

# ANGLO-NEPALESE RELATIONS

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES OF THE BRITISH RULE  
IN INDIA TILL THE GURKHA WAR





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*To my father*  
**SRI CHANDRAKUMAR CHAUDHURI**  
*on his 84th birthday*



## PREFACE

As one of India's nearest neighbours Nepal has been susceptible to the political developments in India during the past few decades. The gradual march of India towards independence and democracy and, especially, her adoption of the new Constitution in 1950, naturally, had their repercussions on the Nepalese people and politics. But Nepal emancipated herself only recently from the autocratic rule of the Ranas and set up a democratic Government under the aegis of her king.

At present Nepal has assumed a position of particular importance in relation to India. The British Government in India treated Nepal as a closed preserve for the army recruitment and as a hilly buffer between India and Tibet. But, after Indian independence and Nepal's emancipation from the despotic control of the Ranas, both these countries have become partners in building the destinies of the common man in their respective territories. Naturally, India's interest in Nepal, and the latter's interest in India have increased many times to-day.

The present relationship between these two countries has, however, to be studied with reference to the Indo-Nepalese relations during the British rule in India, which for obvious reasons, supply us with the background and help us to get the correct perspective. Unfortunately, very little of the history of these relations becomes known till one reaches the Gurkha War (1814-16).

The purpose of this work is to reconstruct the history of the Anglo-Nepalese relations from the early days of the British rule in India till the Gurkha war (1814). On this period no connected or comprehensive study has yet been made. Kirkpatrick's *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul*, Hamilton's *Trade Relations*, Oldfield's *Sketches from Nipal*, Landon's *Nepal*, Ikbali Shah's *Nepal the Home of Gods*, Markham's *Bogle and Manning*, Prinsep's *Military Transactions* have been found very useful for my work, but none covers the entire period nor the different aspects which form



the subject-matter of this work. Kirkpatrick, Prinsep and Markham are really valuable secondary sources. Most of the other works are more or less of travellers' interest.

About the Kinloch expedition some details may be found in most of the above-mentioned works but these are of a fragmentary nature and do not contain any critical analysis. Prof. S. C. Sarkar's articles on Nepal refer to the Kinloch Expedition, and to a very limited extent, to the frontier question, but not to the Anglo-Nepalese relations as a whole. I have gone through the original sources relating to the Kinloch expedition and I have endeavoured to make the treatment analytical and critical.

The period subsequent to the death (1775) of Prithvi Narayan Shah, the Gurkha King, till the Gurkha War (1814-16) is almost invariably dismissed by writers on Nepal in a few sentences. But I have come across abundant materials for the reconstruction of the history of this period. Some very interesting and at the same time highly important documents have been found, and I have drawn upon these in narrating the hitherto untold story of the Nepalese assistance to the Nawab Vizier of Oudh in the Rohilla War at the request of the Company's Government, and of the part played by the wife of Warren Hastings in securing military help from Nepal against Rajah Chait Singh of Benares.

I have consulted different series of records preserved in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, and I have found the following specially useful for my work: *Letters to and from the Court of Directors, Public Proceedings, Political Consultations and Secret Consultations*. A very important document—*Statement of everything that had passed between the Nepal Government and the English from first to last* (January 9, 1815) could not be traced in the Indian National Archives. But on a reference to the Secretary, Commonwealth Relations Office, London, I got a micro-film copy of this document. It is a very important document and has thrown new light on certain hitherto obscure or unknown facts of the Anglo-Nepalese relations of the period dealt with by me. I have tried to bring to light some important episodes in the Anglo-Nepalese relations and to throw new light on topics that have been dealt with by others.

Original sources, both published and unpublished, secondary sources etc., consulted by me, have been shown in the Bibliography in Appendix 'C'. In view of the fact that I have based this work mainly on primary sources, I have saved myself the trouble of making bibliographical comments.

In quoting extracts, I have retained the spelling and punctuation of the original documents.

In order to understand the Nepalese point of view, I have studied a few books on Nepal written by the Nepalese writers in their own language. My attempts to get assistance from the Nepal Government, through the First Secretary to the Nepalese Embassy, New Delhi, however, did not succeed.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. N. K. Sinha, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of History, Calcutta University, for the valued guidance I received from him.

K. C. CHAUDHURI.

Calcutta,  
March 21, 1960.





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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C. P. C.	...	Calendar of Persian Correspondence.
IHQ	...	Indian Historical Quarterly.
Pub. Cons.	...	Public Consultations.
Sect. Cons.	...	Secret Consultations.
Sel. Com. Pr.	...	Select Committee Proceedings.

## MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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PRITHVI NARAYAN SHAH

By the Courtesy of  
Sri Balchandra Sharma, M. A.

## CHAPTER I

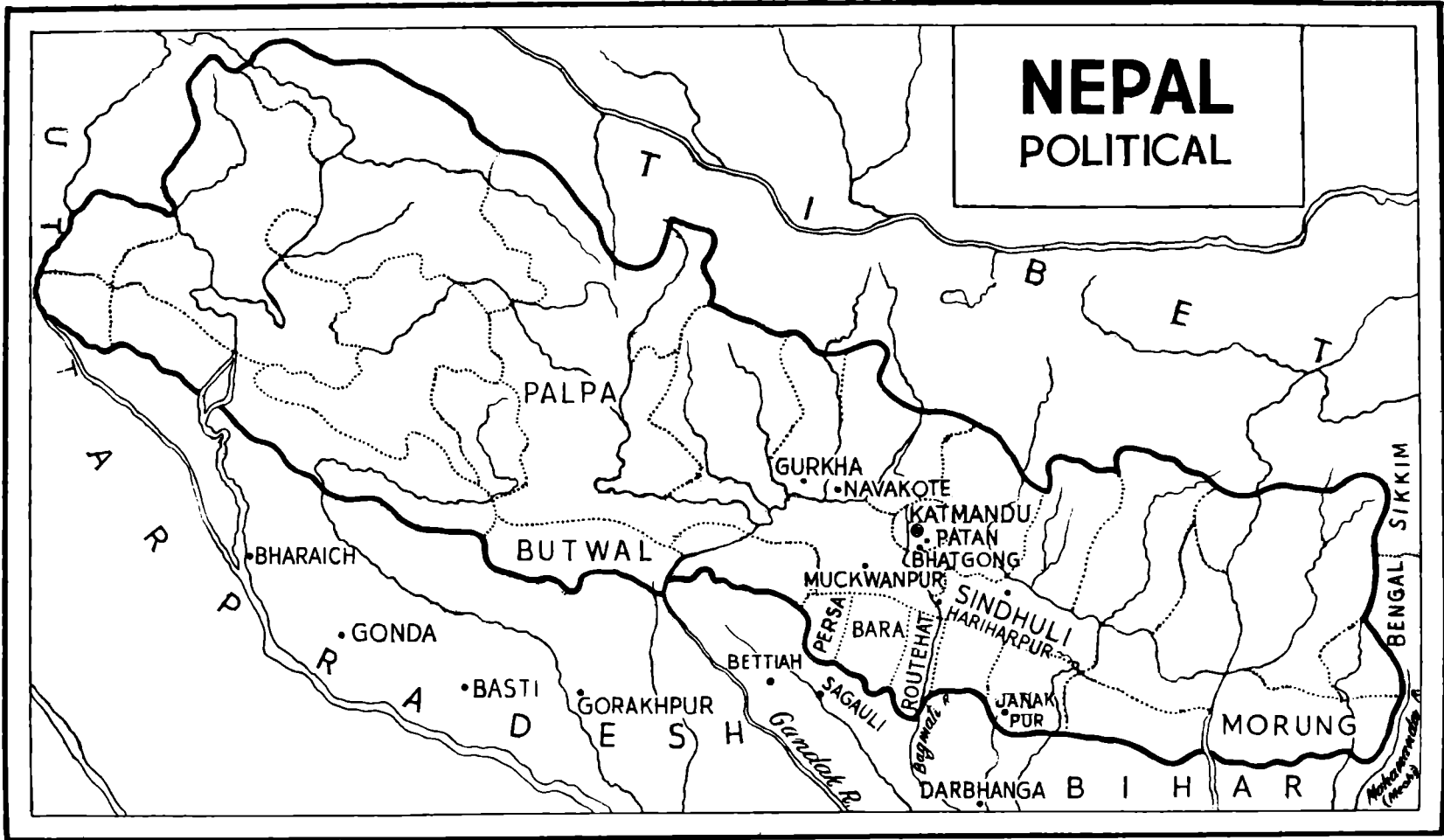
# INTRODUCTION: NEPAL IN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

### I

Nepal, one of India's closest neighbours, linked up with her by cultural and commercial ties from time immemorial, has not yet received that amount of attention from Indian scholars as she could reasonably have claimed. This appears to be due, partly at least, to the peculiar process of political isolation through which she had been passing since the later Hindu period. Despite her intimate political contact with Indian Empires in the days of India's glory<sup>1</sup> she gradually passed out of Indian history during the medieval and early modern periods. The chief factor that conduced to this seclusion was the peculiar geography of Nepal.

Of all influences that go to determine the course and regulate the pace of the political, social, economic and cultural evolution of a people, that of physical geography is of the greatest consequence. This fundamental truth has been borne out very faithfully by the history of Nepal. She is one of those countries whose history and political destiny, and above all, relations with the neighbouring countries have been to an incalculable degree influenced by physical geography. The peculiarities of Nepal's geography—peculiarities that relate to altitude, climate, river-system, configuration, etc.—have rendered her not only difficult of access, and consequently secure against foreign attacks, but capable of producing a martial race.

Nepal lies due north of India, and is almost a parallelogram in shape with an appendix at the north eastern corner. Towards the north it runs along the southern range of the Himalayas beyond which lie China and her dependency Tibet, while towards the south it skirts the borders of the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. From east to west it extends from the Mechi





(Mahananda) river and Sikkim to the Sutlej. The longest distance between the borders lengthwise, is about 576 miles ; its breadth varies from 80 to 144 miles. It comprises about 68,000 square miles of territory which rises in gradual elevation from the south towards the north, to the highest known altitude of the globe. Yet the elevation, ranging from 21,000 ft. to 29,000 ft. above the sea level, has nowhere been so abrupt as to make Nepal or any part of it a detached mass of territory insofar as its physical relation with India is concerned. In fact, the Indian territories to the north reach their natural frontiers only when they touch the northern-most snowy range of the Himalayas.

The interior of Nepal has been cut up into three distinct parts of almost equal size by mountains, viz. Nandadevi, Dhabalgiri, Gosainthan and Kanchanjungha, all of which stand at rightangles to the Himalayan range. Each of the three parts thus formed—the eastern, central and western—is washed by numerous streams, which combine, as they flow down southwards, into three big rivers: the Gogra in the western part, the Gandak in the central and the Kosi in the eastern.<sup>2</sup>

## II

Although Nepal has been commercially and culturally connected with India and other countries beyond her frontiers yet the communication has never been easy, and even during the period under review, i.e. under comparatively modern conditions, it was extremely hazardous. No wonder, she remained concealed from the world outside. During the early days of the British rule in India, Nepal remained in a state of political, cultural and economic seclusion, except insofar as it was broken by her feeble commercial relations with the territories of China, Sikkim, Tibet and the districts on the northern borders of the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. Nepal also served as a channel through which the Indo-Tibetan trade relations subsisted.

Ignorance sometimes lends charm to places, and lack of knowledge about Nepal coupled with occasional flow of

Tibetan gold through her into Bengal, invested her with a mystery. Exaggerated notions about Nepal's wealth naturally found an easy currency among the British. It was widely believed, although erroneously, that Nepal contained several gold mines.

The commercial relations between Nepal and Bengal may reasonably be said to date from the earliest times of Indian history. During the medieval period, although our knowledge of the times is almost nil, there can be little doubt that some kind of contact, presumably through trade and commerce, was maintained. This fact is borne out by the adoption of the Persian designations and expressions like *Bar-kazees*, *Kazees*, *Subahs*, *Omrachs* etc., by the Nepalese. Further, Mr. Bogle's reference<sup>3</sup> to certain articles of merchandise as also Capt. Kirkpatrick's<sup>4</sup> list of exports and imports of the two countries leave little doubt that trade relations between Nepal and India, particularly, Bengal, had been continuing for centuries before the coming of the British in India.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the Nepalese copper held a sort of monopoly in the Indian market for its quality, and it was only after the introduction of a cheaper variety of copper by the British that the former was ousted from the Indian Market.

Indeed the economic potentialities of Nepal were responsible for drawing the secluded land of mystery once again into the arena of Indian politics in the second half of the eighteenth century. During that period of transition the history of India was characterised by two opposing forces: the breaking and the making of empires. The Moghul Empire was on its last legs, its every part contested by adventurers. The Maratha Empire was soon to receive at Panipat (1761) a shattering blow which doomed it to disintegration. It was in the midst of these political changes that one of the most decisive battles of the world was fought and won by the English in Bengal, viz.: the battle of Plassey (1757), which marked the beginning of the transition of the East India Company from a mercantile firm into a political power in India. It was particularly fortunate for the British that their first steps towards political

accession in India fitted so well into the throes of indigenous empires in dissolution.

While in the plains of India the indigenous powers were being replaced by the British, in the regions beyond her northern borders, a parallel movement was in progress: the Gurkhas were conquering the whole of Nepal for themselves. These two parallel forces, after having acquired enough strength and territories within their respective regions, met each other on the common border—the Terai, extending nearly to eight hundred miles—to decide which of the two—the Gurkhas or the British—were to control the tract of the Himalayan Terai.

When the English Company was fast undergoing a metamorphosis from a commercial community into a political power, Prithvi Narayan, the Gurkha Chief, was laying the foundations of his greatness. The Gurkhas inhabited the place of the same name, which was one of the four sovereign principalities into which Nepal then was divided. These were: Katmandu, Patan or Lalita Patan, Bhatgong and Gurkha.<sup>6</sup> The Gurkhas comprised the *Khas*, *Magars*, *Gurungs* and a few others of the eleven recognised divisions into which the Nepalese then were divided.<sup>7</sup> They were a recklessly brave and hardy race of people. For such a brave and hardy, and instinctively militant people whose natural geography developed them into a martial race, it was only natural to seek expansion of territories, and under the able leadership of their Chief, Prithvi Narayan, the Gurkhas launched upon a career of conquest. The territorial expansion of the Gurkhas was rapid, and soon the three Chiefs of Katmandu, Patan and Bhatgong began to feel the weight of the Gurkha arms and lose grounds to them till the whole of Nepal came under the sway of the Gurkha Chief. It is in the context of this gradual expansion of the Gurkhas that the Anglo-Nepalese relations are to be studied. The most remarkable and peculiar feature of the English political expansion in the East was that commercial expansion preceded the political. We shall, first trace the commercial relations between the English and the Nepalese, and in that connection study their political relationship.

## III

From the earliest times a brisk trade existed between Nepal and the Indian districts on the Nepal border. The Indian districts which particularly participated in this trade and through which imports from Nepal were distributed all over Bengal and exports to Nepal were sent, are: Dehra Dun, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Bhabhara, Champaran, Purnea, Darbhanga, etc. The lists of exports and imports through these districts, during the early days of the British rule in India, show a large number of items in common. The most valuable items of import were, however, the Tibetan gold ingots and gold dust, which, as it has already been remarked, were erroneously believed to have been Nepalese gold. The inflated notion about the Nepalese opulence, which gained currency also among the English traders in Bengal, naturally made them interested in the Nepalese trade. Under the peace-loving Newar Kings of Nepal, the Anglo-Nepalese trade made a good beginning. The East India Company began to take part in the Nepalese trade by the way that it sent merchandise to the bordering districts wherefrom it would be exported to the trans-Himalayan regions. The most voluminous item of import from Nepal was rice of which "200,000 maunds and upwards entered the district (Gorakhpur) in a single year"<sup>8</sup> Other grains, ghee, oil-seeds, spices, hides, copper, etc., constituted the most important items of imports from Nepal which would purchase a huge quantity of English as well as country-made cloth, yarn, small amounts of grains, sugar, salt, dried fish, etc. Nepal would also send sheep and goats and import ponies.<sup>9</sup> The district of Dun used to get hardwares of all descriptions, cotton cloth, cotton blankets, sugar, tobacco, food-grains, dried fruits, spices etc., from different parts of India and send them to the hills. The biggest purchaser was Nepal. From the hills India received coarse blankets, rice, ginger, turmeric, red gum, resin, timber, potatoes, opium, etc.<sup>10</sup> The district of Bhabhara exported grains, salt, cotton goods, sugar, tobacco, etc., to Nepal and imported rice, timber, oil-seeds, fibrous products, etc. The registration posts through which the

import and the export trade passed were Qutbgarh, Babaganj, Jamnia, Kataniaghat, Bichia and Bharatpur.

Similar trade relations existed between the district of Gonda and Nepal.<sup>11</sup> Basti district imported from Nepal unhusked rice, wheat, small quantities of barley, millet, gram, pulses and exported cotton goods, metals, salt, sugar, oil, wool, etc. One of the important trade routes to Nepal was through Champaran. The bulk of the import trade consisted of rice and paddy and export trade, of cotton piece goods, salt, sugar and kerosene oil.<sup>12</sup> Trade between the district of Purnea and Nepal had long been of great importance. The export-import trade was of the same nature as between the other Indian districts and Nepal.

The chief trade routes to Nepal were (a) Nawabganj to Dwiaganj, (b) Amona via Sahibganj to Dwiaganj, (c) Mirganj to Sahibganj, (d) Kusamba to Pathardewa, (e) Kursatkata to Rangeli, (f) Rajola via Dhobi to Gora, (g) Megha via Harecha to Jhontiaki, (h) Sikti to Rangeli, (i) Dhubeli via Kochaha to Chailghazi in Nepal, (j) Phulwari via Teragach to Chailghazi.

Another almost equal number of routes was later on developed to facilitate trade between the Indian districts referred to above and Nepal and the hilly regions. The Nepal Government used to levy export and import duties, any evasion whereof would be punished with a double duty, if detected. Persons who had their permanent residence in Nepal were allowed to pay a consolidated sum towards tariff duties annually.

The Industrial Revolution in England added to the importance of the Anglo-Nepalese trade and commerce. During the first half of the eighteenth century the East India Company's import from England consisted of bullion and woollens. Not less than 74% of the import was covered by the bullion and the rest by woollens. For a long time past woollens were the staple manufacture of England.<sup>13</sup> It was by the middle of the eighteenth century that cotton fabrics started improving as a result of inventions of new methods. But till then the British-made woollen goods and only one variety of cotton fabrics called *Broad Cloth* used to be imported. These, however, had a



very poor market in India and more often than not, had to be sold at a loss. This perturbed the Court of Directors who asked the Calcutta Council to explore the Himalayan regions for the disposal of the woollens.<sup>14</sup>

The East India Company had also a plan to exploit the fir timber from the Terai. Even before the Gurkha conquest of Nepal, the East India Company and the Court of Directors got interested in the fir trade. In his letter to the court of Directors, one Col. Barker<sup>15</sup> wrote. "Bettiah will, I think, be of considerable consequence to the Company. Its firs will afford masts for all ships in India which must produce a new and considerable trade with other nations in India as well as advantageous to our own shipping. Gold and cinnamon are also found here, the latter we gather in the jungles. Timber as large as never I have seen, musk and elephants' teeth besides many other commodities I have not yet got knowledge of".<sup>16</sup> The Fir Scheme, although eventually given up, was pursued with great earnestness upto 1772. In his letter to the Governor General and Council at Fort William, one Mr. Peacock wrote about the efforts he had been making to cut down firs from Morung forests and how he had succeeded in getting the sole right of cutting fir and *Saul* wood from the Ameerpore Morung, from the local Rajah (Coran Sein). Coran Sein, Rajah of Morung<sup>17</sup> who wanted to enlist the support of the English in punishing the Gurkha Rajah Prithvi Narayan Shah who had "seized 10 or 15 villages" belonging to him, granted to the English the right of cutting wood in the following terms: "Whatever Fir or Saul timbers, what elephants, spices, etc., and what country is on the borders of the hills and whatever is the product of the hills are all given upto you".<sup>18</sup>

Such were the early trade relations between the English and Nepal. The Nepalese trade was of special importance to the East India Company, for the latter had an idea of linking up their China trade through Nepal. Besides, Nepal served as the channel through which Anglo-Tibetan trade was also being conducted. All the same, things were still in a formative stage and the English had not yet taken any determined step with regard to their

trade with Nepal although they were convinced of the possibilities of the Nepalese trade in particular. But soon occasion arose which compelled the attention of the English to the affairs of Nepal and the neighbouring regions.

#### IV

It has already been pointed out that the Nepal valley was divided into four sovereign principalities. But in the middle of the eighteenth century the Gurkhas rose into prominence and began subduing the three other principalities of Patan, Bhatgong and Katmandu.

The Gurkha Chief under whom the Gurkha power rose into pre-eminence was Prithvi Narayan Shah, son of Narbhupal Shah. It was the latter who first mooted the idea of uniting the whole of Nepal under the Gurkha house. But it was not given him to realise his ambition. His son Prithvi Narayan, however, translated the idea of a united Nepal into a reality.

Prithvi Narayan succeeded his father in 1742,<sup>19</sup> rather early in life. He was an intrepid soldier and an astute politician. He spent the first seven years in the consolidation of his kingdom and in preparation for what was to come next. From 1749 he began his offensive against his neighbours. Navakote was the first place to feel the weight of the Gurkha arms but due to divided command on the Gurkha side the latter was defeated. Upon this, Prithvi Narayan came to Benares where his father-in-law Abhiman Singh, a Rajput Chief, procured for him some fire arms and a quantity of ammunition. On his return to Gurkha, Prithvi Narayan first took steps to defeat Navakote in the diplomatic field. He entered into friendly alliance with the Chiefs of Lumjung, Tanhu and Palpa. This done, Prithvi Narayan sent an army against Navakote from three directions. The Chief of Navakote was signally defeated and his country passed into the hands of the Gurkhas.

Prithvi Narayan's next strategy was to conquer all the places round the Nepal valley, that is, Katmandu and the neighbouring regions, and thereby to create an economic crisis in order that the conquest of Nepal valley might be-

come easier. He attacked Kirtipur, a dependency of Patan and a strategic post commanding the Nepal valley, but was signally defeated ((1757). Prithvi Narayan made good his escape from the battle field but his minister Kalu Pande was killed in action. Kalu Pande was an able administrator and a great organiser. His death meant a great loss to the Gurkhas and it was not until 1763 that they were in a position to resume the policy of conquest.

In 1763, the Gurkhas conquered Muckwanpur, one of the gateways to Nepal from Bengal. The conquest of Muckwanpur, however, brought Prithvi Narayan in collision with Mir Qasim, Nawab of Bengal. Bikram Sein, King of Muckwanpur, was taken prisoner by Prithvi Narayan. Upon this, Kanak Singh, another local Chief, complained to Nawab Mir Qasim and requested his intervention. "In consequence of this complaint, the Nabob himself crossed over sending Gourgeen Cawn before him who arrived near Muckwanpur where his whole army being destroyed the Nabob returned to Patna".<sup>20</sup> It may be mentioned here that Mir Qasim's expedition was not solely determined by the consideration to help the imprisoned Chief Bikram Sein of Muckwanpur on the representation of the latter's friendly neighbour Kanak Singh but also by Gurgin Khan's eagerness to test the strength and skill of the troops whom he had disciplined and of the artillery which he had trained. Gurgin Khan's lust for the Nepalese gold was another cause of his earnestness to lead the expedition, although the Nawab was counselled against it.<sup>21</sup>

The defeat of the expedition was so complete that Gurgin Khan was obliged to retreat without stopping, having lost a great number of his men and "leaving many stands of arms".<sup>22</sup> The repercussions of Mir Qasim's expedition upon the Gurkhas could be traced in their suspicion about the intentions of the rulers of Bengal. It was not unnatural for them to look upon this expedition only as a precedent which would be followed by the rising British Power in Bengal.

In 1765, Prithvi Narayan attacked Kirtipur again. The ferocity<sup>23</sup> with which the Gurkha conquerors had dealt with the natives of Kirtipur struck terror into the hearts of the

neighbouring people and made the subsequent Gurkha conquests easier, for none dared to incur the wrath of the Gurkha Chief by making any attempt at self-defence against an enemy so strong and ruthless.

Prithvi Narayan's conquest of the whole of Nepal was rendered easier by the internal dissensions among the Nepal rulers. Ranjit Malla, Chief of Bhatgong, in his quarrel with the Chiefs of Patan and Katmandu invoked the assistance of the Gurkha Chief Prithvi Narayan.<sup>24</sup> As it happened in the history of many a country, the jealous Chief of Bhatgong instead of bringing an ally in Prithvi Narayan, brought a new master.

Soon he repented his indiscretion and sought to compound his quarrel with the Chiefs of Patan and Katmandu in order to offer a joint resistance to the Gurkha Chief. But it was too late, for the mischief had already been done.<sup>25</sup> Prithvi Narayan first took possession of Bhatgong and next he invested Patan (1767). The rapid expansion of the Gurkha dominions and the growth of the Gurkha power round the Nepal valley placed Jayprakash Malla, the Chief of Katmandu, in a state of siege. All egress and ingress having been stopped, Katmandu was faced with the danger of being starved to submission. Jayprakash in this predicament sought military assistance from the English in Bengal. The step was no doubt taken in sheer desperation, for there was hardly any power in the hills with which Jayprakash might enter into any fruitful alliance against the Gurkhas. The English seized the opportunity, not without reason, and decided to send an expedition to relieve Jayprakash, the Chief of Katmandu.<sup>26</sup>

1. Vide: *Classical Age*: Edited by Majumdar & Pusalker, pp. 8, 60, 85, 138; also *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*: Edited by Majumdar & Pusalker, pp. 49, 59.

2. For the topographical details I am indebted to Oldfield: *Sketches from Nipal*; Digby: *Nepal and India*; Kirkpatrick: *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul*; Mill: *History of British India*, Vol. VIII, p. 4 ff.

3. Markham: *Bogle and Manning*, p. 124.

4. Later Col. Kirkpatrick.

5. Kirkpatrick: *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul*, pp. 203-55.

6. *Bogle's Memorandum on the trade of Tibet*: Pub. Cons. April 19, 1779, No. 2; also vide Markham: *Bogle and Manning*: pp. 75-76.

7. Northey & Morris: *The Gurkhas*, p. 63.

8. *District Gazetteer of U.P.: Gorakhpur Dist.* Vol. XXXI, pp. 78-79.

9. Ibid, p. 79.
10. *District Gazetteer of U.P.* Vol. XIV, pp. 52-53.
11. *District Gazetteer of U.P.* Vol. XIV. *Dun.* p. 185, foot-note.
12. Ibid. *Champaran*, p. 94 ; The existence of trade relations between India and Nepal, and between India and Tibet through Nepal is also referred to and items of import and export shown in *Markham's Bogle and Manning* pp. LX-LXX ; Kirkpatrick's *An Account of the Kingdom Nepal*, p. 205 ff ; Stavorinus' *Voyages to the East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 391 ; Pub. Cons., Oct. 31, 1769, No. 1 ; Home Public Press List. Vol. VII, p. 225.
13. Hamilton: *Trade Relations*, p. 109.
14. Public Letter from Court of Directors, March, 16, 1768 para, 41.
15. Secret Letter to Court, p. 94 (1765-67).
16. Barker's letter to Select Committee, March 6, 1766.
17. Letter to Govr. in Council from Mr. Peacock, June, 25, 1772 Pub. Cons. June 8, 1772, No. 2 (a).
18. Pub. Cons. July 8, 1772, No. 3 (b).
19. Vide: Levi: *Le Nepal*, pp. 261-62 ; also Vansittart: *Notes on Nepal*, p. 52 ; Sharma: *Nepalko Ailihasik Rupa-Rekha*, p. 215.
20. Pub. Cons. Cop. No. 10, p. 150 ; also see O'Malley: *Bihar & Orissa Gazetteer*, Dist. *Champaran*, p. 24 ff ; *Riaz-us-salatin*, Translation by Abdus-salam, p. 296 ; *Seir-ul Mutaqherin*, Vol. II, p. 447.
21. *Seir-ul-Mutaqherin*, Vol. II, p. 447, Chatterjee, N.L.: *Mir Qasim*, pp. 163-64.
22. Ibid, p. 448, also Vide: O'Malley: *Bihar & Orissa Gazetteer*, Dist. *Champaran*, p. 28 ; Ishwar Raj: *Naya Nepalko Itihas*, p. 103.
23. "He ordered his brother Surupratna to cut the noses of all including children, except those in arms": Father Guiseppe: "An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal", Vide *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. II, p. 307 ff.
24. "They went to war, and Perti Narrain, the Rajah of Goorkha, was called in to take part in the quarrel ; having subdued the enemy, he turned his arms against his allies—Bogle's Memorandum on the Trade of Tibet, Dec. 5, 1774 ;—Vide: Diskalker: *Bogle's Embassy to Tibet*, IHQ, June, 1933, Vol. IV, p. 425 ff.
25. E. C. Bose: *Copies of the Treaties between E. I. Co. and Native Powers in Asia with the introductory and historical notices thereon*, p. 164.
26. Sel. Com. Pr., March, 27, 1767 ; also April, 30, 1767.

## CHAPTER II

### KINLOCH EXPEDITION

Separatist tendencies of the three principalities of Katmandu, Bhatgong and Patan were indeed the real cause of their undoing. The Gurkhas took the fullest advantage of this dissension among the Chiefs of the Nepal valley, took them one by one and defeated them all. Jayprakash, the Chief of Katmandu, was one of the last to be subdued by the Gurkhas. He had watched the growth of the power of the English East India Company in Bengal and did not fail to realise that the only dependable military power in Hindostan was the English Company. As it has already been observed, the Newar king Jayprakash Malla<sup>1</sup> courted the British out of sheer desperation. Had there been any power in the hills with which he might have entered into a fruitful alliance, Jayprakash would have surely avoided an alliance with the East India Company whose rise to political ascendancy must have been watched by him not entirely without suspicion, although the policy of the Newars towards the English was not one of total exclusion. But adversity brings strange bed-fellows and the Newar Chief, when hard pressed, chose the lesser of the two evils.

Nepalese *Vakeels* were sent to Mr. Golding, the English Commercial Agent at Bettiah, to solicit British help on behalf of the Newar Chief Jayprakash of Katmandu against Prithvi Narayan. The purport of the conversation between the Nepalese *Vakeels* and Mr. Golding was communicated to Mr. Thomas Rumbold, the Company's Chief at Patna, on the 6th of April, 1767. A copy of Mr. Golding's letter was forwarded by Mr. Rumbold to Mr. Verelst, the then Governor, on the 18th April, 1767. In his letter containing the purport of his conversation with the Nepalese *Vakeels* Mr. Golding made out a strong case for sending an expedition to the relief of the Newar Chief. Mr. Golding emphasised the justifiability of such an expedition not only on moral grounds, for, "it would be rescuing a large city from plunder and sword", but

also on the ground of the possible advantages which the East India Company would gain thereby. Further, Mr. Golding pointed out, the Gurkhas had already "encroached upon us not a little" and in the event of the loss of the Nepal valley to the Gurkhas, the Fir Scheme<sup>2</sup> would have to be given up and even Bettiah, which came in the Company's possession after the Battle of Buxar, 1764, would be exposed to the plundering raids of the Gurkhas. If, on the other hand, the Newar Chief was successfully relieved, the English would certainly earn his gratitude which would facilitate the opening of communication with China through Nepal and this would be of great consequence to the Company. Lastly, Golding pointed out that at any event, the English would shortly be required to oppose the Gurkhas for the safety of the Fir Scheme as well as the revenues of Bettiah, and the most prudent step under the circumstances would be to strike the Gurkhas before they had gained sufficient strength, and that again, without any expenditure on the Company's part since the Newar Chief was offering to bear all costs of the expedition.

In the meantime, Prithvi Narayan, who must have had enough means of contact with the plains and who must have been keeping the strictest watch upon the enemy (Jayprakash), realised the danger of a military alliance between the Newar Chief and the East India Company, and began taking steps to forestall the move. He addressed a letter to Mr. Thomas Rumbold, the Chief of Patna, requesting his protection for a visit to Patna, presumably to strike an alliance with the English Company or at least to prevent one between the Newar Chief and the English. Mr. Rumbold communicated Prithvi Narayan's request to Mr. Verelst, President of the Select Committee, with a forwarding letter in which he observed as follows: "The trade from Nepal which formerly was considerable has been entirely stopped by these invaders (the Gurkhas); small force, I am assured, would be sufficient not only to raise the siege but entirely to reduce the Goorcallly Rajah to obedience. The latter is so apprehensive of our assisting the Nepal Rajah (Jayprakash) that I have a letter from him the other day, desiring he might be allowed to visit Patna and that protection might be afforded him".<sup>3</sup>

This letter was considered by the Select Committee on the 30th April, 1767, along with that of Mr. Golding which contained Jayprakash's request for assistance. The Select Committee decided to send military assistance to the Newar Rajah Jayprakash, after trying mediation which they knew would be ineffectual. In their letter of the same date (April 30, 1767) the Select Committee instructed Mr. Rumbold to remonstrate with Prithvi Narayan so that he might "withdraw his troops from Nepal and desist from molesting the Raja with whom we are upon terms of amity; that the honour and interest of the Company require we should treat him as a declared enemy".<sup>4</sup>

In the meantime the Select Committee directed Capt. Kinloch, who had been earlier sent on an expedition against the Raja of Tipperah,<sup>5</sup> to proceed with all expedition to Monghyr and thence to Patna so that he might be in readiness to lead the expedition against the Gurkha Rajah should remonstrances prove ineffectual. The decision was communicated to Col. Smith.<sup>6</sup> Thus military intervention was almost a foregone conclusion.

The considerations that weighed with the Select Committee to decide in favour of sending military assistance to Jayprakash can be gathered from their letters to Mr. Rumbold<sup>7</sup> and to the Court of Directors<sup>8</sup> from their proceedings of the 30th April (1767), from Mr. Rumbold's letter to the Select Committee<sup>9</sup> and from Mr. Golding's letter to Mr. Rumbold.<sup>10</sup> The revival of the declining, almost dead, trade relations with Nepal and the opening up of China trade through Nepalese territory were two of the prime considerations that led the Select Committee to decide to render military assistance to the Newar Rajah Jayprakash. The scarcity of specie in Bengal due to huge drainage in consequence of China investment made it necessary to open new avenues of earning bullion. Nepalese gold would remove the scarcity of the current specie, they thought. "We are strongly induced to prosecute the intended expedition into that country. In the present declining state of commerce and scarcity of current specie, we the more readily embrace a measure which promises to open new sources of trade and



stores of money to replace those annual drains of Treasury, we are directed to make for supplying China investment".<sup>11</sup> Apart from the purely commercial considerations, the security of Bettiah against recurrent incursions from the adjacent Terai and Prithivi Narayan's threatened forcible occupation of the villages north of the Bettiah border demanded military action against the Gurkha Rajah.

Under instructions from the Select Committee Capt. Kinloch proceeded to Patna where he was asked to await further instructions from Mr. Rumbold. The Select Committee's action in directing Kinloch to proceed from Tipperah to Monghyr and thence to Patna without consulting Col. Richard Smith, the Commander-in-Chief was contrary to all traditional systems of military subordination and is, therefore, inexplicable. It is not a little curious that the Select Committee considered it wise to present a *fait accompli* to Col. Smith who should have been normally the person to pronounce on the advisability or otherwise of sending a military expedition to a strange and unknown country.

Pursuant to the Select Committee's decision to render military assistance to the Newar Chief Jayprakash Malla, Mr. Rumbold and Capt. Kinloch were busy gathering all relevant information likely to help the expedition to success. In the meantime Prithvi Narayan was peremptorily asked to accept the English mediation to which he sent an evasive reply.<sup>12</sup> In June 1767, the Nepalese *Vakeels* Muktan Unda (Muktananda?) and Faqir Ramdoss who came to solicit English help on behalf of the Newar Rajah were examined by Capt. Kinloch at Patna. This was done with a view to eliciting every information of military importance. The strength of the Gurkha army, as the *Vakeels* said, was near about 50,000 of which again, only 20,000 were stationed in the Nepal Valley and the rest was engaged in cultivation in their native places. Their arms comprised bows and arrows, swords and matchlocks. Information regarding roads and fords, food and drinking water was also obtained. The *Vakeels* made no secret of the fact that there was no time to lose, for with break of monsoon the hilly paths would become unsafe and the hill rivers unfordable. They also informed Capt.

