a certain extent out of date due to changes in organization.

An attempt has been made to deal with the chief classes of Gurkhas and their characteristics without

going deeply into the many ramifications of clans and kindreds.

Chapters have been included to describe the system of recruiting and the work of the Gurkha Recruiting Depots but here again the subject matter has been treated briefly.

The matter of addresses for letters sent to the hills is an important one and all officers are at intervals concerned with this as it is on the correctness of a man's home address as entered in his army documents that so much depends when the question of pension or Family Allotment arises.

Numerous books on Nepal and the Gurkhas have been written in the past which deal with these subjects in greater detail and the serious student will find these in Messes and Libraries. This aims at giving the reader a general picture and also at encouraging enquiries from their men to learn more of these grand men and their fascinating country.

The author realizes the many imperfections of this book but he has endeavoured to keep it within reasonable limits and assist some of the many new British Officers of the Gurkha Brigade who may not have access to well-stocked book-shelves in these days of sudden and frequent moves. Where he has expressed opinions they are personal ones which are the fruit of some twenty-six years of service in the Gurkha Brigade and including three years on the Recruiting Staff. Several visits to Nepal have been of use in preparing the material for this book.

KUNRAGHAT.

H. R. K. GIBBS

I. 7. 1943.

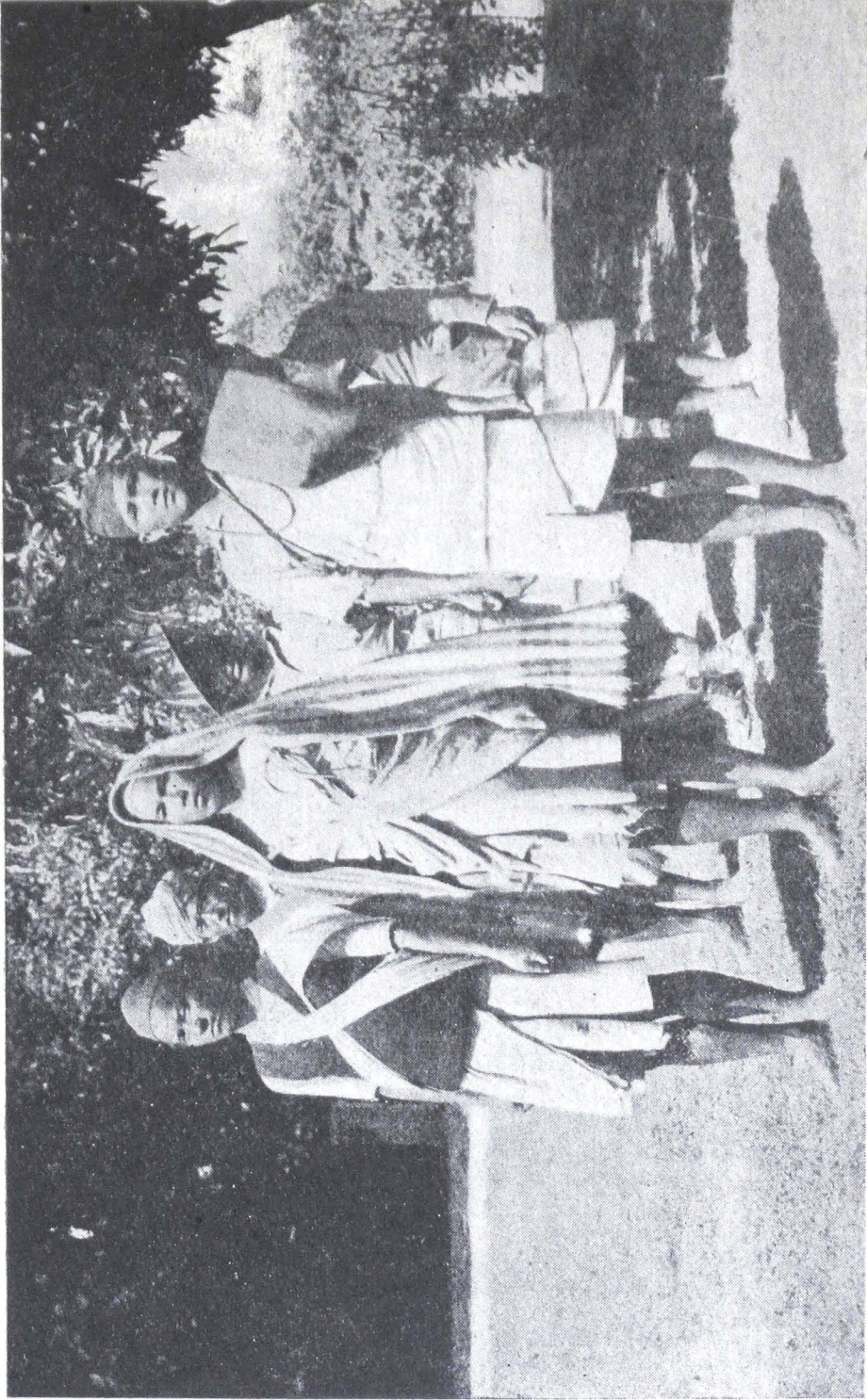
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Gurkha recruits in their hill clothes, Gurungs from Lamjung, with recruiters.

CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY

Nepal is the home of the Gurkha soldier but the term Nepal has a very restricted meaning to the Gurkha. To him it means the Valley of Nepal in which are situated the capital of the country, Kathmandu, and the old cities of Patan and Bhatgaon, an area very roughly 15 miles long by 13 miles wide.

A Gurkha living outside the Valley will always say that he comes "from the hills" not "from Nepal".

In this short book no attempt will be made to describe the country in any detail. Any Atlas will show the reader that it is a country which rises in a series of huge steps from the foothills just beyond the Indian boundary to the main axis of the Himalaya which separates Nepal from Tibet. From these gigantic mountains flow the rivers which add further to the difficulties of travel in the country. With the sole exception of the short rail and road link leading to the Southern ramparts which guard the Valley communications in Nepal are restricted to rudimentary hill tracks often interrupted by rivers and streams in spate. This fact must always be borne in mind when the question of furlough and leave or communication with the men's homes is considered.

The Terai, a belt of heavy tropical jungle running along the Indo-Nepali frontier is not an area from which Gurkha recruits are obtained. Many of the inhabitants are Indians of the same type as those on the Indian side. The Tharus are mongloid and are famous as elephant mahauts and as hunters. They also appear immune from the dreaded Ahwal fever which renders the Terai uninhabitable for others except during the cold weather months.

Nepal is governed in a curious and unique way. His Majesty the King of Nepal takes no part in the actual Government but is described as the fount of honour and epitomises the independence of the country. The succession goes from father to the eldest son or failing sons to the eldest daughter to the King. The King is called Panch (5) Sri Sirkar. All power is effectively in the hands of the Maharaja and the Rana family. The Maharaja or Tin Sirkar, as he is spoken of by the Nepali people, enjoys the full title of His Highness the Maharaja, Prime Minister and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of Nepal. The present Maharaja holds the rank of General in the British Army and is G.C.B. The position of the Maharaja is unique. His power is absolute and every aspect of Government is concentrated in him. He is assisted by the other members of the Rana family which has been the ruling dynasty since the days when Jangbahadur seized the power in 1846. The succession to the office of Prime Minister which is hereditary includes the brothers of the ruling Prime Minister according to age and then his sons and brothers' sons according to age. The eldest son does

not necessarily, in fact merely would, succeed his father. All the important members of the Rana family live in Kathmandu and it is unusual for any of them to go into the hill districts. Some however are Governors of provinces.

Nepal maintains a minister at the Court of St. James in London and Great Britain is represented in Nepal by His Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Nepal. He is referred to as the British Minister for short. The Chancery and Legation are in Kathmandu. In principle it is aimed at that the appointment of First Secretary at the Legation should either be a commanding officer of a Gurkha unit who has completed his command or some such senior British Officer of the Gurkha Brigade who has finished his regimental service. At present the First Secretary at the Legation is a re-employed Lt.-Colonel who formerly commanded a Gurkha Battalion. The Minister is selected from the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India. In accordance with diplomatic usage and custom all communications between the Governments of Great Britain and Nepal are conducted through their respective ministers. Nepal also has a Consul General in New Delhi. It is often asked why the entry into Nepal by Europeans is so restricted. Various reasons are put forward. One is that Nepal is a most orthodox Hindu Kingdom and that restrictions are necessary to avoid desecration of holy places. The real reason is probably that the Nepalese Government are naturally determined to preserve the complete inde-

pendence of the country and wish to be allowed to develop their institutions and administration in their own way on Nepalese lines free from any outside interference. They also do not intend to allow foreigners to exploit the resources of the country nor do they desire that uncontrolled and unchecked outside influences should be allowed to percolate into the districts. A further and probably very cogent reason is that inability personally to see how the wheels go round inside the administration of the country will cover a multitude of sins and stifle any adverse criticism of ways and means at the source. It should be pointed out that this restriction does not apply only to Europeans. A passport is required by anyone wishing to enter Nepal be he Indian or European. A further point is to be noted, that hotels do not exist in Nepal and the few visitors to Kathmandu even are the guests of the British Minister, the Legation Staff, or of the Nepalese Government Officials. Special arrangements are made for pilgrims to the sacred places at various times. Friendly diplomatic relations between the British and Nepalese Governments were established by the Treaty of Segowlie in 1815. This treaty of friendship was reaffirmed in 1923 and various measures relating to trade and customs duty etc., were enacted. Under special arrangements and subject to certain conditions the Nepalese Government permits the recruitment of the martial clans of Nepal for the Gurkha (Rifle) Brigade and for certain other formations such as the Assam Rifles (old Assam Military Police), the Kashmir Rifles and the Burma Army. Recruiting

is carried out solely under the orders of the Recruiting Officer for Gurkhas by means of properly authorized recruiters.

The Recruiting Officer or his Deputy visits Nepal from time to time to discuss recruiting matters with the British Ministers and His Highness the Maharaja.

CHAPTER II

GURKHA CLASSES

What is a Gurkha? The word is familiar enough but its meaning is frequently very loosely interpreted. A clear cut definition is complicated by the two facts that not every man from the Kingdom of Nepal is a true Gurkha and that there are many thousands of Gurkhas who are not Nepalese subjects.

The Darjeeling district of Bengal, the States of Sikkim and Bhutan, the province of Assam and then Burma contain between them several hundred thousands of people who though descended from Nepalese born ancestors are themselves born and bred in the districts they now inhabit. To these must be added the offspring of Gurkha Soldiers who have settled down in the vicinity of Gurkha Regimental Cantonments and the flotsam and jetsam who have drifted into the big cities, the railway colonies and the industrial areas. To the Recruiting Officer however the term Gurkha means something more

restricted. He would perhaps describe a true Gurkha as a man of the martial clans of Nepal. In the normal way recruitment for the regular Gurkha units of the Indian Army is confined to those men only who are of those martial clans and who are actually brought in from the Nepal hills. During this war as in the War of 1914-1919 this definition is extended to cover those who have migrated to the Darjeeling district and to the States of Sikkim and Bhutan.

It may be of interest here to record that in 1942 when many Gurkha refugees from Burma found their way into India some doubt arose as to the genuine Gurkha character of these poor people. A number of them united to forward a petition or memorandum to the Maharaja of Nepal in which they stated that they considered themselves to be true Gurkhalis and that they had married among themselves only and lived according to the Nepali traditions and customs handed down to them by their parents. The writer saw and dealt with many of these refugees and only twice did he come across a Gurkha who had married a Burman woman. However these are the exceptional cases and for all practical purposes the Recruiting Officer's definition may be taken as the right one.

Nepal contains many other classes which are not Gurkhas. These will be mentioned later on but for the present we may concern ourselves with the main classes of Gurkhas.

These are Thakurs, Chetris, Magars, Gurungs, Tamangs, Limbus, Rais, Sunwars and perhaps the

Newars who are the original inhabitants of Central Nepal especially the Valley.

With the exception of the Newars all these classes have one thing in common, an ancient claim to the bearing of arms and military service. All habitually carry the national weapon the Kukri. The position of the Newars is somewhat unusual and will be considered by itself. The remainder differ in appearance in varying degrees. The Rais perhaps have a more typical mongloid face. At the other end of the scale the Chetri shows a greater tendency to approximate the Indian. All now-a-days can speak Nepali the lingua franca of Nepal though thirty or forty years ago it was common to find recruits who knew only their own tribal language. A curious modern development is that the women folk by nature more conservative and stay-at-home, are now in many cases able to speak and understand Nepali. The vast majority of recruits are quite illiterate and the very few who can write use the Deva Nagri script.