Kinloch how Prithvi Narayan had "taken ten principal cities and possession of all his (Jayprakash's) country" and had kept the towns of Katmandu, Patan, Bhatgong and Zeemy (*sic*) all closely blockaded".<sup>13</sup>

What was most against Jayprakash, as the *Vakeels* pointed out, was that the rains would not make any material difference in the affairs of the Gurkha Rajah, "his different lines of circumvallation being of chains of small forts or hideouts round the places blockaded within which there are commodious houses for his people free from rain".<sup>14</sup> A plan of the Gurkha attack, presumably intercepted, was also given by the *Vakeels*. As to the stages of journey to be done by the expeditionary force, a plan was also drawn up by Muktan Unda himself.

To test the veracity of the statements of the *Vakeels* to Capt. Kinloch they were again examined by Mr. Thomas Rumbold. Their statements to Mr. Rumbold were found to corroborate their earlier statements to Capt. Kinloch. It must be noted that Mr. Rumbold followed a very peculiar method of testing the veracity of the Nepalese *Vakeels*. He seems to have thought that the reliability or otherwise of the *Vakeels* would depend on the extent to which they could depose in corroboration of their former statements to Capt. Kinloch. The *Vakeels* were sufficiently intelligent not to depose differently to two representatives of the Company whom they had approached for help. Mr. Rumbold, obviously, relied on the method of examination-in-chief and cross-examination of a witness in a witness box and proceeded to decide on the question of the veracity of the statements with reference to the extent of discrepancy, if any. But the second examination of the Nepalese *Vakeels* certainly did not eliminate the chance of their misrepresenting or at least overstating the real affairs as it was actually found to be the case later.

The total distance to be covered by the expeditionary force was 96 *coss*,<sup>15</sup> and the journey had to be completed by eleven stages, during the last six stages of which the Nepal Rajah undertook to provide *coolies* and provisions. The stages of the journey to be performed were as follows:

## COSS

Patna to Hodgepore	...	3	} Water & Provisions to be met with at all these stages.
to Darbhanga	...	22	
to Bawah	...	7	
to Jannuipore	...	12 ...	
to Jeladbas	...	6 ...	Water but no provisions.
to Rannybapa	...	9 ...	-do- -do-
to Siddley	...	9 ...	Water & Provisions
to Kurcoate	...	6 ...	-do- -do-
to Jungajulu near Dumjah	...	6 ...	Water but no provisions.
to Daupchah	...	10 ...	Rajah to supply provisions at Daupchah. <sup>16</sup>
to Ponautee	...	6 ...	

In reply to his letter containing the above details the Select Committee wrote to Mr. Rumbold stressing the wisdom of abandoning the expedition unless the latter was fully convinced of the highest probability of success.<sup>17</sup> "We repose", wrote the Select Committee to Mr. Rumbold, "too much confidence in your prudence and zeal for the service to entertain any suspicion that you will suffer yourself to be deluded by false reports and exaggerated accounts into a scheme, the defeat of which would bring dishonour upon our arms and deeply reflect on the conduct of the Committee. We must positively insist upon your relinquishing this expedition unless you have fullest conviction that it must be attended with success, since at this distance we cannot be competent judges of the degree of credit to be allowed to the reports of the *Vakeels* and *Faqir* and the other advices you may have received".<sup>18</sup>

The Select Committee was even more cautious in their instructions as to the progress of the expedition. It was forcefully enjoined upon Capt. Kinloch that should the Nepal valley be fully occupied by the Gurkha Rajah Prithvi Narayan, during the progress of the expedition, Capt. Kinloch must not proceed further and, instead, keep his army at "Bettiah country". Should he encounter unexpected difficulties either from the "Season, the situation of the country or the power of the enemy so as to render dubious the success of the expedition", the expedition should not proceed further. In case of success, however,

the expeditionary force was to refrain from pillage or oppression, and to "engage the affection and confidence of the Rajah by every tie of gratitude and esteem".<sup>19</sup>

One cannot overlook the most unbusinesslike manner in which the whole proceedings relating to the sending of the expedition were conducted.

In the first place, too much confidence was placed in Mr. Rumbold's optimism which was based on the statements of the Nepalese *Vakeels* unverified by any independent enquiry. Neglect of independent enquiry and reconnaissance, to say the least, is inconsistent with military ideas of security and precaution.

In the second place, Mr. Rumbold and Capt. Kinloch, in their anxiety to expedite the march of the expeditionary force, overlooked the extremely hazardous nature of the journey as well as the very important warning given by the Nepalese *Vakeels* in June 1767, that there was no time to lose in view of the impending outbreak of the monsoon. Neither the Select Committee nor Mr. Rumbold nor did Capt. Kinloch realise that some more time would inevitably be lost before the troops could actually have marched off.

Although in view of the assertion of the Nepalese *Vakeels*, corroborated by the Capuchin missionaries in Nepal and at Bettiah, that Jayprakash, the Rajah of Katmandu, would not be in a position to hold his own against the Gurkhas beyond a short period, the anxiety of Mr. Rumbold and Capt. Kinloch may seem to be somewhat justified, yet it is difficult, on a dispassionate view of the whole situation, to exonerate them of the charge of rashness and irresponsible conduct for ordering the troops to march off without having ensured supply of provisions at every stage of the hazardous journey and for overlooking the fact that monsoon had already commenced.

In the third place, the strength of the troops sent was hopelessly inadequate in view of the formidable task they were required to perform. Not only this, Capt. Kinloch before starting on the expedition had reduced the number of the officers to the minimum. This was due to the fact that Mr. Rumbold and Capt. Kinloch had under-estimated the strength and fighting capacity of the Gurkhas.

Lastly, the Select Committee also did not act with caution, although their instructions to Mr. Rumbold with regard to the sending of the expedition were cautious enough. They did not care to consult Col. Smith, the Commander-in-Chief, on the advisability of sending the expedition. This was probably due to their great confidence in the fighting abilities of the British army.<sup>20</sup>

Thus the expedition started with a doubtful prospect of success. All the same the Select Committee was very much optimistic. In their letter to the Court of Directors, dated Sept. 25, 1767, they explained their conduct in sending the expedition which seemed to have been "foreign to the spirit of that system of politics whereby we the English proposed regulating our conduct" and expressed hopes of revival of the Indo-Nepalese trade relations which had been disturbed recently by the Gurkha conquests. The "system of politics" referred to was, obviously, one of retaining the character of merchants with scrupulous delicacy" and avoiding interference in the politics of any country which the Court of Directors thought fit to enjoin upon the English in Bengal from time to time. Sending of military expedition was indeed an interference in the internal politics of Nepal, but as the Select Committee explained to the Court of Directors, it was only a means to an end which was the revival of the Indo-Nepalese trade. The importance of trade was emphasised by the Select Committee in the following terms: "We need not inform that for many years an advantageous trade has been carried on between the province of Behar and the rich country of Nepal by which a considerable quantity of gold and many other valuable commodities were imported. The Rajah being dispossessed of his country and shut up in his capital by the Rajah of Goorkha, the usual channel of commerce has been obstructed and these provinces are deprived of the benefits arising from the former intercourse, at a period when the decline of trade and scarcity of specie render it of greatest importance that every spring of industry should flow freely and without interruption. The vicinity too of Nepal to the Bettiah country of which the Subah is now in quiet possession will bring additional advantages to this traffic by

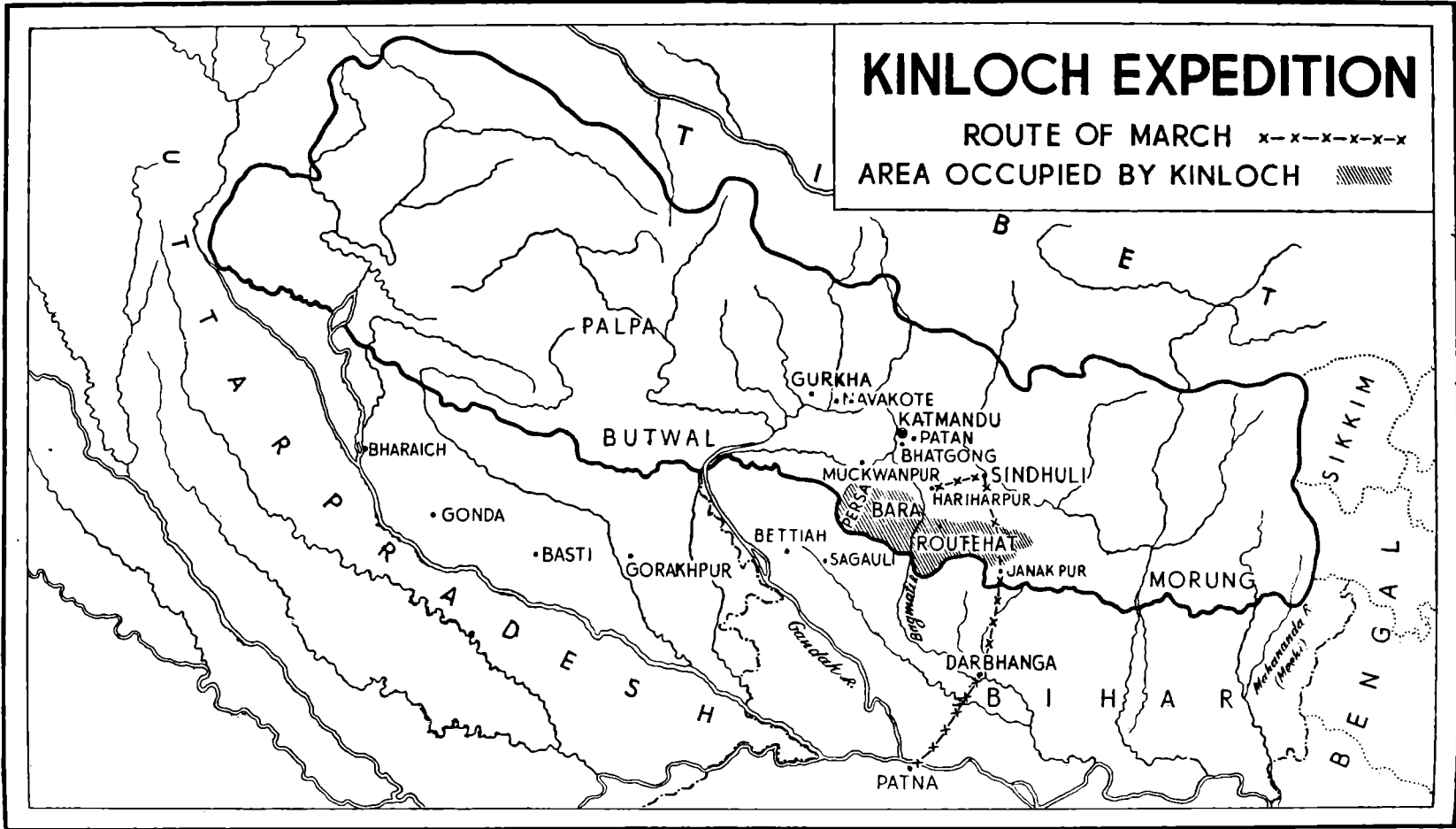
rendering it more easy and secure than in former times, so that we entertain very flattering prospects from the issue of an expedition of which we hope to send you an account by the last despatch of the season".<sup>21</sup>

Unfortunately, the expedition miscarried and the high hopes of the Select Committee were dashed to the ground. The reasons for the failure of the expedition were set forth in a series of letters that passed between Capt. Kinloch and Mr. Rumbold, the latter and the Select Committee and the Select Committee and the Court of Directors.

Hardly had the expedition proceeded two or three days' march, the major part of the provisions they carried with them was destroyed by a sudden torrent from the hills.<sup>22</sup> Thus from the very outset misfortune dogged the expedition and the soldiers almost immediately after their start had to experience acute shortage of provisions. But disregarding such handicaps as shortage of food, the soldiers marched into the difficult pass in the Gurkha country.

In the first four stages of the journey provisions were available on a starvation scale but despite such a difficulty the expedition marched forward. No help in respect of provisions was forthcoming from the Nepal Rajah and when Capt. Kinloch reached Janickpore (Janakpur) through such difficulties, assurances of abundant supply of provisions were given by men of the Nepal Rajah once the troops would reach Siddley (Sindhuli) where the seventh stage of the journey would have ended. But even at Sindhuli the much expected and repeatedly promised help was not forthcoming. "Famine stared them in the face. Retreat under the present circumstances was out of the question and it was impossible to hold Sindhuli for long as all supplies of provisions had been cut off by the enemy".<sup>23</sup>

Capt. Kinloch decided to dash towards Katmandu as quickly as possible. At this stage the sepoy who had endured enough hardship due both to the natural difficulties of hill-climbing and lack of provisions became almost rebellious. Many deserted their rank. The "spirited conduct" of Capt. Kinloch, however, saved the situation and the army was induced to march towards Hariharpur. After reaching Hariharpur the main problem before the expedi-



tionary force was to negotiate the hilly river Bagmati. Hilly rivers are very treacherous and Capt. Kinloch had no idea of them. An improvised bridge and a raft were made to cross the river. But a violent torrent washed them down before the army could cross over. The last hopes of dashing up to Katmandu were thus lost. The fatigue of the journey coupled with the lack of provisions which came only in very small quantities told upon the health of the soldiers. The porters who were carrying loads of military equipment and of the very little provisions that could be acquired, relieved themselves of their burden and deserted in the darkness of the night. Capt. Kinloch in his anxiety to make the expedition a success disregarded the hardship of the journey and the lack of provisions, and all this may be considered a part of his 'spirited conduct' but what he was overlooking thereby was that he was rendering his troops incapable of facing the enemy when encountered. However, the unfordable Bagmati precluded such an encounter. Nature fought for the Gurkhas. Famished and falling sick in an increasingly large number the troops of Capt. Kinloch had no way out but to order an immediate retreat. The retreating troops of Capt. Kinloch were hotly pursued by the Gurkhas sent by Prithvi Narayan under Birabhadra and Vidharbha who took a huge toll of the retreating soldiers. Capt. Kinloch at last returned to the Terai with his physically incapacitated and considerably depleted army. When at last Capt. Kinloch's army was withdrawn from the frontier it was found, on inspection by Col. Smith at Bankipore, thoroughly deficient in discipline and the tenth company of the eighteen that were sent under him, totally unfit for service.<sup>24</sup>

Upon his return to the Terai after the failure of the expedition, Capt. Kinloch occupied the Gurkha territories of "Barra (Bara), Persa and Hilwall consisting of thirteen pergunnahs besides some villages" between the northern border of Bettiah and Nepal. Among the forts occupied in these territories, those at Bara, Persa, Routehat and Bidgi were of great importance. Capt. Kinloch occupied these territories and forts with the double purpose of covering the humiliation suffered by the expedition and securing an



effective base for a fresh expedition to Nepal. In the meantime he wrote to Mr. Rumbold appealing for reinforcement, without which, as he pointed out, there was the danger of perishing by famine and sword. It was also Capt. Kinloch's idea to conduct a fresh assault against the Gurkhas and to relieve the Nepal Rajah.

Capt. Kinloch drew a rosy picture of the possibilities of the newly occupied territories which, put together, would be more extensive than Bettiah. To justify his demand for reinforcement probably, he wrote: "It is the finest country I have seen, large plains and the soil in appearance so fertile that I am certain, with inhabitants enough, and proper improvements might make them yield 10 lakhs per annum".<sup>25</sup>

While Capt. Kinloch was awaiting reinforcement for a fresh attack, Mr. Rumbold was in correspondence with the Select Committee who considered on Dec. 11, 1767, Mr. Rumbold's letter on the Nepal expedition and resolved that "as our military establishment is already reduced by detachments to the coast,<sup>26</sup> and as further reinforcement may be required by the gentlemen at Fort. St. George, that therefore we recall Capt. Kinloch and for that purpose write the following letter to the Chief of Patna".<sup>27</sup>

In their letter to Mr. Rumbold, Chief of Patna, on the same date, the Select Committee regretted the news of the miscarriage of the expedition and suspected "some misconduct in the officer" or forgery in the letters and information given by the *Vakeels* and the *Faqir*. The Select Committee desired a strictest inquiry into the authenticity of the intelligence obtained before the expedition was sent and of the causes of the failure.

In his letter dated Dec. 19, 1767, and Jan. 3, 1768, in reply to the communication of the Select Committee. Mr. Rumbold sought to impress upon the latter that the expedition was not a total failure. As to the haste with which the expedition was ordered to march off, Mr. Rumbold pointed out that the "repeated accounts of the distress of the Rajah of Nepal not only given by the *Faqir* but received through the Jesuits residing there and at Bettiah who positively affirmed he could not hold longer than the beginning of October

if not relieved" induced him "to push on the detachment so early in the season".<sup>28</sup> He, however, agreed with the Select Committee's suggestion that some of the letters produced by the *Faqir* to Capt. Kinloch while on his march might have been forged and this was in all probability, as Mr. Rumbold suggested, done by the *Faqir* with a view "to urge us on as much as possible to the relief of his master". As to the net gains out of the expedition, Mr. Rumbold asserted that the occupation of the "countries" on the border of Bettiah would give greater security to the people and revenue of Bettiah. "This will also be a measure of securing to us the fir timber which grow in plenty in the hills adjacent". He also pointed out the inexpediency of recalling Capt. Kinloch since this would encourage the Gurkhas to come against the English. Occupation of the "countries" on the border of Bettiah would make it easier for the English, should they ever like to have any communication with Nepal. The Select Committee considered Mr. Rumbold's communication of the 19th December, 1767, on January 12, 1768, and came to the decision that the failure of the expedition was due to Capt. Kinloch's deviation from the specific instructions given him, which had been approved by the Select Committee. They ordered that a Court of Enquiry be held and Capt. Kinloch be relieved of his command and asked to repair forthwith to Bankipore.<sup>29</sup>

In the meantime Capt. Kinloch having been informed of the possibility of his recall wrote to Mr. Rumbold reiterating the causes of the failure of the expedition. The two causes that he had specially stressed in his letter were the rain and the want of provisions. He also suggested that a second expedition might be permitted since it had every possibility of success in view of certain changes in the situation. *First*, the Gurkha Rajah could at best command 50,000 men who were chiefly engaged in the siege of the four cities in the Nepal valley. But once the four cities were reduced to submission, the Gurkha Rajah would have a command over four times the present number. Moreover, his having been in possession of "hundred stands of our arms" which the retreating troops of Capt. Kinloch had left at Sindhuli would make the Gurkhas" a very troublesome enemy in the low

country” and “though they may be drove (*sic*) back they will serve render it impossible to follow them up effectually”. *Secondly*, the Gurkha Rajah was deprived of an extensive and fertile country which supplied him money and grain. *Thirdly*, the neighbouring hill Rajahs were all enemies of the Gurkha Rajah and would help Capt. Kinloch in his fresh attempt against him. *Fourthly*, the greatest difficulty of the conquest had also been removed, namely, the want of provisions, since with help of the local hill Rajahs provisions might be lodged at different stages of the five days’ journey that would have to be undertaken to reach Nepal from the place where Capt. Kinloch was camping. *Finally*, the Nepal Rajah would not be in a position to hold himself long and it was imperative that assistance should be sent forthwith, for, once the Gurkha Rajah succeeded in reducing the Nepal valley completely, all the allies of the Company in the mountains would be no match for him. Capt. Kinloch wanted a quick decision on the subject so that he might pledge his words to the hill Rajahs who were willing to join hands with the English.

Mr. Rumbold in his reply to the Select Committee’s letter containing the order for a Court of Enquiry and the recall of Capt. Kinloch, enclosed the latter’s communication.<sup>30</sup> In his reply dated January 28, 1768, Mr. Rumbold put up a strong defence of the conduct of Capt. Kinloch and impressed upon the Select Committee that Capt. Kinloch “was more unfortunate than culpable”. This letter of Mr. Rumbold explained the causes of the miscarriage of the expedition. These may be summed up as follows: (i) Heavy rain set in and lasted for many days. This rendered a river (Bagmati) impassable. Further, the roads were not so good as the *Vakeels* of the Nepal Rajah Jayprakash Malla had given them out to be. (ii) Scarcity of grains began to be so severely felt that the troops were living on a starvation scale of provisions. Despite extreme scarcity of food-grains the expedition would have certainly pushed on to Nepal but for the uncertainties of the hill rivers. (iii) Although the strongest assurances were given by the Rajah’s men to provide grain for the detachment in large quantities once it reached Sindhuli, actually it did not come. (iv) The loss of Sindhuli

dispirited the Gurkha troops and it was in fitness of things that Capt. Kinloch would try to push as quickly as possible to the relief of the Nepal Rajah when chances of success against the Gurkhas seemed to be brighter. But the unlucky circumstances of bad weather, and the reluctance of the Bazar people to provide grains to the expeditionary troops made it impossible for Capt. Kinloch to reach Nepal. (v) The camp followers started deserting, particularly after some of the stragglers on the road were killed by the Gurkhas ; this made the situation worse. (vi) All the above circumstances coupled with the bad behaviour of the sepoy made Capt. Kinloch decide not to run further risks but return to Janakpur. It was Mr. Rumbold's contention that Capt. Kinloch behaved with becoming spirit and his failure was providential.<sup>31</sup>

Mr. Barwell, however, in his letter dated Feb. 28, 1768, to his father put the entire blame on Capt. Kinloch and his officers who were all Scotch men. He wrote as follows: "The force destined for the expedition was 2,400 sepoy commanded by Capt. Kinloch, a Scotch gentleman, entirely ignorant of the country and people. The number of officers on an expedition of this nature, I suppose, ought rather to have been increased than diminished ; nevertheless, through Capt. Kinloch's influence the officers were reduced to the lowest number possible and that number all Scotch and all possessed with the idea of making their fortunes in the course of the expedition. The troops returned are in number about 800. The miscarriage of this expedition may be assigned to one cause, the too great confidence of overcoming difficulties as soon as encountered, grounded on a mean opinion of the courage of the nations to which our arms are opposed".<sup>32</sup>

That the Select Committee suspected some misconduct on the part of the officers is clear enough from their letter dated Dec. 11, 1767, to Mr. Rumbold. There can be little doubt that the whole expedition from its preparation till its miscarriage was conducted in a rash manner disregarding the vital question of the safety and security of the troops sent. After all allowances have been made for an Englishman's not unnatural antipathy to a Scotchman, it is difficult to altogether brush aside Mr. Barwell's contention in his letter to

his father that it was the lure of Nepalese gold and a dare-devil attitude of the officers in charge of the expedition that led to the disaster.

It may be recalled that Nawab Mir Qasim's general Gurgin Khan met with a similar fate in almost similar circumstances. Mr. Rumbold's defence of Capt. Kinloch is understandable. After all, he cannot be exonerated of the charge of a slipshod manner of enquiry about the provisions and road facilities which were so very vital to the success of the expedition in an unknown hilly country under enemy control.

That even the Select Committee did not exercise enough caution but placed too much confidence in Mr. Rumbold, the Chief of the Patna factory, has already been pointed out.

## II

In one respect, however, the Kinloch expedition was justifiable although it failed to achieve its main purpose. It gave the English a first-hand knowledge of the roads to Nepal and the difficulties that a future expeditionary force, if ever sent, would have to face. Further, occupation of the territories north of Bettiah, stretching as near as five miles from the Nepal border, gave not only security to the Bettiah country but furnished the English with a valuable base for future military action. The hill fortresses of Bara, Persa, Routehat and Bidgi were now under British occupation and this was something worth the trouble taken if there were any idea of opening up the Nepal trade.

Capt. Kinloch in his letter had suggested a second expedition. This was supported by Mr. Golding, the English officer at Bettiah, who in the meantime had a communication from one Jeel Bikram Singh, "master of the hills for a long way almost as far as Novocot, Pertarein's (Prithvi Narayan) chief city". This was sent by Mr. Golding to Mr. Rumbold who, in turn, sent it to the Select Committee. In his letter to Mr. Rumbold, Mr. Golding said that Jeel Bikram Singh "has offered for conducting the English (should the English make a second attempt) troops through his country".<sup>33</sup> Other hill Rajahs were so nearly connected with

Jeel Bikram that once he joined the English against the Gurkhas, they would immediately follow his example. In a second letter on the subject, Mr. Golding wrote to say that Rajah Jeel Bikram was eager to know of any decision taken with regard to the expedition and the part he was expected to play in it. In the meantime Capt. Kinloch received a conciliatory letter from Keer Singh, the general of Prithvi Narayan Shah, the Gurkha Rajah, which he forwarded to Mr. Rumbold with a note that it would be possible to enlist the support of any number of the hill Rajahs against the Gurkhas, if they were only given a clear assurance of the British friendship.<sup>34</sup>

All these were communicated to the Select Committee by Mr. Rumbold along with his letter of January 28, 1768, and considered by the latter on Feb. 10, 1768. They were satisfied with the explanation of the causes of the miscarriage of the expedition, as given by Mr. Rumbold, as well as with the conduct of Capt. Kinloch. They rescinded their previous order of Jan. 12, 1768, that Capt. Kinloch should be relieved of his command. As to the suggestion of a fresh expedition, they asked Mr. Golding to let them know the number of troops that he would judge sufficient to ensure the greatest probability of success and to suggest measures to be pursued. "As we cannot at this distance be competent judges of the force requisite to enable us to make a second attempt for the relief of the Nepal Rajah, we must, should it be carried into execution, depend greatly upon the intelligence you transmit to us. You will, therefore, be pleased to inform us of the number of the troops you judge sufficient to ensure the greatest probability of success; and measures you may recommend us to pursue".<sup>35</sup> In reply to this, Mr. Rumbold wrote back that should it be determined to make a second attempt to relieve the Nepal Rajah, one complete battalion besides five or six companies would have to be spared since Kinloch's troops had been much weakened due to sickness and desertion.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Rumbold also assured that he would endeavour to spare from the Pergunnah the reinforcement necessary for the purpose. Besides, he suggested that a few more artillery men would prove of infinite service. Since the



season had far advanced Mr. Rumbold desired that permission to send the expedition immediately might be given.

The Select Committee on receipt of this communication from Mr. Rumbold resolved that the force recommended by him to be added to Capt. Kinloch's detachment for a second attempt to relieve the Nepal Rajah was too considerable to be employed in such an enterprise at a time when the Secret Department at Madras was making persistent requests for a further reinforcement from Bengal. The Select Committee decided that a second enterprise should be postponed for the time being and that Capt. Kinloch should be directed to remain with his force to secure the countries newly acquired in that quarter until further orders.<sup>35</sup>

No exception can reasonably be taken to the decision of Select Committee in view of the Company's war with Hyder Ali for which the Madras Council was asking for help. Further, a number of Zamindars in Bihar were in open rebellion and Setab Roy, the Deputy Dewan, was asking for military help. Under the circumstances the Select Committee hesitated to undertake a second expedition without the sanction of the Court of Directors and the proposal was given up. The Court of Directors endorsed the decision of the Select Committee in this regard and expressed the opinion in respect of the territories occupied by Capt. Kinloch that it might be proper to hold them should attempt at conquest be repeated.<sup>37</sup> That a second and successful attempt against the Gurkha Rajah would be of great interest to the Company was proved by the subsequent events.

Capt. Kinloch's optimism about the prospect of collection from the occupied territories was falsified by the actual receipts. On July 17, 1759, Mr. Rumbold wrote to the Select Committee regretting that he had not been able to collect so large a sum from the lands taken from the Gurkhas as he was in hopes of doing. The ryots could not cultivate their lands due to the raids of the hill people. The country was so unhealthy that the Company's sepoys could not continue there during the rains and had to be withdrawn. The report also gave the collection figure as

Rs. 20,400 in place of an estimated collection of ten lakhks. It was, however, claimed by Mr. Rumbold that the possession of the "country" had indirectly benefited the company by securing collection in Bettiah which had suffered greatly in the past at the hands of the Gurkha people coming down the hills.<sup>38</sup>

Thus ended the first attempt on the part of the Company to revive trade relations with Nepal and to establish some sort of a political influence there which they expected to result from the military assistance they proposed to render to the Nepal Rajah Jayprakash Malla against the Gurkhas. The immediate effect of the expedition on the Gurkhas was to confirm their suspicion of the intentions of the English Company. They began more jealously to follow their policy of exclusion towards the Europeans as such. Further, the open enmity that developed between the Gurkhas and the English, as well as the failure of the latter to make a second attempt at armed intervention which the Gurkhas apprehended, as would be evidenced from a letter addressed to Capt. Kinloch by Keer Singh the Gurkha general, naturally led to intensified border clashes. If the revival of the Nepal trade was the motive, it is doubtful whether the forcible occupation of the Gurkha territories north of Bettiah was a wise course. That all this invited troubles for the Company will be evident as we pursue the subject of Anglo-Nepalese relations in the subsequent period.

### III.

Miscarriage of the Kinloch expedition and the failure of the Company to renew their attempt to relieve Jayprakash left the Gurkha Rajah free to deal with the besieged capitals of Katmandu, Patan, Bhatgong, etc. By the end of the year 1768 he succeeded in reducing all the cities that still held out. "Prithvi Narayan almost walked into Katmandu due to the Indra Jatra revelry in which the Nepalese were sunk".<sup>39</sup> There was no resistance, for the people of Katmandu remembered the brutal treatment meted out to the people of Kirtipur by the invading Gurkhas. A graphic

account of the Gurkha conquest of Katmandu is given by Father Guiseppe, a member of the Roman Catholic Mission in Nepal.<sup>40</sup> Once master of Katmandu proper, Prithvi Narayan began to follow his policy of exclusion and expulsion of the Europeans with all strictness. The Capuchin missionaries were expelled from Nepal. The Kashmiri merchants, *Gossains* and *Faqirs* who were connected with the Bengal trade were also expelled from Nepal.<sup>41</sup> Prithvi Narayan had sufficient contacts with the plains to know of the details of the rise of the East India Company from a commercial concern to a political power and it was his policy to keep scrupulously aloof from them. He realised that with the white traders went the white soldiers and their trade soon degenerated into political intrigues. This attitude, further embittered by the Company's attempted assistance to the Newar king Jayprakash and their occupation of territories north of Bettiah, led to a positively anti-British policy on the part of the Nepal Government under Prithvi Narayan. The English Company realised too late that they were backing the wrong horse in Jayprakash. Now followed a period of frantic effort on the part of the Company to placate the Gurkha king which however, did not bear fruit so long as Prithvi Narayan was alive.<sup>42</sup>

1. According to Kirkpatrick Ranjit Malla, Rajah of Bhatgong appealed to the Company for help: "Runjeet Mull having prevailed on the British Government to aid him with a military force for the purpose of expelling Purthi Narain" (Kirkpatrick: *An account of the Kingdom of Nepal*, p. 268 ff). It is incorrect. Vide Sel. Com. Letter to Court, Sept. 25, 1767; also Logan: *Memorandum to Verelst*, Oct. 31, 1769; Sarkar: 'Some Interesting Documents'—*Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XLIV, Serial Nos. 67-88 (1932), pp. 43-45; Sel. Com. Pr. April 30, 1767 (Vol. I, pp. 197-8).

2. J. Long: *Selections from Unpublished Records of India* Vol. I. Appendix A, p. 537.

3. Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. I, pp. 197-98 (April 30, 1767).

4. Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. I 1767, pp. 199-200.

5. Sel. Com. Pr. 1767 (1), pp. 200-202.

6. Sel. Com. Pr. 1767 (1), pp. 200-202.

7. Sel. Com. Pr. July 21, 1767, (1) pp. 239-52.

8. Sel. Com. letter dated Sept. 25, 1767, Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. XIII pp. 244-45, 255.

9. Rumbold to Verelst, April 18, 1767, Sel. Com. Pr. April 30, 1767.

10. Sel. Com. Pr. March 27, 1767.

11. Sel. Com. to Rumbold, Sel. Com. Pr. July 21, 1767.

12. Rumbold to Sel. Com. Aug. 6, 1767, Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. XIII, pp. 244-45.

13. Nepalese *Vakeels'* and *Faqir's* deposition to Capt. Kinloch, Sel. Com. Pr. July 21, 1767, Vol. XIII, p. 239 ff.

14. Capt. Kinloch to Verelst, July 4, 1767 ; Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. XIII p. 239 ff.
15. *Coss*, an Indian term of Sanskritic origin denoting a distance of 4,000 yards.
16. Extract from letter from Capt. Kinloch to Mr. Verelst, July 21, 1767.
17. Sel. Com. Pr., July 21, 1767, Vol. XIII, pp. 239-52.
18. Sel. Com. Pr. July 21, 1767, Vol. XIII, pp. 239-52.
19. Op. Cit.
20. Barwell's letter to his father, Feb. 28, 1768, No. CXI, *Bengal Past & Present*, Vol. X, Ser. No. 19, p. 29.
21. Sel. Com. to Court, Sept. 25, 1767.
22. Barwell's letter to his father, Feb. 28, 1768, Vide *Bengal Past & Present*, Vol. X, Serial No. 19, p. 29.
23. Vide Nandalal Chatterjee: *Verelst's Rule in India*, p. 30.
24. Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. XIV, pp. 643, 645.
25. Capt. Kinloch's letter to Mr. Rumbold, Sel. Com. Pr. Jan. 12, 1768.
26. Ref. is to the Madras Presidency.
27. Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. XI, p. 152.
28. Sel. Com. Pr., Jan. 12, 1768.
29. Op. Cit.
30. Sel. Com. Pr. Enclosure to Mr. Rumbold's letter, Jan. 28, 1768, Vol. XI, p. 72, ff. Feb. 10, 1768.
31. Rumbold to Sel. Com. ; Sel. Com. Pr. 1768 (II), pp. 122-26.
32. Barwell to his father, Feb. 28, 1768, vide *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. X Serial No. 19, p. 29.
33. Golding to Rumbold, Sel. Com. Pr. Feb. 10, 1768 (XI), p. 73 ff.
34. "Nothing is wanting, I firmly believe to make as many allies as I could wish in the neighbouring Rajahs, but a declaration from myself that I will be theirs for the whole, they were ready, but have reasons to think we only hesitate. Were they, therefore, to offer their friendship, they know if we do not proceed how much reason they have to fear their common enemy" Kinloch to Rumbold, Sel. Com. Pr. Feb. 10, 1768 (XI), p. 73 ff.
35. Sel. Com. to Mr. Rumbold, Sel. Com. Pr. Feb. 10, 1768 (XI) p. 73 ff.
36. Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. XI, p. 152.
37. Court of Directors, Genl. Letter, Nov. 11, 1768.
38. Letter from Rumbold, Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. 15, pp. 59-60.
39. Vide S. Levi: *Le Nepal*, p. 272 ; also see Sardar Ikbāl Ali Shah: *Nepal the Home of Gods*, pp. 38-9.
40. The Catholic Mission had been long established in Nepal, where they had secured many converts and received grants of land from the Newar monarchs. Their title deeds, inscribed on copper, are still in possession of the Bishop of Patna. Vide Cavanaugh: *Rough Notes on Nepal* ; pp. 123-24.
41. Markham: *Bogle and Manning*, p. 124 ff.
42. Prithvi Narayan died in 1775 and not in 1771 as Kirkpatrick (p. 271), Landon (p. 67), Ikbāl Ali Shah and others put it. Vide: Levi: *Le Nepal*, pp. 276-77—"Prithvi Narayan mourut a Man Tirtha, sur la Gandaki dans les premiers jours de 1775" ; also see Vansittart: *Notes on Nepal*, p. 36 ; The news of the death of Prithvi Narayan Shah and the succession of his son Singha Pratap was communicated to the Company towards the end of 1775, Vide C. P. C. Vol. III, Nov. 20, 1775, No. 2048, also Pub. Cons. April 19, 1779, No. 2.

### CHAPTER III

## JAMES LOGAN MISSION

The Industrial Revolution and the consequent need for wider market for the new manufactures in England made the Court of Directors more interested in the expansion of the Company's trade in the comparatively backward and, therefore, less exploited hilly countries to the north of India. Early in 1768 the Court of Directors expressed their desire that the Calcutta Council should obtain all relevant information whether trade could be opened with Nepal and "whether cloth and other European commodities may not find their way from thence to Tibet, Lassa and the western part of China".<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, in the meantime, attempts made by the Company to revive the Nepal trade and, through her, the customary trade relations with Tibet, which had been stopped by the Gurkhas, proved abortive. This was the first active interest taken by the Company in the affairs of Nepal. The Kinloch expedition all the more embittered the attitude of the Gurkhas towards the English in Bengal. Force having failed, conciliation was the only course that remained open and the Calcutta Council was on the lookout for a suitable person for the purpose.