The costumes and customs of the various classes will be touched on in the sections dealing with those classes.

It will be noted that the term clans and kindreds are frequently referred to in subsequent chapters. These may best be understood by comparison with the Scots Clans and Septs.

CHAPTER III

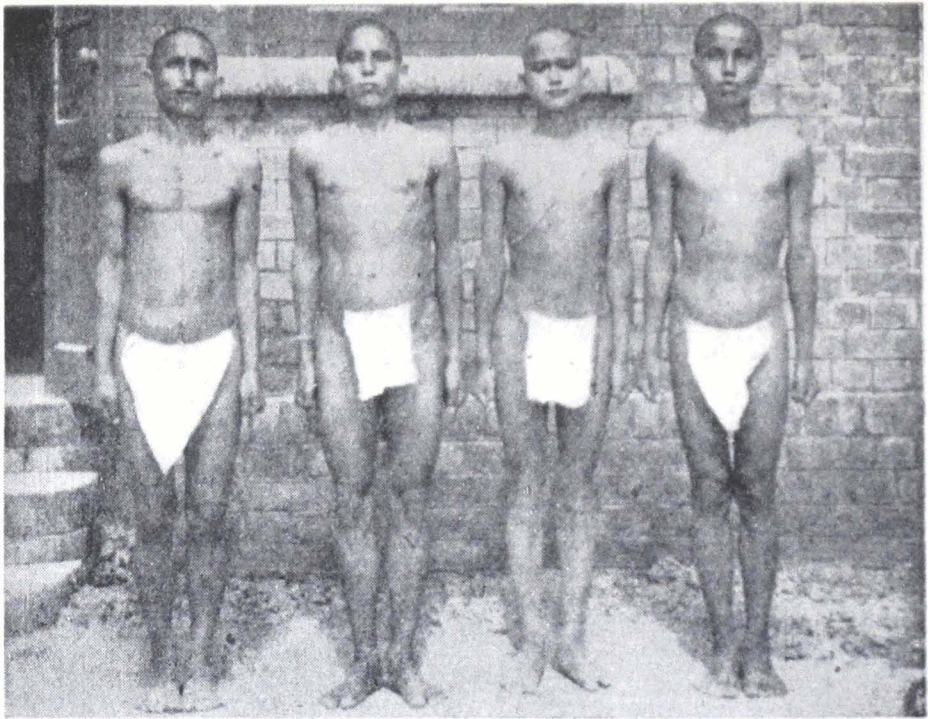
THAKURS

The Thakurs are scattered fairly widely throughout the whole country and are often found to occupy important positions in the social organization and Government appointments of Nepal. In appearance they are generally Mongolian and their dress is the same as that of Magars and Gurungs from whom it is difficult for the uninitiated to distinguish them. Their social prestige is very high and they claim to be of royal descent and in fact are generally regarded as standing next to the Brahmin in the social order. The present royal family of Nepal are Thakurs of the Sahi clan.

The clans of the Thakurs are as follows:—

BAM. BANSI. JYU. JIVA. MAN. NAVAKOTYA. SAMAL. SEN.* CHAND.* KALYAN. POKHRELI. SIG or SING.* HAMAL.* KHAN.* RAIKA. SURAJ-BANSI. RAKSYA. ISMALI. MALL* or MALLA. RUCAL. UCHAI. SAHI.*

Those clans which are most commonly met with in our regiments are marked with an asterisk in the list above. The clans are often further sub-divided into Kindreds which frequently indicate the district from which a clan originated *e.g.*, a Bhirkotya Khan is a man whose family originally hailed from Bhirkot even though the man himself may now be living in Salyan.



Thakur recruits.

A Thakur always refers to himself by his clan name *e.g.*, as Dalbir Chand, Bahadur Sig or Indrabir Khan. A Thakur woman however is always known as a Thakurni and not by the clan name.

The offspring of a slave woman of the old days by a Thakur father became known as a Khwas. A Khwas will always claim the Kindred of his father but he will always be a Khwas and can only marry a Khwas woman, their children in turn remain Khwas.

It is of interest that illegitimate children of the Nepalese royal family are also known as Khwas.

In normal times the majority of Thakurs are enlisted in the 9th Gurkha Rifles but all other regiments have enlisted a certain number. They are most desirable recruits in every way. A Thakur need not adopt the sacred thread (Janeo) until he marries and he can consequently eat with other classes and does until that takes place. His caste restrictions are in any case not numerous nor does he incline to allow them to become too prominent. Generally speaking they are far above average in intelligence and many of them have a considerable amount of education as children. A large proportion attain Gurkha Officers rank.

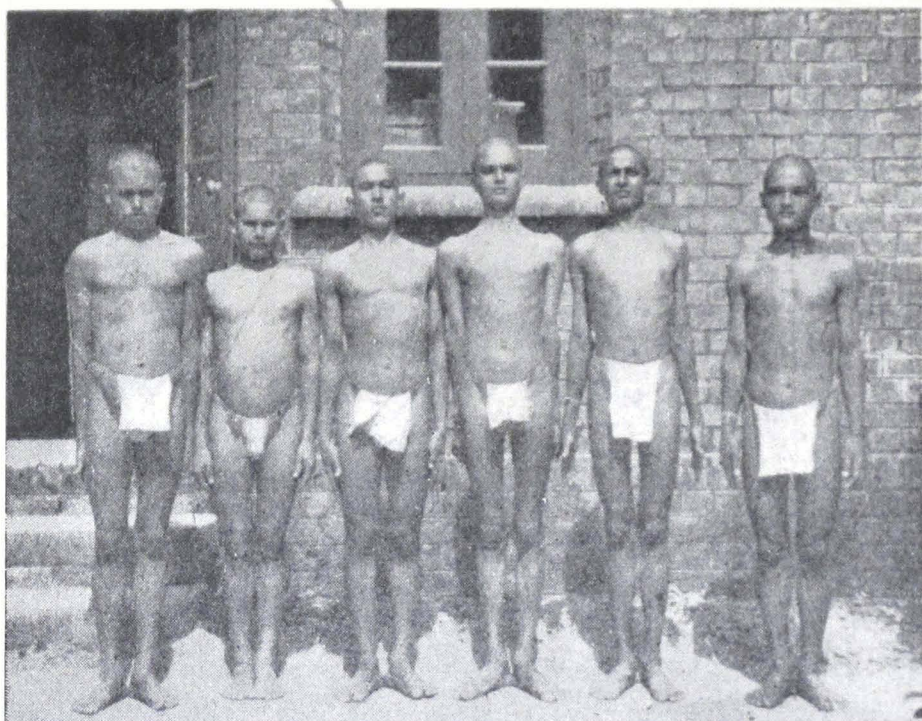
A Thakur man may marry any Thakurni girl of a clan other than his own *e.g.*, a Sen may marry the daughter of a Hamal, of a Khan or any other Thakur except a Sen.

The marriage ceremonies are performed by a Brahmin and are similar to those of any Gurkha marriage.

CHAPTER IV

CHETRIS

The word Chetri (also spelt Chhetri) is derived from the Sanscrit Ksatriya meaning the warrior class. This at once gives the main characteristic of the Chetri. He is a more orthodox Hindu than most other Gurkhas and considers himself of a superior social status. He has also a greater degree of Hindu-Indian blood and tradition in his make-up. In old books they are frequently referred to as Khas Gurkhas and their language was called Khaskura *i.e.*, the language of the Khas. It is now known that there were people in Nepal known as Khas long before the Brahman made himself felt in the country. The modern Chetri is the result of many generations gradually absorbing various immigrants from India who were driven into the sanctuary of Nepal by Mahomedan invasions. Without going into details it is probably correct to say that the Brahmin and the Rajput driven by persecution from India contributed mainly to founding the Chetri race. They married Magar or Gurung women and converted some indigenous inhabitants. The ultimate mixture formed the Chetri as we know him to-day. The greater number have a distinct appearance being slighter, taller and darker than the other tribes but one occasionally comes across Chetris who are not readily distinguished from Magars. There are in fact many branches of the Ranas and Thapas for



Chetri recruits and recruit boy.

example who have obviously split in the distant past, one stream remaining Magars and the other stream becoming Chetris. The normal Chetri has a more pronounced nose than the flatter one of his more Mongolian compatriots; he also usually has a heavy beard and hair on the limbs and body whereas the other Gurkhas rarely boast more than a few wisps of a moustache even when a grown man. The Chetri is scattered fairly widely over the whole country but he is found in greater numbers in the Valley and more central areas such as Gulmi. Of recent years large numbers of Chetris have been recruited from Eastern Nepal. Their dress is similar to that of other Gurkhas but more of them wear the suruwal (trousers which fit closely from the knee down) than the patuka which is a long cloth wound round the hips producing a kilt effect.

As has been indicated the Chetri is an orthodox Hindu and is stricter in religious observance than other Gurkhas. On active service the Chetri will put aside his caste rules but under peace time conditions he observes the laws as to food. Any Gurkha can partake of food and water from a Chetri but the reverse is not the case and especially in the case of rice and dhall. The vast majority of Chetris wear the sacred thread or janeo but those who do not will eat with Magars and Gurungs etc. Where numbers of Chetris serve together it is therefore necessary to allow them to have cooks and water-carriers of their own caste. The females of this class are known as Chetrinis and can readily be recognized by the donkey-fringe of hair over the forehead. In peace

time the 9th Gurkha Rifles is the only wholly Chetri and Thakur regiment having been constituted as such in 1894 upto which time it was an Indian regiment. It is thus often thought that the high social position of the Chetri is responsible for the 9th Gurkha Rifles being the senior unit of the Gurkha Brigade, but the seniority is really due to the fact that the regiment as an Indian Regiment of Infantry became a regular unit of the Line in 1823, before the other Gurkha units were transferred from the list of irregular or local corps to the Line. The Chetri does however enjoy great social prestige and in Nepal he is looked up to as a member of the upper class. Large numbers of Chetris serve in the Nepalese Army, the Rifles and Passupati Prasad Regiments being famous units composed of Chetris and Thakurs. Chetris have always been recruited in other units of the Gurkha Brigade in varying numbers and during the Great War of 1914-1919 as in the World War which broke out in 1939 many thousands have joined Magar and Gurung Regiments. Numerically they are a very great class in the population. The chief clans of Chetris are:—Adhikari, Baniya, Basanet, Bhandari, Bist, Bohra, Bura-thoki or Bura, Gharti, Karki, Khatri.

Chetris normally call themselves by their clan and name *e.g.*, Lalbir Basnet etc., but the generic name Chetri is also correct.

A Chetri may marry any Chetrini of another clan.

These are subdivided into numerous kindreds detailed lists of which may be found in the official handbook on Gurkhas. Many of these kindred

names are similar in the case of Magars. This is explained by the fact noted above that some Chetris and Magars spring from a common stock before the present caste distinctions became clear. In other cases as the Magars adopted the customs and religious observances of their more orthodox compatriots they took upon themselves the kindred names too.

Before closing this chapter on Chetris there is one class we must consider separately. The Matwala Chetris are the offspring of a Chetri father and a Magar or Gurung mother. They adopt the clan name of the Chetri father but are not admitted into the caste of the father and no real Chetri not even the father, will eat with them. They do not wear the sacred thread. If a Chetri marries a Magar woman of the Rana clan the children of the marriage will be known as Bhat Ranas.

A development of recent years is of interest as showing the evolution of a class. There are many Matwala Chetris in Piuthan and Sallyan, the most westerly districts recruited by the Gurkha Regiments. The majority of these Matwalas now claim to stand on their own feet and insist on calling themselves Matwalas pure and simple and disclaim any connection with Chetris. They do not wear the thread and will eat and drink with Magars. Their clans so far identified are as follows:—

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Basnet. | 6. Chalaune. |
| 2. Bhandari. | 7. Rana. |
| 3. Bisht. | 8. Rawat. |
| 4. Bohra. | 9. Rewle. |
| 5. Burathoki. | 10. Woli. |

The above classification does NOT apply to Matwala Chetris from areas other than Sallyan.