That the Company was trying to establish some sort of relationship conducive to the expansion of trade and commerce with the hilly countries was no secret. On August 25, 1769, one James Logan addressed a letter to Mr. Verelst, Governor and President of the Calcutta Council, expressing his willingness to be appointed an emissary to Nepal. He wrote: "Having learnt that the Hon'ble Company have recommended a trial to open a trade between these provinces (under the Company), Tibet and the western provinces of China by the way of Neypall, and considering the little knowledge Europeans have yet acquired of these countries and the commerce of which they are capable, I am led to believe that in order to obtain knowledge so necessary to

the prosecution of this scheme there is wanted a person on whose integrity some dependence may be placed, who shall, endowed with proper authority on the part of the Company go and inform himself of the countries themselves of the commerce of which they are capable with Hindostan, of the means by which such commerce if practicable may be established and transmit a faithful account of his discoveries."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Logan offered to obtain further information about the hilly countries should the Company so desire, and he was confident of being successful in doing so notwithstanding the 'commotions in these parts'. He appears to have been a widely travelled man so far as the hilly tracts north of the Indian borders were concerned. He also possessed detailed knowledge of the articles of trade between Patna and Nepal before the Gurkha conquest and pointed out in his memorandum that the chief exports of Patna in this trade were coarse woollen clothes called parpeteens, coral, salt, betelnut, cotton clothes, Patna chintzes (?), nutmegs, etc. The imports were gold ingots, gold dust, borax, musk, cowtails, chirris (?), etc.<sup>3</sup> The common current value of gold in Nepal, as Mr. Logan pointed out, was 50% less than what it was in Patna. It was his point that, properly handled and protected, the trade with Nepal and other hilly countries through her would be of immense benefit to the Company.

Mr. Logan who had also a fair knowledge of the topography and of the road and the water transport of the area wrote that when the communication would be opened, it would not be more than eight or nine days' journey from Patna to Katmandu and the road at the most rugged places was such as loaded bullocks might pass. The river Gandak was navigable by large boats during all seasons of the year upto a distance of two days' journey from Nepal and Bagmati upto a distance of 20 coss from Nepal.

Mr. James Logan also possessed a clear knowledge of the political situation of the Terai and the Nepal Valley. He said that it was to his knowledge that the Newar Rajah Jayprakash after his defeat at the hands of the Gurkha Rajah had left Katmandu and was probably either cooped up in

some stronghold or had taken asylum with his friend and protector Gora Lama (White Lama), the Pontiff of Lhasa. It was Mr. Logan's suggestion that the Company should try to reinstate Jayprakash on his throne for, in doing so, the Company would be true to their friendliness towards him and, further, would be in a position to obtain the most favourable advantages from him in the bargain. If, on the other hand, the Company chose to make a rapprochement with the Gurkha King Prithvi Narayan, they would give a bad impression of the English in these parts and thereby hinder the advancement of their interests there. He pointed out that the Gurkha Rajah "In the present fullness of his power" would never accede to any terms which were worthy of the Company's acceptance. Mr. Logan seems to have a closed mind so far as dealings with the Gurkha Rajah were concerned. To his mind, the Gurkha King would not allow any security to the Company's trade, even if he might formally agree to do so, until his power was reduced.

Mr. Logan suggested that the reduction of the Gurkha Rajah's power would be easy now since the Lama of Tibet who was a close friend of Jayprakash would lend his moral support to the Company as the Gurkha Rajah had provoked him by plundering the rich temples of his votaries in Nepal. Further, assistance given to Jayprakash would directly earn his gratitude and the Company's trade might be extended into Tibet more advantageously. Another point of vantage was that Rajah Coran Sein (Karan Singh ?), whose territory lay eastward of Nepal, was a staunch enemy of the Gurkha Rajah since the latter had deposed his first cousin the Rajah of Muckwanpur and taken him captive eight years ago. Mr. Logan also referred to Coran Sein's proposal to Capt. Kinloch for a second attempt against the Gurkha Rajah and pointed out that Coran Sein invited him to his capital to settle the terms of a coalition between him and the Company. Mr. James Logan was confident that he would be well received at the court of Coran Sein should his attempt at conciliating the Gurkha Rajah fail. Here, he was sure of getting intelligence, guides etc., for prosecuting his journey, obviously, for the purpose of establishing contact with Rajah Jayprakash.<sup>4</sup>

He, however, concluded his memorandum by saying that should the Company determine that Jayprakash and his interests were not to be considered at all, he would be prepared to apply himself immediately to Prithvi Narayan and make such proposal as the Company might authorise him to do.

Mr. James Logan's memorandum was considered by the Council and he was permitted to undertake the journey as he proposed. Dr. N. L. Chatterjee is of the opinion that the idea of the mission was "to placate the ruffled feelings" of the Gurkha Rajah.<sup>5</sup> But Prof. S. C. Sarkar in his paper 'The Nepal Frontier' read in the 3rd session of the Indian History Congress, observed that 'a close study reveals the fact that mission was not so very innocent after all'.<sup>6</sup> But from the two letters by Governor Cartier, which Mr. Logan had carried for the Gurkha Rajah Prithvi Narayan<sup>7</sup>, the conciliatory attitude of the Company becomes abundantly clear. In one of the letters the Governor introduced Mr. James Logan—'a man of great intelligence and high position'—as his accredited emissary and desired that whatever the Rajah would hear from Mr. Logan might be regarded as spoken by the Governor himself.<sup>8</sup>

In a second letter, the Governor hoped for friendship with the Rajah. He also sought to explain the Company's former attitude towards him (the Gurkha Rajah) and stated that their move to assist the Newar Rajah Jayprakash was due to sheer ignorance. Formerly as the 'English Sirdars' were not fully acquainted with the Rajah of Nepal, they rendered Jayprakash assistance, but now that he had been 'tried and found wanting' and as the praises of Rajah Prithvi Narayan had been heard from every quarter, the English had ceased assisting Jayprakash, the former Rajah of Nepal and were desirous of entering into friendship with Rajah Prithvi Narayan. As the opening up of trade between Nepal and Bengal would be mutually beneficial, Mr. James Logan had been 'deputed to arrange the matter'. The Rajah was requested to open his heart to Mr. Logan who with equal frankness would 'communicate to him the views of the English Sirdars'. As soon as an arrangement was arrived at,



the Governor hoped that commercial relations would be established, between Bengal and Nepal.<sup>9</sup>

Letters similar to the first one referred to above were also sent to Rajah Jasa Goshmal, Rajah Coran Sein and five other Rajahs of the hilly country. In the above context and remembering, as one does, the Court of Directors' communication of March 25, 1768, to try a revival of the trade with the northern countries as well as the fact that the Gurkha King Prithvi Narayan had in the meantime been strongly possessed of the whole of the Nepal valley, it is likely that Mr. Logan was not encouraged by the Governor-in-Council to search out Jayprakash. Although we have no trace of the instructions given to Mr. Logan, yet it is probable that he was asked to apply himself to the cultivation of friendship with Prithvi Narayan. The subsequent attitude of the Company towards the Gurkha Rajah also supports this contention.

Again, the Company was certainly not in a better position at the end of 1769 to spare a much larger force than the one sent under Capt. Kinloch to attack the Gurkha King who had already gained enough strength and was doing so almost daily.

We have no knowledge of the subsequent activities of Mr. Logan. In their letter to the Court<sup>10</sup> the Calcutta Council announced in June, 1770, the departure of Mr. Logan on his mission. No further reference to Mr. Logan is found in the available records. The last indirect reference to Mr. Logan is probably to be found in the Gurkha Rajah's letter to Teshi Lama wherein he referred to a certain 'Firinghee'<sup>11</sup> whom he had driven out of Nepal.<sup>12</sup>

There can be no doubt that Mr. Logan's mission failed miserably and the Anglo-Nepalese relations stood at a standstill as it had been ever since the Gurkha conquest of the Nepal valley. Rather, the relation took a turn for the worse, since the subsequent years were characterised by repeated border conflicts.

1 Pub. Letter from Court, March 16, 1768.

2 O. C. I. Oct. 13, 1769.

3 Op. Cit.

4 "At this place (Coran Sein's capital), provided my business is unfavourable to the Goorkha, I'm pretty sure of a hearty welcome, and

here I would get intelligence, guide, etc., in order to prosecute my journey".  
O. C. I. Oct. 13, 1769.

5 N. L. Chatterjee: *Verelst's Rule in India*, pp. 38-39

6 S. C. Sarkar's Paper: "The Nepal Frontier" *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, 3rd session, p. 1618, (1939)

7 C. P. C. Vol. II, Nov. 13, 1769, No. 1686.

8 C. P. C. Vol. II, No. 1682, Nov. 13, 1769.

9 C. P. C. Vol. II No. 1686, Nov. 13, 1769.

10 Gen. Letter to Court, June 25, 1770.

11 'Firinghee'—an Indian generic term for Eurasians. "The name 'Feringee' was, however, more specially applied to the Portuguese settlers in India" Hunter: *History of British India*, Vol. I p. 184; also vide *Riaz-u-s-Salatin*. Translation by Abdus-Salam, p. 319, foot note.

12 Markham: *Narrative of the Mission of George Bogle*, 2nd Edn. p. 158.

## CHAPTER IV

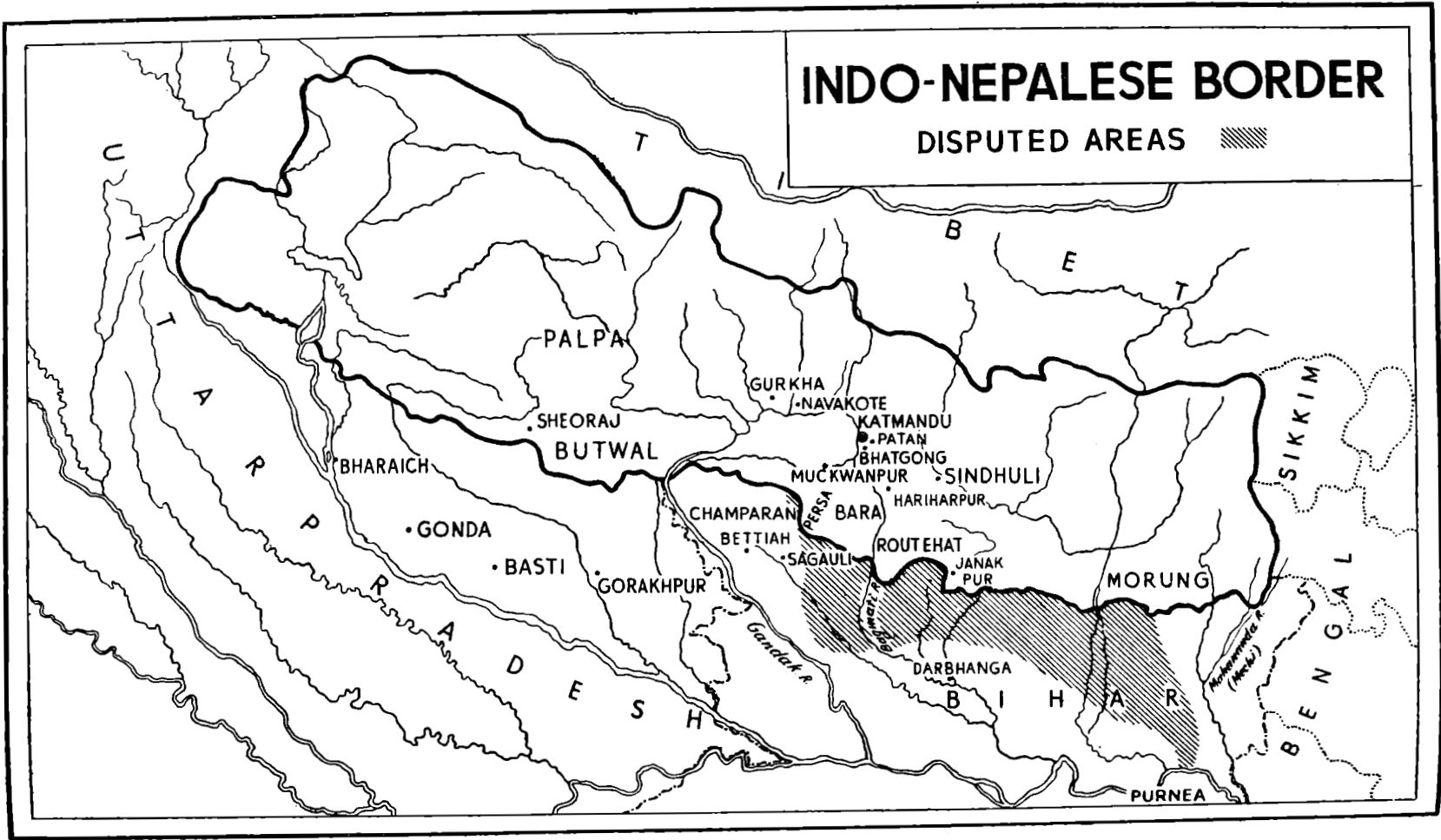
### BORDER CONFLICTS: ANGLO-NEPALESE POLITICAL RELATIONS

The miscarriage of the Kinloch Expedition and the failure of the James Logan Mission resulted in a total deadlock between the Company and the Nepalese Government. The Gurkha King Prithvi Narayan Shah had very deep suspicion about the intentions of the English which was confirmed by the latter's assistance to the Newar King Jayprakash Malla, as also by Capt. Kinloch's occupation of Prithvi Narayan's countries north of Bettiah. Prithvi Narayan's career synchronised with the period of transition of the East India Company from a commercial institution into a political power and the acquisitive nature of the East India Company was known to him. He, therefore, followed a policy of total expulsion and exclusion so far as the English were concerned. It was also his idea that the foreign traders would make his country a desert by sucking all profits.<sup>1</sup> He would, therefore, never allow the Kashmiri merchants, *Gossains*<sup>2</sup> and others who used to carry on a highly profitable trade between Bengal, Tibet and Nepal, to stay in his country. They were all ruthlessly expelled. The English whom he feared for their military strength and expansionist policy would be the last people to be allowed by him into his territories. This was also the reason why Mr. James Logan was turned out of Nepal.<sup>3</sup> Two letters from the Company which Mr. Logan had carried personally for Prithvi Narayan Shah recognising him as the King of Nepal and soliciting his friendship did not have the desired effect. On the contrary, for a few years to follow, the relationship between the English and the Nepalese Government turned for the worse. This was in no small measure due to the over-zeal of the Company's servants stationed in the bordering districts of the north. Instead of trying to settle down within their legitimate limits and allaying the suspicion of the Gurkha Rajah with a view to reviving the

trade between the two countries, some of the Company's officers evinced an unjustifiable eagerness to grab more territories by dispossessing the Nepalese authority. This they sought to do in the name of security without sufficiently realising that the best way of securing the bordering territories with an irregular and ill-defined boundary in a difficult hilly region was to cultivate the friendship of the Nepal Rajah, the strongest of the Rajahs of the hilly countries in the north. These officers kept their ears too open and their pens too facile to hear complaints against the Gurkha Rajah and to recommend punitive measures against him to the Company's Government.

On May 21, 1771, Mr. Keighly, Chief of Darbhanga, drew the attention of the Patna Council to the situation of the Tauter Pergunnahs bounded by Champaran, Purnea, Gandak and the Terai. He wrote to say that the Tauter Pergunnahs properly belonged to the Sircar Tirhut and the Rajah of Nepal held the tenure on a nominal Peshakash<sup>4</sup> of Rs. 12,000/- per annum, but that again he paid at his pleasure. The Pergunnahs might in a year or two produce, as Mr. Keighly thought, "a much more considerable sum to our Employers and when still more weighty argument is put in the scale that in the dearth last year when people on our lands were dying out of number the Tauter Pergunnahs were well supplied with grain and no want therein. The poor ryots, therefore, who were starving in one part of Sircar Tirhut went there and are now prevented from returning".<sup>5</sup> Mr. Keighly also asserted that the Tauter Pergunnahs belonged to Subah (Bihar) and included in the Emperor's grant of the Dewani to the Company in 1765. He desired the Patna Council to take measures for the extension of the Company's boundaries to their lawful limits. This would, he said, bring under the Company one of the most populous areas of Bihar and which if weeded of some thieves who had accumulated large fortunes at the cost of the ruin of the country, would enhance the revenue of the Company in an appreciable measure.

On June 15, 1771, Mr. Golding wrote to the Patna Council to the effect that the Gurkha Rajah had extended his territories within two or three *coss* from Sircar Cham-



paran and had occupied all lands in the Terriany (Terai) lying between Sircar Champaran and the foot of the hills extending from the river Gandak about fifteen *cos*s towards Sircar Tirhut. He also informed the Council that about four or five hundred of the inhabitants of those areas had fled and taken refuge in Champaran and he had encouraged them to settle in the Bettiah country but he suspected that these people would be ultimately enticed away by the Gurkha Rajah by fair promises. Under the circumstances, Mr. Golding was of the opinion that it had become "necessary to confine him (the Gurkha Rajah) within his own hills to prevent the molestation which may otherwise be shortly expected from him to Company's possessions on that side".<sup>6</sup> The Patna Council forwarded all these communications to the Governor-in-Council at Calcutta adding that Rajah Setab Roy also thought it probable that the Gurkha Rajah might make some attempts upon the Company's territories and prove a very troublesome neighbour two or three years hence. The Patna Council naturally left the question of military action against the Gurkha Rajah to be decided by the Calcutta Council. They also pointed out that it would not be difficult for them to take possession of the Terai and the Tauter Pergunnahs but 'it would', they observed 'occasion an immediate rupture with the Gurkha Rajah, and it would then be necessary either to march a considerable force into the hills and attack him in his own country or else to station about two battalions of sepoys along the borders of Bettiah and Tirhoot in order to cover our territories from the incursions of his people'.<sup>7</sup>

The Governor-in-Council at Calcutta requested the Patna Council to furnish all relevant details about the Tauter Pergunnahs including those relating to their eventual alienation. They also desired information as to whether the Rajah of Muckwanpur was ever considered a zamindar of the Province of Bihar independently of the said Pergunnahs. Information as to who paid the peshkash of the Pergunnahs since their conquest by the Gurkhas when they conquered Muckwanpur, and as to the actual revenue settlement was requested.<sup>8</sup>

The Patna Council sent a lengthy reply based on their

own information and a letter from Setab Roy, recounting the history of the Tauter Pergunnahs. It is clear from these documents that the Muckwanpur Rajah was never considered a zamindar of the Province of Bihar independently of the Tauter Pergunnahs. As to revenue settled, the Patna Council observed "the tribute, you will observe, was valued in Alamgir's time at Rs. 1,200/-; it was afterwards raised to ten thousand and afterwards to Rs. 12,000/-, which is the present valuation, but has always been paid in elephants, not in money. Peertenarayan the Goorkha Rajah has this year sent five small elephants on account of this and the last year's tribute, amounting according to the existing valuation to about rupees 15,000/- and we have no reason to complain of his committed any acts of hostilities as yet, whatever may be apprehended from him hereafter."<sup>9</sup>

It is worthwhile to mention here that sometime after the conquest of Muckwanpur, the Gurkha Rajah sent his *Vakeel*, one Deenanath Upadhyaya, to Darbhanga for the settlement of the revenue of the Muckwanpur territories with the Company. Mr. Keighly, Chief of Darbhanga, sent Deenanath Upadhyaya to the Patna Council where he represented on behalf of the Gurkha Rajah that the Tauter Pergunnahs and the rest of the Terai were dependent on Muckwanpur and since the hilly country of Muckwanpur came under the possession of the Gurkha Rajah the cultivated low lands of the Tauter Pergunnahs also belonged to him by the same title, and that the Nepal Government was willing to pay whatever rent (Mal Uazib) had been paid by the Rajah of Muckwanpur. The Patna Council having agreed to this suggestion the Nepal Government gave *Tamasook* and paid rent accordingly.<sup>10</sup>

The Patna Council, obviously, took a very reasonable view of the whole thing and did not allow themselves to be swayed by the overzeal of Messrs. Keighly and Golding, and Rajah Setab Roy. While Mr. Golding and Rajah Setab Roy's suggestions were based on the consideration for the security of the Company's territories, Mr. Keighly's was based on no better ethical consideration than to secure the enhancement of the yearly revenue income of his employers.

The following list of the *Mahuls*<sup>11</sup> in the Pergunnahs

was furnished by Rajah Setab Roy: Tauter—1, Nunda Kajoutly — 1, Assiboo — 1, Muckwanpur Nerabad — 1, Bickerma—1, Beera—1, Mandu—1, Jumna—1, Rassary—6, Shapore — 1, Beya — 1, Carady — 1, Bunnrin-Mulky — 1, Scry—4.

In view of the above facts the Governor-in-Council came to the conclusion that the inconveniences and expenses of an expedition would far outweigh the advantages expected to be reaped by the recovery of the Tauter Pergunnahs. Hostile measures were thus disapproved of so long as the Gurkha Rajah would not refuse to pay the tribute and would not commit depredations on the Company's possessions in the Province of Bihar. This was, indeed, the only reasonable attitude that the Governor-in-Council could take. They also took into consideration the fact that even if possession of the Tauter Pergunnahs was resumed it would be necessary, on the Patna Council's own admission, to post two battalions of sepoys for the protection of the Pergunnahs. This would mean an increase in the military establishment of the Pergunnahs which would entail heavier expenditure than the possession of the Pergunnahs would indemnify. The Council of course did not thereby sign away their right to proceed against the Gurkha Rajah should the tribute agreed upon was discontinued or should the Gurkha Rajah commit any hostilities against the Company's territories.<sup>12</sup> They wrote to the Patna Council on the above lines and pointed out that "from the Rajah's known activities and the situation of his country, in an expedition against him, it is to be expected he would give us much trouble before subdued and by frequent incursions disturb the tranquillity of the Behar Province and materially prejudice the collections". All this showed the wisdom of the Council in not sanctioning military action against the Gurkha Rajah. But the claim to the annual tribute from him was to be kept up.

Although an open rupture between the Company and the Gurkha Rajah was avoided, yet border troubles between the two countries went on almost unabated.

In the meantime, the English were ingratiating themselves with Rajah Coran Sein of Morung for the exploitation of the fir timber. From the letter of one Mr. Francis Peacock,



dated June 25, 1772, it appears that one Mr. Mirtle was already in Morung for the purpose.<sup>13</sup> Mr. Peacock and Mr. Christie were ordered by the Board to proceed to Morung for the same purpose. But it appears from Mr. Peacock's letter that there was some difference between him and Mr. Christie and the latter, who was in charge of cash, sepoy and stores, refused to advance anything to Mr. Peacock without a special order from the Board. Mr. Peacock was very much earnest about his duty and he advanced his own money for the purpose of cutting of fir trees in the Morung forests. But before being permitted to do so, he repaired to Nautpore in January 1772 and obtained an interview with Rajah Coran Sein and 'got leave to explore the whole country' "I have brought with me", he wrote, "upwards of 60 fir trees, some of which are near 60 ft. long and 5 in circumference, full of turpentine and in good order."<sup>14</sup> He also brought 5 jars of tar and turpentine extracted from other trees. There were, as he said, firs of 90 ft. in length and 9 ft. in circumference. All this Mr. Peacock did at a great personal risk and expense and his prayer to the Board was to be reimbursed of the money spent by him.

Coran Sein, Rajah of Morung, in a letter dated July 15, 1772, in reply to one written by Mr. Peacock to him, expressed sympathy for the latter's troubles in procuring fir trees in the Morung wood. He promised to enjoin on the zamindars of every Pergunnah to help Mr. Peacock in future with coolies and *mullas* (boat men). Coran Sein expressed great friendly sentiments in his letter and granted Mr. Peacock, as the representative of the Company, "what Fir and Saul timbers, what elephants, spices etc. and what country is on the borders of the hills and whatever is the produce of the hills".<sup>15</sup>

Coran Sein was an unmitigated enemy of the Gurkha king and he was apprehensive of the latter's gradually swallowing his territories. In fact, in his letter to Mr. Peacock, Coran Sein wrote: "My friend, when you visited me at Chunra I informed you of all the ill of the conduct of the people of the East (Nepal) who had seized 10 or 15 villages belonging to me and set up new land marks". He also complained of the high-handedness of the Gurkha Rajah towards other Rajahs of the hills in the neighbourhood of Nepal and

said that the *Vakeels* of 24 Rajahs and others came and represented to him that the Gurkhas had killed the Rajah of Nepal and taken his kingdom. "You are the Sirdars of all the Rajahs. If you have Gorekah punished and the Zamindery given to the cousin of the deceased it will be praiseworthy".

It appears that Coran Sein, Rajah of Morung, was the leader of the petty Rajahs of the hills in the Terai and, as such he was requested by the latter to intervene in favour of the cousin of Jayprakash, the late Rajah of Nepal, whom the Gurkha Rajah Prithvi Narayan had dispossessed. Coran Sein had earlier made a proposal to Capt. Kinloch to undertake a second expedition against the Gurkha Rajah and offered to render every assistance to him. In the meantime there were fresh grounds for complaints on his own part since the Gurkha Rajah had seized 10 or 15 villages belonging to Coran Sein. From his letter to Mr. Peacock it becomes clear that he made a fresh proposal to Mr. Peacock to help him in his proposed attempt to assist the Nepal Rajah against the Gurkhas. Mr. Peacock, however, could only say that unless he had the Company's orders, he could not render any assistance to Coran Sein. Now that Mr. Peacock was going to Calcutta; Coran Sein desired him to place the whole matter before the Company for their consideration and, should they agree to his suggestion, he would himself send 30,000 archers through the hills, 1,000 or 1,500 horses, and Tellingahs on water carriage by the borders of the hills and would furnish the Company with the relevant information about the affairs of the Gurkhas.<sup>16</sup>

It also appears from the letter that Coran Sein had made an attempt to send some assistance to the Nepal Rajah but the contingent was prevented from proceeding by Mr. Keighly, Chief of Darbhanga. "I was employed in collecting together of (*sic*) archers and did send 1,000 or 1,500 horses and Bir-kundasses by the Borders of the Hills. Mr. Keighly, Chief of Durbungah received Gorekah not to suffer my troops to enter the country. My troops had nearly reached Gorekah. Mr. Keighly sent his to oppose them. I on this account wrote to mine and ordered them to return and never to engage against Mr. Keighly. They are now come back to this place and I am helpless."<sup>17</sup>

Coran Sein desired Mr. Peacock to "explain the state of affairs to the Eastward (Gurkha) and of Mr. Keighly, bring a perwannah to the people of the East to give up the villages they have seized and another to Mr. Keighly that he may never impede the marching of my troops to Nepaul". He then pointed out that if the Company would assist him with forces and artillery, his archers to the number of 20,000 or 25,000 would first pass through the hills, the Company's troops should then come to his aid and he would supply them with provision and carry them through such roads that they would undergo no hardship. As an extra inducement he wrote: "Nypaul is so fine a country that it will please both the Sepoys and the Company."<sup>18</sup> He concluded his letter by calling the Gurkha king a great tyrant and remarking that to punish him would not only tend to the credit of the Company but it would be a good deed in the eyes of God.

The question of any sort of military action against the Gurkha Rajah had already been broached by the Governor-in-Council and it was thought fit not to proceed upon any military action even for the purpose of the resumption of the Tauter Pergunnahs. Obviously, the proposal of military assistance made by Coran Sein did not meet with any favour from the Company.

That the depredations by the Gurkha Rajah Prithvi Narayan became a matter of grave concern to the petty hill Rajahs can be gathered from the repeated appeals to the Company from various quarters, the main theme of which was the punishment of the tyrannical Gurkha Rajah.

Adbhut Singh, son of Ranjit Malla, the defeated and deceased king of Bhatgong, had taken shelter under the British at Benares. Nothing was nearer his heart than to persuade the English Company to render him military assistance to recover his father's kingdom from the Gurkha King Prithvi Narayan. It is obvious, that the rising power of the British made a deep impression on the hill chiefs to look upon the East India Company as the only power with which a military alliance would be a measure of safety. Probably they did not realise that the English assistance might soon degenerate into English domination or it is possible, that they wanted to lose some measure of independence and

remain in power under the shadow of the Company rather than lose their country and become supplicants in foreign countries and courts. But the Company was the last institution to be easily argued into a commitment to render military assistance against the Gurkha Rajah after the experience of Capt. Kinloch and without having weighed the advantages such a course was likely to bring for them. Adbhut Singh was too feeble a person to inspire any confidence in the Company to come to his assistance. The matter was allowed to rest unattended to.

In 1770 Regonaut (Raghunath?) Sein appealed to the Company for help against one Budh Karan who had been the Dewan of the deceased Rajah Kamdat Singh of Morung. In the same year Mr. Ducarel, the English Supervisor at Purnea, reported that Budh Karan was plundering the Company's frontiers and putting the Company's subjects to flight. To follow Budh Karan's affairs some retrospect is necessary.

Kamdat Singh, Rajah of Morung, the tract on the northern borders of the Company stretching from the Kosi to the Teesta, was an independent ruler in respect of Bijepur, Ameerpur, Muckwanpur etc.

Quite a few years before the Gurkha conquest of the Nepal valley, Reza Khan, the Deputy Naib of the Company, suggested that the reduction of Morung was necessary as thereby the Company's boundary north of Purnea would reach its natural frontier as it would graze the hills.<sup>19</sup> Inquiries in this regard showed that Kamdat Singh claimed to be an independent ruler and was not a vassal to anybody nor did he pay any tribute to anybody for his territories which extended from Bhutan to Nepal and from Purnea to Tirhut and Bettiah. Even Bhatgong was within his kingdom which later on became independent under its Zamindar with the assistance of the Rajah of Sikkim. In 1765-66 Kamdat Singh was advised by his Ministers Budh Karan and Ajit Singh to attempt a recovery of his ancestral territories lost in the meantime. Soon afterwards, it was detected by Kamdat Singh that the two Ministers were involved in a deep-laid scheme against him. He dismissed them. The dismissed Ministers wanted to take revenge on Kamdat Singh either

by his deposition in favour of his minor son or by assassination. They engineered a rebellion with the assistance of the disbanded troops and made Kamdat take refuge in Purnea under its Fouzdar Suchitram. While he was at Purnea the Nawab of Bengal sent for him for purposes not known. Kamdat Singh appealed to the Nawab for assistance for the recovery of his kingdom from the usurper Budh Karan. This help being beyond the power of the Nawab to render, Kamdat Singh was sent to the Company's Governor at Calcutta. But Kamdat Singh was in a very weak state of health, so the Governor sent him back to Murshidabad.<sup>20</sup>

Kamdat Singh failed to inspire any confidence among the high-ups of the Company to induce them to promise any military assistance. But he was, after all, a determined man. With a horde of ill-equipped men he attacked Budh Karan and put him to flight. But soon after the recovery of his ancestral domain, he was assassinated by his army, at the instance of Budh Karan, in 1769. Upon Kamdat Singh's murder his uncle Regonaut (Raghunath) Singh succeeded him to the throne. This opportunity was taken by Budh Karan to come out of his hiding and to take up arms against Regonaut. The latter in his distress appealed for English help. Budh Karan was not content with operating against Regonaut's territories: he did not hesitate even to plunder the Company's frontiers and put their ryots to flight.<sup>21</sup> Ducarel, the British Supervisor at Purnea, suggested that assistance should be granted to Regonaut. His arguments were quite reasonable and interesting. He pointed out that Morung was a very fertile country and, should there be a strong and quiet rule in Morung the Company's ryots in the bordering territories would be allured to go and settle there. This would result in a fall in the Company's revenue. On the other hand, if Morung would remain disturbed the bordering territories of the Company would not be free from plundering raids. Under the circumstances, the best course that Mr. Ducarel suggested was to extend the Company's influence over Morung. This could be easily done by rendering military assistance to Regonaut. He thought that only four battalions of the Company's troops would be sufficient for the purpose and those parts which would be

liberated from the occupation of Budh Karan could be possessed by the Company themselves.<sup>22</sup> Such a course, to Mr. Ducarel's mind, was certainly to be beneficial to the company in more than one way. It would not only secure the Company's borders from incursions from the hills, give the English possession of the Saul forests, firs and spices, but place them at the channel of supply to the hills. Another benefit that would arise out of it was that it would prevent the Sannyasis<sup>23</sup> from ravaging the districts of Bengal by blocking their way. This would also give them control over boats and ferries in the area.

The Select Committee was in favour of following more or less a consistent policy of not rendering any military assistance to any of the contending hill Rajahs unless it was necessary for maintaining the interest of the Company. They, therefore, ordered immediate security arrangements for the bordering districts of the Company's territories by proper deployment of troops but deferred consideration of the question of military assistance to Regonaut to a future time when it might become absolutely imperative. This was how the Regonaut episode ended.

In this way the Company's assistance was sought by different hill Rajahs in their mutual quarrels as also against the Gurkha Rajah. Offer of assistance also came to the English from the hill Rajahs in their anxiety to see the Gurkhas reduced. But the Company had then no plan with regard to the hill countries except a willingness to revive trade with those regions. Besides, they had no knowledge of those regions to admit of a clear-cut policy regarding them. Their responsibilities in Bengal were already too heavy and their financial commitments too great to allow them to follow any doubtful prospects, however alluring.

The Sannyasi incursions and the plundering raids of Budh Karan brought the Company and the Gurkha Rajah to mutual correspondence. In May, 1773, Prithvi Narayan wrote a letter to the Governor expressing his anxiety to cultivate friendly relations with the company. He also complained that Budh Karan, the treacherous Dewan of his brother, had usurped the countries of Ameerpur and Bijepur

which were in possession of his brother whom he had assassinated. He cautioned the Governor that Budh Karan might take refuge within the Company's territories ; he even proposed to send a force to punish Budh Karan and requested the Governor to write to the Chief at Patna not to give any assistance to the Dewan.

For the districts of Ameerpur and Bijepur the Company had been hitherto receiving tribute in evidence whereof Prithvi Narayan sent a *patta* granted under the seal of the Naib of Azimabad. He sent his *Vakeels* Parsod (Prasad) Pundit and Aka Misra to represent his case in respect of Ameerpur and Bijepur. He also promised that if he would be in a position to punish Budh Karan he would send the Governor 'merchandise and curiosities'. The same thing was also written by Deota Shahai, Dewan of Rajah Prithvi Narayan who also requested the Governor to issue a *patta* to the *Vakeels* for the two districts of Ameerpur and Bijepur. The *Vakeels* of Prithvi Narayan met the Governor just at the time of his departure for Benares, and therefore he asked them to meet him at Patna which they never did. Upon this the Governor (Warren Hastings) requested the Nepal Rajah to send trustworthy representatives.

Meanwhile the Governor desired the Rajah to take steps to prevent the depredations committed by Sannyasis who came from Nepal every year into Bengal.<sup>24</sup> A similar letter was also addressed to Abhiman Singh, another Dewan of the Nepal Rajah Prithvi Narayan. On Jan. 14, 1774, Prithvi Narayan informed the Governor that he would send his *Vakeel* to him and added that should the Governor support him he would seize Bijepur where Dewan Budh Karan had taken refuge. As to the prevention of the Sannyasi menace he pleaded his inability since the river Gandak where the Sannyasis crossed over into the Company's territories was outside his jurisdiction as it had been lately included in the Company's territory. If he was allowed to extend his dominion upto the Gandak, he would prevent the Sannyasis from entering the Company's territories. He also cited an instance when, at the request of Mr. Vansittart, he had once punished the Sannyasis severely.<sup>25</sup> It also appears from the records

that some sort of an arrangement was ultimately made with the Nepal Government for the prevention of the Sannyasi menace. The passage is worth quoting: "At that time a number of armed Nagas used to come in a body from Hurdwar through the Teraee to the Eastward as far as Dinajepoor and to ravage the Company's territories every year. When the troops advanced to drive them back they always retired and concealed themselves in the Teraee where the troops were unable to pursue them. In this manner the country was laid waste. At length the English entered into arrangement with the Rajah of Nepal that he should prevent the passage of the Nagas."<sup>26</sup>

All this shows the wisdom of the Governor-in-Council's policy of non-intervention in the quarrels of the hill Rajahs with the Rajah of Nepal. The period from 1772 to 1785, covered by the rule of Mr. Warren Hastings was the formative epoch of British Indian history and, like all formative epochs, it was crowded with problems both internal and external. All the same, Warren Hastings did not for a moment forget the need for extending the Company's trade in the hilly countries to the north. He sought to extend the influence of England not only by arms and diplomacy but also by commerce. It was his capacious mind that first conceived the idea of opening friendly commercial intercourse between the Company and the natives of the "lofty trade lands behind the snowy peaks to the north".<sup>27</sup> That Warren Hastings and his wife played an important part in allaying the suspicion of the Rajah of Nepal in respect of the Company and making a friend out of an enemy in Prithvi Narayan is an unwritten chapter in the story of Warren Hastings' activities in India.

Pursuant to the request of Warren Hastings, now Governor-General, Prithvi Narayan sent his trusted *Vakeel* Deenanath Upadhyaya to settle the affairs of Ameerpur and Bijepur with the Company. It was during Deenanath's stay at Calcutta that arrangement with the Nepal Government for preventing the Sannyasis from crossing over to the Company's territories was arrived at. Every attention was given to Deenanath during his stay at Calcutta and he was regarded



as an accredited Ambassador of the Nepal Government to the Company. During his stay at Calcutta began a regular correspondence<sup>28</sup> between the Nepal Govt. and the Governor-General. While Deenanath was just back to Nepal after having settled the Ameerpur and Bijepur affairs with the Company, one Mirza Abdullah Beg laid claim to the Pergannath of Routehat alleging that it was his Jageer. Abdulla Beg appealed to the Company who desired the Gurkha Rajah to prove his title to the Pergunnah. Deenanath Upadhyaya was again sent to Calcutta to bring the matter before the Council. Records were called for and it was resolved that the question should be settled.<sup>29</sup>

While Deenanath Upadhyaya was in Calcutta the Governor-General was obliged to leave Calcutta on official business. He therefore, sent for Deenanath and "giving him 1,000 rupees for his expenses desired him to accompany him".<sup>30</sup> The Governor-General's preparations having been already complete, he set out in advance of Deenanath. But when the latter reached Patna and was about to start for Benares to meet the Governor-General there, the insurrection of Rajah Chait Singh occurred and it was impossible for him to proceed. Deenanath stayed on at Patna. During his stay at Patna Mr. Maxwell died and Mr. Ross carried on with his work as a stop gap. Deenanath waited upon Mr. Ross and told him all about his mission. Mr. Ross pleaded his inability to do anything in the matter since he was working in the capacity of the Chief only as a temporary measure. But he advised him to stay on as the Governor-General would come to Patna as soon as the affairs of Benares would be settled. Deenanath accordingly stayed on. In the meantime news of disturbances at Benares came pouring into Patna where the Governor-General's wife was awaiting his return. She was naturally biding her time in a very great anxiety. She sent for the local Rajah and asked him how Bejaygarh, the fort under the control of the insurgents could be captured. The Rajah suggested that a friendly connection subsisted between the Company and the Rajah of Nepal and that a *Vakeel* of the latter was then at Patna ; she should send for him and request him for assistance, since success could easily be obtained in hill warfare with hill troops.

Needless to say, the rising of Chait Singh had in the meantime spread to the neighbouring areas including the hilly tracts. Deenanath Upadhyaya was sent for and brought before Hasting's wife. She appealed to Deenanath in the name of friendship that subsisted between the Company and the Rajah of Nepal that he should immediately write to his master all about the situation and request him to send speedily a force to Benares to Assist the Company. She assured Deenanath of a firm friendship between the Company and the Rajah of Nepal in case such assistance was given; the Governor-General would also be very much grateful. The lady herself addressed a letter to the Nepal Rajah requesting him to send assistance speedily. The letter was forwarded by Deenanath to his master.

The Nepal Rajah was much pleased and immediately sent an army under Dhonkul Singh, Paruth Ram Daree and other Sirdars which reached Muckwanpur immediately. The Rajah's letter containing the intelligence of the despatch of the army to Muckwanpur was made over to Hasting's wife. She, however, desired the troops to remain at Muckwanpur as a standby for a few days or till she should learn the state of affairs at Benares, when, if necessary, she would request their advance. In a few days' time intelligence arrived that Fort Bejaygarh had been captured by the English and Rajah Chait Singh had fled. The wife of Warren Hastings advised Deenanath to send back the army now that Benares affairs had been settled and asked him to postpone his departure till the return of the Governor-General. She, in her gratitude, remarked, "I shall not fail to bring to his notice the manner in which your master has evinced his friendship by the assistance which he sent to us".<sup>31</sup> Such assurance, coming as it did from the wife of the Governor-General himself, gave Deenanath extreme pleasure. He advised the return of the army from Muckwanpur and himself awaited the return of the Governor-General. Shortly afterwards the Governor-General arrived at Patna and Deenanath hurried to meet him at Bankipore with a letter from the Nepal Rajah, and submitted for his consideration the affairs of Routehat claimed by Abdullah Beg as his Jageer. At this time the Governor-General's ears were poisoned by some interested

people through Mr. Graham by giving out falsely that the Rajah of Nepal at the suggestion of Deenanath had sent an army to assist Chait Singh and that it had returned from Muckwanpur on hearing the news of the success of the English at Benares. The Governor-General, naturally, was very cross with Deenanath but the latter explained the whole thing to him. Upon this, the Governor-General, asked Deenanath to meet him the next morning at Mr. Barnell's where he would go for breakfast. This Deenanath did. In the meantime, the Governor-General had the whole thing from his wife and in the morning when he met Deenanath he not only received him cordially but introduced him to others who were present at Mr. Barnell's and told them of the warm friendship that subsisted between the Company and the Rajah of Nepal and that the Rajah had sent an army to his assistance at the suggestion of his wife and on hearing the news of the success of the English it was asked to return. The Governor-General also told the Chief of Patna, Mr. Brooke, Mr. Chanter, a member of the Patna Council, and other present that the case of Abdulla Beg had been enquired into and it was found that Routehat was dependent on Muckwanpur and had nothing to do with Behar and the Rajah of Nepal, therefore, was the sole authority to exercise the power of either granting or resuming the Jageer in it and the Governor-General had nothing to do in the matter. He accordingly ordered that Perwannah should be issued to the effect stated above.

Warren Hasting's administration (1772-1785) covered the rule of Prithvi Narayan for three years as well as of Singh Pratap (1775-78) and a part of Ran Bahadur's time (1778-1807). The Anglo-Nepalese relations, particularly in the political sphere, had taken a turn for the better and, if not under Prithvi Narayan, at least under his successors, these became quite cordial.

## II

If the administration of Warran Hastings was particularly noteworthy for the improvement of the Anglo-Nepalese relations, it was equally praiseworthy for the steps taken to

revive the commercial relations with the hilly countries, particularly with Tibet and Nepal. It was his idea to revive free commercial intercourse between Tibet and Bengal through Nepal. It may be noted here that although the Gurkha Rajahs were willing to cultivate friendly relations with the English, they jealously guarded their country against the English merchants. In 1772 an incident took place which in its train brought an opportunity for an attempt on the part of the Company to revive trade relations with Tibet through Nepal. In that year the Bhutanese King Deb Judur overran Sikkim which he held for some years. He then invaded Cooch Behar which brought him in collision with the English Company. Deb Judur was, however, beaten back and some of his strongholds occupied. About this time Warren Hastings received a communication from Teshu Lama offering to intercede in the matter, and it was through the good offices of Teshu Lama that the Company's Government concluded a treaty with Bhutan. Warren Hastings seized this opportunity and sent Mr. Bogle, a Bengal Civil Serviceman, to Tibet on May 13, 1774, for exploring the possibilities of Anglo-Tibetan trade. Mr. Bogle was accompanied by Dr. Hamilton and Mr. Manning. This mission was successful in the sense that some first hand information about the condition of the country and the possibilities of trade and details about the trade routes was obtained. Mr. Bogle's mission was followed by two other missions of Dr. Hamilton and a second mission of Mr. Bogle. It was in 1779 that Mr. Bogle proceeded on his second mission to Tibet.<sup>32</sup> Although Mr. Bogle found Teshu Lama willing to co-operate with the English Company in removing the obstacles to a free trade and in adopting such measures as might increase the intercourse between Bengal and Tibet, yet there was no possibility of reviving the trade through Nepal. This was due to the ill-feeling that subsisted between Nepal and Tibet since the former's conquest of the territories of Demo Jeng<sup>33</sup> which were subject to Lhasa and naturally, there was no room for any negotiations between Tibet and Nepal towards reviving the trade through the latter country. On the death of Prithvi Narayan Shah, Teshu Lama addressed a letter to his son Singha Pratap, in

which after writing some words of consolation and condolence, made a request to him to allow all merchants "Hindoos, Mussalmans, and the four castes to go and come and carry on trade freely".<sup>34</sup> This is a clear evidence of the extent to which the Gurkha conquests had disturbed the usual trade relations between Tibet, Nepal and Bengal. Teshu Lama's letter failed to influence the policy of the Nepal Government. Teshu Lama, however, assured Mr. Bogle that he would use his good offices with the Emperor of China to procure leave for the Company to send a deputation to China. This was certainly in connection with the revival of the Anglo-Tibetan trade, Tibet being a vassal of China.

One thing that Mr. Bogle noticed among the Tibetans and the Bhutanese was their strong prejudice against the European merchants and, in spite of all hospitality that Mr. Bogle received at the Court of Teshu Lama, he had to write as follows to the Governor-General: <sup>35</sup> "In regard to procuring permission for Europeans to trade in Tibet, it was a point, which I have already mentioned the impossibility of claiming. In former times when the Europeans were settled in Hindostan merely as merchants, there would have been no difficulty in establishing factories and freedom of trade. But the power and elevation to which the English have now risen, render them the object of jealousy to all their neighbours. The opposition which was made to my proceeding into Tibet, as well as the many difficulties I had to encounter in the execution of my commission, arose from this source. The Government at Lhasa considered me as sent to explore their country, which the ambition of the English might afterwards prompt them to invade, and their superiority in arms render their attempts successful".<sup>36</sup> This suspicion, mentioned by Mr. Bogle, was general so far as the hill countries on the northern border were concerned, and the Nepal Government's policy of exclusion and expulsion was based on this suspicion of the intentions of the English merchants.

Mr. Bogle emphasised the importance of the opening of the trade route through Nepal and obtaining abolition of duties and exactions imposed on trade in that country. This

was a condition precedent to the establishment of free trade between Bengal and Tibet. He also suggested opening of trade routes through the Bhutan passes. That Warren Hastings also wanted to link up the Company's China trade through Tibet is clear from his letter to the Court of Directors, dated April 19, 1779, in which he observed: "a very considerable trade is carried on between China and Tibet. By means of Teshu Lama, therefore, I am inclined to hope that a communication may be opened with the Court of Peking either through his mediation or by an Agent, directly from this Government. It is impossible to point out the precise advantages either in opening new channel of trade or in obtaining redress of grievances or extending the privileges of the Company that may result from such an intercourse".<sup>37</sup>

Warren Hastings also sent a mission to Nepal for the purpose of reviving the trade relations between Bengal and Nepal. In his letter of Jan, 1, 1784, Warren Hastings recalled the time when there existed a trade relation between Bengal and Nepal which was productive of mutual advantages and friendship between them, but it ceased with the beginning of hostilities on the borders. He also referred to the collision between the Bhutanese King Deb Judur and the Company and how later on friendly relations had been established between the two. He gave this information to the Nepal Rajah, obviously to allay his suspicion. He also wrote about the great confidence the late Teshu Lama had in him (Governor-General) and how the former desired to build a house on the bank of the Ganges near Calcutta. Having thus narrated how the hill Rajahs were having friendly relations with the English, Warren Hastings expressed his great admiration for the Nepal Rajah's peaceful intentions which he had heard of from diverse sources and asserted that the English Government had also similar intentions and principles. Under the circumstances, it would be desirable, the Governor-General suggested, to have trade relations between the two countries. He informed the Rajah that he was sending one Mr. Foxcroft to proceed to Nepal with his letter containing true sentiments of the Governor-General regarding the establishment of friendly relations

between the two countries. Some presents were also sent with Mr. Foxcroft as a token of the Governor-General's friendship.<sup>38</sup> The results of this mission are, however, not known.

1. Ishwar Raj: *Naya Nepalko Itihash*, p. 109. "Bideshi Mahajanlai desh vitra hulyo bhane noharule dunianlai kankal banai chhordechhan" (The foreign merchants, once they get a foothold in the country, make the whole country a desert).

2. *Gossains*: a class of wandering merchants—"the trading pilgrims of India" as Markham described them. Vide Markham: *Bogle & Manning*, p. 124.

3. *Ibid.*, 2nd Edn. p. 158.

4. *Peshkash*—a Persian word meaning presents particularly to Government.

5. Pub. Cons. 1771, pp. 119-23, 147-53.

6. Pub. Cons. July 9, 1771, pp. 119-21.

7. *Op. Cit.*

8. *Op. Cit.*

9. Letter to Governor-in-Council from Patna, July 30, 1771.

10. "Statement of everything that passed between the Nipaul Government and the English": *Indian Office Records*, Home Misc. Series, Vol. 648, pp. 198-250.

11. Rajah Setab Roy's letter, forwarded to the Governor General in Council, Patna, July 30, 1771. Pub. Cons. August 10, 1771.

12. Letter, dated August 10, 1771 from Board to Patna Council. Pub. Cons. 1771, pp. 147-153.

13. Pub. Cons. June 8, 1772, No. 2 (a).

14. Pub. Cons. June 8, 1772, No. 2 (a).

15. *Op. Cit.*

16. Home Pub. Cons. July 8, 1772, No. 2 (b).

17. *Op. Cit.*

18. *Op. Cit.*

19. Markham: *Bogle & Manning*, p. 150; *Sel. Com. Pr. Vol. XVII*, pp. 184-85; *C.P.C.*, Vol. II; No. 233.

20. *C.P.C.* Vol. II. Nos. 44,51,85,98,174,233,241.

21. Ducarel's letter to Becher, Resident at Durbar, April 4, 1770.

22. *Sel. Co. Pro. Vol. 17*, pp. 182-189.

23. *Sannyasis*: "The history of this people is curious. They inhabit, or rather possess, the country lying south of the hills of Tibet from Cabul to China. They go mostly naked. They have neither towns, houses, nor families but rove continually from place to place, recruiting their numbers with the healthiest children they can steal in the countries through which they pass. Thus they are the stoutest and most active men in India. Many are merchants. They are all pilgrims, and held by all castes of Gentoos in great veneration. This infatuation prevents our obtaining any intelligence of their motions . . . they often appear in the heart of the province as if they dropped from heaven. They are hardy, bold, and enthusiastic to a degree surpassing credit. Such are the *Senassies*, the gipsies of Hindostan" Gleig's *Memoirs of Warren Hastings* Vol. I. p. 303; also vide:

Forrest: *Selections from the State papers of the Governor-General of India*, Vol. I. p. 19. (Foot note); Datta: *History of Bengal Subah*, Vol. I. p. 265.

24. *C. P. C.*, Oct. 30, 1773, Nos. 601, 602.

25. *C. P. C.* Oct. 30, Jan. 14, 1774, No. 763.

26. *India Office Records*, Home Misc. Vol. 648, p. 206.

27. Gleig's *Memoirs of Warren Hastings*, Vol. I. p. 310.
28. *India Office Records, Home Misc.* Vol. 648, p. 209.
29. *Op. Cit.* p. 210.
30. *Idem*
31. *India Office Records*, Vol. 648, pp. 213-220.
32. Markham: *Bogle and Manning*, p. LXVII
33. *Pub. Cons.* April 19, 1779, No. 2.
34. Teshu Lama to Singha Pratap: *Pub. Cons.* April 19, 1779, No. 2.
35. *Op. Cit.*
36. *Pub. Cons.* April 19, 1779, No. 2.
37. *Op. Cit.* No. 1.
38. *C. P. C.* Vol. VI, No. 949.



## CHAPTER V.

### ANGLO-NEPALESE COMMERCIAL TREATY.

Warren Hastings' impending departure encouraged a recrudescence of border conflicts between the Company and the Nepal Government. On December 18, 1784, the Governor-General addressed a letter to the Nepal Rajah to the effect that he had received reports that the Rajah's people were creating disturbances and interrupting the cultivation in the village Antarwa (Itharwa), commonly called Mundia, in the Pergunnah Dilwarpur, in Sircar Tirhut. The Governor-General requested the Rajah of Nepal to take proper measures for the prevention of such disorders in future and for the restitution of such articles as had been carried away by the Rajah's subjects.<sup>1</sup> The Rajah of Nepal sent no reply to this communication for months and a second letter was written on the subject when Sir John Macpherson was the acting Governor-General. On June 2, 1785, the Governor-General in a letter to the Rajah drew the latter's attention to the complaint made months ago about the plundering raids of the Rajah's men in the village Itharwa. The request to prevent future raids and to order a restitution of the articles carried away by the Rajah's men was repeated and an early reply was solicited. In reply to this letter from the Governor-General the Rajah of Nepal asserted his claim over the village and said that Rajah Madho Singh, Zamindar of Darbhanga, who was the complainant to the Governor-General with regard to the village, was unnecessarily quarrelling about it. His attempts to settle the matter by a joint commission of *Amins* of both sides, which had been the customary method of settling such disputes, proved unavailing as Rajah Madho Singh would not agree to this procedure. On the contrary, he had stationed his guards in the village which legitimately belonged to the Nepal Rajah. The latter also assured the Governor-General that a *Vakeel* would be sent to wait upon him to explain the matter fully. The Governor-General was

also requested by the Rajah to send an *Amin* to investigate the matter and settle the dispute.<sup>2</sup>

From the nature and spirit of the letters from Nepal, it becomes clear that although the Nepal Administration would not suffer the English traders to enter Nepal, yet it was not out to precipitate a quarrel with the Company. There can hardly be any doubt that the border conflicts took place in spite of the peaceful intentions of the two Governments ; these were mainly due to the very nature of the irregular and ill-defined boundary in a difficult hilly terrain.

In September, 1786, Lord Cornwallis came as the Company's Governor-General. Soon after his arrival one Dharanidhar Upadhyaya, *Vakeel* of Rajah Kirtibhum of Mallehbhum, a hill state, represented to him that his master desired the Company to assist Adbhut Singh, the son of Ranjit Malla, the dispossessed Rajah of Bhatgong, in recovering his ancestral properties from the Nepal Rajah. It may be recalled that Bhatgong was conquered by Prithvi Narayan Shah. It was also suggested by Dharanidhar Upadhyaya that should the Company restore the territories of Adbhut Singh, the latter would pay an annual tribute to the Company. He also said that there were many hill Rajahs who would gladly combine their forces against the Gurkhas.<sup>3</sup> It may be recalled that Adbhut Singh had made a representation, in person, to the same effect to the Company a few years back but failed to inspire confidence in the authorities. Similar representations were also made by Adbhut Singh's *Vakeel* Bhajo Shaib Jagraj to Warren Hastings. But none of the representations could argue the Company into a course of action at once inexpedient and hazardous.

Lord Cornwallis' rule was largely one of definition and reorganisation and he was the last man to try an armed interference with a doubtful prospect of success. He first addressed himself to the settlement of the boundary disputes between the Company and the Nepal Government. There were complaints and counter-complaints from both sides but all this did not justify any armed conflict. That many extraneous factors were responsible for creating a feeling of mistrust between the Company and the Nepal Government admits of no doubt.<sup>4</sup> Rajah Kirtibhum was persistent in his solicita-

tions for military assistance against the Nepal Rajah. This was due to the inevitable feeling of insecurity that Rajah Kirtibhum and, for that matter, other hill Rajahs had because of the increasing expansion of the Gurkha Kingdom. The Rajah of Jumlah was also against the Gurkha Rajah and in an engagement defeated the latter's forces. The Rajah of Jumlah was proceeding against the Nepal Rajah but Rajah Kirtibhum wanted at least two battalions of the Company's forces on his side so that he might as well march against the Gurkha Rajah.<sup>5</sup> But Lord Cornwallis did not allow himself to be persuaded to grant the requests of Rajah Kirtibhum. On the contrary we find that Ali Ibrahim Khan, Judge at Benares, sent his compliments to the Rajah of Nepal adding an assurance that all pilgrims to Benares from Nepal were being given every facility. He also referred to Puranpuri Gossain who often visited Nepal. The compliments of Ali Ibrahim Khan were duly returned by the Rajah.<sup>6</sup> Obviously, it was not the Company's policy to do anything that would strain the relationship between the two. For, the Company had not yet forsaken the idea of reviving the trade relations between Bengal and Nepal. All the same, the Company followed a cautious policy with regard to the Nepal Government as will be obvious from a letter addressed to Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah of Nepal by the Company, in which the latter regretted their inability to permit Deenanath Upadhyaya to transport 500 muskets which he had purchased at Calcutta for the Rajah, due to the standing order to the contrary. But the Company sent one musket to the Rajah as a present.<sup>7</sup> The Rajah acknowledged the receipt of the present of a musket by the Company and observed that he had learnt of the Company's refusal to transport the guns but "this does not matter so long as there remains friendship between the two."<sup>8</sup>

## II

A fortuitous circumstance brought the Company and the Nepal Government nearer each other and facilitated the signing of a commercial treaty between the two. The expansionist policy of the Gurkhas ever since Prithvi Narayan's

time ultimately brought them into conflict with Sikkim and Tibet. They commenced inroads into Sikkim and by degrees they succeeded in overrunning Sikkim territories as far as the river Teesta and the Sikkim Rajah had to pay tribute to the Nepal Government as far late as 1815. These territories were made over to Sikkim at the instance of the Company, after the Gurkha War, in 1817.

The restless energy of the temperamentally militant Gurkha people would know no bounds unless confronted by a superior force. The Gurkhas even sought expansion into Tibet which, according to a legal fiction, was dependent on China and the Tibetan Lama was the spiritual father of the Chinese Emperor. The armed conflict between Nepal and Tibet had its genesis in the currency problem that arose between the two countries. Under the last Newar rulers, debased gold coins were issued by the Nepal Government and a huge quantity of these was in circulation all over Tibet. This was due to a very old custom by which the Nepalese coins would pass as legal tender in Tibet. Upon the Gurkha conquest of Nepal, Prithvi Narayan Shah wanted to issue full gold coins in place of the debased ones. This was imperative for removing impediment to trade between different hill countries, for a full coin would be acceptable to the people and traders of every country. The Tibetan Government demanded that the exchange ratio of the new full coins and the old debased coins must be at par. But this was impossible for the Nepalese Government to concede. This was how the trouble started between the two Governments. Later, however, the Nepalese Government proposed a definite ratio of exchange of the two types of coins, but this was also rejected by the Tibetans. The inevitable result was that trade and commerce between the two countries came to a standstill and there was an estrangement of felings.<sup>9</sup>

During Ran Bahadur Shah's reign, the regent Bahadur Shah, the uncle of the minor king, began extending the Nepal territories towards Tibet.<sup>10</sup> The outstanding currency question coupled with a motive for expansion soon brought the two Governments into an armed conflict. The Nepalese writers, however, would have us believe that the Nepal Government had no bellicose intentions. They wanted a

peaceful settlement of all issues between Tibet and Nepal but the former, being always inclined to find fault with the latter, ultimately offered a challenge that they were willing to fight the Gurkhas. Whatever that might have been the Nepal Government sent its troops under Damodar Pande which entered into Tibet as far as Digarchi, the Lama of which place was the spiritual father of the Chinese Emperor. Teshu Lama in a letter to the Governor-General informed him of the Gurkha attack on Tibet and requested that no military assistance might be rendered to the Gurkha Rajah, should he approach for such assistance, but himself requested for military help. Teshu Lama concluded his letter with a request that his correspondence might be kept secret from the Chinese Emperor, who was Teshu Lama's sovereign, obviously because the correspondence was being held without the knowledge of the latter.<sup>11</sup> The Governor-General assured Teshu Lama that no help would be given to the Gurkha Rajah but also regretted that the Lama's request for military assistance could not be complied with. The Governor-General categorically stated the reasons for which no military assistance could be given. First, the distance of Digarchi from the Bengal Presidency was in itself a forbidding factor. Secondly, the Gurkha Rajah had not given any provocation to the Company nor caused them any injury to justify such military assistance against them. Thirdly, Tibet being a vassal of the Chinese Emperor, if any military assistance was rendered to her in her quarrel with Nepal, there would be considerable embarrassment created for the Emperor,<sup>12</sup> particularly in view of the trade relations between the Company and China.

Earlier to Teshu Lama's letter, the Nepal Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah had addressed a letter to the Governor-General, intimating to him the fact that the Nepalese army had been ordered to proceed against Lhasa since the latter had broken the terms of a treaty formerly entered into between Tibet and Nepal. He also requested that the Company should not render any military assistance to Tibet should any such request come from that quarter.<sup>13</sup>

In the meantime the Chinese Emperor being informed of the conflict between Tibet and Nepal sent a general with

a contingent to Digarchi. Under the auspices of a Chan Chun a treaty was signed between the two countries and Tibet agreed to pay an annual tribute of 50,000 rupees to the Nepal Government upon which the Nepalese troops vacated Kheroo, Kuti, Junga, Phullak, etc., which they had occupied during the conflict.<sup>14</sup> Regular trade between the two countries was also restored. Soon after, however, the Tibetan Government stopped payment of the annual tribute. After all, they looked upon the treaty with no pleasure. In the meantime Tashu Lama died and there started a dispute over the inheritance. Sumhur Lama, brother of Teshu Lama, who found his claim unsupported in Tibet, left for Katmandu to curry favour with the Rajah of Nepal so that with his assistance he might further his own claim. The asylum given to Sumhur Lama by the Nepal Government incensed the Tibetans who attacked all the Nepalese traders living in Tibet. In this way the situation took a serious turn, and the Nepal Government sent an army against Tibet. The Tibetans at once sent a deputation to the Chinese Emperor for armed intervention. The Nepalese army had in the meantime entered into Tibet and ransacked all the great monasteries in Digarchi. The Chinese Emperor was not slow to act. He sent an army 70 thousand strong under a Chinese General. The Nepalese Government was asked to restore the properties they had taken away from Tibet, and also to surrender Sumhur Lama, but on the refusal of the Nepal Government to do so the Chinese army attacked the Nepalese soldiers and chased them up to Navakote where the latter were defeated. One night the Nepalese resorted to a stratagem. They put fire to the neighbouring jungle which had the desired effect. The Chinese army thought that they were sought to be engulfed by fire by the Nepalese and made good their escape from the area.<sup>15</sup>

After this, both sides thought it inexpedient to prolong the fight and negotiations were started by both to effect a reconciliation. The result was the signing of a tripartite treaty by which Nepal had to owe at least a semblance of allegiance to China. The Nepal Government was required to send presents to the Chinese Emperor as a token of their allegiance ; the Chinese Government would also reciprocate

by sending presents in acknowledgment.<sup>16</sup> The China trade would be open to both the Nepalese and Tibetan traders and the Chinese Government would pay money to Nepal to compensate the loss sustained by the Nepalese Government during the conflict. It was also agreed that in case of any trouble between the Nepalese and the Tibetan Governments, immediate information must be sent to China.

It was in the context of the above conflict that the opportunity for an Anglo-Nepalese trade agreement offered itself. At the news of the advance of the Chinese army, the Nepal Government were more or less unnerved. They apprehended Chinese military intervention and began to make representations to the English as well as to the Rohilla Sirdar Nawab Faizullah Khan<sup>17</sup> for assistance. Amar Singh Thapa and other Sirdars of the Nepal Rajah addressed a letter to Nawab Faizullah Khan for 2,000 men, which the latter regretted as having not the power to render without permission from the Governor-General-in-Council and the Nawab Vizier of Oudh.<sup>18</sup> Nawab Faizullah Khan intimated Mr. Stuart the contents of the letter from Amar Singh Thapa and other Sirdars. The Rajah of Nepal also addressed a letter to the Governor-General saying that disputes and hostilities had been going on between Nepal and Lhasa for the past three years (1789-92), but now the war had become more serious. Under the circumstances, he had already applied to the Governor-General for military assistance; he wanted ten pieces of cannons and ten European Sergeants. But now he desired that the Governor-General would show him equal kindness and friendship as he was wont to do towards the Nawab Vizier and further requested an assistance of two battalions of Europeans and one of Sepoys with military stores and a suitable number of guns.<sup>19</sup> A similar letter was also addressed to Mr. Duncan, Resident at Benares, in which the Rajah in requesting military assistance said: "You and the English in general endeavour at the successful issue of the affairs of those with whom you enter into engagements. On this account I have every confidence in the English Gentlemen, and have written frequently for assistance. I request that, immediately on receipt of this letter, you will write to the Governor-General, and send your letter

by the dawk so that the assistance required may arrive in time".<sup>20</sup>

In the meantime as an extra inducement, the Rajah of Nepal entered into a commercial treaty with the Company. The credit for the signing of the commercial treaty is largely due to Ali Ibrahim Khan, Judge at Benares, who opened correspondence through Gajraj Misra, Guru of the Nepal Rajah, who resided mostly in Nepal. Abdul Qadir Khan, munsif of the Dewani Adalat of the city of Benares, was commissioned in concurrence with Mr. Duncan to proceed to Nepal with gifts and presents for the Rajah. He waited upon the Rajah and his uncle Bhadur Shah who was the *de facto* ruler, as the King was a minor, through the good offices of Gajraj Misra. The people of Nepal, both high and low, shunned and avoided Englishmen and their agents, and the inevitable result was that Abdul Qadir had to face much difficulty in getting himself heard. But after a great deal of tactful persuasion the Nepal Government agreed to accept the propositions put up before them through Abdul Qadir. Accordingly, an agreement was executed between the parties in accordance with the draft prepared by Mr. Duncan, and the Maulvi returned to Benares after accomplishing his task successfully.<sup>21</sup>

The agreement was signed on March 1, 1792, which contained seven articles altogether. By the first article 2½% duties were agreed upon to be taken reciprocally on imports from either country. The duties would be levied on commodities valued at the market price. Deterrent punishment was to be meted out to officers of either Government should there be any realisation of duties above the prescribed rate (art 2). The merchants were to be indemnified of the loss due to robberies, theft etc., by the zamindar of the area within which the incident would take place (art 4). In case of non-sale of the commodities, the merchants should be free to take these to countries beyond the borders of the contracting countries and no additional duty should be levied (art 6). The commercial treaty was to be in force immediately and binding upon the successors of the present rulers of the two countries and it should be the basis of further increase of concord and friendship between the two countries.<sup>22</sup>



The Nepal Government fondly hoped that the Company would send military assistance and military stores as desired and made repeated appeals to the Governor-General as well as to the British Resident at Benares. But Lord Cornwallis, pursuant to the Company's policy of non-intervention in the affairs of the hill Rajahs followed ever since the time of Warren Hastings and mindful of the relations that existed between them and the Chinese Government, declined to send any military assistance. But he offered to mediate between the Nepalese and the Chinese Governments. To this end Captain Kirkpatrick was sent with a contingent to Patna on his way to Nepal. But hardly he reached Patna before a letter from the Rajah was received by the Resident at Benares in which the news of the signing of a treaty between Nepal and China was given and a request was added that Captain Kirkpatrick should not be sent to Nepal. The Resident at Benares was desired by the Rajah to send the contents of the letter to the Governor-General.<sup>23</sup>

That there were considerable suspicion and hesitancy on the part of the Nepal Government in admitting any Englishman into Nepal unless forced by circumstances can be well imagined from the Rajah's request to instruct Capt. Kirkpatrick not to proceed to Nepal.

Capt. Kirkpatrick addressed a letter to the Rajah desiring permission to meet him for the purpose of furthering friendship between the Company and the Nepalese Government. But the Nepalese Government would not fully rely on the professions of friendship by any Englishman without testing them to their satisfaction. Dewan Bhim Shah and Deenanath Upadhyaya were sent to Patna by the Nepal Government to meet Capt. Kirkpatrick.<sup>24</sup> Obviously, on the report of Bhim Shah and Deenanath the Rajah decided to permit Kirkpatrick to proceed to Nepal. Guru Gajraj Misra also reached Nepal, in the meantime, to vouch for the good intentions of the Company in sending Capt. Kirkpatrick. The Rajah ultimately agreed to his suggestions to invite Capt. Kirkpatrick to Nepal.<sup>25</sup> In his letter received by the Governor-General on the 2nd January, 1793, the Rajah explained the reasons of his previously discouraging Capt.

Kirkpatrick's visit. The unwholesomeness of the climate, the heat of the season and the opposition of the hills which would prove very inconvenient to Capt. Kirkpatrick prompted the Rajah to advise that he should not be sent. After full discussion with Capt. Kirkpatrick, both the Dewan and Deenanath Upadhyaya were convinced of the peaceful and friendly intentions of the Company in sending him to Nepal. They also wrote to the Governor-General to vacate the order of postponement of Capt. Kirkpatrick's journey to Nepal.<sup>26</sup> Upon this the Governor-General gave fresh instructions to Kirkpatrick in supersession of the former, now that the conflict between Nepal and China had been compounded.

The new instructions to Capt. Kirkpatrick covered a wide field of reference. He was desired to find out the 'real cause' of war between Nepal and China so that the Company might judge the best way of acting as a mediator between China and Nepal "in case of a revival of the quarrel on any future occasion".<sup>27</sup> He was also instructed to assure the Rajah of the friendly disposition of the Company towards him and their desire to encourage a free commercial intercourse between the two countries. He was also commissioned to induce the Nepal Government to pay stricter attention to the commercial treaty signed on March 1, 1792. A final settlement of the outstanding boundary disputes, an enquiry into the nature of trade which the people of Nepal carried on with Tibet, Tartary and also into the possibility of British exports finding a suitable market there were also to be Capt. Kirkpatrick's task to accomplish. An interesting article in the instructions was the direction given him to make general observations on the form of Government, on religion, manners and customs of the inhabitants of Nepal and to obtain as much knowledge of the roads, geography etc. of Nepal and of the neighbouring countries as would be possible for him to do. The Governor-General having been informed, in the meantime, that the Rajah of Nepal would rather wish that the surveyor appointed to accompany Capt. Kirkpatrick should not be sent, the orders given to Lieutenant Wilfred, Company's military surveyor, to proceed to Nepal with Capt. Kirkpatrick were rescinded. A cipher code was also given to Capt. Kirkpatrick for his use in Nepal, presumably to trans-

mit information which might not be fully innocuous from the Nepal Government's stand-point.<sup>28</sup>

The Anglo-Nepalese commercial treaty signed in 1792 was more or less a counsel of despair insofar as the Nepal Government was concerned, and as soon as the compelling circumstances were over, the treaty was considered to have had outlived its necessity. This is borne out by the complaint made by one Mr. Pagan who had settled as a cultivator and merchant on the frontiers of Purnea towards Morung. In his complaint to Mr. Duncan, Resident at Benares, he wrote to say that he had sent some merchandise through Nepal to Tibet, but "no sooner the goods had passed the Company's boundary and entered Nepal than the collectors of the *Sayer* and *Badary*<sup>29</sup> therein stationed refused to let his merchandise pass without exaction of the former dues so that Mr. Pagan has been obliged to bring back his goods".<sup>30</sup>

Mr. Duncan considered this violation to be a discredit on his own part as well, for he was one of the persons who had brought the commercial treaty to a conclusion.<sup>31</sup> Mr. Duncan requested Ali Ibrahim Khan to see, with the assistance of Gajraj Misra and Abdul Qadir Khan, that the treaty was given effect to. Ali Ibrahim Khan, Gajraj Misra and Abdul Qadir Khan were three others, besides Mr. Duncan, who had played an important part in the signing of the treaty between the Company and the Nepal Government. Abdul Qadir was no less anxious to see the treaty obeyed, and of all the natives who assisted the Company's interest during the period, he deserves special mention. Abdul Qadir was already trying to obtain information about the situation in Nepal that hampered the Anglo-Nepalese trade relations as envisaged in the commercial treaty of 1792. He gave an account of the affairs of Nepal based on the sundry reports that he received from the Kashmiri merchants resident in Nepal in which he observed that the straggling groups of the Chinese forces were still quartering in the vicinity of the place Dhee Bhoomuck "neither have they yet left of levelling the hills and smoothing the roads".<sup>32</sup> Abdul Qadir Khan made mention of a *Peerzada*<sup>33</sup> in Benares who was in the habit of visiting Nepal from time to time and was about to set forth for Nepal on the next visit within a

fortnight and stay there about a couple of months. He would also proceed to Lhasa after visiting the Chinese army in Nepal. Abdul Qadir requisitioned the help of the *Peerzada* to further the cause of the Anglo-Nepalese commercial relations. The *Peerzada* would, as Abdul Qadir Khan informed Mr. Duncan, visit one of his disciples Sulyman, a Kashmiri of great influence and credit who knew Tibetan, Chinese and Nepalese languages, and through him bring the affairs of the Company to a happy conclusion. Thus the *Peerzada* became another unofficial emissary of the Company. We have no further reference to the *Peerzada* nor do we know what he actually did for the improvement of the Anglo-Nepalese commercial relations.