The Gurkha Recruiting Depot for Western Nepal at Kunraghat has accepted the position and for the sake of clearness all such men from Sallyan are enlisted under the name of Matwala. ,

Although as often happens in the case of mixed bred people some of them are coarse and undesirable as recruits there are many excellent men among them. Some are so like the Magars they live among that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible to tell them apart. In the past a few have enlisted as Magars without being detected as Matwala Chetris

A difficulty which is sometimes experienced in days of intensive recruiting when recruiters do not personally know the lads they bring in, is that of the Brahman who wishes to enlist. Sometimes the recruiter knows the lad is in fact a Brahman but presents him as a Chetri. This would not matter so much if the lad was keen to soldier and was physically fit. The real trouble lies in the fact that the religious authorities in Nepal insist that if a Brahman goes overseas he loses his caste for ever. In the case of all Gurkhas, on return from active service overseas a strict purification ceremony known as Panipatiya must be performed before he is ceremonially clean. This purification will not be granted or performed for a Brahman if he is known to be one and he becomes an outcaste for life. This being so recruitment of Brahmans is not allowed. Some men have got away with it and have posed as Chetris and duly obtained Panipatiya but the vast

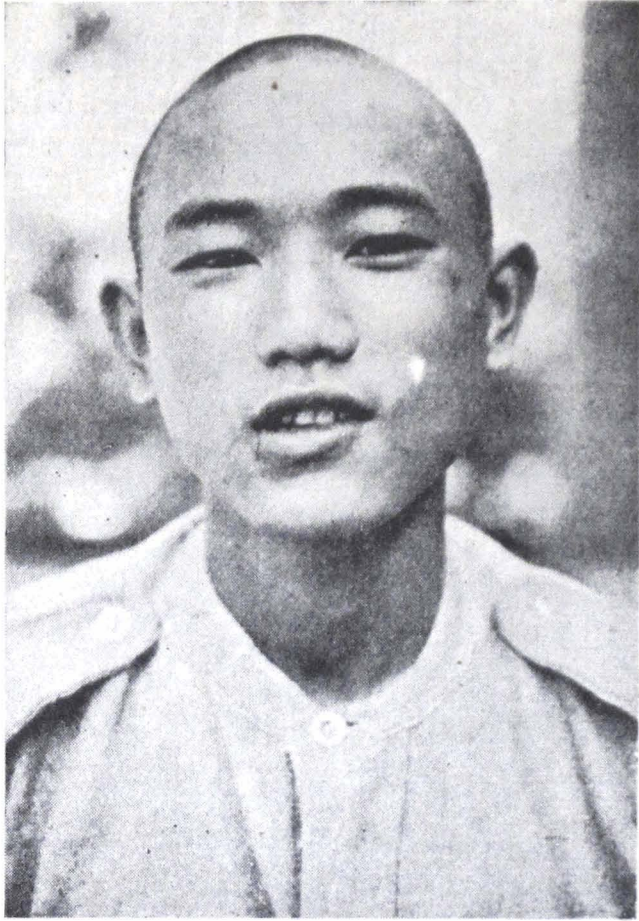
majority are found out before they have served very long. The writer knew one Jaisi Brahman, that is the son of a Upadhyaya Brahman who had married the widow of a Brahman, who served in the Army for nearly 30 years and was in Mesopotamia in the first Great War. He was a Subadar Major when he died and held the honour of the O.B.I. and was an honorary lieutenant. One other complication is that presented by the strict Chetri who wears the sacred thread and in his home conforms to all the rules of his caste. He may temporarily remove his thread either on his own initiative or because he was persuaded to do so by an unscrupulous recruiter, and enlist in a Magar or Gurung regiment. Then he may find life not quite so pleasant as he anticipated and so he suddenly produces his thread and makes difficulties over his food and so on.

Of course he may be punished for making a false statement when his enrolment form was being completed but that does not solve the difficulty in all cases.

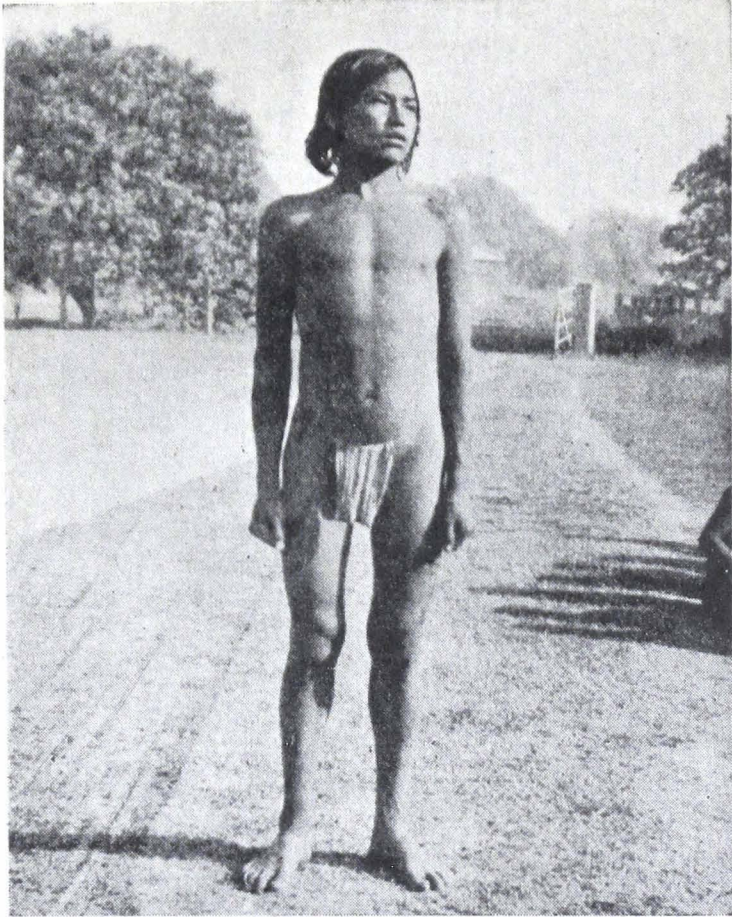
CHAPTER V

MAGARS

The Magars furnish the greatest number of men from any of the Gurkha Classes for the Gurkha Brigade. Of the seven regiments composed mainly of Magars and Gurungs the Magars form approximately two thirds. The Magars are said to have been settled originally chiefly in the Tehsil of Palpa and to have spread over the Central and Western areas of Nepal steadily during the past seven hundred years. Palpa was until recent times a kingdom of its own and was bigger in extent than the present tehsil. To-day the Magars are found in most districts from the hills west of the Valley of Nepal right across to Dailekh in the West. There have been Magar settlements for many years in Eastern Nepal but they were not recruited in any numbers. The great expansion of the Gurkha Brigade in the years 1940 to 1943 has led to a big intake of these men and it has been found that many more Magars are in Eastern Nepal than was formerly thought to be the case. They usually pronounce their clan name as Mangar. A further point of interest is that recruiting efforts and reconnaissances have shown that much country in Salyan and Piuthan has been newly colonised during the past two or three generations by Magars who have moved west from the more thickly populated areas in Central Nepal. The emigration of Gurkhas both to the West and to the East into the Darjeeling district, Sikhim



Magar (Ale).



Magar (Pun from Jilla 4000 Parbat).

and Bhutan is a striking proof of the great pressure of an increasing population.

Longer contact with refugees from Hindu India in the days of Muslim invasions has left a greater degree of influence with Magars than with the Gurungs. This probably accounts for the fact that some of them do not appear quite so mongloid and for the greater degree of religious orthodoxy in their customs. These remarks apply more to the big clans called the Ranas and the Thapas than to the others. Taken as a whole the Magars are typical Gurkhas and provide us with some of the finest soldiers in the whole Army. The great Magar tribe is divided into seven clans viz.:—Ale; Bura or Burathoki; Gharti; Pun; Rana; Roka and Thapa. Of these the Thapa is the largest and the Roka the smallest clan. All are equal in social status and inter-clan marriages are usual and normal. A Magar may marry the daughter of a man of any kindred except his own *e.g.*, a Resmi Ale may marry the daughter of any other Magar clan or kindred except of the Resmi kindred. There are however some cross-cousin marriages which are somewhat complicated and differ from those permitted to Gurungs; for instance a Magar may marry the daughter of his mother's brother but not the daughter of his father's sister which latter is permissible for a Gurung. On the other hand a Magar girl may marry the son of her father's sister. The modern tendency is to avoid cousin marriages and for a man to marry outside his clan. This is, however, not by any means universal among Magars. Quite a number of cases

of Magar-Gurung inter-marriages have come to the notice of the recruiting staff of recent years. This certainly happened in previous times before the present clan system became distinct.

The Ale clan produces very desirable recruits of fine appearance but they are not very numerous.

The Ghartis are of several kinds and need careful recruiting as many are of doubtful breed. In the past a slave who was freed became a Gharti and as many born slaves were illegitimate children of very mixed parentage it will be readily understood that this strain was undesirable from many points of view. It should be noted in passing that prior to the abolition of slavery in Nepal in 1924 there were two types of slaves. The first were Kamaros who were just the private property of their owners as were cattle or pieces of furniture and could be sold as such; they were usually the descendants of slaves although many were the children of a slave girl who had gratified her owner. All Kamaros were regarded as complete outcastes. The second class named Banda were individuals who voluntarily or through force of circumstances bound themselves as slaves to repay a debt. Such people could and did often work out their debt and become freemen again.

The Royal Degree abolishing slavery also abolished the term Kamaro and established a special clan or caste known as Siva Bhakti. They are officially allowed to marry into the Gharti clan and no doubt in the course of time will be completely absorbed into the clan although the taint of slavery and the consequent aversion persists to-day.

The Bhujiyal kindred regard themselves as superior to other Ghartis. They are mainly shepherds and take their name from the river Bhuji Khola which flows through northern Gulmi. Recent investigations and a study of kindred names suggests a close connection between Ghartis, Puns and Buras especially in the tehsils of Sallyan and Piuthan. The Puns are perhaps more localized than other Magars and the greater number come from the north, especially from the districts of Baglung and Char Hazar Parbat.

Generally speaking Puns are very Mongolian in looks and a typical Pun from 4000 Parbat wears his hair long and greased with ghi. A very marked characteristic of many Puns and one shared with Buras particularly of the west, is the wide lower jaw. It is often so pronounced as almost to resemble a swollen tumour on the angles of the jaw. Many come from the borders of Tibet and indeed there is little doubt that some of these are as much Tibetan as Nepalese. The tribes known as Thakalis who carry on a great deal of the Salt trade with Tibet are in close contact with the Puns and resemble them so closely that for many years they have supplied the Gurkha Brigade with numerous excellent recruits under the borrowed name of Pun.

The Rokas are not numerous and are sometimes confused with the Chetri Rokas. The Magar Rokas are found in the same country as the Puns, but mainly in Gulmi, and have produced some very fine recruits though only in small numbers.

The more one sees of the Bura or Burathoki the greater does his similarity to the Pun appear. This

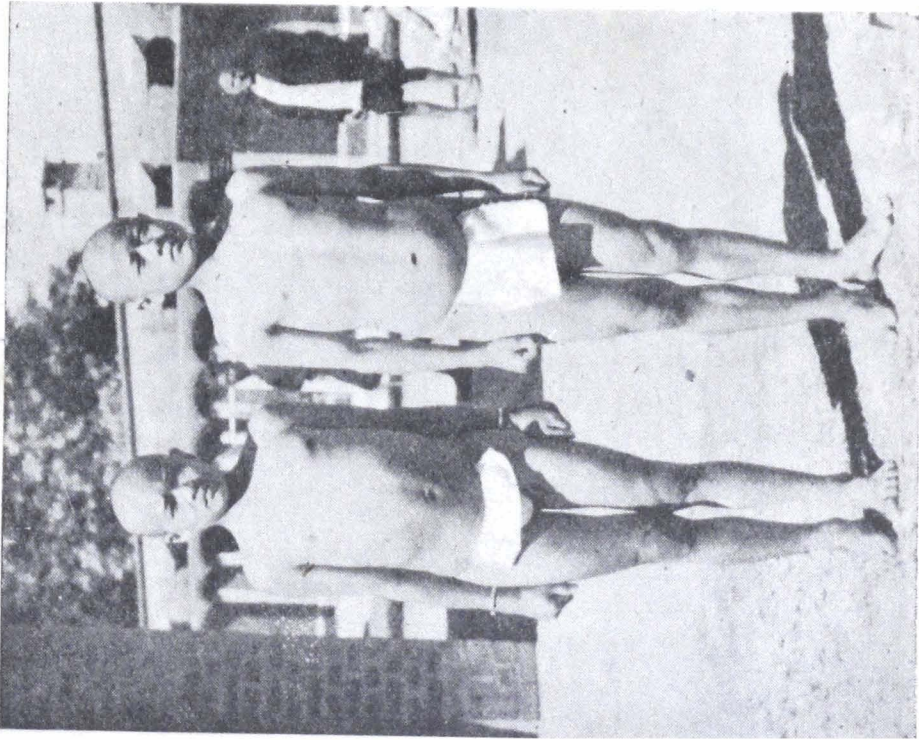
is strikingly demonstrated by the large numbers recruited from Piuthan and Sallyan during recent years. They tend to be big, heavily built men and are excellent soldiers. The Ranas are plentiful and widely distributed throughout the country. The Chitore or Chitaure kindred is very numerous and undefined legend suggests a connection with the Rajput Hindu refugees from Chitore fleeing from Muslim invasion. It may be that early Magars who became converted to orthodox Hinduism as a result of their contact with these immigrants adopted the name of Chitore. That however is only speculation. At one time they certainly claimed a social superiority and within the last hundred years a Magar of the Thapa kindred who had lost three generations of ancestors in battle became a Rana. This superiority is not claimed nor is it apparent to-day. It should be noted that there is a Chetri Rana clan.

The Thapa is the largest single clan among all Gurkhas and its members are widely distributed and greatly enlisted. As is only natural the name of so large a clan lends itself as a cloak under which others sometimes enlist. Given the time and a knowledge of the kindreds of the Thapa clan it should in theory be easy to detect the imposter but in practice it is not so easy as that.

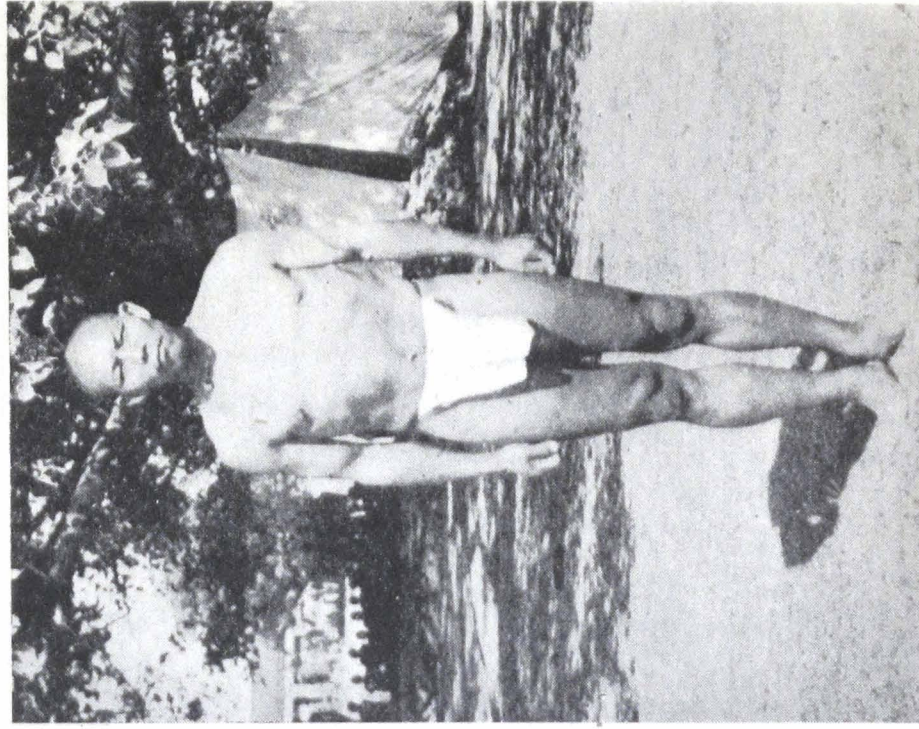
Magars have a language of their own known as Magar Kura which is the same among all who speak it. Not all Magars speak it—the Ales, Ranas and Thapas being perhaps its chief users. It is interesting to note that the women who as everywhere are more conservative than men do not now-a-days speak



Magars from Piuthan, two Buras on the right.



Magar (Ranas).



Magar (Thapa from Palpa).

Magar Kura to the same extent as formerly. During the past twenty five years it has been noted that the majority of Magarnis have come to speak Nepali. Many Puns and Buras speak a dialect called Kam Kura which varies greatly from place to place.

All Magar women are described as Magarni and not by a clan name *e.g.*, Tilkunwari the wife of Subir Thapa should be entered in a family pension claim as Tilkunwari Magarni.

Men are called by their clan name; *e.g.*, Subir Thapa, Manbahadur Gharti and so on. It is incorrect to refer to a Magar merely as a Magar nor should he be referred to by kindred name for instance—Manbahadur may be of the Bhujiyal kindred of the Gharti clan. He is known as Manbahadur Gharti.

CHAPTER VI

GURUNGS

The Gurungs for the most part inhabit higher and more northerly country than the Magars although small settlements are found scattered in other parts of the country. A few are found in Eastern Nepal but they are usually Gurungs in little but name as they have lost the chief characteristics of Gurungs. Large numbers of the finest Gurung recruits have been obtained from Gorkha, Lamjung, Kaski, Payung, Satung, Tanhu and Bhirkot. There are also many in No. 1 West, a district which is closed by the Nepal Government against recruiting for the Gurkha Brigade.

It is not an easy matter to distinguish a Gurung soldier from a Magar although in their own country little differences in clothing sometimes are apparent to the knowing eye. All Gurungs however, wear a thread necklace known as a "rup". It is composed of 9 strands in the case of men and 7 in the case of women and has 9 or 7 knots tied in it as the case may be. Another minor characteristic which has been noted is for some Gurungs, especially those from the area round the Andhi Kholā in Garhung and Bhirkot to have sharper, slightly hooked nose as opposed to the broad nose of the majority of Magars and Gurungs.

Whereas the Magars are mainly agricultural the Gurungs are predominantly pastoral. Most of them coming in from the high pasture lands of Lamjung have a heavy woollen blanket sewn up into a sort of cone. This can be worn over the head and completely covers the shoulders and body to the hips and also any load being carried. It is of an "off white" colour with narrow black and brown stripes. Men—especially Puns—from 4000 Parbat have a similar garment but it is generally distinguished by its wider black stripes.

Gurungs have their own language known as Gurung kura but by no means all of them know it. Their women folk for the most part speak Gurung kura only although of recent years more of them appear to have taken to Nepali. Gurung kura is very nasal as spoken and it is extremely difficult to reduce to roman script. The Gurung describes himself as Thammai or Gurum. Many of the kindreds



Gurungs and Tamangs from No. 1 West in Kathmandu City.



A Charjat Gurung Priest (Lama) visits Kunra-
ghat to collect his son's Family Allotment.

shown in the lists are probably duplicated owing to men of the same kindred sometimes using the Gurung kura word and sometimes the Nepali word.

Gurungs are divided into two main classes. The first being the Charjat consisting of four clans, Ghale, Lama, Lamchane and Ghotane each subdivided into kindreds. The second class is known as the Sora Jat. Any original division of this class into sixteen clans is now lost in the mists of antiquity and the class as a whole is only divided into kindreds.

The Charjat Gurung considers himself a cut above the Sorajat and the Ghale is regarded as the superior Gurung of all. It is interesting to note however that now-a-days some Gurungs dispute this and go so far as to state that a Ghale is in a class of his own and quite distinct from other Gurungs. This may be a case of sour grapes. A further interesting point is that many Tamangs living alongside Ghales in Gorkha and No. 1 West have in the past enlisted under the name of Ghale and it is extremely hard to tell them apart. This question will be referred to later when Tamangs are dealt with.

The Gurungs are certainly less orthodox Hindus and indeed were Buddhists entirely at one time. Today while they submit to the Brahman's ascendancy they employ Lamas (Buddhist priests) for their more important religious ceremonies. This matter is discussed in greater detail in the chapter on Customs but it may be mentioned here that Charjat Gurungs employ Lama priests (not be confused with the clan named Lama in Nepali and Leme in Gurung kura) and the Sorajats employ Pacu Giabrings as priests.

The age of a Gurung can always be ascertained by asking him in which Bargha (cycle of time) he was born. Every Gurung child—except those in Eastern Nepal—is taught the name of his Bargha and so a simple calculation will give the correct age at any time. Gurungs divide time into a series of cycles each of twelve years and named after an animal.

THE GURUNG BERGHA (A BARKHA)

English.	Nepali.	Gurung Kura.	Cycles of 12 years.
Deer	Mirga	Pho lo	1887. 1899. 1911. 1923. 1935.
Rat	Muso	Chu lo	1888. 1900. 1912. 1924. 1936.
Cow	Gai	Lo lo	1889. 1901. 1913. 1925. 1937.
Tiger	Bagh	Tho lo	1890. 1902. 1914. 1926. 1938.
Cat	Biralo	He lo	1891. 1903. 1915. 1927. 1939.
Vulture	Garud	Mupri lo	1892. 1904. 1916. 1928. 1940.
Snake	Sarpa	Sapri lo	1893. 1905. 1917. 1929. 1941.
Horse	Ghora	Ta lo	1894. 1906. 1918. 1930. 1942.
Sheep	Bhero	Lu lo	1895. 1907. 1919. 1931. 1943.
Monkey	Bandar	Pra lo	1896. 1908. 1920. 1932. 1944.
Bird	Chara	Chia lo	1897. 1909. 1921. 1933. 1945.
Dog	Kukur	Khi lo	1898. 1910. 1922. 1934. 1946.

NOTE:—"Lo" is Gurung-kura for Bargha and in Tibet means "year".

A Charjat Gurung may marry a girl from a clan other than his own *e.g.*, a Ghotani may marry a girl from the Lama, Lamchane or Ghale clan. Now-a-days he may also choose his bride from the Sorajat although in past times this was not permitted and marriages either way between Charjats and Sorajats led to the Charjat being reduced to Sorajat. Con-

servative Gurungs favour a cross-cousin marriage opposite to that of Magars. By this a Gurung will marry the daughter of his father's sister or the daughter of his mother's brother. A Gurung woman is called a Gurungseni.

CHAPTER VII

TAMANGS

Until recently the only Tamangs known to the Gurkha Brigade were those enlisted from Eastern Nepal and Darjeeling for the 7th and 10th Gurkhas. Major C. J. Morris in his official Handbook on Gurkhas writes that "the home of the tribe is said to be the Nepal Valley and its vicinity, but now-a-days they are found in considerable numbers all over Eastern Nepal, and large Colonies exist in Darjeeling and Sikhim".

The true position as we now know it to-day is that there are very large numbers of Tamangs in Western Nepal especially in the Tehsil of Gorkha and in No. 1 West. These Tamangs are in every way finer men than those from the East with whom they have, indeed, little in common. They live alongside Gurungs, sometimes in the same villages and sometimes in small villages of their own. Their appearance, dress, customs and language are so similar to those of Gurungs that for all practical purposes they are indistinguishable. They appear to have a parti-

cular affinity with Ghaes. They also carry out the peculiar death ceremony called the Arghun as do Gurungs, when to this it is added that Tamangs speak Gurung-kura it will be realized that in the past many have enlisted as Gurungs and have served many years without anyone being the wiser.

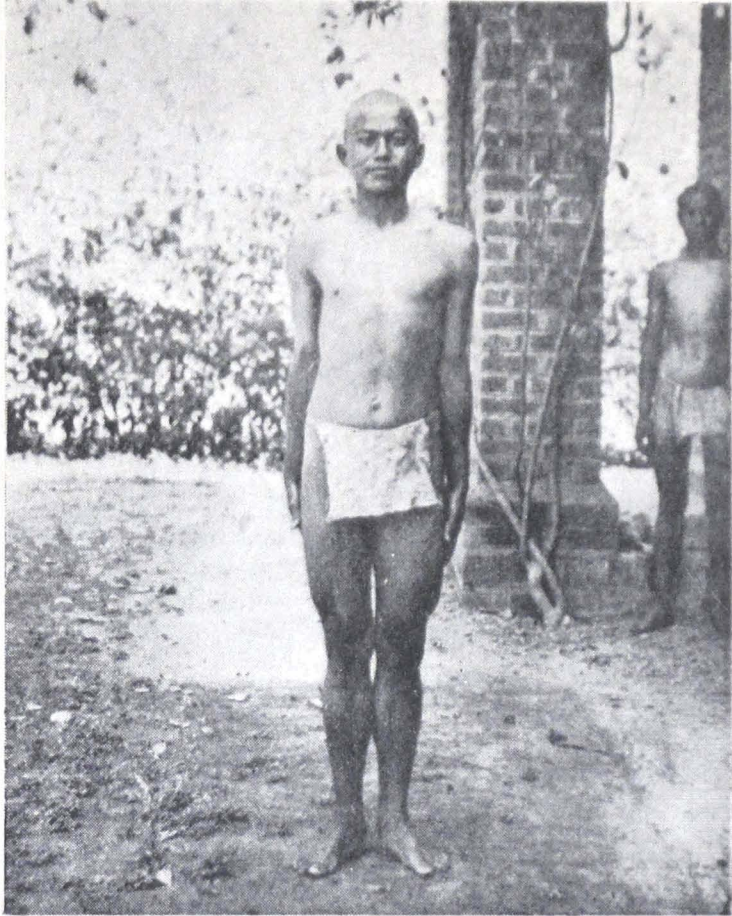
The Tamang has this prejudice against him that he is said to eat beef and so his chances of ever becoming a Gurkha Officer were slight. He will, like Gurungs, eat buffalo flesh. The writer has met large numbers of Tamangs together with Gurungs in the Valley of Nepal and in No. 1 West coming in from Gorkha and found it quite impossible to distinguish them from Gurungs.