### III

Capt. Kirkpatrick had started, as we have already seen, more or less on a fact-finding mission to Nepal and to assist him in his job the Maulvi was<sup>34</sup> also deputed. Lt. Knox was another military officer of the Company who was sent with Capt. Kirkpatrick. Capt. Kirkpatrick was not the first Englishman to have entered into Nepal as the East India Company's accredited agent as is erroneously thought by some.<sup>35</sup> James Logan and Foxcroft were Capt. Kirkpatrick's predecessors in this regard. But Capt. Kirkpatrick was the first Englishman to render a valuable service to the East India Company by preparing an excellent account of Nepal and making her known to the people of Leadenhall Street. Although an army Captain, Kirkpatrick showed his historical bias in his account of Nepal which lifted the veil that had kept her hidden from the European eyes. His account is of great topographical, political and commercial interest to every enquirer about Nepal.

Suspicion and jealousy that the Nepal administration had about the English precluded any accurate account of the actual state of affairs in Nepal and the real attitude of the Nepal Government from reaching the English. Capt. Kirkpatrick's was admittedly the most accurate account of Nepal of the time. It was he who first resolved the mystery about

the Nepalese gold. "Nepal territories produce not a grain of gold" was his observation about the erroneous notion that Nepal possessed several gold mines.<sup>36</sup>

It is not the purpose of this work to make any elaborate reference to Capt. Kirkpatrick's account. It will suffice if we confined this narrative to such references as were of importance in regard to the subsequent commercial relations between the Company and Nepal. Besides the list of exports and imports of Nepal, which showed a variety of articles the Company might profitably trade in<sup>37</sup> Capt. Kirkpatrick found out the real causes of the languishing nature of the Nepalese trade with Bengal which, according to him, were the ignorance of the Nepalese administration, the impolitic restrictions which the trade suffered from and the monopolies that some of the mercantile houses held in the Nepalese foreign trade. It becomes obvious that, besides the natural suspicion of the Nepalese Government about the real intentions of the English, the above factors were in no small measure responsible for the hesitancy, narrow spirit and faltering manner of the Nepalese trade relations with the Company.

Capt. Kirkpatrick was not slow in gathering information of military interest. The Nepalese army comprised 50 to 60 companies of un-uniform numbers with about 140 matchlocks altogether, most of which were almost obsolete. One very valuable observation made by Capt. Kirkpatrick was about the bravery, capability, sustained effort and hardship of the Gurkha soldiers. Being a soldier himself, Capt. Kirkpatrick saw the potentialities of the Gurkhas as soldiers whom the British Government were to employ in huge numbers not at a far-off time. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Ranjit Singh of the Punjab was another soldier to have recognised the military potentials of the Gurkhas and his army comprised Gurkhas besides the Poorbiahs, the Sikhs, Muslims and the Hindus.<sup>38</sup>

That Capt. Kirkpatrick did not accomplish anything beyond bringing the Company a first-hand information of the affairs at Nepal is clear enough from the necessity of sending another emissary in the person of Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan.

1. C.P.C., Vol. VII, Dec. 18, 1784, No. 1540.
2. C.P.C., Vol. VII, Aug. 19, 1785, No. 300.
3. C.P.C., Vol. VII, Nov. 4, 1786, No. 847.
4. C.P.C., Vol. VIII, Nos. 1098, 1282, 1414, 1458, 1459, 1788, Nos. 5, 6.
5. C.P.C., Vol. VIII, Sept. 25, 1788, No. 723.
6. C.P.C., Vol. VIII, Jan. 2, 1788, No. 7 ; 1789, Nos. 1356 and 1366.
7. C.P.C., Vol. VIII, Sept. 10, 1788, No. 695.
8. C.P.C., Vol. VIII, Aug. 22, 1789.
9. C.P.C., Vol. II, Jan. 2, 1790. No. 16, Foot-note 2 (a).
10. Balchandra Sharma: *Neplako Aitihashik Rupa-Rekha*, pp. 235-36.
- Ishwar Raj: *Naya Nepalko Itihash*, pp. 126-27.
11. C.P.C., Vol. VIII, Jan. 22, 1789, No. 977. Cammann, S. observes: "It is interesting to find Panchen Lama so candid with the English in his frank admission of the distrust of the Chinese . . ." *Trade Through the Himalayas*, p. 116, foot-note, 61. But this letter was written by Teshu Lama. Vide C.P.C., Vol. VIII, Jan. 22, 1789, No. 977 ; Sect. Cons., Jan. 26, 1789, No. 3.
12. C.P.C., 1789, Nos. 977, 1068.
13. *Ibid*, 1788, 609.
14. *Ibid*, Vol. IX, No. 16, foot-note 2 (a), p. 5.
15. Ishwar Raj: *Naya Nepalko Itihash*, pp. 126-30.
16. *Idem*.
17. The Rohilla Sirdar Faizullah Khan, successor of Hafez Rahamat Khan, was allowed to return to Rampur by the *Treaty of Laldang*, on certain conditions.
18. C.P.C., Vol. X, 1792, Nos. 473, 488.
19. Pol. Cons., Oct. 3, 1792, No. 11.
20. *Op. Cit.*, No. 18.
21. C.P.C., 1792, No. 344.
22. Atchison: *Treaties Engagements and Sunnuds*, Vol. II, No. XXIII, p. 103 ff.
23. C.P.C., 1792, No. 852.
24. Pol. Cons., Jan. 14, 1793, No. 29 (a).
25. Pol. Cons., Feb. 25, 1793, No. 38.
26. Pol. Cons., Jan. 14, 1793, No. 20 (a).
27. Pol. Cons., Jan. 14, 1793, No. 20 (b) ; Ross: *Cornwallis correspondence*, Vol. II, pp. 205-6.
28. Pol. Cons., Jan. 14, 1793, No. 20 (b).
29. Sayer: duties on goods exported into Nepal. *Badary*—correct form *Bhadary* meaning Nepalese Government official.
30. Letter from Mr. Duncan to Ali Ibrahim, Nov. 12, 1792 ; Pol. Cons., Nov. 30, 1792, No. 36.
31. *Op. Cit.*
32. Abdul Qadir to Mr. Duncan, Nov. 16, 1792.
33. A religious preceptor in Islam.
34. Pub. Cons., Nov. 30, 1792, No. 36.
35. Chakraverty, B. P., in his article 'Maulvi Abdul Qadir's Report on Nepal' observes: "Kirkpatrick was the first Englishman who entered into the heart of Nepal as the agent of the E. I. Company", *Islamic Culture*, Oct. 1946, p. 362. But James Logan and Foxcroft are at least two others who had done so before Kirkpatrick.
36. Kirkpatrick: *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*, p. 174.
37. *Ibid*, p. 203 ff.
38. Sinha: *Ranjit Singh*, p. 167.

## CHAPTER VI

### EMBASSY OF MAULVI ABDUL QADIR

#### I

The need for Maulvi Abdul Qadir's embassy to Nepal arose out of the virtual failure of Capt. Kirkpatrick's mission to achieve anything for the improvement of the Anglo-Nepalese commercial relations or for the settlement of the outstanding border conflicts between the two countries. The suspicion and jealousy with which the Nepalese administration looked upon the English merchants became sufficiently known to the Company and they realised that a better approach towards resolving the difficulties between the two Governments would be to send a native on an embassy to Nepal. Although such agents of the Company were also looked upon with suspicion, yet Abdul Qadir's knowledge of Nepal and his contacts with the high-ups in the Nepal Government during 1792 made him a little less liable to suspicion than any Englishman. Maulvi Abul Qadir was, therefore, the very best choice under the circumstances.

The decision to send Maulvi Abul Qadir on an embassy to Nepal was taken by Sir John Shore, Lord Cornwallis's successor in office. Sir John Shore was the most experienced of the English servants of the Company of the time and possessed a first-hand knowledge of the revenue system of Bengal.<sup>1</sup> Lord Cornwallis was exceedingly fortunate in his subordinate officers and definitely the most fortunate in having an experienced officer like Sir John Shore under him. Sir John Shore's efforts to improve the revenue position of the Company did not exclude expansion of the Company's trade. He resumed the Anglo-Nepalese commercial question where his predecessor, Lord Cornwallis, had left it. That Sir John Shore must have been in the know of the attempts made by Lord Cornwallis in this regard is a presumption that does not call for any proof. Sir John Shore's plan was novel and of a more practical nature in the sense

that he wanted to ascertain the value of the trade with Nepal by an actual experiment on a moderate scale and to give a permanent establishment to the Anglo-Nepalese trade by the Residency of an Agent on the Company's behalf in Nepal, should the results of the experiment justify such a course. All this is clearly stated in his minute<sup>2</sup> which runs as follows: "This communication applies to the subject into (*sic*) two points of view. The measures to be adopted for ascertaining the value of trade with Nepaul, assisted by an actual experiment on a very moderate scale and the mode of giving a permanent Establishment to it by the Residency of an Agent on the part of the Government at Nepaul if the Commerce should be found on enquiry of sufficient importance to render it expedient".<sup>3</sup> The choice fell upon Maulvi Abdul Qadir, as it has already been noted to head the embassy.

Maulvi Abdul Qadir was a Bengali Muslim of a high family and the son of Wasil Ali Khan, the *Qazi-ul-qazat* (Chief Qazi) of the Sadr Nizamat Adalat instituted by Warren Hastings. He was himself a munsif of the Mofussil Dewani Adalat at Banares.<sup>4</sup> He enjoyed the implicit confidence of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, Judge of the Dewani Adalat at Benares, as well as of Mr. Lumsden, the English Agent at Benares. Both of them considered Maulvi Abdul Qadir as intelligent and zealous in the service of the Company. Mr. Lumsden spoke very highly of his integrity and talents, mildness of manners and intelligence and held high hopes about the success of the embassy headed by him. That the Maulvi was a man of parts admits of no doubt and the success that attended his first visit to the Nepal court was enough proof of his abilities.

The instructions that Sir John Shore gave to Maulvi Abul Qadir make an interesting study. The Maulvi was to consider himself "as a merchant and not as an agent of Government", but necessary recommendations would be given him so that he might prove to the satisfaction of the Rajah that his stay in Nepal was "merely for the purpose of cementing the friendship between the States and forwarding and improving their commercial intercourse". He was



to impress upon the Rajah and his ministers the expediency of promoting the trade and increasing the mutual ties of friendship between the two states. The Maulvi was also authorised to hear any propositions that might be made to that effect by the Rajah and to propose compliance with them subject to the approval and express sanction of the Company. He was to ascertain how the above purposes could be best attained and to know who of the Rajah's ministers were well disposed to support the proposal of an increased trade with the Company and who were hostile.

One important point included in the instructions to the Maulvi, although not mentioned in the minute of the Governor-General referred to above, was the question of the adjustment of the boundary disputes between Morung and Purnea. Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan was expressly commissioned to receive any representation on this subject on behalf of the Rajah and to assure the Rajah that the Governor-General would give his most anxious consideration to the matter as soon as the connected papers would be sent to Calcutta by the Collector of Purnea<sup>5</sup>. He was instructed to enquire particularly into the circumstances of the trade of Nepal and the neighbouring countries with the imports and exports and the articles which were produced or manufactured in the country with such other articles as might advantageously be employed in the trade between the two states. Should the Maulvi think it necessary, he might for the purpose of conciliating the Rajah and his ministers, make presents to them of such articles out of the merchandise as they would wish to accept. Abdul Qadir was given certain articles to make an actual experiment as to their possibilities as items of trade<sup>6</sup>.

Another business of importance entrusted to the Maulvi was the problem of the Faqir or Sannyasi menace. These predatory groups who took up their abode in Morung, would commit outrages on the inhabitants of the Company's Provinces. The matter had been previously referred to the Rajah but no action was taken in this regard and the Maulvi was instructed to represent to the Rajah on the subject so that the Sannyasis might be checked<sup>7</sup>.

It is obvious from the instructions to the Maulvi that the embassy was in reality for a double purpose, political and commercial, although the latter was of greater importance.

## II

Preparations for the Maulvi's departure were complete ; instructions and letters of recommendations were handed over to him and some quantity of broad cloth, corals etc. kept ready. The Rajah was informed of the impending departure of the embassy. At this point of time, the situation took an unfavourable turn exactly as it did on the eve of the departure of Capt. Kirkpatrick. The Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah who had taken over the administration from the hands of his uncle Bahadur Shah, who had acted as the regent and Vizier during the former's minority, wrote to the Resident at Benares a most discouraging letter in which he said that "owing to the war with the Chinese, all the Tibet country" had been devastated and laid waste by the two armies. The area was not frequented by merchants now, for there was no vend for merchandise. "Now when the Hindostan merchants bring articles for trade, there is no one there desirous of purchasing them, they are therefore obliged to put up with the loss and selling more or less whatever they can't take back". In the circumstances, the Rajah did not consider it advisable on the part of the Company's Government to send Maulvi Abdul Qadir with the merchandise for "the loss upon the goods and the expenses of carriage on the road will be excessive". The Resident was, therefore, advised to "suspend the sending of Molavy Abdul Kauder".<sup>8</sup>

In the letter containing the information of the impending embassy of Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan, the Governor-General also desired the Rajah of Nepal to extirpate, if possible, or at least to punish adequately a body of 'freebooting fakeers' under Kurrem Sahah (Karim Shah?) and Soobhan Ali Shah who repeatedly made incursions into the Company's territories in Dinajpore, plundering and carrying off the goods and effects of the inhabitants. The Rajah wrote to say that on the receipt of the letter of the Governor-General he had despatched two companies of Tellingas to seek them out,

and after a great search they were found close to the borders of Tirhut within the Rajah's territory in the woods of the mouzah Auber in Pargannah Mohery in Zillah Morung where that body of Faqirs concealed themselves. The Rajah's troops killed 35 of the Faqirs in an engagement and wounded many others. It was, however, not certain whether Kurrem Shah and Soobhan Ali Shah had fled or kept themselves concealed in the Rajah's territory. Troops had been sent to every quarter to trace them out. Should they have gone into the Company's dominions, necessary steps should be taken by the Company's servants as they would deem fit. The Rajah also complained in the same letter that Gudjaree Roy and other robbers had taken up their abode in Purnea and were making inroads every now and then into Morung district, a dependency of the Rajah. "It depends upon the Company's Government to punish and extirpate them which will tend to maintain concord between the two States".<sup>9</sup>

In another letter to Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan the Rajah wrote the same thing discouraging him to come to Nepal at that time when articles from Hindostan had no purchaser. "I am, therefore, induced by the union and attachment subsisting between the two states to write to you that you by no means whatever bring merchandise to this quarter as it will hurt my reputation and occasion loss in the articles and a heavy expense for carriage on the road, believe this to be certain. I have written upon this subject to the Governor-General and Mr. Duncan from which particulars will fully appear".<sup>10</sup>

The real cause behind the throwing of cold water on the proposed embassy of Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan was far from the Rajah's solicitude to save the Company from sustaining loss or saving his reputation being hurt due to the loss that a friendly Government was sure to suffer for want of purchasers. The real motive is to be found in three things: *First*, he wanted to compel attention of the Company to the long outstanding question of adjustment of boundaries between Bengal and Morung. *Secondly*, the Nepal Government suspected that the Company was not inclined to forward the cause of the Rajah in respect of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor, the two districts in the Nawab Vizier's country of which he

had claimed possession. These two points were expressly stated to have occasioned the disinclination of the Rajah in permitting the embassy of Abdul Qadir to proceed to Nepal in a private letter written by Gajraj Misra to Maulvi Abdul Qadir.<sup>11</sup> *Thirdly*, the Rajah's Dewan Deenanath Upadhyaya held the monopoly of the Nepalese trade with Bengal and just before the despatch of the Rajah's letter Deenanath arrived at Nepal and brought his personal influence to bear upon the Rajah to write discouraging the sending of the commercial embassy.<sup>12</sup>

Gajraj Misra, the Guru of the Rajah of Nepal and a dependable friend of the Company, was in the meantime sent to Nepal to persuade the Rajah to vacate his objection to the visit of Maulvi Abdul Qadir. Gajraj Misra succeeded in his mission and procured an invitation from the Rajah to the Maulvi to proceed without delay.<sup>13</sup> In the letter from the Resident at Benares to the Rajah which Gajraj Misra carried on his person the Rajah was bluntly told that "importation (*sic*) of acting contrary to engagement among rulers high in place were very disgraceful".<sup>14</sup> The Resident, however, expressed his gratification at the Rajah's profession of encouragement and conciliation to the merchants and traders from the time of the execution of the Commercial Treaty. He also assured the Rajah that the English Government had in every respect been solicitous to encourage and conciliate the traders and merchants from Nepal the result whereof was a progressive increase in the volume of trade between the two States. As to the Rajah's objection to Maulvi Abdul Qadir's visit to Nepal on the ground of small profits on trade owing to the devastation in the Tibet country, the Resident intimated the Rajah the diverse objects that the Company had in view in sending him. These were, he stated: "*First*, for him to pay respects to you. *Secondly*, to transmit the presents intended for you by the Governor-General. *Thirdly*, to transmit the *khellaut* and letters from the Nawab Vizier. *Fourthly*, to communicate with you in respect to settling the boundary between Morung and Purnea which you are so desirous of. *Fifthly*, to converse with you on the subject Cashipoor and Rudrapoor for which you formerly made appli-

cation in the manner the Governor-General had authorised and on the endeavours which out of consideration for your attachment are made for that purpose and as the Khaun had with him some specimens of goods which he proposed to trade with on his own account, and as in friendship and candor (*sic*) it was necessary to inform you of this and application also made by the Khaun to the Governor-General for a recommendation on that account, the Governor-General out of consideration for the union subsisting between the two States may have written to you by way of recommending him".<sup>15</sup>

The attempt to disguise the real character of the Maulvi's embassy is obvious enough and needless to say it was done with no other purpose than to circumvent the Nepal Government's possible objection to trading in Nepal on the Company's account. The success of Gajraj Misra in conciliating the Rajah was indeed due to his personal influence to some extent, but the contents of the Resident's letter certainly had no little influence upon the Rajah. In fact, the objection raised by the Rajah to Maulvi Abdul Qadir's proposed visit was not so much his own as we find from a letter addressed to the Governor-General by the Resident at Benares, presumably based on the information received from Gajraj Misra. The Resident observed: "I have not the least doubt that the Rajah's disinclination to the measure had its origin in the intrigues and influence of Deenanath Oppadeah, and not in any objection or jealousy on his own part".<sup>16</sup>

In a letter to the Resident at Benares the Rajah wrote vacating his earlier objection to the visit of the Maulvi and we notice a distinct effort on the part of the Rajah to explain his earlier conduct in refusing permission and to save himself from a feeling of embarrassment. He wrote to the Resident at Benares in the following terms:

"With respect to what I formerly wrote discouraging the Maulvi from importing merchandise because of the disoluted (*sic*) condition of the B'hoot (*sic*) country in consequence of which I apprehended no purchasers would be found and nothing but loss would ensue

(*sic*) upon the enterprise, I beg Sir you will not suspect me to have been actuated by any motive but that of attachment and purity of intention. But as you are not fully satisfied of the truth of the account I gave you, you may be told the same thing from all the merchants and traders of both countries. My friend, where such a friendship and union so firmly subsists between us, any loss that will accrue to you, I consider as my own and it was upon that principle that I persuaded the information. As you are of opinion that the departure of the Molavy with the several points entrusted to him<sup>17</sup> will tend to the encrease (*sic*) of attachment and union it is very well ; whatever the wish of the two Sircars may be, shall be represented and done. It is proper then that you make the Molavy set out for this quarter without apprehension".<sup>18</sup>

To get over the embarrassment caused to himself by his inconsistency in objecting to the embassy once and inviting it to come again, the Rajah caused a letter to be written by his minister Damodar Pande in reply to a letter to him by the Resident, exonerating the Rajah of any motive other than solicitude to save the Maulvi from sustaining loss. "Do not suspect Sir", wrote he, "that any other motive influenced the Rajah".<sup>19</sup> Damodar Pande also informed the Resident of the Rajah's pleasure on hearing that the Maulvi was intending to proceed to Nepal to pay his respects and to present on behalf of the Governor-General and the Nawab Vizier tokens of friendship and to converse on important points of common interest ; "the Molavy should be given dismissal to set out for Nepal without delay". Maulvi Abdul Qadir was also written to by the Rajah to start for Nepal agreeably to the direction of the Resident Mr. Duncan.

### III

At long last the Maulvi arrived at Katmandu with his party and the merchandise entrusted to him. There were

about fifty people in his company and merchandise worth Rs. 15,000/- made up of the following items:

		Rs.	Rs.
Broad Cloth (red in shade)	...	5,000/-	
Broad Cloth (blue in shade)	...	5,000/-	
Corals (large)	...	2,000/-	
Kashmabad Cloth (white)	...	1,000/-	
Mirzapur Chintz	...	2,000/-	15,000/-
<hr/>			
Cash	...	10,000/-	
Personal advances to Maulvi	...	5,000/-	15,000/-
<hr/>			
			30,000/-
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In view of the possibilities that were expected to ensue as a result of the embassy, Sir John Shore considered the expenditure involved to be rather negligible. In his minute he put it as follows: "The magnitude of the object furnishes a sufficient justification for the expenses of the undertaking, which, if it should even totally fail, cannot occasion very considerable loss".<sup>20</sup>

Maulvi Abdul Qadir and party set forth for Nepal in the summer of 1795 and reached Katmandu either in July or early in August. The Maulvi was received with all the courtesy due to a foreign emissary by the Rajah's Dewan who commended him to the Rajah, who was pleased to receive the presents that the Maulvi offered him on behalf of the Governor-General. The Rajah acknowledged the receipt of the presents as well as of two letters that the Maulvi carried on his person.<sup>21</sup>

In the very same letter the Rajah informed the Governor-General of the steps he had taken to punish the freebooters under Raheem Shah pursuant to the request of the Governor-General himself. The Rajah expressed his friendly sentiments by saying, "I reckon any person who plunders or otherwise infests the Company's territory as an absolute enemy to my own country and please God I will continue to chastise such riotous persons".<sup>22</sup> In one of the letters that the Maulvi carried from the Governor-General

to the Rajah, the decision of the boundary dispute between Morung and Purnea was communicated and the Rajah was informed that the connected papers would shortly be sent to him. The Rajah gratefully acknowledged this decision on the part of the Governor-General. He also assured the best of attention to the Maulvi as the Governor-General desired.

The Rajah also raised the question of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor which, although legally belonging to the Nawab Vizier, were sought to be possessed by the Rajah himself through the good offices of the Governor-General for the services rendered by the Gurkhas in the Rohilla war. "It is well known that my family have shown sincere attachment to the Vizier during three generations. Recently too the laudable services done by my people in the Rohilla War out of regard for His Excellency and in compliance with the solicitations of Messrs. Duncan and Cherry".<sup>23</sup> It is obvious that the Rajah wanted his claim to be pressed through the English insofar as the two Taluqs of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor were concerned and he seemed to consider the presence of Maulvi Abdul Qadir at Nepal to be most opportune for the purpose. The matter was also raised in the conversation with Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan in presence of 'Gooroojee' Gajraj Misra. Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan in his letter to Mr. Duncan requested him to look into the affairs of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor. He, however, assured the Rajah of the great friendship the Company bore him regarding his claim to Cashipoor and Rudrapoor on hearing which the Rajah expressed his extreme gratitude and desired the Company to settle the matter in favour of the Nepal State. The Rajah also complained to the Maulvi that Lal Singh and Harrack Deo Joosey, formerly servants of the Kumaon Rajah, a vassal of Nepal, had killed their master and fled to the Vizier's dominion and were trying to take possession of the Taluqs of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor in conjunction with some of the Vizier's officers. Even Gajraj Misra who was present during the conversation could not help observing "how strange it was that notwithstanding the kindness and favour manifested by the English and the Vizier, the latter should give protection to such rebels and atrocious characters who had murdered their master".<sup>24</sup>



The Rajah's claim to the possession of Cashipoore and Rudrapoor was long outstanding and the matter was represented to Capt. Kirkpatrick when he visited Nepal during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Cornwallis. The Rajah reiterated his claim on the ground of valuable services rendered to the Vizier during the Rohilla War. He was even prepared to pay a little compensation for the two Taluqs although he expected that the Nawab Vizier who was "the Chief Vizier of Hindostan, should give him those small places without any demur or compensation. This would not be far from what magnanimity and justice demand".<sup>25</sup> Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan requested Mr. Duncan to exert himself and promote this affair and assure the Rajah that every exertion would be made in this regard. The whole matter was placed before the Governor-General by Mr. Duncan when he came to Calcutta on official business. Upon this the Governor-General addressed a letter to the Rajah saying that although it would be a matter of great satisfaction to himself personally to see the wishes of the Rajah fulfilled in respect of the Taluqs of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor, yet it did not depend on him to do so. He also regretted that it did not lie in his power to comply with the Rajah's wishes by using his "influence with the Nawab Vizier (who considers the possession of these two Pergunnahs as of the greatest importance) for the gratification of them". The Governor-General also pointed out that his regard for justice and solicitude to see the wishes of the Rajah gratified could very well be understood by the Rajah from "the orders issued to the collector of Purnea to adjust the Morung boundary in exact conformity to your (the Rajah's) application upon that subject".<sup>26</sup>

From the above discussion it is quite obvious that the Maulvi addressed himself in a large measure to the task of a political agent, rather than that of a merchant willing to vend his goods on his own account.

#### IV

Apart from the political adjustment that the Maulvi attempted to effect between the two Governments, he ren-

dered a much more valuable service to the Company from the commercial point of view as will be evident from the reports that he sent from time to time from Nepal. If Capt. Kirkpatrick's visit was important for making Nepal known to the English, that of Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan was of greater importance since it was the first practical experiment in trade with Nepal for assessing the actual value and potentialities of the Indo-Nepalese trade. Expansion of trade was, however, the underlying motive of both the missions and judged from that point of view Abdul Qadir's was definitely of a much greater importance and value as it helped to put the Company into the real picture of the Indo-Nepalese trade potentialities. His reports, unlike the account of Capt. Kirkpatrick, confine themselves mainly to commercial matters, but are none the less interesting.

The Maulvi began with a narrative of the difficulties encountered in the journey to Nepal during the hot season which told upon his health as well as of the men of his party. As many as 30 of his men fell ill on reaching Nepal and three of them died.<sup>27</sup> The Maulvi himself suffered from intermittent fever and returned after about six months' stay at Nepal a wreck of his former self. The Rajah, however, made all possible arrangements for the treatment of the Maulvi and his men.

As to the real sentiment of the Rajah, who was a young inexperienced man and would seldom look after the interests of his subjects, the Maulvi could not understand much. As he was unwell his subjects were allowed little or no intercourse with him and even others "cannot have much".<sup>28</sup> Thus the very meagre opportunity that the Maulvi had of getting into personal touch with the Rajah precluded his obtaining any clear idea about his personal attitude towards the Anglo-Nepalese trade. But he found that the ministers Damodar Pande, Abhiman Singh, Bulbahadur Shah<sup>29</sup> and others were very favourably disposed towards the Company in their attempt to further the trade relations between the two countries.

The third Dewan Nara Singh and the fourth Dewan Tribhuban Singh were also favourably disposed towards the Company. At first, however, Tribhuban Singh, being egged

on by Deenanath Upadhyaya, appeared to be unfriendly, but Maulvi Abdul Qadir's efforts succeeded in converting him to the views of the other Dewans.

After having given an idea of the persons who were—and who were not—favourably disposed towards the Company, the Maulvi proceeded to give a detailed account of the information that he procured respecting the trade and commerce of Nepal. Nepal Khas, that is, Nepal proper, and other districts dependent on it, were frequented by traders. These places, as the Maulvi observed, looked like bazars where traders from Tibet and Hindostan assembled for buying and selling. The inhabitants of Nepal were more industrious than the people of Hindostan, remarked the Maulvi, and were given to trade and commerce. Few articles of trade were produced in Nepal and these had a market in Tibet. But the Nepalese having been an industrious people engaged themselves as brokers between the merchants from Hindostan and Tibet and appropriated the profits of the trade. A large section of the Nepalese population earned their livelihood from this kind of brokerage. The reasons why the Hindostan merchants, particularly the Hindus, could not earn the profit themselves, by trading with Tibet directly, were enumerated by Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan as follows:

*First*, the Hindus who would go to Tibet could not attend to the injunctions of the Shastras. The religion of the Hindus stood in the way of their going to Tibet, for their Shastras did not permit them to eat the flesh of cattle, dogs, hogs, etc. whether dead or alive.

*Secondly*, the climate of Tibet also did not suit the ease-loving Hindus. "The water and air of Tibet are very cold and there are frequent frosts and falls of snow, but all the Musalmans of Hindostan who carry on trade with industry and have houses in Patna, Benares and Nepaul, carry articles of the produce of Hindustan to Tibet and sell them to advantage".<sup>30</sup>

The Maulvi was also sufficiently careful to find out the hindrances to the Company's trading with Tibet directly. He observed that the inhabitants of Tibet being used to very cold climate could not bear the heat of Hindostan and on

this account they made purchases of the articles imported into Nepal from the Company's Provinces. The result was that the Nepalese, acting as the middlemen between the Tibetans and the Indian merchants, appropriated the bulk of the profits. With regard to the produce of Tibet the inhabitants of Nepal acted in the like manner. They derived a huge profit from the Tibetan trade and even the Rajah of Nepal himself would not hesitate to derive huge profits from the Tibetan trade. The profits of the Tibet trade was, however, not so high as they used to be formerly, although they continued to be considerable.

In order to remedy the difficulties in the way of direct trade with Tibet and China, the Maulvi made valuable suggestions. He pointed out that, in the first place, the inhabitants of Nepal had to be conciliated somehow or other. Then, in future five warehouses must be established for keeping ready stock of broad cloth and other articles of European manufacture. These five places, as Maulvi Abdul Qadir recommended, were: (a) Near the border of Buxaduar district of Coochbehar; (b) in Sircar Champaran; (c) in the Nawab Vizier's dominion adjoining Butwal; (d) near Kumaon in the Nawab Vizier's dominion; (e) at the most western boundary of the Nawab Vizier's dominion towards Srinagar. These places being of bracing climate, the Tibetan merchants would have no difficulty in coming down to them and making purchases from the five factories. "Some of the inhabitants of Tibet and China knowing that these factories were established in the coldest parts of the Company's and the Nawab Vizier's possessions, would probably resort thither in the cold season and the trade might then be carried on without the intervention of others".<sup>31</sup> The factories being near to Nepal, might even send goods to it (Nepal) according to demand.<sup>32</sup>

Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan assessed the total annual export from the Company's territories into Nepal at four or five lakhs of rupees. If good relations would subsist between the people of China, Tibet and the English Company, the trade would increase. The Calmucks, the inhabitants of Seling (?), as well as all inhabitants of all countries from the borders of Tibet to Yarkhand<sup>33</sup> would take advantage of this

trade. According to the Maulvi, broad cloth was in great demand in all these countries, and once this article and others of European manufacture could be introduced into these countries with the concurrence of the hill Rajahs, it would not be within the power of these Rajahs to throw obstacles in the way of this trade, and trade and commerce would merrily go on between the Company's dominions and China, Tibet etc.<sup>34</sup>

Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan also gave the specifications of the articles of merchandise that should be exported from Hindostan to Nepal and the neighbouring countries. It is worthwhile to consider the specifications and the profits likely to be made from the trade at some length, coming as they did from an actual experiment in trade with Nepal conducted through Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan himself.

*Broad Cloth:* This variety of cloth was in great demand in Tibet. All colours except yellow were liked by the people. If broad cloth was sold in Nepal net profit would be 25% and if at Lhasa, it would go upto 60%. About three lakh rupees worth of broad cloth might be sold every year.

*Coral:* This was in great demand among the army and the Sirdars of China and in parts of Tibet. When sold at Nepal profit would be 37%, and while sold at Lhasa the profit would go upto 75%. Corals of large bead and of a particular variety were in demand and the Maulvi assured the Resident at Benares that he would state the particular sorts required for the purpose when necessary. The transport cost of corals being negligible, it would be a good article of export. One lakh rupees worth of corals might be disposed of annually.

*Pearls:* Pearls not of round shape were also in great demand and the profits would be at the same rate as in the case of corals and the quantity likely to be sold every year was as large as that of corals.

*Cotton Cloth:* Cotton cloth manufactured at Mhow would fetch 25% profit when sold at Nepal and 60% when sold at Lhasa.

*Conch Shells:* Ornaments made of conch shells would bring a profit of 25% when sold at Nepal and 100% at Lhasa.

*Bengal Raw Silk:* Raw silk from Bengal was in great demand among the weavers of Nepal and Lhasa and the profit when sold at Nepal would be 25% and 60% at Lhasa.

*Woollen Carpets (Small):* Small woollen carpets called *assun* in Nepal and Tibet were in good demand. They must be of different colours. Profits would be 25% at Nepal and 60% at Tibet.

*Looking Glasses, Knives and Scissors:* These items of European make were very much in demand both in Nepal and Lhasa. Profits would be 25% when sold at Nepal and 100% in Tibet.

*Brass Scales and Weights:* Profits 25% in Nepal and 60% in Lhasa.

*Nutmeg:* Profits in Nepal 25% and 100% in Tibet.

*Cardamums, Assa Fotida (?), Sandal Wood, Googool:* Profits 25% when sold in Nepal and 60% when sold in Tibet.

*Allum, Chohara (?), Benares Kumtchaub (?):* Profits 25% when sold in Nepal and 60% in Tibet.

*Silk and Cotton piece goods, Cotton staples:* Profits 25% when sold in Nepal and 60% in Tibet.

*Shield made at Murshidabad and Sylhet:* Profits 25% in Nepal and 60% in Tibet.

*Tobacco, Benares Sugar:* Profits 25% in Nepal and 60% in Tibet.

*Kuff<sup>35</sup> of diamonds:* Profits 25% in Nepal and 100% in Tibet.

*Indigo:* Profits 25% in Nepal and 100% in Tibet.

*Kurua Cloth<sup>36</sup>:* Profits 25% in Nepal and 60% in Tibet.<sup>37</sup>

The above list of articles leaves no doubt that for the Company the Tibetan trade would be more than twice as much profitable as the Nepalese trade. This presumption

was already there even before the practical experiment carried out by Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan and the endeavour of the Company was always to link up the Tibetan and the China trade through Nepal. In view of the great difference in the profits in selling the goods in Nepal and Tibet, the suggestion of Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan for the establishment of direct trade relations with Tibet and China by rearing up factories in the coldest parts of the Company's and Nawab Vizier's dominions, was of great value. The inhabitants of Nepal, as it is evident from the reports of the Maulvi, earned their livelihood by middlemanship. This must have been one of the major causes why the Nepal Government was not willing to forward the Anglo-Nepalese trade relations. For a correct assessment of the possibilities of trade and commerce between the provinces of the Company and Nepal, Tibet, China etc. the experiment made by Sir John Shore was of great value.

Certain observations the Maulvi could not help making with regard to the internal politics of Nepal which, for obvious reasons, had a direct bearing upon the trade relations between the Company and Nepal. These observations also throw some light on the character of the reigning monarch and, for the matter of that, of the Nepalese administration as a whole. The youthful extravagances of the young inexperienced Rajah led him into the clutches of the most undesirable elements of the state. Singing, merry-making and dissipation abounded in the Court and the Rajah lost his sense of duty to his subjects. Surrounded by a coterie of self-seeking officials of low birth and tastes, the Rajah allowed the administration to drift along the line of inefficiency and indiscretion. "Bahader Shaw, the Rajah's uncle, a man of great sense, who annexed to Napaul the possessions of several Rajahs and listened to the advice of men of knowledge and character and was in his heart disposed to cultivate friendship of the Company, of the Sovereign of China and of the Nawab Vizier, has been disgraced in consequence of the suggestions of ill disposed persons".<sup>38</sup> The Rajah also took by force from his own ryots and the merchants of Tibet over twelve lakhs of rupees as *nuzzeranah* on the occasion of his accession to the *musnad*. Almost invariably the Rajah spurned all good

counsels and entertained antipathy to his uncle Bahadur Shah as well as to the sensible ministers like Bulbahadur, Abhiman Singh, Damodar Pande and his Guru Gajraj Misra. It appears that the Chinese Emperor held a sort of influence over Nepal and having been pleased with the Rajah's uncle and the former regent, Bahadur Shah, wrote to the Rajah recommending his reinstatement as the Vizier.<sup>39</sup> The Rajah, however, fastened the guilt of attacking Tibet on Bahadur Shah, for which, the Rajah replied, he had been dismissed. The Chinese Emperor also desired the Rajah's special attention to the merchants trading in Nepal and advised remission of revenue of the ryots of the Newar caste. He further proposed the introduction of Chinese coins into Nepal. The Nepal Rajah, however, objected to these proposals.

One very interesting information contained in the report of Maulvi Abdul Qadir was that the Rajah of Nepal retained in his services three 'Firinghees' and put them in charge of his artillery. One of them was a Frenchman who was very skilful in his profession. He was recruited at Calcutta by Deenanath Upadhyaya when Bahadur Shah was in charge of the affairs of the Government. This Frenchman used to receive a pay of Rs. 500/- per month and was employed in casting cannons. About 200 cannons were cast by him before his removal from office. Once the natives of Nepal were sufficiently trained in the job of cannon casting, the pay of the Frenchman was stopped and when the latter, discovering the bad faith of the Nepal Government, sought voluntary dismissal, it was refused. Two attempts on his part to escape from Nepal proved abortive and he was put into confinement in chains and "it is probable that he is now dead".<sup>40</sup>

The Maulvi also observed that there was a general disaffection in the country and it was most probable that Bahadur Shah would be reinstated in office by the people. Should such a thing happen, the Maulvi was definite that friendly intercourse between the two countries would increase. "The Rajah also wished to confine many of the old Sirdars, and they are in consequence, in perpetual apprehension. All the great men and ryots of Napaul are friendly to Bahadur Shah who is in terms of friendship with Gudjeraje Misser and other men



of understanding of the country".<sup>41</sup> Abhiman Singh, the Dewan of the Rajah, was so disgusted with the state of affairs in Nepal that he wished to quit Nepal for good and settle in the Company's dominions should the Company fix some "*Malguzaree* lands" for him.<sup>42</sup>

The Maulvi also reported that the new Emperor of China was solicitous of the well being of his subjects as well as of those of Tibet. He remitted all duties on merchandise imported into Tibet in order to alleviate the distress of the inhabitants of Tibet occasioned by the depredations of the Nepalese troops. To promote the prosperity of Tibet he had remitted large sums of money for making advances to cultivators and merchants. Traders of Hindostan and Nepal who resorted to Tibet were highly delighted at the treatment they received from the rulers of China. But unfortunately there was no amity between the Nepal Government and China. Under the circumstances, the Maulvi suggested that in order to take advantage of the China trade, it would be advisable to conciliate the Rajah of Nepal as well as his ministers by friendly letters. Further, if the Nabob Vizier could be "brought to consent to their wishes respecting Rooderpoor and Casheepoor, it will be expedient that they should be gratified in order to satisfy the Rajah and his ministers of the sincerity of the English Government".<sup>43</sup>

In spite of the best efforts made by Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan to allay suspicion of the ill-disposed ministers, the Rajah himself and some of his subjects, he cannot be said to have succeeded fully. In fact, it was this suspicion and, particularly the machination of Deenanath Upadhyaya, that made the departure of the Maulvi from Nepal expedient. In a letter written by Gajraj Misra to Mr. Lumsden the 'expediency' of his departure was attributed to "the benefit of a change of air and . . . the suspicions entertained by several of the inhabitants and also by the Rajah".<sup>44</sup> In this letter Gajraj Misra remarked: ". . . all business is conducted through persons of bad character—Deenanath Oppadea's object is to interrupt the harmony between the two Sircars".<sup>45</sup> All this corroborates the Maulvi's statement about the character of the Nepal Administration.

## V

It is necessary to make an assessment of the actual value of Maulvi Abdul Qadir's commercial prospecting in Nepal. That the deputation was not decisive in its result goes without saying. Of the articles carried by Abdul Qadir Khan, broad cloth of a calculated prime cost of Rs. 9,807-1-0 was disposed of at Rs. 14,065 (Nepal *sicca*). The Nepal *sicca* being 15% less than the Benares *sicca* in value, the sale proceeds of broad cloth actually stood at Rs. 11,955-4-0 Benares *sicca*. Thus the gross profit was Rs. 2,148-3-0 from which supplementary cost, that is cost of carriage, reasonable salaries that would have been incurred if a *Gomastha* were appointed to handle the merchandise and such other incidental costs, had to be deducted. The Maulvi's personal expenses having been met from a separate fund, such inevitable expenses of handling and carriage were not added to the prime cost. Needless to say, the profits were not at all encouraging. The corals which the Maulvi took with him were unsaleable due to their high prices and a selection of the beads.<sup>46</sup> With regard to the produce of Nepal, the Maulvi made no purchase as he had learnt from his agents at Patna that there was no market for such stuff at that time. Thus the deputation of Maulvi Abdul Qadir, although of great importance from certain points of view, was not "decisive with respect to the expediency of persevering in an endeavour to extend the commercial intercourse between the two states".

Yet, the deputation made it perfectly clear to the Company that direct trade relations with China and Tibet, without the intervention of the inhabitants of Nepal, would be highly beneficial to the Company's provinces and Maulvi Abdul Qadir's suggestion for the opening of five factories in the coldest parts of the Company's and Nawab Vizier's dominions deserved special consideration. But all this was not an immediate possibility. The erection of the factories, as suggested by the Maulvi, would take a sufficiently long time and might be carried out some time in the future.

Another point of importance that the Maulvi brought to the notice of the English was the probability of a revolution

in Nepal in no distant future.<sup>47</sup> Should such a revolution take place and Bahadur Shah be restored to power, there was the likelihood of an increased and more cordial commercial intercourse between Nepal and the Company's provinces. This is also borne out by two letters written by Gajraj Misra to Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan after the latter's return to Benares from Nepal.<sup>48</sup>

Thus ended Sir John Shore's attempt to forward the Anglo-Nepalese commercial relations and, through them, to extend the Company's trade to Tibet and China. As we have seen, the response from the Nepal Government was not at all warm, nor was the commercial experiment much encouraging. The Nepal Government, however, wanted to turn the Maulvi's deputation into good account by pressing their claim to the Taluqs of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor. Sir John Shore, in his letter to the Rajah, made it sufficiently clear that the affairs of the two Taluqs were entirely a matter of the Nawab Vizier of Oudh and, as such, there was very little for the Governor-General to do in this regard.<sup>49</sup> The Rajah of Nepal, however, persisted in pressing the Resident at Benares, Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan and Gajraj Misra for utilising the good offices of the English in getting the two Taluqs. Soon after the arrival of the Maulvi at Benares, the Rajah sent his *Vakeel* Chandra Sekhar Upadhyaya to Mr. Lumsden, Agent to the Governor-General, for settling the affairs of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor. But having received no encouragement, the Nepal Government sought to open negotiations with Nawab Vizier of Oudh directly without the intervention of the English. This information was sent to Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan by Gajraj Misra from Nepal.<sup>50</sup> The Nepalese *Vakeel*, sent to the Nawab Vizier for the purpose, assured the Rajah that he would get the business of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor settled with the Nawab Vizier and advised that no further negotiation on the subject should be held with the English Company. But although the English were not willing to interfere in the matters of the Vizier, they did not view with pleasure the Rajah's attempt to settle the affairs of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor directly without their consent.<sup>51</sup>

1. Firminger, Vol. II, pp. 513, 516-18.
2. Pol. Cons., Nov. 10, 1794, No. 29.
3. Pol. Cons., Nov. 10, 1794, No. 29.
4. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 21.
5. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 2.
6. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 2.
7. Op. Cit.
8. Pol. Cons., March 20, 1795, No. 23 (2).
9. Op. Cit.
10. Pol. Cons., March 20, 1795, No. 24.
11. Pol. Cons., May 1, 1795, No. 11.
12. Pol. Cons., May 1, 1795, No. 7.
13. Pol. Cons., May 1, 1795, No. 7.
14. Pol. Cons., May 1, 1795, No. 12.
15. Pol. Cons., May 1, 1795, No. 12.
16. Pol. Cons., May 1, 1795, No. 7.
17. Pol. Cons., May 1, 1795, No. 12.
18. Pol. Cons., May 11, 1795, No. 14.
19. Pol. Cons., Nov. 10, 1794, Nos. 29-30.
20. Pol. Cons., Nov. 10, 1794, Nos. 29-30.
21. Pol. Cons., Sept. 21, 1795, No. 25.
22. Pol. Cons., Sept. 21, 1795, No. 25.
23. Op. Cit., also India Office Records, *Mome Misc. Ser.*, Vol. 648, p. 225.
24. Pol. Cons., Sept. 21, 1795, No. 20.
25. Pol. Cons., Sept. 21, 1795, No. 20.
26. Pol. Cons., Sept. 21, 1795, No. 26.
27. Pol. Cons., Sept. 21, 1795, No. 20.
28. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 2.
29. Bulbahadur Shah—Naib of the Rajah of Nepal; Damodar Pande and Abhiman Singh—Dewans of the Rajah of Nepal. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 2.
30. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 3.
31. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 3.
32. Op. Cit.
33. Op. Cit.
34. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 4.
35. Kuff of diamond (*Hirakash* i.e. Ferrous Sulphate?): May be *Hirakash* (ferrous sulphate) used by the women of the hills, even by low class women of the plains, to colour teeth.
36. Kurua Cloth: In all probability *Kora* cloth i.e. unbleached cloth.
37. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 4.
38. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 9.
39. Op. Cit.
40. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 9.
41. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 9.
42. Op. Cit.
43. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 9.
44. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 10.
45. Op. Cit.
46. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 1.
47. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 9.
48. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 13; also vide Pol. Pr. of date, p. 126.
49. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 13.
50. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 13.
51. Pol. Cons., March 7, 1796, No. 13.

## CHAPTER VII

# WAZIR ALI AFFAIR: PALACE REVOLUTION IN NEPAL

### I

If the Abdul Qadir embassy did not succeed in improving the relation between the English and the Nepal Government, it did not worsen it either. The Nepal Administration continued to follow its traditional manner of courting the English from a safe distance but did never show any lack of warmth in friendly professions.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the internal administration of Oudh became worse than inefficient. The death of Nawab Vizier Asaf-ud-daulah in 1797 made the situation worse. The Governor-General Sir John Shore, in spite of his professed policy of non-intervention, had to intervene. Sa'adat Ali, brother of the deceased Nawab, was installed on the *guddee* in preference to Wazir Ali who was looked upon by the deceased Nawab as his successor. Wazir Ali, reputed to be an illegitimate son of Asaf-ud-daulah, was pensioned off and he took his abode at Benares. He bided his time in discontent and was secretly trying to engineer a rebellion against the English. He even put himself into contact with Zaman Shah of Kabul whom he invited to invade Hindostan. The British Government, in order to check Wazir Ali before it was too late, ordered Mr. Cherry, the then Resident at Benares, to escort Wazir Ali to Calcutta. The attempt failed, for Wazir Ali massacred several Englishmen, including Mr. Cherry, and made good his escape into the hills of the Terai.

Ran Bahadur Shah, Rajah of Nepal, came to know of the brutal murder of Mr. Cherry and others "from the Public Papers".<sup>1</sup> He immediately wrote to the Acting Governor-General, Sir Alured Clarke who had taken over from Sir John Shore, expressing deep sorrow at the massacre of Mr. Cherry and others. He also informed the Governor-General that he had learnt from the *Amleh* (officers) of the Rajah of Palpa

that Wazir Ali had reached the country of Butwal accompanied by 25 horsemen. Not only that ; he was recruiting persons with a view to re-entering the Company's territories and committing further excesses. Under the circumstances, the Rajah said, he had issued orders to the *Amleh* of that quarter directing them not to permit persons who had been guilty of such enormity to enter or to remain within the dominions of Nepal. Ran Bahadur Shah assured the Governor-General that, should Wazir Ali attempt to come by force into the hills and the Palpa Rajah be unable to oppose him, he would himself depute an officer "of approved valour to chastize and expel him" from his country. "With a view to the increase of our existing friendship", observed the Rajah, "I have never allowed any person an asylum within my territories who has been at variance with or an enemy to the English gentlemen".<sup>2</sup> He had also communicated the whole affair to Deenanath Upadhyaya and instructed him to communicate all particulars to the Governor-General. The fact that the Rajah addressed this letter to the Governor-General even before receiving the latter's communication on the subject, leaves no doubt about the friendliness of the Rajah or at least his eagerness to avoid any involvement in trouble likely to be created by the rebel Wazir Ali.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, the Governor-General had addressed the Rajah requesting him to direct all his officers throughout the country to trace out and apprehend Wazir Ali and his followers, should they enter the Rajah's territories, and to deliver them to the Commander of the troops of the Company and the Vizier. The Governor-General also informed the Rajah that he had received intelligence that Prithvipal Sein, Rajah of Palpa-Butwal, or persons acting on his part, received Wazir Ali and his followers disregarding his allegiance to the Nawab Vizier. Prithvipal Sein not only refused to deliver up Wazir Ali and his men but, on the contrary, was assisting them in raising troops and exciting commotion. The Governor-General desired the Rajah to afford every assistance to the troops of the Company and the Nawab Vizier in bringing Wazir Ali and his men to punishment.<sup>4</sup>

The Rajah in his reply to the above letter of the Governor-General reiterated what he had already said on the

subject in his first letter and informed him that he had on perusal of the Governor-General's letter deputed an officer with troops to the quarter in which Wazir Ali and his men had taken shelter, with peremptory instructions to apprehend him and his men. Officers of the Nepal Government had likewise been ordered to prevent his entering or taking refuge within the Nepal dominions. The Governor-General was naturally pleased at the friendliness shown by the Rajah and desired the latter to take effective measures to prevent Wazir Ali's receiving any supplies of money or provisions and thereby to reduce him to extremities. The Governor-General apprehended that Wazir Ali might make his escape through the Rajah's country either in disguise or by a sudden flight. He, therefore, desired the Rajah to alert all his officers in charge of *ghats* and passes to be on their guard and to be prepared to seize Wazir Ali and his accomplices whatever might be the manner in which they might attempt to escape. The Rajah was desired to order his officers to pass on all intelligence that they might happen to come across to the officers of the Company or of the Nawab Vizier.<sup>5</sup>

The British Government declared a reward of Rs. 40,000/- and a large *Jageer* from the Nawab Vizier for the arrest of Wazir Ali. But the Nepal Government sent troops under one of their officers to apprehend Wazir Ali without caring for the reward. Some unknown enemy of the Nepal Government, however, informed Wazir Ali of that Government's preparations to arrest him. Wazir Ali fled beyond the Nepal boundary and passed westward through the Company's territories.<sup>6</sup> He was, however, apprehended later on by one Rajah Pratap Singh in September, 1799, and was handed over to the British who kept him confined at Calcutta upto 1817.

That the Nepal Government did a good turn to the English and the Nawab Vizier by attempting to apprehend Wazir Ali and informing the Governor-General, uncalled for, of Wazir Ali's quartering in Butwal area and trying to raise troops with the purpose of re-entering the Company's territories cannot be denied. Well might the Government of Nepal claim, as they actually did at a later date, that they

had not been "wanting in good offices towards the English and will not be so hereafter".<sup>7</sup>

## II

The Wazir Ali affair was hardly over before the Governor-General received a letter from Rajah Ran Bahadur stating his intention to place his son Kunwar Girban Juddha on the *musnad*, himself abdicating in his favour. He also expressed his desire to lead a secluded life and devote himself entirely to the worship of God. He desired the Governor-General to extend the very same kind of friendship and consideration to his son as he did in his own case. "I trust", the Rajah wrote, "you will bestow the same kindness and favour on Maharaj Koonwur (who is still very young) which I have experienced, even in a twofold degree".<sup>8</sup> The Governor-General was requested to direct his attention to whatever might conduce to the increase of existing friendship which would be reciprocated by the new Rajah in an equal measure.

The Governor-General assured the Rajah in reply to his communication that the most earnest desire would always be manifested by the British Government towards his son in order to "connect and strengthen the bonds of amity and union".<sup>9</sup> The abdication of Ran Bahadur and the accession of his son Girban Juddha took place towards the end of March, 1799, and that was the occasion for an exchange of friendly sentiments between the new Rajah and the Governor-General.<sup>10</sup>

## III

In all the correspondence that took place between Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah and the Governor-General, the inside story of the abdication was not told. In an *arzee* from one Baidyanath Singh of Bareilly to Mr. Revell it was stated that Rajah Ran Bahadur "having abdicated his Government nominated his successor to the Raj and assumed the habit of a mendicant, reserving to himself the whole authority and power".<sup>11</sup> But the real story comes to us from a letter written by Capt. Knox, while Resident at the Nepal Durbar.<sup>12</sup> It



throws a lurid light on the character and tastes of Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah. Having been placed on the *musnad* at an age that he himself could not recollect, Ran Bahadur naturally was under the regency of the Queen Mother who spent her time in the enjoyment of her new power and position utterly neglecting the education and upbringing of her son. The Rani was, however, a capable woman and proved herself equal to the task of keeping the newly acquired territories of an incohesive kingdom under her effective control. But her extravagance took away what her administrative efficiency had otherwise given to the governance of the country. Ran Bahadur grew into his adolescence under the neglectful guardianship of his mother. In 1786 the Queen Mother died and the regency was taken over by Ran Bahadur's uncle Bahadur Shah. He was an able administrator but he too was a victim to the lure of power and position, the immediate effect of which was that the nephew was encouraged in his pursuit of idle and baneful pleasures. This was done with a view to entrenching his own authority with the expectation that Ran Bahadur, habituated to dissipation, would not at all be willing to take on himself the rigour and trouble of conducting the administration of the country.<sup>13</sup> But belying Bahadur Shah's expectations, Ran Bahadur, on attaining his twentieth year, suddenly announced his resolution to take up the reins of Government in his hands. The tide of loyalty flowed so strongly in favour of the hereditary Prince that Bahadur Shah had to forbear an unavailing opposition and resign the office quietly.

The first year of Ran Bahadur's rule was a model of efficiency. The propriety of his conduct and the justice of his actions far surpassed the highest optimism among his subjects. But unfortunately, the first year was to stand as a reproach to his activities in the subsequent years of rule. He reverted to his former mode of idle dissipation neglecting the affairs of the state. The climax was, however, reached when, contrary to all sense of royal dignity and social decorum, he got infatuated with a Brahmin widow of bewitching beauty. He ultimately married her and gave her the status of the First Queen of the state much to the chagrin of high-born people and state officials. About the close of 1797 the new

Queen bore him a son—Girban Juddha Bikram—but herself fell seriously ill. Despairing of her own life, the Queen expressed her great concern at the sure persecution that awaited her son, being born of an unapproved wedlock, should the king also die before completing his twenty-fourth year as the astrologers had already predicted. Upon this Ran Bahadur decided to abdicate in favour of his son so that during his own life time habitual obedience to the minor King might develop among the officers of the state and even when Ran Bahadur would die his son would not have to face any difficulty. Ran Bahadur made all officers, both civil and military, swear allegiance to the infant Prince and solemnly declare that they would never fail “to sacrifice their lives in defending his person”.<sup>14</sup> All this was necessary to get over the difficulty of violating the traditional order of succession in the Gurkha family by which children born of females of pure Rajput descent would take the inheritance to the exclusion of other children.<sup>15</sup> The Governor-General in Calcutta was also requested by the Rajah, as we have already seen, to extend his kindness and friendship to the infant Prince.<sup>16</sup>

The abdication of Ran Bahadur and the consequent accession of Girban Juddha Bikram took place some time in March, 1799<sup>17</sup> and one of the other Ranis was made the Regent.<sup>18</sup> Ran Bahadur now devoted his time to attendance on his favourite Rani whose health was rapidly declining. But all his cares and offerings at the temples—it is said he spent 12 lakhs of rupees—and constant prayers of the Brahmins proved of no avail; the Rani died. The death of his most beloved Rani threw Ran Bahadur out of mental balance and in a paroxysm of grief and shock “he cut off the noses and ears of many of the Brahmins who officiated at the temples, where prayers had been offered for the recovery of the Rani; he deprived others of their caste by forcing the flesh of dogs and hogs into their mouths. He caused the Golden Idol from the venerated temple of Bhuwanee to be ground to dust with the most abominable filth; he directed the temple itself to be demolished, and the three Companies of Sepoys, whom he gave the orders, demurring at the sacrilege, he commanded scalding oil to

be poured upon their naked bodies feasting his eyes with the sight of their sufferings".<sup>19</sup>

This mad orgy of murder and mutilation compelled the officers of the state to combine in an attempt to seize Ran Bahadur and remove him from the Capital to some place of retirement where, deprived of his power of oppression, he might pass his days well provided with all the necessary comforts. In the meantime the infant Prince had been removed to Novakote, under orders of Ran Bahadur, presumably to keep him safe while he was carrying on his acts of madness. At Novakote the officers of the state assembled and swore mutual adherence, the first to swear being Bul Bahadur, an uncle of Ran Bahadur. They prepared and despatched a remonstrance to Ran Bahadur, stating that having abdicated in favour of his son he had no longer any right to interfere in the matters of the Government and requested him to retire to such a place as might be most agreeable to him. This only added fuel to fire and Ran Bahadur tore the despatch into pieces and swore vengeance against all concerned and issued orders to the troops to proceed against the officers of the state. But the officers remained firm in their stand and although Bul Bahadur had deserted them they began to proceed towards Katmandu. Soon Ran Bahadur came to know to his utter mortification that the troops sent to engage the officers of the state who stood against him had quietly walked into the camp of the confederated chiefs. Dismayed at this defection in the army and fearing that his person might be seized by the very troops who were still with him, Ran Bahadur stole away at dead of night to Benares.<sup>20</sup>

A slightly different story is found in an intelligence from Benares soon after the arrival of Ran Bahadur and his party which comprised Bul Bhadur, his uncle, Kurdip—a person of rank—four women and fifty men, at Benares.<sup>21</sup> According to this intelligence, the immediate circumstances that occasioned the Rajah's flight from Nepal were as follows: "He (Ran Bahadur) wanted to resume his seat on the *musnad* of Nepaul, but the ministers, the *cuzees*, the Rauny etc. observed to him that he had voluntarily abdicated the Government in favour of another and that his

resumption of it was inadmissible. This incensed the Rajah greatly against the officers of Government and he gave orders for beating some and putting others to death. They and the body of the people have in consequence denounced him as a mad man and declared that he ought to be confined. The Rajah hearing of this quitted Nepaul and repaired to Benares".<sup>22</sup> (May 27, 1800).

The British Government played no part in these internal troubles of Nepal, but the Palace Revolution provided them with an unforeseen opportunity.

The arrival of Ran Bahadur at Benares opened a new chapter in the Anglo-Nepalese relations and led to the signing of a fresh treaty between the two countries.

1. Pol. Cons., March 1, 1799, No. 7.
2. Pol. Cons., March 1, 1799, No. 7.
3. Pol. Cons., March 18, 1799, No. 1.
4. Pol. Cons., March 11, 1799, No. 23.
5. Pol. Cons., April 22, 1799, No. 9.
6. *Home Misc., Series of India Office Records*, Vol. 648, p. 27.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Pol. Cons., September 3, 1799, No. 7.
9. Pol. Cons., September 3, 1799, No. 7.
10. Pol. Cons., September 3, 1799, No. 8.
11. Sect. Cons., June 26, 1800, No. 71.
12. Sect. Cons., June 26, 1802, No. 42.
13. Sect. Cons., June 26, 1802, No. 42.
14. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 42.
15. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 42.
16. Pol. Cons., September 3, 1799, Nos. 7 & 8.
17. Pol. Cons., September 3, 1799, No. 7.
18. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 42.
19. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 42.
20. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 42.
21. Sect. Cons., June 26, 1800, No. 70.
22. Sect. Cons., June 26, 1800, No. 71. Also vide P. Landon: *Nepal*, Vol. I, pp. 70-2, and Cavanaugh: *Rough Notes on Nepal*, pp. 131-33. Landon gives an interesting story about the orgy of murder and mutilation done by Ran Bahadur, which runs as follows: "His unconventional marriage with a Brahmin girl was a matter of his great unpopularity but by lavish presents he purchased them off. But their curse, he thought, was the cause of the death of his wife." Cavanaugh also gives almost a similar story.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ANGLO-NEPALESE TREATY OF 1801

The great importance that successive Governors and Governors-General attached to the Nepalese trade can easily be understood from their repeated attempts at conciliating the Nepal Administration and at persuading it to follow a liberal commercial policy towards the Company's dominions. Lord Wellesley would be the last person to allow any opportunity of furthering the Company's interests to go unavailed. Ran Bahadur's arrival at Benares was naturally considered by him an excellent opportunity for the furtherance of the political and commercial interests of the Company insofar as the state of Nepal was concerned.

On receipt of the intelligence that Ran Bahadur had arrived at Benares, Lord Wellesley, considering that this event might lead to the improvement of the connection already subsisting between the two Governments<sup>1</sup> and thinking that it would be extremely desirable to cultivate that connection both for political and commercial advantages, appointed a person to attend upon the Rajah. This was done obviously enough, to enable the Company to avail themselves of any favourable opportunity that might arise. Capt. Knox's experience of the Nepal court made him specially qualified for the appointment and naturally the choice fell on him. He was to receive a salary of Rs. 1,500/- per month and was authorised to appoint such staff and incur such expenditure as the nature of his employment might render necessary.<sup>2</sup>

History is said to repeat itself, and the Company was faced with a situation almost similar to that of 1767 when the Newar King Jayprakash solicited the Company's help against the Gurkhas. Ran Bahadur, the fugitive Rajah of Nepal, had on his arrival at Benares addressed a letter to the Governor-General requesting assistance for his reinstatement to the *musnad* of Nepal. A similar letter was also addressed to the Governor-General by Guru Gajraj Misra.

Capt. Knox was specially commissioned to deliver the Governor-General's letter personally to him and to assure him of the Company's friendly disposition towards the Rajah.<sup>3</sup>

Instructions given to Capt. Knox for his guidance in his dealings with the fugitive Rajah give out clearly the motive of the Company in appointing a special officer to attend upon him as also the policy adopted by the Company towards Nepal. The Governor-General made it clear that the interests of the British Government did not permit him to remain an indifferent spectator to the political events of such a magnitude in a state bordering so wide an extent on the possessions of the Company and of the Nawab Vizier. Capt. Knox was, therefore, desired by the Governor-General to obtain detailed and accurate information relating to the late transactions in Nepal which necessitated the flight of Ran Bahadur Shah to safety.<sup>4</sup> Capt. Knox was, however, specially directed to "abstain from giving the Rajah any encouragement to expect that the Company's Government" would assist in establishing "his authority by force" until he would receive "express instruction to that effect".<sup>5</sup> What the Governor-General was interested in was to act as a mediator between the actual ruling power in Nepal and the ex-Rajah. For that purpose Capt. Knox was authorised to receive proposals from the ex-Rajah and to open negotiations with the principal officers of the actual Government of Nepal. He was also instructed to elicit information as to whether the ruling authorities in Nepal were willing to re-admit Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah "under the guarantee of the British Government".<sup>6</sup> Restoration of Ran Bahadur Shah under the guarantee of the British Government was the crux of the whole situation. Should the British Government succeed in inducing the Government of Nepal to submit their differences with the Rajah to the arbitration of the Company, it would be possible for the latter to have some measure of political influence over the court of the restored Rajah which might be used to secure and improve commercial concessions for the Company.

That the Governor-General-in-Council was not willing to force a military decision upon the actual Government of

Nepal is clear enough from the following paragraph in the instructions to Capt. Knox: "The primary object of the Governor-General-in-Council is to be instrumental, by his mediation, in the re-establishment of the Rajah's authority and by this service to conciliate the gratitude of that prince and to obtain from him in return such concessions as should be effectually calculated to improve and secure the commercial intercourse of the two countries".<sup>7</sup>

The Governor-General-in-Council's willingness to avoid military intervention becomes more evident when we consider that the above decision was taken in spite of a letter from one Baidyanath Singh of Bareilly to Mr. Revell, Customs master at Mancee. In this letter the writer, after having given a short account of the political situation in Nepal that had led to the flight of Ran Bahadur Shah, concluded by observing that "if the Company's Government should wish to obtain possession of the country (Nepal) it might be effected with the greatest ease during these commotions. A person came to me one day and observed that if the Company's Government would place confidence in him, he would take such measures with respect to the roads and assistance which an army would require, that the Company's forces might march with ease and safety for that purpose to the capital of Nipaul".<sup>8</sup>

The Governor-General-in-Council also did not rule out the possibility of any alternative to the proposed mediation. It was expressly stated in the instructions to Capt. Knox that should the proposal for mediation appear impracticable or inexpedient, advantage might be taken of the fear on the part of the Nepal Government which was sure to grow in them due to the protection and honourable reception given to Ran Bahadur by the British.<sup>9</sup>

## II

The appointment of Capt. Knox to attend upon the ex-Rajah set in motion a long-drawn process of negotiations between Ran Bahadur Shah and the English, on the one hand, and the latter and the Nepal Government, on the other. Guru Gajraj Misra was ready at hand to act as the

go-between. But soon the whole situation became clouded by mutual suspicion and jealousy.

Ran Bahadur Shah was a supplicant at the door of the English and was receiving liberal subsidies from the Company. But while carrying on negotiations with the English about the future plan of his restoration, he fondly hoped that the Nepal Government, out of the fear of a possible alliance between the English and Ran Bahadur Shah, would agree to reinstate him to power. In fact, Ran Bahadur Shah had no intention of accepting English mediation unless reduced to extremity. In order that the Nepal Government might be aware of his contemplation to requisition English help, he began talking loosely to sundry people from Nepal "of returning to Nepal after the rains with a British army".<sup>10</sup> This was the *modus operandi* of Ran Bahadur's design to intimidate the Nepal Government to submission. He also employed his Guru Gajraj Misra to convey his terms to the Nepal Government. Once he sent Gajraj to Nepal without informing the English and this led to a serious misunderstanding. Guru Gajraj was suspected of double dealing. Further, Ran Bahadur's trust in Gajraj, after he had informed Capt. Knox that Gajraj did not enjoy his confidence since he had "aided his uncle (Bahadur Shah) ten years ago in an attempt" upon his life,<sup>11</sup> naturally raised a presumption against the honesty of both Ran Bahadur Shah and Gajraj Misra. Capt. Knox did not make any secret of his suspicion of Gajraj Misra. But the subsequent activities of Gajraj fully cleared him of this unfounded suspicion and he proved himself to be an unfailing friend of the English.

Capt. Knox had no illusion about the nature of Ran Bahadur Shah and pursuant to the instructions given him by the Governor-General-in-Council, he opened negotiations with the Chiefs of the Nepal Government for a direct settlement in which adequate provisions for the ex-Rajah Ran Bahadur would be a major clause. As usual, Gajraj Misra was the negotiator. When this direct negotiation was opened between the English and the Chiefs of Nepal, Ran Bahadur began pressing the Company for military assistance. In a communication to the Governor-General, he represented that the "evil-minded traitors", meaning the Chiefs of Nepal, had



not only acted in a treacherous manner towards him but were now trying to destroy his son and place Litram Rudra Shah, a nephew of Sree Kissen Shah, upon the *musnad*.<sup>12</sup> In the circumstances, he desired the Governor-General to punish the Nepal Chiefs and to restore him to the guardianship of his minor son so that he might look after his education until he reached majority.<sup>13</sup> He also wrote to say that "considering the British nation to be the bravest of the brave, just, disposed to protect and to appreciate the claims of men of rank and of friends, and true to their engagements, I came into the Company's territory."<sup>14</sup>

Ran Bahadur also gave a detailed account of the military position of the state of Nepal and listed the strength of the army as follows: 40,000 troops ; 6,000 musketeers ; 50 pieces of ordnance ; 3,000 archers, 6,000 men armed with sabres, 200 rocket men and some more irregulars. Damodar Pande, by common consent the most sensible minister of the time, Karnaman, Ranjit Khetry, Permool Rana and Sree Kissen Shah were stated by Ran Bahadur to be the most inveterate of his enemies and he added that they had contemplated to depose and murder his son. As to others, Ran Bahadur asserted that although at the instance of the treacherous Chiefs they were inimical to him, they were only apparently so. In reality, they were not disposed to subvert the Government.<sup>15</sup>

A plan of military action and total forces that would be necessary to punish the Nepal Chiefs were suggested by Ran Bahadur Shah. According to his plan, 9 Battalions of Sepoys and one Battalion of European soldiers would be enough, but necessary precaution must be taken to seal the frontiers towards Butwal, Morung etc. so that none might come to the assistance of the Nepal Chiefs.<sup>16</sup> Ran Bahadur promised to reimburse the Company of the expenses that would be incurred in sending the expedition and to "make such remuneration for services performed as may be consistent with such a system of union and concord, and may satisfy your lordship."<sup>17</sup>

Capt. Knox, through whom the above communication of Ran Bahadur was sent to the Governor-General, made some independent enquiry about the military strength of Nepal

and pointed out in an enclosure to the above letter that the strength of the irregulars was about 25,000 men. He further stated that "in the statement of the Rajah, I believe, he has not included any part of the force that is stationed at a distance from the capital. It is true that his extreme jealousy had strained my means of acquiring information on that and on every other subject, that from what I have been able to collect, I imagine, it will not be overrating the force of the whole country to estimate the number of Fire-locks as high as 18 or 19 thousand and of other description in a similar proportion".<sup>18</sup>

While ostensibly the ex-Rajah Ran Bahadur was carrying on negotiations with the British for military assistance, he was secretly trying to return to Nepal without British help. It also became clear to him that the British Government would not be prepared to render him any military assistance at a time when they were faced with the Maratha, Sikh and the French problems. "They will not resort to violence, for the country (Nepaul) being entirely mountainous; they are now at war with Vizier Ali, the Sics, the French and the Deccanees. The French have lately captured six of their ships, and a son of Mr. Graham the first member of the Board of Revenue was killed on one of them".<sup>19</sup>

Ran Bahadur Shah had probably realised the unpleasant truth that the English had lost faith in him and the only way open to him was to prevent any settlement between the Nepal Government and the Company independently of himself. He, therefore, addressed a series of secret communications to the Chiefs of Nepal warning them against the danger that any settlement with the British was fraught with. To the officers of the Nepal Government he addressed a special communication in which he assured them that there was nothing to be apprehensive of in his remaining under the English protection and warned the officers in the following terms: "The appetite of the English is insatiable. They wish to tax you with something, after obtaining a writing from me and making me subscribe to an oath; you should not write in terms of sincerity or conciliation; Misser Gajraj is interested in the prosperity of the English and he will deceive you. He has written to them hence asserting his

fideliſy in moſt ſolemn manner, but you ſhould keep this circumſtance ſecret from him and the Engliſh. He will ſwear a thouſand oaths to you and the Engliſh alſo will conciliate you in various ways with a view of (*ſic*) gaining their object, which is to your injury. This you ſhould conſider in every ſenſe as the advice of your friend that the Engliſh wiſh to deceive you”.<sup>20</sup>

Ran Bahadur Shah alſo aſſured the Nepal Chiefs that the Engliſh had no chance of ſending any army againſt Nepal. In the circumſtances, the Nepal Government had no reaſon to court the frienſhip of the Britiſh. His letter was full of warnings againſt dealing with the Engliſh. “After learning theſe circumſtances<sup>21</sup> it is not proper that you ſhould enter into frienſhip with the Engliſh ; you muſt not expect to ſatisfy them with ſilver and elephants and preſents. Their hope and object is Gold Mine. Neither will they be ſatisfied with a factory. Do not by any means give credit to Gajraj Miſſer, if you do, your lives will be a ſufference of hardships ; by giving a daughter in marriage a ſon-in-law is obtained but no ſon-in-law is obtained by giving up a wife”.<sup>22</sup> Obviously, to enter into friendly relationship with the Engliſh, in Ran Bahadur’s eſtimate, would be tantamount to giving away one’s own wife. We can hardly conſider the above warnings of the ex-Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah ſimply as a diplomatic move knowing as we do the traditional anti-European ſentiments of the Nepaleſe. This view is all the more ſtrengthened when we know from the correſpondence between Capt. Knox and the Governor-General that Ran Bahadur was trying to withdraw from the Company’s territories, if need be in a clandestine manner.