Tamangs are divided into two main divisions, Bara Tamangs and Atharajat but any significance in the names twelve and eighteen has now disappeared. They are also known as Lamas or Murmis in Eastern Nepal.

An Assistant Recruiting Officer (himself a Gurkha) who has recently made an extensive tour in 1943 in Gorkha, Lamjung and No. 1 West has reported as follows regarding Tamangs:—

Besides being found in No. 1 West, large numbers of Tamangs are found in the northern part of Gorkha and a few in Lamjung and Upardang-garhi. Above Arughat on both banks of Buri Gandak River is the real land of the Tamangs where they live in big villages.

In Gorkha and Lamjung they sometimes live in small villages of their own and sometimes in villages with other classes.



Tamang from Gorkha.



Limbus, Rais and Sunwars from Eastern Nepal
at the Laheria Sarai Recruiting Depot.

CHAPTER VIII

LIMBUS AND RAIS

The Limbus and Rais of which the latter are the more numerous have much in common and intermarry. They may therefore be considered together. These Eastern Nepalese are collectively known as the Kiranti tribe. Limbus are known as Yakthumbas and Rais as Khambus or Yakkas. In peace time their enlistment was restricted mainly to the 7th and 10th Gurkhas although many were enlisted in the Assam Rifles and the old Burma Military Police and all Magar and Gurung regiments took some in varying numbers. The old Assam Light Infantry now the 1/6th, 1/8th and 2/8th Gurkha Rifles also enlisted many in the old days.

The Limbus are practically confined to the extreme East, that is to the hills east of the Arun River, Ilam and Dhankuta being the chief area and known as Limbuan. Limbu recruits are brought into the Eastern Nepal Recruiting Depot at Ghoom near Darjeeling.

The Rais inhabit the country west of the Limbu area right up to the Valley of Nepal. Most of their recruits go to Ghoom but those from Ramechhap and No. 3 East go to Laheria Sarai in Bihar when that Depot is open during the winter. One class of Rais call themselves Diwans but little is known of the origin of this clan.

Both Limbus and Rais are very Mongolian in appearance and are a shade bigger than Magars and Gurungs. They are fair coloured and have even less hair than other Gurkhas. Although they accept the supremacy of the Brahman they retain more of their original Buddhist customs and almost invariably employ their own priests for domestic ceremonies. These priests are called Phedangmas, Homes or Bijuwas.

The clans and kindreds of Limbus and Rais are extremely complicated and numerous and owing partly to the system of inter-marriage it is very doubtful if any really accurate list could now be made. One name deserves mention, that of Suba. This was originally a title bestowed on certain Limbu chiefs and to-day it is still used only by the descendants of such a man. The title of Suba is used throughout Nepal for Government officials. For example the Nepalese Officer attached to the British Legation in Kathmandu is known as the Mir Suba.

In our army the Limbus and Rais keep up festivals and customs in practically the same way as all other Gurkhas, although they do not show the same keenness for dancing as Magars and Gurungs. One big difference exists in their marriage rules. A Limbu may marry a Rai and vice versa but the girl will still call herself by her own clan name *i.e.*, a Limbu girl—called a Limbuni—marrying a Rai will still be entered in his kindred roll as a Limbuni and a Rai girl who marries a Limbu man will be entered as a Raini. Although the young people exercise more liberty of choice than other Gurkhas in choosing a

partner they will never marry relatives or anyone of their own kindred; hence the cross-cousin marriages of the Magars and Gurungs have no counter-part among Limbus and Rais.

Limbus and Rais all speak Nepali but they also have a large number of dialects which vary greatly from place to place. They are usually intelligent and quick witted. With this quickness of mind goes a tendency for a quick temper although like all Gurkhas they are above all very cheerful and generous. They appear perhaps slightly more reserved—Limbus especially—than Magars and Gurungs but perhaps that is more apparent than real or because they do not have quite so exaggerated a sense of fun as the others.

It should be mentioned here that the Darjeeling district and the states of Sikkim and Bhutan contain between them several hundred thousand Nepalese the vast majority of whom are Limbus and Rais. In British India they are invariably well educated and have for long provided the Gurkha Brigade with many excellent clerks. Large numbers of their men and women are employed in the Tea Gardens and responded with tremendous effect to the many calls made for road making labour on the Burma frontier of recent times.

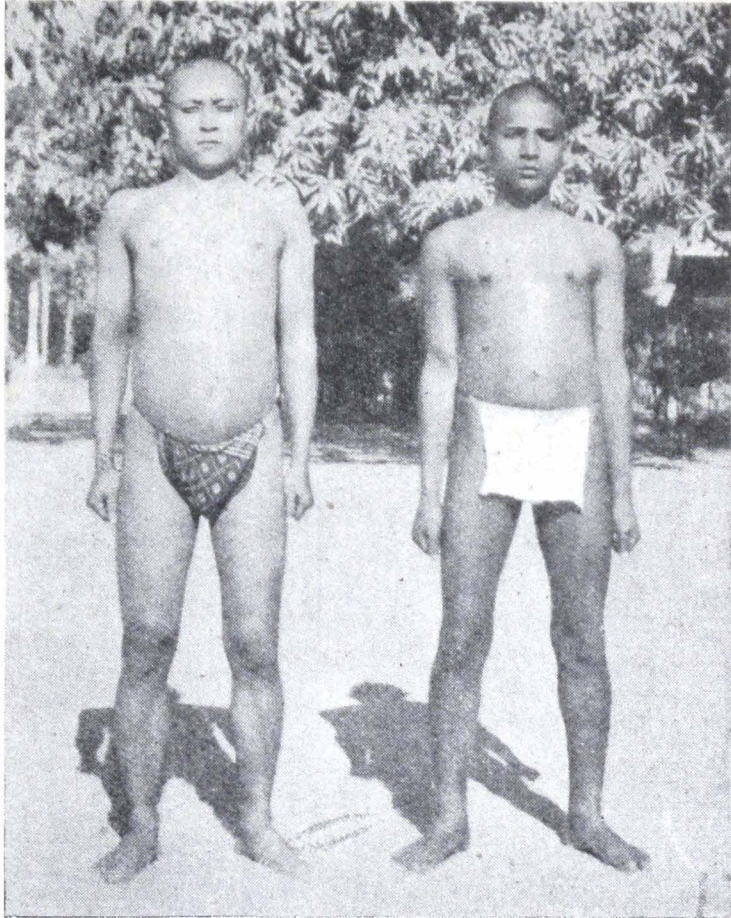
A number of Nepali girls from the Darjeeling district have joined the various women's organizations such as the W.A.C.I., W.V.S., nursing services etc. One complete unit of Nepali girls has been formed in the W.A.C. (I) for signal duties.

CHAPTER IX

SUNWARS

This tribe is a very small one practically limited to the districts on the Likhu Khola river in Eastern Nepal. In most respects they are very like the Magars and Gurungs although they have a language of their own besides Nepali. The few recruits obtained from them are from a clan known as the Bara Thare or "Twelve Kindred". They are excellent soldiers. Their customs are for the most part identical with those of Magars. The main differences are that they, like their neighbouring Limbus and Rais, eat buffalo flesh. They do not permit cross-cousin marriages and utilise the services of Brahmans for all their religious ceremonies. A Sunwar man may marry any girl of the Bara Thare outside his own kindred or close relationship. The senior branch of this tribe the Das Thare are not recruited nor do they inter-marry with the Bara Thare.

The tribe of Sunwar should not be confused with the menial class of goldsmiths known as Sunars.



Two young boys from Newars.

CHAPTER X

NEWARS

The Newars are considered to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the Valley of Nepal and to-day they form the bulk of its population. Their glory as a race has departed and their aristocracy was all but exterminated by the conquering Gurkhas under Prithwi Narayan in the middle of the eighteenth century. Newars are now-a-days predominantly merchants, artisans and cultivators. From early times they were both artistic and religious and it is to them that Nepal owes the glorious wood and metal work which is so marked a feature of the Valley. Many Newars early on became orthodox Hindus but originally they were mainly Buddhists. A curious blend of the two religions exists even to-day but Brahmanic Hinduism is slowly and surely displacing the last traces of Buddhism. To-day the Newars are divided into four classes, to make a somewhat arbitrary distinction. The upper class consists of the priestly Brahman division largely concentrated in the cities of the Valley. Men of this class are either engaged entirely in religious occupations in the many temples or clerical and such administrative occupations as are now open to them *e.g.*, the present Private Secretary to the Maharaja is a Newar and is known as the Bada Kaji. Next come the traders and merchants who though predominating in the Valley also carry on their trade throughout the country.

Then come the artisans skilled as carpenters, wood carvers, metal workers, makers of bells and so on. The largest class, the Jyapus, is composed of the cultivators who make the Valley one of the most fertile areas in the whole world. Consciously or unconsciously this division of the Newars has followed the Hindu caste system of class segregation. There has even come to exist a class known as Sresta corresponding to the Hindu military class known as Ksatriya or among Gurkhas as Chetri. It is mainly from this class that considerable numbers of soldiers have come. In normal times fewer Newars were enlisted than was formerly the case but as in the Great War of 1914 to 1919 so again now many have come forward to enlist and make excellent soldiers. Many Newars have the sub-caste name Pradhan.

In appearance the Newars vary greatly and undoubtedly in many cases we can see the influence of Indian blood. As a whole they are taller and of slighter build than Magars and Gurungs. Many of them are of very fair complexion. The Mongol characteristics are evident both in their appearance and in their own language. Many have enlisted as Magars and have remained undetected. Their dress varies with the locality and in the Valley the tight trousers known as Suruwal with the "chaubandi" coat forms the normal attire. The Nepali cap is universal for men. This is a round brimless cap of any colour, often black, with one side higher than the other. The women, spoken of as Newarnis, dress in gay coloured bodice and skirt with a shawl worn over the shoulders but not over their heads.

They are very fond of jewellery especially on their ears and always tuck a flower into the knot of their hair which is drawn back over the head to the nape of the neck.

CHAPTER XI

MISCELLANEOUS TRIBES

In addition to the tribes already dealt with some others are worthy of mention, some because the great expansion of the army of recent years has been responsible for their enrolment and others because they have always been enlisted for specific trades and occupations.

The Sherpas of Eastern Nepal have always been known as excellent porters and it was from among them that the famous "Tigers" were selected for the Everest and other expeditions. The Sherpas come from the districts on the East Nepal—Tibet borders and there are also many in Darjeeling. They are Buddhists of an easy going kind who will eat and drink pretty well anything. Their fondness for drink and gambling sometimes leads them into trouble unless they are under strict supervision but their fine physique is a great point in their favour and some have proved good soldiers. In the past they were not usually enlisted but some enlisted under the name of Lamas.

In the Darjeeling district there are many Lepchas and Bhotiyas who are not Gurkhas but have been

enlisted as mess waiters and as artisans of different kinds. They are cheerful people and make excellent private servants but are not enlisted as soldiers.

Dotiyals come from the extreme West of Nepal from the districts of Silgarhi and Doti. They also inhabit the British India districts of Kumaon. These Dotiyals are not soldiers but are enrolled as porters, an occupation for which they are well fitted and which is their normal means of livelihood.

The Tharus are a mixed race of Mongolian descent who have lived in the Terai for many generations. They are not soldiers but elephant mahouts and porters. They appear to be among the few who are immune from the deadly awal fever of the Terai.

Sarkhis (bootmakers) and Kamis or Lohars (blacksmiths) are well known in all Gurkha regiments where they are enlisted for their particular occupations.

Damais are tailors and musicians who are enlisted only in those capacities. None of the above are true Gurkhas and are not fighting men.

There are other menial classes such as the miners (agri), potters (kumhal) and boatmen (manji) who are not usually met with as they are not enlisted as soldiers.

No menial castes may eat with the fighting castes and should they do so the higher caste man is at once considered "Pani band" *i.e.* out-casted until he and all who may have eaten with him have performed the proper religious ceremonies which will enable them to regain their caste. It is this point which has to be watched so carefully by the Recruiting Staff since it

affects all units and all individuals passing through the Depots, as in the case of an infectious disease all "contacts" have to be isolated and endless trouble is caused. Despite all precautions cases do occur particularly when an unscrupulous recruiter is determined to lie.

Finally, a Gurkha soldier will occasionally be met who is known as a Giri. They are not numerous but are enlisted at times. There are three kinds of Giris. The first class are Jogi Giris also called Sanyasi Giris; these do not have the small pigtail and are religious mendicants who have performed the Sanyas Dharam *i.e.*, dedicated themselves to mendicancy. They are not enlisted. The second class are a sort of Chetri. They wear the thread but will eat food prepared by Magars and Gurungs although these will not eat the food of Giris. They are said to be mainly confined to East Nepal. The third class are Matwala Giris who do not wear the sacred thread; they too will eat food prepared by Magars and Gurungs but the converse does not hold. They are to be found in East Nepal and also in Tahsil No. 4 West. Both the second and third classes are enlisted if otherwise found suitable.

CHAPTER XII

RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS AND FESTIVALS

The religious customs of Gurkhas are in many respects based on those of the Hindu system but with so independent a race there are naturally customs and ceremonies which are peculiar to Gurkhas. It is with these that this chapter is chiefly concerned. It is outside the scope of this small book for a detailed description to be given and the object will be to give officers who have only a short acquaintance with Gurkhas sufficient information to put them on the right lines and it is hoped to encourage them to find out for themselves in conversation with their men what they do and how and why they do it.

It is difficult to generalise but an attempt must be made in order to keep this chapter within bounds. Perhaps the simplest way to look at this question is to regard it as bound up with the elemental facts of life.

Birth, marriage and death encompass all men and without food for body and mind together with some amusement life would indeed be impossible.

The Gurkha is extremely fond of children and large families are the rule. When a child is born the father is in the curious position in that while the eleven days rejoicing takes place he is obliged to eat alone for the first ten. After that the Brahman or other tribal priest comes to perform the necessary

purification ceremonies and on the eleventh day is carried out the Nwaran ceremony of selecting the child's name. This often leads to a somewhat confusing set of circumstances as the priest usually only selects the initial letter. The result is that a man frequently goes through life with a number of names *e.g.*, the letter B may have been selected and the mother may call the boy Birbahadur while father may speak of Birsing at the same time it is more than likely that he may be known to his friends as Biru or Birkhe.

To add to the confusion of course he will probably collect a nick name. A big headed man will be known perhaps as Tauke or Naple and a boy with a high treble voice may be called Musa. The solution in completing documents is to find out what the boy's parents call him and if the name differs from the one under which he was enrolled it should be added after the word "alias".

Another curious fact will often be noted, that a Magar or Gurung boy may have the first name of Kami or Sarki. This is because parents who have been unlucky in losing children who died young have called in a Kami (blacksmith) or Sarki (bootmaker) to fix a metal or leather bracelet on the wrist of a new born child. This is considered efficacious in warding off evil spirits and the baby boy will then be known as Kami Gurung, Sarki Rana etc.

Sometimes for the same reason a pretence is made of feeding the new born babe with grain and such a boy will then be known as Juthe *i.e.*, as one who was subjected to a trick or lie.

In our regiments in peace time the father of a newly born child is given 11 days "line leave". This is the same in the case of the child being a boy or a girl. The first son is the cause of special joy as it is he who will carry out his father's eventual death ceremonies.

The next big event in a child's life is the Bhat Khuwai or first feeding. This is the weaning ceremony when a formal feeding of grain is carried out by friends and relations. On this occasion the soldier father gets no leave but usually is allowed to have his lights on after "lights out".

Marriage is the next important event in a Gurkha's life.

The customs and ceremonies vary slightly among different tribes. The majority employ Brahmans to perform the ceremony but Gurungs and Limbus and Rais and Tamangs more usually call in their own tribal priests.

Although a Gurkha may be betrothed at a very early age married life does not begin as a rule until both boy and girl are at least sixteen years old or more. One does, however, come across very young husbands and wives at times, this is especially so among Chetris. As all the world over, mothers do a lot of match making but it is probably correct to say that the young folk as often as not settle these matters themselves to a degree unknown in India. Among the Gurkhas it is the rule rather than the exception for boys and girls to choose their own partners often without the parents' knowledge. The essential rite in the marriage ceremony is known as Sindhur Halnu

and consists in the man putting red lead on the girl's forehead and along the parting of her hair.

Run away marriages are common.

The betrothal (magni) often precedes the actual marriage ceremony (Byaha) by many years.

Even in the case of early marriages the girl will almost invariably continue to live with her own parents for some years. If it is found on checking a man's kindred roll that he has a child wife it will also usually be ascertained that he will describe her as Maito or Maitalo, that is, "living at her parents' home".

If a boy and a girl run away and marry they will in due course seek the parents' blessing and will make submission to the girl's father who usually accepts the position and puts his caste mark (Tika) on the young peoples' foreheads after they have carried out "Dhok dinnu" which means making obeisance.

The first and truly married wife is known as Byahate but he may also take a second wife especially if the first is childless or has no son. If this second wife is married with her parents' consent and with proper religious ceremonial she is also Byahate. If, however, the girl's parents did not agree to the marriage and it is of an informal nature, unblest by a priest she is known as a Lyate. A widow, except among orthodox Brahmans who do not re-marry, will re-marry by the Lyate ceremony. In our regiments only one wife is normally allowed to be with the husband in the married lines. A Panchayat of Gurkha Officers usually enquires into the regularity

of the marriage before sanction is given for the wife to live in the lines.

Divorce is permitted and both parties may re-marry, the woman by the Lyate ceremony only. The matter is normally arranged with the aid of the village council (Panchayat) and the ceremony (Sinko Panra) as is usual for such affairs is carried out by a priest.

In our regiments matrimonial troubles are normally dealt with by a committee of Gurkha Officers. In cases of desertion by wife or husband and where a third party is involved the damages (Jari Khat) and settlement of property are fixed by this committee.

The Gurkha is a good family man and wrecked marriages are the exception not the rule. It is not uncommon however, where parents have betrothed children early in life or even had the Byaha ceremony performed that the arrangement does not stand the strain and the boy or girl on attaining maturity may contract a run away marriage with a partner of their own choice. In general the Gurkha is a kind generous husband and his wife returns his affection and makes a happy well-kept home.

In our regimental married lines much has been done by the wives of British Officers to further child welfare work, and the many maternity wards, first aid rooms and knitting and sewing classes provide ample evidence of the popularity and appreciation of these activities. During the present war detachments of the Women's Voluntary Service have done great work in making garments and other goods for the Red Cross.

Of the many Hindu festivals which take their place in the Gurkha's year it is not proposed to give a detailed description. In normal time they are observed as holidays in our regiments as noted here below:—

Maghe Sankrati approximately mid January	1 day
Basanta Panchami approximately end of January	1 day
Shibratri approximately end of February ...	1 day
Holi (or Hori) approximately early March ...	8 days
Ram Naumi approximately mid April ...	1 day
Saune Sankrati approximately mid July ...	1 day
Janai Purne approximately mid August ...	1 day
Janam Astami approximately late August ...	1 day
Dashera (or Dasain) in end of September or mid October	10 days
Dewali end of October or early November ...	3 days

Of these the Dashera is of outstanding importance and it regulates the whole of a Gurkha's year.

The form of its celebration varies slightly in different parts of the country but the main features are the same. The Gurkha regards it as the warriors festival and worships Durga the goddess of Victory and the weapons of his profession as a soldier.

The main characteristic is the dancing and general merry-making which culminates in the all-night celebrations on the day or rather night, called Kalratri to which are invited the British Officers and their wives as well as local officials.

The entertainment varies according to opportunity and circumstances from the "Penny Gaff" type to more ambitious dramatic performances but predominant and essential are the age-old tribal dances in which the performers are dressed in Nepali costumes as Pursengis (male dancers) and Marunis (female dancers impersonated by men). These dances go on continuously until on the following day called Mar, when numerous pigeons, goats and young buffalo bulls are sacrificed at the Maula or specially selected place of worship which exists near the hill villages and in Regimental Lines.

The sacrifice is performed by chopping off the victim's head with a Kukri or Konra. The Konra is a heavy curved weapon with a broad head roughly at right angles to the cutting edge. It is always considered a point of pride to sever the head cleanly with one stroke. The rest of the day is devoted to family parties attended with much food and good cheer. The festival concludes with the worship performed on the last day known as Tika when all men put caste marks on their foreheads.

Even if all other festivals are missed every Gurkha makes great efforts to celebrate the Dashera.

The festival of Dewali is in honour of Laksmi goddess of wealth. Homes, barracks and lines are illuminated at night with little oil lamps and gambling is permitted. Most Gurkhas are inveterate gamblers and this festival allows them to let off steam.

The Holi festival with its accompanying horse-play and throwing about of red powder (Abir) and coloured water is gradually losing its popularity and

is regarded more and more as a festival for low caste people.

One ceremony of paramount importance is the Pani Patiya ceremony which must be performed by all Gurkhas on return from overseas. This absolves him from loss of caste since to cross the sea automatically involves this loss. A small sum (now six pies) is paid and the soldier is granted a certificate. Present arrangements are that this ceremony is performed at Regimental Training Centres. A similar ceremony known as Bhor Patiya is also performed to readmit a man to caste if he has unwittingly broken caste rules by eating with a low caste person. Anyone who has broken these caste rules regarding food however innocently is considered Pani Band *i.e.*, out-casted and is unable to eat with others—even his own relations, until he has performed the purification ceremony.

Deliberate infractions of caste rules render the offender liable to severe penalties including heavy fines and imprisonment besides out-casting him.

The supreme authority in all caste matters for all Nepalese is the Raj Guru who lives in Kathmandu.

From time to time individual Gurkhas carry out personal and domestic acts of worship (pujas) and all Gurkha units will maintain a temple in honour of the goddess Kali together with the Dashera house where all paraphernalia connected with the Dashera is kept.

When a Gurkha dies he is buried or cremated at once. Most Gurkhas now-a-days resort to cremation although Gurungs, Tamangs, Limbus and Rais still

often prefer burial. Cremation is more in accordance with orthodox Hindu custom. The body is always stripped entirely naked when placed on the pyre.

Gurungs and Tamangs have a funeral custom quite peculiar to themselves. It is known as the Arghun and the officiating priest is always a Lama assisted by Jhankris. This takes the form of a great sacrifice and feast accompanied by dancing. All close relations of the deceased must take part in it no matter how many years may elapse before they can be collected together.

It is an extremely costly affair but nevertheless a Gurung son is never content until it has been carried out.

In general death ceremonies (usually called Kiriya) for a dead Gurkha can be carried out at any convenient time but normally within 12 months. This point should be remembered when men ask for leave to perform the Kiriya.

The following amount of "Line Leave" is given in Regiments on occasions of deaths:—

On death of Father, Mother, Wife, Adult Son,
Daughter or Brother 13 days: for minor
children 5 days.

The Sradh ceremony is carried out yearly before Dashera—no special leave is needed.

One other curious custom obtains whereby two men or women who are not related but may be of different tribes, contract a relationship known as "Mit". This can best be translated by blood brotherhood. It constitutes a type of eternal friendship and one Mit will always look after the other's interests.

It automatically rules out any possible marriage between the one man and his Mit's relations.

Normally a Mit will never call his Mit by his name unless circumstances enforce him to do so. Mits cannot sleep in the same place together, nor will a man speak to his Mit's wife (Mitini) until the "Chino Satne" or recognition ritual has been performed.

Satya Narain Puja is often performed by individuals at any time that appeals to them. It is a propitiatory or votive offering to God to ward off evil or to obtain a favour.

CHAPTER XIII

CUSTOMS AND SOCIAL HABITS

While the Gurkha is certainly not given to making an undue fuss over his food requirements it must be remembered that the Laws of Nepal are founded on very orthodox Hindu caste laws and are strictly enforced in Nepal under pain of loss of caste.

In general it may be stated that any Gurkha can partake of food prepared by one higher or equal in caste to himself. The converse spells loss of caste.