In the meanitme, negotiations, were going on between the Engliſh and the Nepal Government through the good offices of Gajraj Miſra. But there was that traditional heſitancy and ſhifting of grounds on the part of the Nepal Government which were the reſult of their ſuſpicion and jealousy of the white traders. In fact, the ſituation became ſo complex as to look almoſt intriguing and Gajraj Miſra as a reſult of his occaſional overdoing in expreſſion of ſincerity and his anxiety to ſhow his influence over the Nepal Government nearly loſt the confidence of Capt. Knox. In the

circumstances, Ran Bahadur's contemplated withdrawal from the protection of the English brought the whole matter to a crisis.

There can hardly be any doubt that Ran Bahadur Shah's habits and manners precluded any confidence in his integrity insofar as the Company's Government were concerned. He kept himself surrounded by people of low social standing and placed his confidence in any body in an indiscreet fashion. Hakeem Antony, a Portuguese tramp, soon became his confidant. One of the four *chaprasies* sent by Mr. Vanderheyden, Agent to the Governor-General, began to ingratiate himself with the Rajah who began to communicate to him all his hopes and fears in a most unreserved manner. Ran Bahadur's treatment of his *Rani* who accompanied him to Benares was also not becoming of the status he occupied.

All this, added to the suspicion that the Rajah was trying to steal away from the Company's protection, pending negotiations with the ruling party in Nepal, made the Company's Government rather a little stiff with him. In reply to Capt. Knox's letter communicating to the Governor-General the possible attempt on the part of the Rajah to quit Benares, the Governor-General clearly observed that the British Government, by reason of the protection afforded to the Rajah and the heavy expenses incurred for his safety, accommodation and comfort, had acquired a moral right to "secure by every just and practicable measure the attainment of the political benefits to be expected by mediating the differences between the Rajah and the ruling power in Nipaul".<sup>24</sup> He, therefore, instructed Capt. Knox to inform the Rajah that he could not be permitted to leave the Company's protection until the Governor-General's pleasure was known. Capt. Knox was also directed to take effectual measures to prevent the Rajah's departure avoiding, as far as possible, all degrees of harshness and personal restraint.<sup>25</sup> Needless to say, the Company wanted to use the exiled Rajah as a lever to extract some political and commercial concessions from the ruling power in Nepal. The result was that sepoys and *chaprasies* were appointed in the name of the Rajah's security, although the real motive was to prevent him from leaving Benares without the permission of the

English. The arrangements continued for some time and towards the end of 1801 the Rajah requested the Governor-General to remove the sepoys and the *chaprassies* since all this had given rise to a supposition in Nepal that he had been kept in confinement by the British.<sup>26</sup>

In the meantime, Gajraj Misra was frantically making attempts to induce the Nepal Government to enter into a treaty of friendship with the English. But Ran Bahadur's letters warning the Nepal Chiefs against any friendship with the English, as also a letter addressed by one Parasuram Thapa to Sukbe Buthut Bramin (*sic*) in which he said that Gajraj Misra would work the ruin of the country by prevailing upon the Government of Nepal to agree to the establishment of an English factory in Nepal, made Gajraj's task very much difficult. Parasuram Thapa wrote in the following terms: "Misser Gujraj would have given up the country of the Hindoos to Mussalmans . . . life is not for eternity; keep the country in possession of the Hindoos, recall the Rajah and put a stop to all family dissensions. Be persuaded and persuade".<sup>27</sup> The reference to the Mussalmans here must have been made in a generic sense, meaning persons who took beef.

But Ran Bahadur had lost credit with his own countrymen long before he had done so with the English. Naturally, although there was some hesitancy on the part of the Nepal Government to come forward for a treaty of friendship with the English, it was not altogether impossible to persuade them. Capt. Knox sent a draft of the treaty that the Company's Government wanted to be signed between the two Governments and Gajraj Misra carried on negotiations with the Chiefs of Nepal on the basis of that draft. He assured Capt. Knox that although Ran Bahadur had written letters to counteract the arrangement that he was trying to induce the Nepal Government to enter into, yet due to the sincere desire on the part of the ruling authorities in Nepal to have closer friendship with the English, the Rajah's letters lost their weight. Gajraj Misra was sure that he would be in a position to induce the Nepal Government to sign a treaty of friendship with the Company.<sup>28</sup> The basic principles of the negotiations on the Company's side were, first, settle-

ment of a *Jageer* on the ex-Rajah Ran Bahadur adequate for a liberal maintenance ; secondly, establishment of an English Resident at Nepal ; thirdly, improved trade relations between the two states.

While the Nepal Government was willing to sign a treaty of friendship with the Company, the proposal to establish a British Resident at Katmandu, as it appears from Gajraj Misra's conversation with Capt. Knox,<sup>29</sup> proved a big hurdle to cross. Some delay was indispensable, as Gajraj Misra remarked, to prepare the minds of the people "for a measure so repugnant to their established prejudice".<sup>30</sup> This was also what the Deputies sent by the Nepal Government at the suggestion of Capt. Knox to a border station for facilitating the negotiations asked Gajraj Misra to make clear to Capt. Knox.<sup>31</sup> The anxiety of Gajraj Misra to show himself off as a person holding a powerful influence upon the Nepal Government as also his anxiety to enjoy the most implicit confidence of the Company's Government, led him to make certain promises here and there which were more or less equivocal in nature. Capt. Knox, a sincere army officer but less of a diplomat, would naturally like the negotiations to be straight and fruitful. He could not fully appreciate the narrow, jealous and hesitant attitude of the Nepal Administration, made all the more so by the occasional communications sent by ex-Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah to the ruling Chiefs and the people of Nepal warning them against an English alliance.

Capt. Knox having found that things were not moving quick enough nor all of Gajraj's assurances proving true within a reasonable time, began to be confirmed in his suspicion of Gajraj's *bona fides*. In his letter to the Governor-General he accused Gajraj Misra as having entered into "the views of the ruling party in Nepal" and said that he "has basely and weakly imagined that a reliance on his fraudulent oaths and protestations would induce Your Lordship to wait the event with passive tranquillity".<sup>32</sup> In his impatience, Capt. Knox wanted to put an end to "chickenery and elicit the real intention of the Nepaul Government".<sup>33</sup> He suggested that all persons, excepting such as were immediately about the person of the Rajah, must be made

to register their names with the city magistrate and all persons who would come to Benares should be brought before Capt. Knox by the Police. Such measures, Capt. Knox thought, "would alarm Gujeraje Misser and the Deputies to immediate offer of proposals on the part of the Nepal Government; at all events, it must be productive of some decisive conduct by which their real intentions will be manifested".<sup>34</sup>

Needless to say, Capt. Knox's rough and ready method of compelling the Nepal Administration and, for that matter, Gajraj Misra to a decisive conduct would be showing some temper but no policy. The fact that measures suggested by Capt. Knox were not adopted leaves no doubt that they were not approved of by the Governor-General-in-Council. Capt. Knox also did not hesitate to point out the ambiguities in the assurances and assertions of Gajraj Misra and to give clear hints of suspicion that his conduct had given rise to. This, however, had the desired effect. Gajraj Misra was very sincere in his friendship with the British and he would not like to lose it. He sent his confidant Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan, who had great credit with the English, to assure them of his *bona fides* and began to exert himself most assiduously to the task of persuading the Deputies from Nepal to come to a decision with regard to the proposed treaty of friendship.<sup>35</sup>

Ultimately, a treaty of friendship between the Government of Nepal and the Company was agreed upon. The main features of the treaty were the settlement of a *Jageer* upon Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah, establishment of a British Resident at Katmandu and appointment of a Nepalese *Vakeel* at Calcutta.<sup>36</sup> Bijepur Pergunnah was settled upon the Rajah as his *Jageer*. He was given the option of either farming his own *Jageer* or remaining within the Company's dominions and receiving the income of the *Jageer* by instalments. In view of the fact that the "transactions which passed between the Governments of China and Nipaul in the year 1791-92 suggested a belief that the issue of those transactions had placed the dominions of Nipaul in a state of partial dependence on the Government of China", clauses that were likely to excite the jealousy of the Chinese Gov-

ernment and thereby become in any degree prejudicial to the Company's China trade, were deleted.<sup>37</sup> Two Deputies sent by the Nepal Government for the purpose of negotiating the treaty came to Patna in company with Gajraj Misra and Capt. Knox and the modified treaty was transcribed on papers bearing the seal of the reigning Rajah and counterparts on behalf of the Company were handed over to the Deputies on October 26, 1801.<sup>38</sup> By a separate treaty, supplementary to the above, between the Nepal Government and Ran Bahadur Shah the terms and conditions of the enjoyment of the *Jageer* were laid down.<sup>39</sup> On the insistence of the Deputies from Nepal, the Company's Government agreed to suspend their claim to the annual tribute in elephants from Nepal during the continuance of the engagements contracted by the new treaty.<sup>40</sup>

Thus ended the chapter of the Anglo-Nepalese relations, which had been opened with the arrival of Ran Bahadur Shah at Benares. That the Governor-General-in-Council had acted with the greatest wisdom by not trying to force a military decision on the ruling power in Nepal for the restoration of Ran Bahadur became fully manifest during the course of the protracted negotiations between the English and the Deputies sent by the Nepal Government. It would have been little short of an act of manifest injustice on the part of the British Government to have supported the pretensions of the ex-Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah who had solemnly abandoned his station, of his own accord, and that again against the general opinion of the people of Nepal.<sup>41</sup>

The conclusion of the treaty of 1801 was a great stride in the Anglo-Nepalese relations since it marked the beginning of a formal political-cum-commercial relation by the establishment of a British Residency at Katmandu. The story of the opening of Nepal bears some resemblance to those of the opening up of China and Japan by the West.

1. Sect. Cons. June 26, 1800, 85.
2. Sect. Cons. June 26, 1800, No. 85.
3. Op. Cit.
4. Sect. Cons. June 26, 1800, No. 86.
5. Op. Cit.
6. Sect. Cons. June 26, 1800, No. 86.
7. Sect. Cons. June 26, 1800, No. 86.



8. Sect. Cons. June 26, 1800, No. 71.
9. Sect. Cons. June 26, 1800, No. 71.
10. Sect. Cons. Aug. 21, 1800, No. 2.
11. Op. Cit.
12. Sect. Cons. Octr. 2, 1800, No. 18.
13. Op. Cit.
14. Op. Cit.
15. Op. Cit.
16. Sect. Cons. Octr. 2, 1800, No. 18
17. Op. Cit.
18. Sect. Cons. Octr. 30, 1800, No. 21.
19. Sect. Cons. April 16, 1801, No. 130.
20. Op. Cit.
21. 'Circumstances' refer to the problems of the Marathas, Sikhs, French, etc. the English were faced with.
22. Sect. Cons. April 16, 1801, No. 130.
23. Sect. Cons. March 19, 1801, No. 83.
24. Sect. Cons. March 19, 1801, No. 84.
25. Op. Cit.
26. Letter dated Nov. 4, 1801, Sect. Cons. June 30, 1802, No. 18.
27. Sect. Cons. April 16, 1801, No. 130.
28. Sect. Cons. March 19, 1801, No. 85, para. 6.
29. Op. Cit.
30. Op. Cit.
31. Op. Cit.
32. Sect. Cons. April 18, 1801, No. 126.
33. Op. Cit.
34. Op. Cit.
35. Sect. Cons. March 19, 1801, No. 85.
36. Atchison: *Treaties, Engagements & Sunnuds*, Vol. II, Ser-  
No. XXIV, p. 105 ff. Art. 7.
37. Sect. Cons. June 30, 1802, No. 1.
38. Op. Cit.
39. Atchison: *Treaties, Engagements & Sunnuds*, Vol. II, No. XXIV,  
p. 103 ff.
40. Sect. Cons. June 30, 1802, No. 1.
41. Op. Cit.

## CHAPTER IX

### RESIDENCY OF CAPT. KNOX

According to the terms of the treaty of 1801 (Oct. 26), Capt. Knox was appointed the first British Resident at Katmandu. But the time was not propitious for working the treaty. The Nepal Administration was then torn between contending factions, each aiming at the control of the minor Rajah. In the circumstances, the difficulty of Capt. Knox's task as the Resident could well be imagined.

The long-drawn negotiations with the Chiefs of the Nepal Administration before the signing of the treaty had, however, given Capt. Knox an idea of the nature of the Nepal Government and of the ways he should follow in dealing with them for any fruitful purpose. He, therefore, took one of the Deputies, sent by the Nepal Government for negotiating the treaty, with him as an escort to avoid any last moment difficulty in his induction into office as the Resident at Katmandu.<sup>1</sup> This was, indeed, a clever move and the reception that Capt. Knox had at the Nepal court was entirely to his satisfaction.<sup>2</sup> In the meantime, three young men—Lachhman Shah, son of Bheem Shah, Kur Beer Singh Pande, son of Damodar Pande, and Kuheer Jung Singh, son of Indra Bir—were sent to Patna as *Vakeels* to represent the Nepal Government in the Company's dominions. These young men were not avowedly despatched as hostages, yet such they were in reality and they were to remain at Patna until the commencement of the next cold season. This was a pretty long time to ascertain the strength of Capt. Knox's footing in Nepal. Damodar Pande and Bheem Shah had requested Capt. Knox in a message to consider the young men as his children.<sup>3</sup>

It is worthwhile to consider at some length the nature of duties Capt. Knox was instructed to perform at Katmandu. He was given certain very important and specific instructions on his duties which admit of clear division into political, commercial, military and general heads. Under the political

head, Capt. Knox was to obtain every relevant information about the civil Government, its alliances and connections with other states and particularly "the nature and extent of connection and intercourse subsisting between China and Nipaul".<sup>4</sup> It was specially impressed upon Capt. Knox that he should try by every means in his power to form a close tie between the Nepal Government and the Company's Government. "Independently of those considerations which suggest the general policy of forming a close connection with neighbouring and contiguous States, the local situation of the territories of Nipaul, skirting considerable part of the northern frontier of Bengal and Behar and nearly the whole North Eastern limit of the Province of Oude, renders an intimate alliance with the State an object of peculiar importance to the political interests of the Company."<sup>5</sup>

It was also to be the business of Capt. Knox to influence the Nepal Government to apprehend and surrender to the Company the turbulent and refractory elements who were in the habit of obtaining asylum within the Nepal territories in order to avoid justice. The co-operation of the Nepal Government was also to be induced so that there might be an equitable adjustment of the boundary disputes that often arose between the subjects of the Company and those of Nepal on the frontiers of Purnea and Tirhut. Such co-operation would also be needed to bring bandits and robbers and other criminals to justice.<sup>6</sup>

Another point of great importance that Capt. Knox was desired to remember was the strategic importance of the Nepal territories in relation to those of the Nawab Vizier and "in the event of any commotion in the Provinces of His Excellency the Vizier's Dominions adjacent to those of Nipaul our connection with the latter state, may essentially aid the means of suppressing such commotion by depriving the insurgents of any assistance or protection from that quarter and by enabling us to draw supplies for the troops employed in the restoration of order and tranquillity."<sup>7</sup> This observation was almost prophetic since, about half a century later, this strategy proved very much effective in putting down the Revolt of 1857 with the help of the Nepal Government.

During the course of the negotiation of the treaty, Capt.

Knox had suggested granting of pensions from the Company's Government to Damodar Pande and Bheem Shah as a means of securing an influence on the actual Government of Nepal. He had also made sure through Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan that Damodar Pande and Bheem Shah would gratefully accept the Company's pension and that "an annual sum of twenty-four thousand rupees divided between Daundhaur, Bum Shah and Gudjeraje Misser would purchase the entire command to their service and consequently the accomplishment of every point that the Government may be desirous of carrying".<sup>8</sup> This, to Capt. Knox's mind, would "convert the Rulers of Nipaul into British Dependants".<sup>9</sup> This suggestion the Governor-General acquiesced in, but Capt. Knox was specifically instructed that such concessions must not in any way entail any obligation upon the British Government to support Damodar Pande and Bheem Shah against their opponent factions, for "such an obligation" (he said) would be "inconsistent with the dignity of the British Government and would militate against the fundamental principles of alliances".<sup>10</sup> If saving the British Government's dignity and the fundamental principles of alliances were at all a consideration, the Governor-General should have better rejected the suggestion of Capt. Knox to keep the officers of a foreign Government in the Company's pension in the dubious expectation of securing an influence on the administration there. Capt. Knox's suggestion and the Governor-General's approval of it were obviously prompted by a desire to get, somehow, a foothold at the Nepal Durbar. The Governor-General pointed out to Capt. Knox that when the influence of the British Government would have been established on a secure and permanent foundation, it would be the object of the British Government to afford its support by direct or indirect means to the existing legal Government of Nepal.<sup>11</sup>

Under the commercial head, it would be the primary object of Capt. Knox to see that complete effect was given to the Treaty of Commerce of 1792 as well as to promote commercial interests of the Company in other ways. It would also be his duty to obtain accurate information respecting the mineral, botanical and agricultural products of Nepal and to suggest the most practicable means of "applying any

of these productions to the purposes of commerce".<sup>12</sup> From earlier reports it was known to the Company that valuable drugs and dyes were produced in Nepal the import of which to the Company's territories and to Europe would promote the "commercial interests of the British nation".<sup>13</sup> Capt. Knox was, therefore, to direct his special attention to this aspect of the Company's trade. He was likewise to ascertain the articles of European manufacture and of the Company's Provinces that were likely to find a vend in Nepal. The question of opening a profitable trade with Bhutan and Tibet either directly with the Company's provinces or through the medium of the natives of Nepal was also to be enquired into by Capt. Knox. The import into the Company's Provinces of gold and silver bullion being an object of considerable importance, Capt. Knox was to avail himself of every opportunity "which may offer to encourage the Government of Nipaul to revive the commerce with Bootan which the erroneous policy of the former Government has injudiciously annihilated".<sup>14</sup> The Governor-General also desired Capt. Knox to effect such arrangements with the Nepal Government as would enable the Company and the British merchants to exploit the produce of the forests of Nepal which abound in sal, pine and fir trees. "If these trees should be found of a size and description calculated for masts and spars it will be an object of the utmost importance to the maritime interests of the Company and the British nation to command supplies of timber from that quarter for the port of Calcutta".<sup>15</sup> Timber for masts and spars were then imported from the coast of Pegu and the Eastern Islands. But the supply was both precarious and expensive. If sal, fir and pine timber could be obtained from the territories of Nepal skirting the borders of the Company's dominions, not only a constant flow of supply would be maintained but the expenses also would be very small.<sup>16</sup> It may be recalled here that exploitation of fir timber engaged the Company's attention for quite a long time upto 1772, when it was temporarily given up. Capt. Knox was also instructed to explore the possibilities of obtaining pitch and tar from the fir and pine trees of Nepal "which at present are imported into this country exclusively from Europe".<sup>17</sup>

From the extensive character of the instructions relating to commerce between the Company's territories and Nepal, it is easy to understand the great importance that the Company's Government attached to their relations with Nepal.

Under the military head, Capt. Knox was desired to obtain with the greatest precaution all accurate information about the military Government of Nepal, such as the number, types and discipline of its troops, its internal and external defences.<sup>18</sup>

There were certain instructions which were of a general exploratory nature. The Governor-General suggested that Capt. Knox should, at a proper time, sound the Nepal Government in respect of ceding a portion of the forest lands skirting the Company's territories, in lieu of an equivalent of the Company's, territories or of money. He was also to ascertain if the Nepal Government would cede a portion of their forest lands, should the Governor-General exercise his good offices to obtain by arrangement with the Nawab Vizier the two villages of Cashipoor and Rudrapoor for the occupation of which the Nepal Government had already shown a great degree of anxiety.<sup>19</sup> Capt. Knox was also desired to obtain precise information generally on all points of a statistical nature and to know the temper of the people and to find out a remedy to the spirit of jealousy and suspicion that the Nepal Administration had towards the English. He was, however, cautioned to obtain all information in a manner that would preclude any suspicion on the part of the Nepal Government.

Capt. Knox had to perform his journey to Nepal by several stages and in his camps at the different stages of the journey *Vakeels* of the neighbouring hill Chiefs would arrive. The *Vakeel* of the Rajah of Butwal came on several occasions, as we know from a despatch from Capt. Knox, to express the solicitations of his master to be received into the favour of the Company's Government. Capt. Knox in his letter to the Governor-General recommended the acceptance of the said Rajah's submission on both political and commercial grounds.<sup>20</sup> Politically, this would, as he suggested, offer an opportunity both easy and effectual for increasing most powerfully the British influence on Nepal.<sup>21</sup> The nature of this probable political influence was explained by him in

another letter written from his camp at Ghorasaun<sup>22</sup> in which he said that Gajraj Misra was pressing upon him "the expediency, nay the necessity" of attaching the Rajah of Butwal to the British interests.<sup>23</sup> He pointed out, presumably from his personal knowledge and experience as well as from what he understood from Gajraj Misra, that the Nepal Government entered into the treaty (Oct. 1801) out of fear lest Ran Bahadur, the late ruthless tyrant, should stage a comeback to Nepal with British assistance. The treaty was thus an "offspring of fear".<sup>24</sup> This fear complex on the part of the Nepal Government was likely to continue only so long as Ran Bahadur remained under the protection of the British. But in the event of his death or flight from the Company's territories this tie would disappear. In the circumstances, another hold on Nepal was considered expedient and necessary by Gajraj Misra as well as by Capt. Knox, and no stronger hold could be found than the proffered attachment of the Rajah of Butwal. To keep the Nepal Rajah and his administration true to their engagements, they must be made to believe that they could be easily punished for violating them. But this they knew to be impracticable unless the Company would acquire "command over such a number of hill people as would be requisite for the transportation of the provisions and baggage, without which military force could not penetrate any distance into their country".<sup>25</sup>

About the commercial advantages that would accrue to the Company on the acceptance of the friendship of the Rajah of Butwal, there were references in both the letters. Capt. Knox wrote to say that the Rajah of Butwal was sincerely disposed to comply with the Company's requisitions for encouragement of trade. Butwal forest would offer an excellent opportunity for the exploitation of pitch and tar from the fir and the pine trees. The river transport could be easily availed of since it would be possible to fell trees close to the banks of the river Gandak and float them down the stream, without much expense of land transportation. Further, the "roads through Butwal and Palpa are by far the best that are to be found in that mountainous country, and present the easiest communication with the interior of Nepal and little Tibet".<sup>26</sup> Unrestrained communication with

Butwal and Palpa was likely to be of great benefit to the Commercial interests of the Company. In the first of the two letters referred to above, Capt. Knox, however, sounded a note of caution that the Rajah of Butwal having been a tributary to Nepal, any secret deal with him might estrange the feeling of the Nepal Administration. But in his second letter (Feb. 1, 1802) he seemed to have revised his opinion, for, he wrote: "Indulgence towards him (Rajah of Butwal) will also materially promote another desirable object as it will tend to reconcile the people of Nipaul and indeed all the hill Chieftains to a connection with us."<sup>27</sup> Obviously, the strategy was to keep the Nepal Government in constant fear of a possible attack through Butwal, by accepting the submission of the Rajah of that place.

The Governor-General-in-Council, however, did not accept the suggestion of Capt. Knox, as contained in his letters mentioned above. The Company's commercial interest in China precluded any interference in the sovereignty of Nepal by adopting any hostile measures either to enforce the observance of the stipulations of the treaty of 1801, or to punish the violation of them on the part of the Nepal Government. Capt. Knox was directed by the Governor-General-in-Council to avoid any attempt to enforce the stipulations of the treaty through hostile measures and "even under the dissolution of our engagement with the state of Nipaul the same consideration would render it the duty of the British Government to restraint the Rajah of Butwal as a dependant of the Company from the execution of his vindictive projects, without the express sanction of this Government."<sup>28</sup> It is sufficiently clear from this communication to Capt. Knox that the British Government, although not unwilling to accept the proffered friendship of the Rajah of Butwal would in no circumstance allow it to be a means to the enforcement of the treaty obligations upon the Nepal Government. To follow Capt. Knox's suggestion would not only have been unworthy of the British Government but would have directly militated against all principles of friendly alliances.

One thing, however, that became sufficiently manifest from Capt. Knox's letter was the very slender hold that the



Nepal Government had on its own feudatories who were willing to look up to a foreign Government for support, even for a change of allegiance. This was indeed an eloquent commentary on the state of political affairs in Nepal.<sup>29</sup>

## II

It has already been observed that times were not propitious for the consolidation of the friendly relations between the Company and the Nepal Government. The administration of Nepal was in the weakest hands and the regency of the young inexperienced Queen Mother proved to be a hey-day for all the factious elements of the state. Good counsel was wanting; the queen, due to her inexperience and suspicion of others about her, always took a decision only to alter it at the next suggestion. To add to the difficulty of the situation Rani Tripura Sundari, Ran Bahadur's another Rani who had accompanied him into exile, left Benares for Katmandu. She had done so quite a few months before Capt. Knox had started on his journey to Nepal. The regent Rani had prevented her entry into Nepal and she was compelled to camp at a village on the frontier.<sup>30</sup> From this place the Rani was trying by secret messages and letters to form a party within Nepal to support her cause. She would have possibly succeeded in doing so but for her trust in Bul Bahadur, uncle of Ran Bahadur Shah, who was deeply and universally hated by all ranks in Nepal.<sup>31</sup> About this time a great alarm was excited in Nepal by the assassination of Kaze Keitman (Kirttiman?) and several persons of note. The known enmity between Keitman and Damodar Pande led many to believe that the acts of atrocity were perpetrated at the instigation of Damodar Pande and he was removed from office. But it transpired that the real contriver of the murders was Shree Kissen Shah, another uncle of Ran Bahadur Shah. Shree Kissen Shah was exiled and he took asylum in Patna, wherefrom he soon proceeded to the camp of Rani Tripura Sundari and offered his allegiance to her. The situation now became all the more intriguing. Damodar Pande was, however, conciliated by concessions and induced to resume his

office. But actually he was not reconciled although he agreed to resume his office with a show of allegiance. In fact, he was desirous of conducting Rani Tripura Sundari to Katmandu and placing her at the head of the administration.<sup>32</sup> Tribhuban Singh, one of the ministers of the Nepal Government, was equally disposed to any measure that might pave the way for the reinstatement of Ran Bahadur of whom he had been a constant and declared favourite.<sup>33</sup> All this made the political confusion in Nepal worse confounded.

Against this background a deputation met Capt. Knox in his camp at Jhanchurua within Nepal but quite far from Katmandu to discuss along with other things, how best the treaty of 1801 could be given effect to. This meeting took place according to previous arrangement made by Gajraj Misra.<sup>34</sup>

In the discussions that followed Damodar Pande and Tribhuban Singh evinced a positive bias for the restoration of Rani Tripura Sundari to power although they would not say so clearly. They argued that the Rani should be permitted to reside within Nepal on an adequate allowance, for it would be cruel to expel her from her native country without imputing any offence to her. Should it be found that her residence in Nepal was dangerous for the state, she might be removed to a place too remote for intrigue. But other Deputies, including Bhim Shah, suggested that she should be obliged to remain within the Company's territories and Capt Knox's approval was naturally sought for. Gajraj Misra also agreed to this view and pointed out the danger of the restoration of Ran Bahadur to power, of which the return of the Rani was the prelude. Even the distribution of offices among the Chiefs was discussed in that meeting, the motive for which could have been no other than to make their arrangements with the supposed concurrence of the British power represented by Capt. Knox.

But the most important point of discussion was how to give effect to the stipulations of the treaty signed between the Company and the Nepal Government. Objections were raised by Tribhuban Singh on the number of the personnel of the Residency. It may be mentioned here that Capt.

Knox's suite comprised, besides himself, four other English gentlemen.<sup>35</sup> He had also an army escort with him, as was customary in those days. Tribhuban Singh pointed out that Capt. Knox's suite was too large and was not agreeable to the terms of the treaty which said that one person on the part of the British Government should reside in Nepal. Further, he pointed out that the strength of the escort which accompanied him was "capable of effecting a revolution in the state."<sup>36</sup> Here Gajraj Misra played his part admirably. He met Tribhuban Singh's objections by saying that when it was stipulated that a British Resident should be placed at Katmandu it was virtually agreed to receive a full suite as it was in the usage of the British Government to send with their representative. As to Tribhuban Singh's fear that the armed escort with Capt. Knox was large enough to be capable of enforcing its decision on the state of Nepal, Gajraj Misra took Tribhuban Singh to task for entertaining such an injurious suspicion. Gajraj Misra remarked that "every man in Nipaul knew that such was the weakness of their country from intestine dissensions that no opposition could be made to a British force, were our Government (British) disposed to take advantage of their trouble."<sup>37</sup> Nepal ought to be grateful, observed Gajraj Misra, for the British forbearance and he asked the Deputies to direct their endeavours to heal all domestic divisions and to re-establish peace and order as well as consistency in the Nepal Government. But all this did not succeed in allaying the fears and suspicions of Tribhuban Singh and several other Deputies who pointed out that "wherever the English had been received as friends, there they had in the end established themselves as Master."<sup>38</sup> The discussions brought out clearly the traditional suspicion of the Nepalese of the English people and the contemporary history of India confirmed their suspicion and fear all the more. They also showed the great love of independence of the Nepalese. Needless to say, although the Deputies present in the discussion were in favour of faithfully adhering to the treaty, they would have certainly avoided any kind of direct relation with the English—not to speak of agreeing to the installa-

tion of a British Residency at their capital—if they had not been politically paralysed by their own dissensions.

### III

On his arrival at Katmandu, as already observed, Capt. Knox was accorded a reception befitting the status and prestige of the Government he represented and creditable to the Nepal Administration. He and his suite at first fixed themselves up in tents fitted close to the armed escort. But under instructions from the governing Rani a bungalow was built up in the royal garden and Capt. Knox was conducted into the newly built bungalow along with his immediate staff. The armed escort and the military officers remained in the tents. The Resident's bungalow was furnished with a guard provided by the Nepal Government. Every civility and respect due to the accredited representative of a foreign Government was extended to Capt. Knox and his suite and signs of hope and success were abundant.

But soon the situation took an unexpected turn for the worse and belied all hopes of success. The political life in Nepal knew no quiet ever since the removal of Bahadur Shah from the administration of the country by Ran Bahadur Shah. The latter, although a ruthless tyrant was able to keep the reins of Government well in hand. But his abdication was the signal for the rise of factions in the court, one trying to oust the other, in order to control the administration of the country to their own benefit. In the meantime Capt. Knox had only succeeded in settling the matter of the payment of allowance to Ran Bahadur Shah according to the terms of the treaty. It may be mentioned here that with a view to securing to Ran Bahadur Shah the regular receipt of funds and in order to place him more directly under the control of the British Government the Company had assigned an amount to be paid to him by monthly instalments from the treasury at Benares. The money would be recovered from the payments which would be made by the Nepal Government to the Company. Hardly had the arrangements regarding the *Jageer* of Ran Bahadur been settled by Capt. Knox in the manner mentioned above,

the influence of the ministers, with whom the arrangements regarding the payment were made, declined and the arrangements "became of no effect".<sup>39</sup> The persons who now took lead in the administration gave assurances that the matter would be considered by them. But soon afterwards, Capt. Knox received information of the proceedings at the Durbar from which it appeared that, instead of taking steps to fulfil their assurances, the ministers were trying to set aside the whole of the engagements contracted by the treaty.<sup>40</sup> The unfailing Gajraj Misra was there to remonstrate against the unwise policy of the ministers and, failing to make himself heard, he "determined to try the effect of absenting himself from the Durbar."<sup>41</sup> It needs hardly any mention that the conduct of the new ministers put Gajraj Misra in a most unenviable situation.

What was worse, presumably under the instruction of the Durbar, a new party of guards was posted in the garden in place of the old, on the 20th July, 1802, and contrary to all principles of decency and decorum, these new men began meddling on every trifling occasion. Within a week they planted themselves at the two gateways of the garden refusing admittance to every native of the country. Dr. Buchanan who accompanied Capt. Knox had been collecting various kinds of herbs and plants through the natives. But this was also stopped by the guards. The offensive vigilance of the guards upon the gentlemen of the suite compelled Capt. Knox to draw the attention of the ministers to their apparently inexplicable conduct. There was no dearth of assurances on the part of the ministers of the Durbar to set matters right without delay. But the assurances were not followed by any action. The result was that the guards' conduct was marked by open disrespect. Capt. Knox had to send his native *munshi* Abdul Ali Khan,<sup>42</sup> nephew of Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan, to the Durbar to make personal representation on the matter. There were prompt apologies for the delay in looking into the matter. But all promises of redress remained unfulfilled and the progressively disrespectful conduct on the part of the guards, became more and more intolerable. For about nine days Capt. Knox had to put up with the studied indignity to which he was exposed. That the

sepoys of the guard were not misbehaving of their own accord admits of no doubt. It was a part of the plan mooted by the Durbar to somehow bow the Residency out of the country. Capt. Knox had ultimately to quit the garden as a protest against the callous attitude of the Durbar to all his complaints.

He, however, addressed a letter to the minor Maharajah informing him of the sudden change in the attitude of the Durbar towards the Residency. This had the desired effect. When the letter was explained to the Queen Mother, she expressed great displeasure at the remissness of the ministers and directed a deputation to wait upon Capt. Knox to entreat him to return to the bungalow. In the evening of the same day (29th July) Hastidal Shah, Gajraj Misra, Lachmi Narain and an officer particularly in confidence of the Rani came to Capt. Knox's tent (where he had withdrawn from the bungalow) to express the Queen Mother's displeasure at the conduct of the sepoys as well as at the remissness on the part of the ministers. The members of the deputation impressed upon Capt. Knox the fact that the Rani had no knowledge of the state of affairs until the receipt of his letter addressed to the Maharajah. Arrangements were made to the satisfaction of Capt. Knox, the guard was changed and the new guard was specially directed to render implicit obedience to the orders of the Resident and his suite. Capt. Knox was then escorted into the bungalow again, and not only that, a payment of Rs. 20,000 was ordered towards the *Jageer* settled on Ran Bahadur Shah. But the whole amount could not be paid for want of cash in the treasury. Thus the situation took a turn for the better as suddenly as it had done for the worse only few days back. The governing Rani was at least more clever than her ministers. She knew the weakness of her position and the value of the British alliance under the circumstances. It was her most sincere desire to faithfully implement the stipulations in the treaty until such time when the minor Rajah Juddha Bikram Shah would take over the administration into his own hands and decide upon the matter himself.

But this was not to be. Shortly after this, information reached Nepal that Rani Tripura Sundari, after having

waited at the village of Kurrurbunnah on the frontier for months, exposed to the dangers of an unhealthy climate, and suffered from a variety of distresses, had left that place with a determination to proceed to Katmandu. The governing Rani sent troops to prevent her from proceeding towards Katmandu, but she had the mortification to hear that her troops, instead of preventing her from proceeding on her march, had joined her camp. The governing Rani desired Capt. Knox to intervene and to bring this affair to a satisfactory adjustment.<sup>43</sup> The annual allowance that the governing Rani offered to Tripura Sundari was only 5,000/-. But Capt. Knox refused to open negotiations with Rani Tripura Sundari on the basis of so meagre an annual allowance. It was ultimately raised to Rs. 18,000 on the insistence of Capt. Knox and the latter sent one of his *Munshis*, Mirza Medhi, to meet the Rani. Mirza Medhi found that the troops of the Nepal Government were on the side of Tripura Sundari and she was determined to reach Katmandu. No question of negotiating any settlement on the basis of an annual pension could arise under the circumstances.

The Rani reached Khankote, seven miles from Katmandu, with the very troops that the governing Rani had sent to put her under restraint. This led to great "alarm, confusion and perplexity" in the Durbar.<sup>44</sup> Cannons were drawn up before the gates of the royal palace, guards posted at every avenue and ammunition served out to prevent the entry of the Rani into the city. Various idle schemes were discussed by the Durbar for preventing the Rani from entering the city with the help of the troops who had joined her. But all this had just the reverse effect. The troops who were still on the Government side openly declined to resist all schemes of the Durbar by force and to facilitate by every means within their power the entry of the Rani into the city. Damodar Pande who had earlier lost his influence in the administration was requested to press upon Rani Tripura Sundari some kind of settlement, short of surrender, by the existing Government. He proceeded to Khankote where the Rani was encamping, but before the actual negotiation was opened, the governing Rani, giving way to despondence, fled to the sanctuary of Pasupatinath with the minor Maharajah.