The staple diet of our Gurkha soldiers is rice and in the cooking of rice and dhal caste requirements must be obeyed. They eat meat which is *Jatkai i.e.*, for Hindus. They will eat most articles of food but various tribes have idiosyncrasies the chief of which are as follows:—

Magars will eat all kinds of meat including domestic poultry but they do not eat buffalo flesh. They keep and domesticate wild piglets which they call Ghar Sungar to kill and eat when full grown but they do not eat village pigs which scavenge and are only eaten by low caste people. Any wild game particularly wild pig (Banel) is greatly sought after. Gurungs except Ghales eat all the above and also buffalo flesh.

Ghales will not eat buffalo flesh, fowls or goats but they will eat hen's eggs, sheep (Nepalese variety) and any "shikar" *i.e.*, game killed in the chase. They will not eat any pig except wild pig.

Tamangs will eat any food including beef when possible.

Limbus and Rais will eat domesticated pig flesh in addition to goats, sheep and all poultry.

No Gurkha will eat female goats or sheep.

Above all the Gurkha delights in fish and they will go to almost any length to obtain it. Preserved waters of fishing clubs require special watching if there are any Gurkhas within reach. Gurkhas soon acquire a taste for such delicacies as tinned salmon, herrings and sardines.

As for drinks the Gurkhas cheerfully accept any alcoholic drink available good rum being their favourite. In their hills they brew a simple, nourishing beer from grain. It is called Janr. It is comparatively harmless and when well made it is a pleasant drink. The distilled spirit or raksi is a fiery drink which requires a strong head. Illicit brewing

and distilling is frequently the cause of trouble with Gurkhas—particularly women—in India.

The universal cigarette habit has long captured the Gurkha and tobacco in some form is a minor luxury for all but a very few. The old fashioned Gurkha will smoke his "banse huka", *i.e.*, bamboo pipe with earthenware top (chilam). Some men smoke a European pipe.

The normal clothing worn in the hills is simple. For men it usually consists of the lanauti or exiguous loin cloth held in place by a string round the waist. Over this is worn the patuka—a cotton cloth wound several times round the hips and almost reaching the knee. This gives a kilt-like effect. The Kukri is normally tucked into the top of this in front of the body.

The upper classes and most of the Eastern Nepal men wear trousers called Suruwal. They are tight from the knee down and very voluminous in the seat.

All Gurkhas wear the Chaubandi—a sort of double-breasted bush shirt which overlaps in front and is tied both inside and outside by tapes. In cold weather a blanket often sewn into a rough cloak is worn by many. The national cap is universal except in the extreme west where a loose puggaree is often favoured. This cap which may be of any colour but more often black, is close fitting and has one side higher than the other. Eastern Nepalis more usually wear a round Kilmarnock Cap. Really good shoes are made throughout the country and the better off folk wear them. Most Gurungs and many others wear the Khadi or Ainti bhanro. This is a large

coarse-woven sheet worn over the shoulders with opposite corners knotted in front of the chest. It thus forms a large bag behind in which all sorts of things are carried.

European coats and waistcoats are popular especially with ex-soldiers while cheap shoes especially rubber-soled canvas shoes have of recent years become common.

Many men, particularly youngsters affect bright bead necklaces. Most popular with young bloods are the studs made from Indian silver quarter rupee pieces worn in the button-holes of shirts or waistcoats and joined by chains. Gold or silver ear-rings and bracelets are usual for children and youths. The most prized ornament of all is a wrist watch.

The women wear the same clothing with some local variations throughout Nepal. It consists of the following:—

The Cholo or bodice with sleeves down to the wrists and buttoning in front ; the Phariya or Guniu, a skirt which is a long piece of cloth, often with a bright pattern, which is wound round the waist many times: the Majetro is a shawl worn over the head and shoulders and may be of any colour, material or even a bath towel from an Indian bazaar shop. All women wear a white cloth wound round and round the stomach: in this they carry money, odds and ends and sometimes a sickle or kukri when going to the fields. Jewellery is worn as much as possible and often represents the family wealth. The chief items are the large plates worn as ear-rings and known as Kan ko sun, bracelets (balo), anklets (kuri

or kalli), nose ring (bulaki), necklaces (mala) one of which known as tilari is composed of reels of gilt and coloured threads. Another item of jewellery is a large plate of gold or gilt worn on top of the forehead. Rings are always worn. Sophisticated young Nepali girls of to-day readily take to silk stockings and high heeled shoes and an umbrella is always a prized possession.

As many women have learnt to knit in the regimental lines, pullovers are now-a-days quite common while knitted children's clothing and caps are more and more coming into daily use.

Newar women never cover their heads and always tuck flowers into their hair. Chetrinis almost always wear a donkey fringe over their foreheads. Babies are carried on their mothers, backs and tied into position with a cloth. It is very rare to see a child carried in the Indian style sideways on the hip. When on a journey or going to work men and women carry their goods and food in large baskets called Doko. These are carried on the shoulders supported by a brow band called a Namlo. Smaller wicker-work baskets (Pirunga) are used for carrying food, etc.

The traveller in Nepal will be amazed at first to see the enormous loads which are carried in this style. Quite often old people or invalids are carried for many days in this fashion in a basket.

In Nepal there are no vehicles of any sort except in the Valley where cars and lorries are used to a certain extent. Even there, there are only a very few carts pulled by buffaloes. The rule is walk or

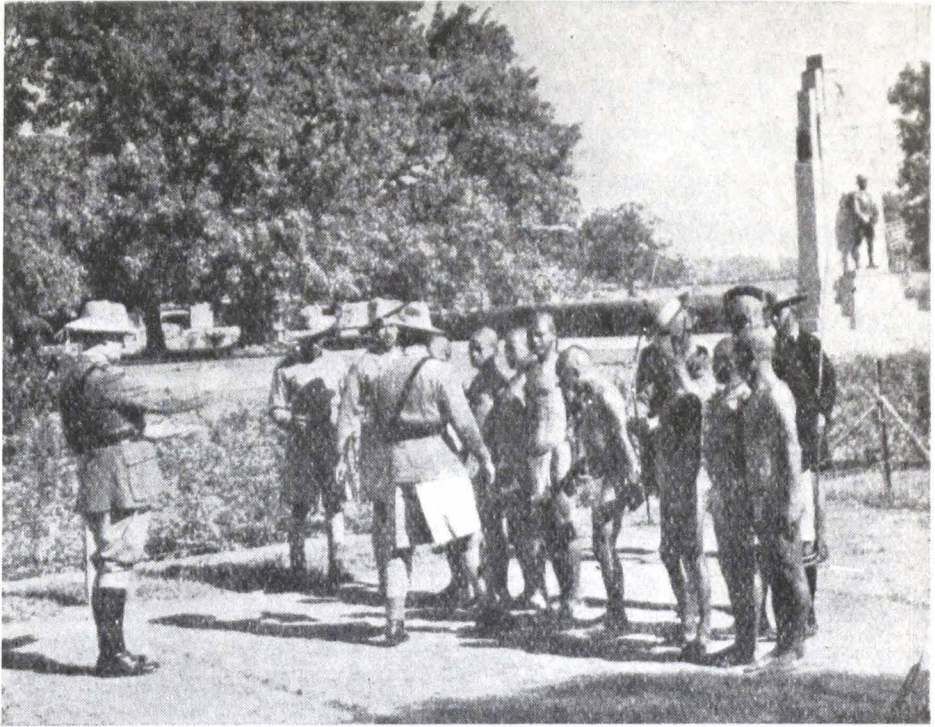
be carried in dandy, litter or basket. Only officials may ride ponies on the road up to Kathmandu. In other parts it is possible to hire mules or ponies but very few except invalids or officials use them.

As has been stated in an earlier chapter, most of the trade of the country is in the hands of the Newars.

The types enlisted for the Gurkha Brigade are all of agricultural or pastoral people. The Gurungs and most of the others who live in the higher mountain districts are pastoral as opposed to agricultural. At the various seasons, after harvest, for example, big fairs are held, and to them come all the men and women from the countryside to buy and exchange. No Europeans have been able to see these fairs and so it is only from accounts by their men that British Officers can learn of them.

Kunraghat Recruiting Depot and Record Office can, however, provide a very good sample during the period from mid December to the end of March when many thousands of men and women come to draw pensions, Family allotments and to seek news of their men folk in the Army. At that time every type of Gurkha from the length and breadth of Nepal may be seen. In fact it must be the most representative gathering possible to imagine and it is probably not duplicated anywhere.

On some days during the last cold weather the Gurkha population of Kunraghat exceeded ten thousand.



The Recruiting Officer inspects recruits at Kunraghat. The Gurkha Brigade War Memorial, 1914-1919 is in the background.



Pensioners and Family Allottees at Kunraghat.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RECRUITING DEPOTS

In the early days of the Gurkha Brigade recruiting was carried out by units themselves and not only did they obtain no assistance but they had to encounter much opposition in smuggling their recruits from Nepal. In 1886 a Central Gurkha Recruiting Depot was set up in Gorakhpur and after many vicissitudes the present site was occupied at Kunraghat some 3 miles from the town of Gorakhpur. The extensive Depot Lines and Offices date from 1930 and the Gurkha Brigade War Memorial with its beautiful memorial statue and the Pensioners Dharamsala was opened in 1928.

Having its own Railway Station and Post and Telegraphic Office the present Depot has proved equal to all demands placed on it in the present stirring times.

Recruiting from Eastern Nepal was regularised in about 1890 and the present Depot at Ghoom was established in 1901, after work had been carried out in Darjeeling since 1890. The Laheria Sarai Depot in Bihar was first utilised in 1909. Financial stringency in 1929 temporarily ended the work here but the great expansion of the present war has seen the re-establishment of a Camp Depot there each year from November to February to deal with recruits from Tehsils No. 2 (Ramechhap) and No. 3 East.

In normal peace time recruiting was carried out by parties detailed by each battalion acting under the general orders of the Recruiting Officer. He was assisted by one whole time Assistant Recruiting Officer whose tenure of duty was for 18 months for 12 of which he acted as Adjutant and Quarter-master, and two part time Assistant Recruiting Officers who remained at Kunraghat for the six months during which the Recruiting Depot was open. With the exception of the Head Clerk and Clerical staff and some pensioner chowkidars the Depot establishment was provided by battalions.

During the summer the Recruiting Officer moved his H. Q. to Ghoom where assisted by one Assistant Recruiting Officer whose appointment was for two years extendable to three, he recruited for the 7th and 10th Gurkha Rifles.

Here the recruiters and Depot duty staff were provided by the 7th and 10th Gurkha Rifles. As at Kunraghat, so in Ghoom recruiting was also carried out for the Assam Rifles, Kashmir Rifles and Burma Military Police, all of whom sent small Depot duty parties to help.

The grand total of recruits taken in a peace time season was usually between 1500 and 2000 and by present day standards it was a leisurely proceeding. All clothing was provided by battalions and in the competition to get the pick of the year's recruits great care was taken by units to select good recruiters and to attract good lads. In this a prosperous well dressed recruiter was a great advertisement. The rewards earned by a successful recruiter and the

prospect of leave at his home at the conclusion of his work was a great incentive.

The great expansion which began in 1940 taxed this system of recruiting to the limit and with the departure of battalions overseas early in 1941 other methods had to be introduced. At present all recruiting is carried out by pensioners and ex-soldiers who are engaged as Paid Recruiters. Gurkha Officers engaged on this work, originally known as Party Commanders, are now re-employed pensioned Gurkha Officers known as Extra Assistant Recruiting Officers. The Depot Duties are carried out by the two Depot Duty Companies at the Kunraghat and Ghoom Depots respectively. Ghoom supplies the staff for Laheria Sarai when it opens. The whole work of recruiting is therefore now carried out by re-employed personnel from the Recruiting Officer himself, his Deputies and Assistants to the ex-soldier employed as recruiter or Depot Quarter Guard sentry. Many of the greatly expanded staff of clerks too are re-employed pensioners. The change over to this new system in time of war was not without its difficulties and set-backs but animated with Mr. Winston Churchill's stirring message "Give us the tools and we'll finish the job" the recruiting staff can claim to have stepped up production, and delivered the goods to those who will have the difficult task of carrying that job to a successful finish.

A brief description of the daily routine at the Kunraghat Recruiting Depot as far as it affects a new recruit going through the mill may be of general interest. The lad arrives from the hills at Nautanwa

or other frontier railhead together with the other lads brought in by the recruiter. Nominal rolls are then made by the Extra Assistant Recruiting Officer there who also issues rail tickets and despatches the party on to the Depot at Kunraghat. A special train from Nautanwa is run each morning and evening to Kunraghat. On reaching the Depot—usually at dawn—all recruits are taken direct to the office of the regiment they wish to join. Here, their names, caste, address and recruiter's name are written up. They then go to the tea shops for a meal. The recruit then has a much needed bath and has his hair cropped. A Pun who wears long hair does not have it removed until and unless he is finally passed.

The Gurkha Officer then inspects the recruits and records his weight, height, age and chest measurements and also checks his caste and examines him for the more obvious medical and physical defects. The Assistant Recruiting Officer either at the same time or afterwards also examines him and decides on his recommendation. All recruits whom he considers fit are marked on the chest with a roman I, in addition to the regiment's number and serial number. Those he considers to be below standard or undesirable are marked with a roman II. The recruit rests for the remainder of the day. On the following day the recruit is seen on the Recruiting Officer's parade. If he had been marked I he is placed in the front rank, if II in the rear rank. The recruiter who brought him in is in the third rank. As the Recruiting Officer inspects the recruits he is accompanied by the Assistant Recruiting Officer and the Gurkha Officer who must

be prepared to give their reasons for placing a recruit in the rear rank. If the recruit is rejected he goes off parade at once and after a meal he is sent back by that night's train in charge of his recruiter to his home. The recruiter is held responsible for bringing back a receipt for the returned recruit from his village mukhiya.

If the Recruiting Officer accepts the recruit he next assesses the reward to be paid to the recruiter. The maximum is Rs. 10/- for a recruit and Rs. 5/- for a Recruit Boy. From this parade the recruit goes direct to the hospital for a medical examination. Should he survive this ordeal he moves in from the reception camp to the Depot area where he is taken over by the Drill Instructor of his unit. If he is medically rejected the Recruiting Officer sees him again and may perhaps ask the Medical Officer for a further opinion. Should the recruit be medically rejected the recruiter is not penalized and receives his full expenses but must take the lad back home. He also takes home a notice to the parents of all accepted recruits. The recruiter reserves his pay, rewards and recruit's subsistence money and returns to the hills that day.

On the third day the recruit is given his first articles of uniform and is then brought before the Assistant Recruiting Officer who completes and signs the enrolment form and kindred roll. Finally he receives an advance of pay and with much cheering he entrains in special rail coaches with his fortunate fellow recruits under a conductor and leaves for his Regimental Training Centre.

The Gurkha Brigade Reserve which has now been absorbed into the mobilized army was based on Kunraghat and in peace time half the total reported each year at the Reserve Centre on 1st January to draw their clothing on being embodied for training. This training had once been carried out at the Depot but in the years before the war all training had been done at Jullundur.

The above short account of the Recruiting Depots has not so far drawn attention to what is actually the biggest task of the Gurkha Recruiting Organization—that of the Record Offices and Welfare work.

The Record Office was sanctioned at the end of 1934 and since then all documents pertaining to non-effectives of the whole Gurkha Brigade are maintained by the Gurkha Recruiting Organization.

This means that once a Gurkha has left his unit on discharge or pension his affairs are dealt with at the Recruiting Depots and Record Offices.

Pensions, Family Pensions, Claims for previous service, Jangi Inam cases, Estates, Medals, Family Allotments and Remittances account for a huge volume of work in normal times and this has been increased and intensified by the phenomenal expansion of the present war.

In addition, at Kunraghat each year a sub-treasury is opened in the Depot Area from mid December to mid March and over 12,000 pensions were paid last year (1942-43). These figures will increase owing to the war.

Further, many thousands of men going to and from leave in the hills pass through the Depots

throughout the year to collect pay, receive advances, rail warrants or to report for rejoining instructions. It is no unusual thing for 400 men or more to report in a single day.

The Recruiting Officer and his staff also carry out all the work for Gurkhas which in India is done by the various civil administrations and District Soldiers Boards for Indian Soldiers and their dependants. This work has naturally assumed large proportions now-a-days and goes on throughout the year.

In connection with the Record and Welfare side of the work at the Depots the chief task is that of investigating the many claims to estates of deceased soldiers and pensioners and the disbursing of allotments to wives, parents and other dependants of serving soldiers.

This is necessary because it is not possible for men to remit money by money order or by post to their homes. The Nepalese postal system is rudimentary and does not transact money order business. If a man wishes to send money to his relations he can do so by hand of a friend if one happens to be going to his village. The normal means, however, is for the money to be paid to the relatives when they visit the Recruiting Depots or the Chancery of the British Minister in Nepal. This entails a system of investigation to ensure that the right person receives the money. Allottees have to establish their identity and produce pensioners from their own villages to support their identification when they first come. The same system is adopted for the identification of pensioners and other claimants with the result that

the soldier absent on service with his unit may rest assured that his money reaches the right people.

During this work the soldiers' relations submit their problems and difficulties to the Recruiting Officer for solution. Many long hours of work are entailed but the Recruiting Staff have always regarded this as a duty of paramount importance and indeed an honour, by which they can watch the interests of the Gurkha soldier who serves us so well and of his family who look to the Depots and the British Legation as places where they will always receive a sympathetic hearing and assistance.

The Recruiting Officer keeps in close contact with the British Minister at Nepal and through him with the Nepalese Government. Regular visits to Kathmandu and interviews with His Highness the Maharaja ensure a constant liaison and maintain the cordial relations which are essential to the efficient and friendly dealing with his Government.

It is convenient to mention here that all official communication between the British or Indian Governments and Nepal is carried on through the Minister whose full title is His Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Nepal.

This applies equally as regards army matters.

All correspondence for the Government of Nepal must be submitted to the British Minister for onward despatch.

CHAPTER XV

COMMUNICATIONS IN NEPAL

It is not always realized that communications inside Nepal or between the Gurkha Soldier in India or overseas and his family at home are extremely difficult and slow. The nature of the country itself offers one explanation and the other is to be sought in the primitive means of communication. The Gurkha Recruiting Organization has given this matter much consideration over many years and much research and investigation has gone to the compiling of the official Handbook of Villages in Nepal. A brief description of the system of civil administration in the Hill country will help to put this matter of communications in the right perspective.

It may help the reader to appreciate the position and to understand it if a comparison is made with the similar organization in England. There one pays national taxation into regional taxation offices but other local taxes such as rates go to the county, the borough or the local municipal offices. Again the system of local Government in England goes from the Parish, the County and the Regional Committees. Certain items such as tithe cut across this and follow the lines of demarcation between the ecclesiastical dioceses; e.g. tithe in the north of Gloucestershire goes to Worcester and not to Gloucester because the diocese of Gloucester dates only from the reformation and Worcester was originally the seat of the eccle-

siastical courts; hence the collection of tithe still follows the ancient rule. Keeping this in view it may be easier to understand the system in Nepal where in addition the equivalent of manorial rights still exist although in England they have passed into the limbo of forgotten things like common right to pasture and tillage before the enclosure acts turned the peasant into an agricultural labourer.

The Hill districts of Nepal are divided into Tehsils equivalent to provinces. In each Tehsil there are several Jillas which correspond roughly to English Counties.

These Jillas are variously grouped for Administrative and Revenue purposes. These may appear somewhat curious at times but long custom has sanctioned the procedure. For example Tehsil No. 3 West contains the four Jillas Kaski, Tanhu, Dhor and Rising-Ghiring. The Administrative Headquarters called the Adda of the Tehsil is at Pokhra in Kaski the Chief Official being the Bada Hakim. The revenue, however, is collected at Pokhra only for Kaski and for the other three Jillas at Bandipur in Tanhu. Kaski is separate for this purpose because the Maharaja of Nepal, *i.e.*, the hereditary Prime Minister, holds the personal position of Maharaja of Kaski (and also of Lamjung). The revenue is paid into an office called the Mal Adda and is in charge of an official with the title of Suba.

Each Jilla is subdivided into a number of Thums which may be compared to the English Rural Districts. The two Chief Officials in the Thum are the Thulo Mukhiya who is the administrative official and

collects the "Bari ko tiro" (tax on unirrigated land) while his underling the Jimwal collects the "Khet ko tiro" (tax on irrigated fields). It may be noted here that in the Tehsil called Dailekh the senior man is the Jimwal and the word Jimwali is used instead of Thum.

Thums vary greatly in size and may consist of a large number of big villages or a mere collection of small hamlets. Big or small, however, it is a most important feature of man's address as any letters etc. must go via the Thum. Normally the Mukhiya settles petty disputes and generally administers the affairs of the Thum. He is responsible for the upkeep of the Kot (guard room) and the Maula or place of sacrifice. A large Thum may have more than one Maula especially if difficult country prevents all residents from attending the Dashera or other festivals at one place. Even if there is more than one Maula the Thulo Mukhiya (Chief Official) will always live at the Thum headquarters and Siano (lesser) Mukhiyas will look after subsidiary maulas. Casual use of the word Maula will sometimes lead to confusion.

A man may, in practice, hand over his tax money to the Siano Mukhiya and himself go the nearby Maula for the festivals and so if he is only asked where his Maula is he will give that name instead of the Thum headquarters. The fact remains, however, that his taxes are collected by the Thulo Mukhiya and for official purposes he will be described as belonging to such and such a Thum.

Visitors to Kathmandu or other Nepalese areas

will be able to recognise the Mukhiyas by their special headdress which is a small skull cap surrounded by a rolled brim threaded with silver cord; a silver badge is fastened to the front. Among other duties he supervises the boundaries of the cultivated land, called "Pari" and the waste or rough grazing areas called "Banjho". The Mukhiya is entitled to one day's labour a year in his fields by everyone in the Thum. Four annas may be paid instead of this forced labour which is known as Bethi. Other forms of forced labour are still in operation. One called Begari, is the carrying of Government articles as everything in Nepal has to be carried on men's backs. The other is known as Jhara and is confined to essential works on paths and bridges for public use. Gurkha Officers of the regular Gurkha Brigade Regiments are exempted from both Begari and Jhara both on leave and in retirement.

Special exemption certificates for Gurkha Officers are issued by the Nepalese Government through the British Minister in Nepal.

The above description of the local Government system brings us to the important matter of the correct method of sending a letter to man's home in Nepal. If it can be sent by hand of a man going on leave to the particular Thum or a nearby village all the better as it will get there quicker than if sent through the post. The Nepal Government has not joined the Postal Union and so all letters to or from Nepal must go through the special Exchange Offices. When a letter reaches the Thum it remains there until called for. The postal peon (called a Hulak) does

not deliver letters to the villages. The address should be written in the Nagri script and must contain the following:—

Addressee's name, Village, Thum, Jilla, Tehsil, Nepalese Office of exchange and nearest Indian post office. The correct Indian postage stamps must be put on. In the case of a letter from Nepal to India Nepalese stamps (eight paisa Nepali) must be put on.

An example is given below:

Manbahadur Thapa,
 Village Sikha,
 Thum Thara,
 Jilla Khanchi,
 Tahsil Gulmi,
 Nepal Exchange Office Bhairwa
via Nautanwa Bazar,
 Gorakhpur District,
 United Provinces.

There are also areas in Nepal called Birta, that is, freehold land and areas known as Raje, *i.e.*, belonging to a Raja. The revenues of such places go to the holder of the freehold or to the Raja. In the interests of uniformity and to ensure correct addresses for letters, etc., the Recruiting Offices show all villages of such areas under Thums as usual.

INDIAN-NEPALESE POSTAL EXCHANGE OFFICES.

Post Office on Indian side of the border.	Nepali Office of Exchange.	Areas in Nepal to be served.	
KATHMANDU (Post Office in the British Legation).	KATHMANDU	Nepal Valley & (Bhatgaon & Patan) Jillas Tanhu, Rising- Giring. Dhullikhel No. 1 East. Choutra No. 1 East. Thum Likhu Listi No. 1 East.	Nawakot No. 1 West Dhading No. 1 West Sallyan No. 1 West Gorkha Lamjung
RAXAUL (Bihar)	BIRGANJ	Parsa Terai Amlekhganj Terai Chisapani.	Kalaiya Terai Rautahat Terai Garhi Terai
SURSAND	JALESWAR	Mohotari Terai Sarlahi Terai Sirha Jilla Udaipurgarhi Terai Daulakha No. 2 East.	Lyang Lyang No. 2 East Lyang Lyang No. 3 East Sinduligarhi No. 2 East Saptari Terai.
FORBESGANJ	BIRATNAGAR	Morang (West portion) ,, (East portion) Pergana Jhapa Thum Dhankuta.	Thum Tehrathum ,, Taplejang Bhojpur No. 4 East Thum Chainpur.