Things became easy for Rani Tripura Sundari, she could now enter into the city and take over the administration into her own hands. She arrived at the capital at the head of a huge following of troops and civilians and soon took up the regency of the minor Maharajah. Damodar Pande became her Prime Minister (Mooluk Dewan) and the minor Maharajah was brought back to the palace under her orders. Thus another revolution took place in Nepal without the shedding of a single drop of blood.

Capt. Knox was a silent spectator to the big change. But soon after assumption of charge as the regent the new Rani (also called Maharani) sent messages to him through Gajraj Misra and Damodar Pande assuring him that the engagements contracted by the late Government had her full approbation and that he might depend upon their being fulfilled in the strictest good faith. In conformity with these assurances, the Maharani ordered immediate payment on account of the arrears due to the Company in respect of the allowances paid to Ran Bahadur Shah. But soon it was found that Damodar Pande had no intention to execute the orders of the Rani in this regard. Finding all remonstrances made by Gajraj Misra ineffective and failing to secure obedience to the Rani's orders Capt. Knox informed her (Maharani) through Gajraj Misra that he would withdraw to the British territories as soon as the travelling season would set in. This had the desired effect. The displeasure of the Rani at the noncompliance with her earlier orders was marked and the ministers were taken to task for this. Within a few days a sum of Rs. 30,000 was sent through Gajraj Misra, being the amount of five instalments due to the Company on account of Ran Bahadur's *Jageer* from October, 1802.<sup>45</sup> A further sum of Rs. 5,000 was expected to be received from the Nepal Government, as Capt. Knox was given to understand by Gajraj Misra. Capt. Knox naturally thought that affairs were on a proper footing.

In the meantime, Mr. Proctor had been appointed by the Company to succeed Dr. Buchanan. Mr. Lloyd, Capt. Knox's Secretary, had been earlier ordered to return to Patna to look after the *Vakeels* of the Nepal Government, who were more or less in the nature of hostages and were to stay in



Patna for some time. Mr. Llyod was now required to rejoin the Residency at Nepal. Passports for both these gentlemen were required and Capt. Knox requested the Rani through Gajraj Misra to issue necessary orders in this regard. The *Subahs* of Bijepur and Morung were settled on Ran Bahadur as *Jageer* and Capt. Knox desired the Nepal Administration to sign proper documents to make over the management of the *Subahs* to<sup>46</sup> Gajraj Misra "who had engaged responsible bankers to be his securities for the regular remittance of the *kists* (instalments)".<sup>47</sup> But the Nepal Government, in spite of assurances that matters would be expedited, began delaying on various pretexts. Neither the passports for Mr. Llyod and Mr. Proctor were issued nor were the documents relating to the *Jageer* executed. Capt. Knox was informed by Gajraj Misra that Rankit Pande and Tribhuban Singh of the Durbar were obstructing the execution of the documents making over the two *Subahs* to the charge of Gajraj Misra and even the Rani herself had strengthened their opposition by expressing her dislike to the mediation of the British Government in matters concerning the exiled Rajah. This matter, to her mind, must be entirely left to herself.<sup>48</sup>

Thus foiled at ever step, Capt. Knox had no alternative but to threaten withdrawal into the Company's territories, should the terms of the engagement remain unfulfilled till the 12th March, 1803. This brought expression of regrets and assurances of compliance from the Nepal Government, but nothing was actually done to implement the treaty obligations. On the 18th of the same month, Capt. Knox prepared for his departure as he had already notified to the Nepal Government. At the last moment the idea dawned upon the Rani and the members of her Durbar that the displeasure of the representative of the British Government might result in troubles for the Nepal Government. Not that the Rani was not conscious of this before. But the indecision of a divided administration kept her siding with one or the other group of the ministers. It was too late when the ministers and the Rani became fully alive to the possible danger that might arise from the displeasure of the British Government. A deputation was sent at the last moment to entreat Capt. Knox to alter his decision and to stay on. As

an earnest, as it were, passports for Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Proctor were offered and the papers regarding the *Jageer* of Ran Bahadur were agreed to be made available immediately. But to change decision after publicly notifying it, as Capt. Knox rightly thought, and particularly under the circumstances already narrated, would be making the words of the representative of the British Government rather light. This would encourage the Nepal Government to do things only under threats, and that at the last moment. Capt. Knox, therefore, stuck to his decision to leave Nepal. But considering the anxiety created by his impending withdrawal in the mind of the Rani, he assured her of the continued friendship of the British Government so long as the Nepal Administration would remain true to their engagements. This did not allay the apprehensions of the Rani and she insisted on Capt. Knox's leaving behind at Katmandu some members of the Residency as a token of continued friendship of the British Government towards Nepal. This Capt. Knox agreed to do and Mirza Medhi, one of his *Munshis*, was ordered to stay on as a representative of the British Residency at Katmandu. Thus after a period of one year from April, 1802, to March, 1803, Capt. Knox left Katmandu.

When he reached Phurfiing, a distance of one day's journey from Katmandu, Kazeo Randhir Singh visited him under instructions from the Rani to express, in the name of the reigning Rajah and herself, extreme regret at Capt. Knox's departure and to wish his speedy return to Katmandu. Kazeo Randhir also represented that the Nepal Administration was actually in the hands of "greedy unprincipled men who had shown their disregard for all obligations".<sup>49</sup> It was, however, the intention of the Rani to watch their conduct with constant vigilance and to guard herself against any treacherous designs by depriving them of the power and patronage which it was no longer safe to leave in their hands. She also felt that the "carrying of her intentions into effect depended in a great measure on the British Government manifesting a friendly disposition to her".<sup>50</sup> Another group of visitors arrived who sought to impress upon Capt. Knox that the administration of Nepal would worsen daily under the young inexperienced Rani and the only condition for a

stable Government, they suggested, was the restoration of Ran Bahadur Shah "at the head of the administration to be formed with the concurrence of the British Government and this condition should be made indispensable in future removals and appointments".<sup>51</sup> They also suggested the establishment and maintenance of a body of British troops in Nepal.

A message from Buktwar Singh, one of the Chiefs of Nepal, delivered to Capt. Knox by the Rajah of Butwal also purported to say that the "affairs in Nepal were in that state of hopeless disorder that nothing excepting the inter-position of the British Government would remedy".<sup>52</sup> The Rajah of Butwal also expressed his hope that the time was now at hand when all expelled Rajahs might be restored to their possessions which had been wrested from them by the "rapacious Gurkhalees"<sup>53</sup> who might as well be stripped of their power of oppressing their weak and unresisting neighbours. Thus many of the Chiefs and the feudatories of Nepal considered the interposition of the British Government a necessity or at least an event that must certainly happen; and, as Capt. Knox put it, "Nipaul presents to its inhabitants no other chance of escaping the miseries of anarchy than by submission to a foreign control".<sup>54</sup>

All this leaves no doubt that the withdrawal of Capt. Knox gave rise to a widespread impression that it would draw upon the Nepal Government the displeasure of the British Government, which many of the Chiefs and feudatories of Nepal welcomed. That the Rani also apprehended the British Government's displeasure is clear enough from her vexation and anger and the charge that she brought against her ministers of "having a premeditated intention of drawing upon her the displeasure of the British Government".<sup>55</sup> She at once ordered that the districts of Bijepur and Morung must be committed to the management of Hastidal Shah for the collection and the remittance of the allowance due to Ran Bahadur Shah regularly. She also appointed a person of rank to attend upon Capt. Knox until his return to Katmandu. Needless to remark that the Rani considered the goodwill of the British Government as absolutely necessary for her own security.<sup>56</sup> This disposition of the Rani was

communicated to Capt. Knox by Har Kumar Dutta Singh, her uncle who observed as follows: "Finding her confidence abused wherever it was placed, beset with difficulties, she knew not how to remove, and apprehensive of treacherous design against herself, she was desirous of placing her person and country under the immediate protection and management of the British Government".

That the circumstances favoured British interposition is clear enough. The only deterrent from the British point of view, was the possible umbrage that such a course was likely to give to the Chinese Government. But on this point Capt. Knox wrote as follows: "With respect to their (Nepal Government's) right consistent with their relation to China, to call for the mediation of His Excellency, it may be admitted as strong presumption-proof, that the people of Nipaul were perfectly independent of that Court, that no application for its assistance against the dangers that one time apprehended from us, nor for composing their intestine feuds, has ever been thought of. Had China possessed a right or felt a wish to interfere with the affairs of Nipaul, it would scarcely have passed un-noticed the many important changes that have agitated that country, nor my reception there as the acknowledged minister of a foreign Power".<sup>57</sup> But Capt. Knox was not sure that occupation of Nepal or bringing it under the control of the British arms would not excite the jealousy of the Chinese Government, since the Nepalese possessions which ran into parts of Bhutan would necessarily bring British troops very near to Chinese territories. Capt. Knox, however, felt like relying on the legal position rather than on political expediency. He observed in this letter to the Governor-General "that the Chinese would not interfere were the Nipalese to invade our possessions, they have no right to interfere".<sup>58</sup>

Should the Governor-General-in-Council deem interference in the affairs of Nepal inadvisable for fear of its leading to consequences endangering the commercial privileges enjoyed by the Company in China, Capt. Knox's suggestion was that for the enforcement of the payment on account of the *Jageer* to Ran Bahadur Shah it would be necessary to take possession of a portion of the Terai. Occupation of Almora

would be, as Capt. Knox thought, to the best advantage of the Company: "... here I allude to the acquisition of Almora. This district stands next to Nipaul in presenting facilities of trade with Bootan (*sic*). It possesses some valuable forests of timber and it is too far removed from any of the Chinese dependencies to occasion jealousy from that quarter".<sup>59</sup> The occupation of Almora, as Capt. Knox imagined, would be easy to obtain. This could be done by agreeing to reinstate Ran Bahadur Shah to power, which again would not be at all difficult to accomplish at a time when there were many in Nepal willing to accept him at the head of the administration.

The Governor-General-in-Council in their instruction to Mr. C. Llyod, Secretary to the Nepal Residency, observed *inter alia* that none of the objects which the British Government contemplated in concluding an alliance with the state of Nepal had been attained and that their accomplishment had been frustrated by causes inherent in the constitution of the Government of Nepal. The disposition of every successive Administration of Nepal had been to preserve the goodwill of the British Government under the apprehension that the loss of British support would be followed by the restoration of Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah with British assistance. There was, naturally, no sincere desire on the part of the Nepal Government to cultivate British friendship or to implement the stipulations of the treaty of 1801. In the circumstances the Governor-General-in-Council considered the treaty as dissolved and, as a consequence, they thought, the Company had no right to keep Rajah Ran Bahadur Shah under their protection.<sup>60</sup> As to Capt. Knox's suggestion that the Company's Government should enter into an engagement with Ran Bahadur Shah agreeing to restore him to power in lieu of the cession of Almora, the Governor-General-in-Council specifically resolved "to abstain from the conclusion of any engagements whatever with that prince."<sup>61</sup> It was also resolved that Ran Bahadur Shah should be left at liberty to return to Nepal unconditionally. In a separate communication to the reigning Rajah the Governor-General-in-Council announced that the British Government had withdrawn from the alliance concluded by the treaty of Oct.,

1801. Mr. Llyod was directed by the Governor-General-in-Council to advise *Munshi Mirza Medhi* to quit Nepal without any delay.<sup>62</sup> Thus the Residency which had, some months back, withdrawn from Katmandu stood formally dissolved with effect from January 24, 1804.

### III

The Company's attempt to establish a permanent Residency at Katmandu for extending their influence on the Nepal Administration and for acquiring commercial advantages proved abortive. The Nepal Government's acceptance of the treaty of 1801 was prompted by fear, and no sooner the fear was allayed to some extent, than they cared not to implement the engagements of the treaty. The fair conduct of Capt. Knox and his suite and the extraordinary patience with which he had borne with the prevarications of the Nepal Government emboldened the latter to behave as it did. The Nepal Government was convinced of the peaceful intentions of the Company and this also must have been to some extent responsible for removing the fear which was at the root of the treaty of 1801. Further, the Residency of a foreign Government was entirely a new thing in Nepal and the British Residency was one which the Nepalese were traditionally afraid of. The Residency was in the nature of a "necessary evil" so far as the Nepal Government was concerned and once the Nepal Administration got over their fear complex, the British Residency was sought to be bowed out of the country. These apart, the indecision of a divided Administration was also largely responsible for the failure of Capt. Knox. The Maharani's orders were more often than not shelved by the powerful 'Chowtras', *i.e.*, ministers, and this led to much misunderstanding. The unsteady nature of woman's rule, which Nepal experienced at that time, must be considered one of the major difficulties Capt. Knox had to face. But it must be said to the credit of Capt. Knox that he had done his job admirably well and quite in keeping with the prestige of the Government he represented.

The only result that had come out of the temporary establishment of the Residency at Katmandu was the acquisi-

tion of first-hand information of the political weakness of the country during that period. This would have been of great value to the Company's Government, had there been any intention to try force. That the period covered by the regency of the two Ranis was one of the weakest in the history of Nepal admits of no doubt. Considering this fact as well as the geographical situation of Nepal in relation to the Company's possessions in India, it will not be impertinent to ask why the Company's Government acted in such a passive manner with regard to Nepal. Many of the hill Chiefs desired the Company to bring Nepal under their control. The Rajah of Butwal was one who deserves special mention. Even the governing Rani and a number of responsible officers of the state would like some kind of superintending support from the British Government. The question that naturally strikes one is that at a time when it would be no more difficult than a simple walk-over into Nepal, the importance of which country had been appreciated by generations of British Governors and Governors-General, why at all the Company's Government under no less a person than Lord Wellesley allowed the opportunity to slip off. Nepal certainly, then, offered a very good chance either to be grabbed or at least to be brought under the Subsidiary Alliance of the Company.

The only plausible explanation of the conduct of the Company's Government at that time, with regard to Nepal, was their preoccupation within India, particularly in connection with the Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-5), on the one hand, and, on the other, the apprehension of the Chinese Government's displeasure which the Company, for their commercial interests in China, would not naturally like to provoke. Besides, in spite of the knowledge the Company had of the approaches to Nepal and of the possible sources of supply of provisions, no positive reliance could probably be placed on the verbal promises of support given by the hill chiefs in this regard.

1. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 1.
2. Op. Cit.
3. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 51.
4. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 11.

5. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 11, para 19.
6. Op. Cit.
7. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 11, para 19.
8. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 2.
9. Op. Cit.
10. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 11.
11. Op. Cit.
12. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 11, para 15.
13. Op. Cit.
14. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 11, para 18.
15. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 11, para 24.
16. Op. Cit., paras 24 & 25.
17. Op. Cit., para 25.
18. Op. Cit., para 31.
19. Op. Cit., para 27.
20. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 24.
21. Op. Cit.
22. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 43.
23. Op. Cit.
24. Op. Cit.
25. Op. Cit.
26. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 34.
27. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 43.
28. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 56.
29. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, Nos. 24, 43.
30. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 45, para 3.
31. Op. Cit.
32. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 45, para 3.
33. Op. Cit.
34. Op. Cit.
35. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 45.
36. Op. Cit.
37. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 45, para 3.
38. Op. Cit.
39. Sect. Cons., Decr. 30, 1802, No. 86.
40. Op. Cit.
41. Op. Cit.
42. Sect. Cons., Decr. 30, 1802, No. 86. Abdul Ali and Mirza Medhi were two native *munshis* who were included in the Resident's suite.
43. Sect. Cons., July 7, 1803, No. 28.
44. Op. Cit.
45. Op. Cit.
46. Sect. Cons., July 7, 1803, No. 29.
47. Op. Cit.
48. Op. Cit.
49. Sect. Cons., May 2, 1805, No. 350.
50. Op. Cit.
51. Sect. Cons., May 2, 1805, No. 350, para 3.
52. Op. Cit.
53. Sect. Cons., May 2, 1805, No. 350, para 4.
54. Sect. Cons., May 2, 1805, No. 350, para 5.
55. Sect. Cons., May 2, 1805, No. 350, para 10.
56. Sect. Cons., May 2, 1805, No. 350, para 11.
57. Sect. Cons., May 2, 1805, No. 350, para 12.
58. Op. Cit.
59. Op. Cit.
60. Martin: *The Despatches of Marquess Wellesley*, Vol. IV, p. 16.
61. Sect. Cons., April 26, 1804, No. 297.
62. Op. Cit.



CHAPTER X  
TOWARDS HOSTILITIES

I

The dissolution of the Treaty of 1801 left Ran Bahadur Shah free to return to Nepal, which he had not been able to do so long, in spite of all his endeavours, due to the surveillance of the Company's Government. Soon after the formal communication of the Company's decision to Ran Bahadur, which also meant a termination of the Company's responsibility to pay him, by monthly instalments, the amount due to him for his *Jageer* under the British guarantee, he began preparation for his departure for Nepal. The Company, however, gave Ran Bahadur Shah one month's notice. On the eve of his setting out for Nepal Ran Bahadur Shah received the balance due to him from the Company, under the previous arrangements, up to the 24th February, 1804, inclusive of the month's notice given by the Company.<sup>1</sup>

The return of Rani Tripura Sundari to Nepal some months earlier was not a prelude to Ran Bahadur's return as Gajraj Misra and some others of the Nepal Court thought.<sup>2</sup> The causes behind her return to Nepal were the cruel treatment meted out to her by Ran Bahadur Shah while at Benares and his utter neglect of her, as he kept himself deeply engrossed in voluptuous pleasures. His amorous attention to a 'Nautch girl' (dancing girl), and his gift to her of the ornaments which he had forcibly stripped off the person of the Rani served as the last straw on the camel's back. She left Benares to save herself from the open insult and indignity to which Ran Bahadur Shah subjected her almost daily.<sup>3</sup> This view is further strengthened by the earnestness she had shown as the governing Rani to see Capt. Knox return to Katmandu and her insistence on his leaving behind some one as an evidence of the continued British friendship towards Nepal. She apprehended that the British displeasure might result in the restoration of Ran Bahadur Shah to power with the assistance of the British arms. Further, her banishment

to a place called Helmu in Gossainkonda immediately on Ran Bahadur's assumption of the charge of administration, adds strength to the contention that her return to Nepal had nothing to do with the later return of Ran Bahadur Shah.

Ran Bahadur Shah returned to Nepal early in 1804. The weak and unsteady rule of the two Ranis during his absence, had created a general feeling of disgust and, consequently, there was a widespread hankering after a steady government in the country, even if it was to be under a ruthless ruler like Ran Bahadur Shah. In such circumstances, when Ran Bahadur Shah crossed into Nepal, there was an emotional upsurge in his favour which washed away all the bitter memories of his ruthlessness and cruelty. He was welcomed and placed at the head of the administration.

While at Benares Ran Bahadur had adopted the sacred title of Swami Maharaj and taken to saffron coloured dress. But neither the title nor the dress was any index of his mind which remained unreformed. The first thing he did on assumption of the charge of administration was to banish Rani Tripura Sundari for her manifest lack of devotion to him. Next he invited Rajah Prithvipal Sein of Palpa to Katmandu on the pretext of negotiating his own marriage with his sister. But on his arrival at Katmandu, Prithvipal Sein was put under the strictest surveillance.<sup>4</sup> This was certainly a retribution for Prithvipal Sein's conduct in proposing to change allegiance from the Rajah of Nepal to the Company's Government.<sup>5</sup>

Ran Bahadur's resumption of power was followed by the removal of Damodar Pande from Prime Ministership and his imprisonment along with his eldest son. Bhim Sen Thapa, was appointed the Prime Minister. These administrative shakes-up ushered in a change both in the internal and the external policy of Nepal. Ran Bahadur wanted to compensate his country for his earlier neglect by the conquest of new territories and Amar Singh Thapa, the Nepalese General was ordered to proceed on a war of acquisition towards the west.

Sher Bahadur, one of the uncles of Ran Bahadur, was not favourably disposed towards the latter and Ran Bahadur in order to keep him at a safe distance ordered him to follow

Amar Singh Thapa. Sher Bahadur was too clever for this trick and refused to obey. He was brought before the Durbar under Ran Bahadur's order and was sought to be imprisoned. This put Sher Bahadur to extreme rage and he struck Ran Bahadur with his sword wounding him fatally, but Balnara Singh, a courtier, at once struck the assailant down. Ran Bahadur's last moment entreaty to Bhim Sen Thapa was to look after his minor son King Girban Juddha Bikram Shah. Thus ended the stormy career of Ran Bahadur Shah (April, 1805).

## II

Bhim Sen Thapa was an able leader and efficient administrator. He was highly ambitious no doubt, but scrupulously respected the last moment desires of Ran Bahadur Shah. One of the first things he did was to force Rani Tripura Sundari to be a *Sati*, i.e. to immolate herself on the funeral pyre of her husband Ran Bahadur Shah. This was a politic step taken by Bhim Sen Thapa to rid himself of a potential rival. He also put to death some of the high officials of the state who were suspected to be against him. Damodar Pande, his eldest son, Prithvipal Sein, and many others also lost their lives in the clean sweep ordered by Prime Minister Bhim Sen Thapa.<sup>6</sup>

Bhim Sen Thapa's ambition was not simply personal, he was also determined to bring all the hilly countries under the direct control of Katmandu and to extend the territories of Nepal upto Kashmir. Soon after the execution of Prithvipal Sein, Rajah of Palpa, Bhim Sen sent Amar Singh Thapa, General of the Nepalese armed forces, to take possession of Palpa. After having brought Palpa under the direct control of the Nepal Government, Amar Singh Thapa proceeded against the king of Garhwal who was defeated and his kingdom annexed to Nepal. This pushed the boundary of Nepal westward up to the Sutlej. Amar Singh Thapa was a soldier of rare abilities. He continued his march westward and conquered portions of the Kangra Valley from the King Sansar Chand. Amar Singh next attempted to take the fort of Kangra, the occupation of which would give him com-

mand over the hilly tracts upto Kashmir. Maharajah Ranjit Singh of Lahore was also keeping his wistful gaze on the Kangra Fort. Sansar Chand, in order to ward off the Gurkha menace, appealed to Ranjit Singh for help, which the latter was willing to render on condition of getting the Kangra Fort in return. This was nothing short of asking for one of the eyes of Sansar Chand and he had to remain content with the defence he himself could put up against the Gurkhas. The situation became desperate in no time and Sansar Chand, pretending willingness to negotiate with Amar Singh Thapa, put off the fury of the Gurkha General to some extent and, in the meantime, after having placed his brother in charge of the fort, came out of it in disguise to carry on negotiations with Ranjit Singh. This time he agreed to cede the fort to Ranjit Singh in lieu of his support in driving the Gurkhas out of the Kangra Valley. In August, 1807, a combined attack from within and without the fort compelled Amar Singh to raise the siege and fall back (August 24, 1807). This was how the first attempt of Amar Singh Thapa to take the Kangra Fort miscarried. But he did not give up the idea of trying another chance.

About two years later Ranjit Singh and the British signed the Treaty of Amritsar (1809) by which the former's expansion towards east across the Sutlej was checked. The second article of the Treaty provided that the "Rajah shall never maintain in the territory occupied by him and his dependants on the left bank of the river Sutledge more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of the territory".<sup>7</sup>

As we have already seen, Amar Singh Thapa was on the look out for an opportunity to attack the Kangra Fort again. He entered into correspondence with the Rajah of Kullu (Kahlur) and Mundee (a part of which fell on the east of the Sutlej), who were inimically disposed towards Sansar Chand.<sup>8</sup> Ranjit Singh's jealous watch on Amar Singh's activities did not miss this intelligence. He at once wrote to Lt.-Col. David Ochterlony, the British army officer at Ludhiana, informing him of the intentions of Amar Singh. Ranjit Singh also gave him an idea of his own plan for checking the Gurkha General. The route that Ranjit Singh intended to follow was through his dependant territories on the east of the Sutlej.

He also desired Lt.-Col. Ochterlony to write to Amar Singh requesting him to refrain from any attack upon Ranjit's tributaries.<sup>9</sup>

Lt.-Col. Ochterlony read a double motive in Ranjit Singh's letter requesting him to write to Amar Singh Thapa to refrain from his contemplated attempt. The motives, to Lt.-Col. Ochterlony's mind, were as follows: first, it was to show the Gurkha General the interest and influence that Ranjit Singh had with the English and thereby to impress upon him the danger of the course he was attempting to follow; secondly, should Ochterlony's request bear fruit, which Ranjit Singh thought it would, then he would be in a position to divert all his soldiers to the conquest of Multan without having to keep a part of them to guard the hilly frontier.<sup>10</sup> Lt.-Col. David Ochterlony betrayed an unusual anxiety at Ranjit Singh's plan of marching through his dependant territories east of the Sutlej and of using the "Ferries and Ghauts" which were under the "first range of the high hills, and though occupied by Chiefs acknowledging his authority and paying him tribute or service, are strictly speaking within the limits of the British protection".<sup>11</sup> Lt.-Col. Ochterlony could not show that Ranjit Singh was contemplating to march through the territories not dependant on him, yet he (Ochterlony) was anxious to prevent the Sikh Rajah from proceeding across the river Sutlej to the hilly frontiers to check the progress of the Gurkhas. What really perturbed David Ochterlony was his apprehension whether establishment of Ranjit Singh's control over the hilly regions then under the Gurkhas would not constitute any danger to the British interest.<sup>12</sup> He, however, left the whole matter for the Governor-General-in-Council to decide. He wrote: "All that I can say with any degree of confidence is that he (Ranjit Singh) may cross from some of his recent conquests or tributary states at a considerable distance from any place that can be thought within the protected territory and immediately into the country (*sic*) which are tributary to or actually in possession of the Gorkha Force, and admitting his success to be as complete as he supposes, he might annex to his own territory Buser, the twelve portions or *Barra Tokrani*, and the whole country of Nahum Rajeh to the Jumna without

in the least interfering with the Districts we have declared under our protection, and the result would only be the real or nominal, as circumstance might occur, authority of Ranjeet, instead of the actual present control of the Nepalese. Whether this change, if actually effected, would be of any detriment to the British interest is a question for the wisdom of His Excellency-in-Council to decide”.

The reply of the Governor-General-in-Council to the above communication of Lt.-Col. Ochterlony was as interesting as comprehensive and did little credit to the latter's understanding of the situation. The Supreme Government, in their detailed instructions for the guidance of Lt.-Col. Ochterlony, explained everything in a fool-proof precise manner. With regard to the general question whether or not Rajah Ranjit Singh was at liberty to carry into effect his declared designs against the Nepalese, the Governor-General-in-Council observed that it was a question to which the engagement subsisting between the British Government and the Rajah had no reference and on “general principle Government would not be disposed to exercise a power of restraint over the project of Ranjeet Singh, not vested in it by the terms of those engagements”.<sup>13</sup>

It was also made clear to Lt.-Col. Ochterlony that any attempt to restrain Rajah Ranjit Singh from pursuing his contemplated course would be tantamount to espousing the cause of the Nepalese Government and would have a prejudicial effect on the British relations with the Rajah and involve the British Government “at least in a very embarrassing discussion, if not in actual hostilities and no adequate cause exists to induce the British Government to expose itself to the hazard of these difficulties or any sufficient motive to warrant its interference in the dispute between these two independent powers”.<sup>14</sup>

As to Lt.-Col. Ochterlony's contention that the first range of the hills although occupied by Chiefs acknowledging Rajah Ranjit Singh's authority, “were strictly speaking within the limits of the British protection”,<sup>15</sup> the Governor-General-in-Council apprehended “this position to be incorrect”.<sup>16</sup> The fact that the Chiefs were dependant on the Rajah contradistinguished them from being under the protection of the

British Government, which would mean dependence upon the British Government. Further, it was impressed upon Lt.-Col. Ochterlony that the protection afforded to the Chiefs on the left side of the Sutlej was a protection against the power of Ranjit Singh and was "explicitly declared to be so in the first article of the proclamation which you (Ochterlony) issued in the year 1809 and consequently inapplicable to Chiefs who are subject to his power and authority in respect of lands so situated".<sup>17</sup> He was also informed that the British Government was not entitled under the treaty to prohibit Ranjit Singh from directing his troops through the territories of his dependants on the east side of the Sutlej. The Governor-General-in-Council even quoted Article 2 of the Treaty of Amritsar in order to show that it could not be construed to mean any authority given to the British Government to prohibit Ranjit Singh from marching his troops through the territories of his dependants against the Gurkhas. In this way all possibilities of a conflict between the British Government and Rajah Ranjit Singh, which might have been of positive advantage to the Gurkhas, were avoided.

The Nepalese General Amar Singh Thapa, in spite of his earnestness to take the Kangra Fort, had to give up the idea. But a portion of the territories of Rajah Sansar Chand of Nadaun remained under him and another under Rajah Ranjit Singh. Sansar Chand could not reconcile himself to the loss of so much territory and thought of requisitioning British help to recover the loss. He put himself in correspondence with the Governor-General and as soon as he was assured of the friendly disposition of the Company's Government towards him he made a proposal to the Governor-General soliciting him to affix his seal and signature to a paper which he himself had prepared and which was enclosed in his letter. This paper contained a commitment that in case of any attack on his dominions by the Nepalese, the British Government would render military assistance to repel it. Further, he requested the Governor-General to give him a promise that the British Government would restore the places which had been wrested from him by Rajah Ranjit Singh, when the former would conquer the Punjab. Obviously, Sansar Chand took it for granted

that the British Government was going to conquer the Punjab within a short time. But the Governor-General-in-Council made it perfectly clear to him that relation of amity subsisted between the British Government and the State of Nepal, and would continue to subsist likewise in future. In the circumstances, the Governor-General-in-Council could not bind himself to render military assistance to Sansar Chand should the Nepal Government try to occupy his territories. Sansar Chand was under the delusion that the earlier profession of friendliness by the British Government was a good ground for expecting military assistance from them. To remove this, the Governor-General-in-Council wrote as follows: "The proofs of friendship towards a state are by no means confined to the measure of assisting it in its wars".<sup>18</sup> As to the request for a promise that the British Government would restore the territories of Sansar Chand, seized by Ranjit Singh, it was made clear that compliance with such a request would be "regarded by the world as an intention on the part of the British Government at some future time to carry its arms into the Punjab and to subjugate the Sikh Chiefs",<sup>19</sup> and compliance with his request to assist in repelling the Nepalese attacks would be tantamount to a predetermination on the part of the British Government to wage war with the State of Nepal.<sup>20</sup>

Thus the possibilities of any conflict between the Nepal Government and the British were scrupulously avoided by the Governor-General-in-Council. Neither the anticipated conflict between Ranjit Singh and the Nepal Government, nor the entreaties of Sansar Chand succeeded in effecting any deviation in the policy of the British Government towards Nepal. It is interesting to note in this connection that the Nepal Government, at a later date, represented through their *Vakeel* Chandra Sekhar Upadhyaya to Governor-General the possibility of extension of territories west of the Sutlej to their mutual benefit, should the British and the Nepal Government combine in this regard. This would lead to the occupation of territories yielding revenues of crores of rupees and the Nepal Government offered to take only a fourth share of the same.<sup>21</sup> But this offer came more or less as a subterfuge to secure from



the British Government concessions on the question of territorial adjustment on Champaran and Purnea Borders. Needless to say, the proposal was not at all considered by the British Government.

### III

Simultaneously with the attempts at expansion towards the west the Nepal Government began pushing their frontiers towards the south. This led to a series of border conflicts. Not that the Nepal Government or their officers and subjects were always the aggressors. Encroachments were also made by the officers and subjects of the British Government.

In 1804, when the Palpa Rajah Prithvipal Sein was kept confined at Katmandu, the Nepal Government began occupying Butwal which comprised a part of the Palpa dominions. In the meantime the Dewan of Prithvipal Sein entered into an agreement with the British Government to hold Butwal under the Palpa Rajah on payment of an annual rent of Rs. 32,000/-. This was necessary as in 1801 the Nawab Vizier of Oudh had transferred to the Company's Government three provinces, known as the Ceded Provinces, in liquidation of his arrears of payments due to the Company, Butwal and Sheoraj fell within the Ceded Provinces. But the Nepal Government had long ago occupied Sheoraj and had been gradually occupying Butwal as well. By 1805 they had occupied two-thirds of the latter district and the whole of Palpa. Upon remonstrance from the British Government the Nepal Government offered to Sir George Barlow to hold the district of Butwal on payment of an annual rent, but this proposal was rejected. Sir George Barlow, however, agreed to relinquish the Company's right on Sheoraj, since it was occupied by Nepal before 1801 when the provinces were ceded by the Nawab *Vizier*, and on condition that the Nepal Government evacuated Butwal forthwith. But this had no effect upon the Nepal Government. The subsequent preoccupations of the British Government allowed the matter to be left where it had been in 1805. Further, friendly negotiations between the two

Governments during the two subsequent years showed no resentment on the part of the British Government for the Nepalese occupation of Butwal.

In 1807 there was another encroachment by the Nepal Government's officers at Morung. They forcibly dispossessed Doolar Singh Choudhuri, the Zamindar of Bhimnagar of certain lands situated within the limits of the Company's territories. The Magistrate of Purnea made representation to the Nepalese officers at Morung with no effect. Two years were allowed to elapse without any settlement of the dispute and during this period the Nepal Government maintained their authority over the occupied lands. The relations between the two Governments during this period were also more or less cordial, as is evidenced by two letters written to the Rajah by the Company.

In one of these letters the Rajah of Nepal was requested to issue necessary orders to the *Subah* (Governor) of Almora not to oppose the procurement of fir trees from the Almora forests by Mr. Rutherford, Superintendent of the Company's factory at Cossipore (in Rohilkhand). The Rajah in his reply informed the Governor-General that necessary orders had been given allowing the transportation of the fir trees already cut for the Cossipore factory. He also assured the Governor-General that on the application of Mr. Rutherford the officers of the Nepal Government would 'instantly furnish any quantity which may be desired of the wood'.<sup>22</sup> In the other letter after a formal expression of friendly sentiments, the Rajah of Nepal was informed that Mr. Rutherford had been directed by the Company's Government to proceed, with the permission of the Nepal Government, to the hills of Nepal for the purpose of instructing the Nepalese people in the improved method of tar extraction from fir trees, which was not known to them. The Rajah was requested to issue necessary orders to the officers of the Nepal Government to extend Mr. Rutherford proper civility, respect and attention, and to afford him protection and facilities during his journey. It was hoped by the Governor-General that the Nepal Government would derive commercial advantage from the success of Rutherford mission.<sup>23</sup> With this request also the Rajah of Nepal fully complied and Mr. Rutherford was

given every facility and encouragement to procure fir timber and establish furnaces for the manufacture of tar.<sup>24</sup>

Early in 1809, the British Government took up the question of the outstanding border disputes and drew the attention of the Rajah of Nepal to their communication sent through the Nepalese *Vakeel* Sheik Issrat Ullah in March, 1807, requesting the restoration of the few villages which had been forcibly occupied by the Nepalese officers at Morung after dispossessing Doolar Singh Choudhuri. The lapse of two years was explained by saying that the British Government patiently awaited during this period the result of their communication of March, 1807.<sup>25</sup> A force was also sent for the purpose of placing those lands in possession of the rightful owner, but with special injunctions to abstain from hostilities unless opposed by the Nepalese troops. This information was also communicated to the Rajah of Nepal. At the same time the Governor-General suggested the institution of a regular enquiry in order to fix up the boundary in a "spirit of harmony and friendship" and through amicable discussions. The Rajah of Nepal was requested to depute a respectable person to meet the officer of the British Government sent to the border for the adjustment of the boundary to mutual satisfaction.<sup>26</sup> To back up by the despatch of troops the demand of the British Government for the restoration of the occupied villages in Bhimnagar was hardly consistent with this appeal to the "spirit of harmony and friendship". But the implied threat had the desired effect. The Nepal Government sent a representative to settle the matter amicably with the officer deputed by the British Government, and on the findings of the enquiry the villages of Bhimnagar were restored to their rightful owner.<sup>27</sup>

Soon, however, new complications arose. Early in 1811 the Nepalese officers erected a *Ghurree* (a military outpost) in the Company's territory at Khyree (Kheri) and provided it with armed men. Representations made by the local authorities to the officers of Nepal in the area having proved unavailing, the Agent to the Governor-General in charge of the Ceded Provinces appealed to the *Subah* (Governor) of Almora. The Agent, in his communication to the

Governor-General-in-Council, gave details of the incident but suggested caution in view of the success of the Rutherford Mission for the extraction of tar from fir trees in Nepal. He also thought it advisable to avoid any measure that was likely to give offence to the Rajah of Nepal.<sup>28</sup> The Governor-General-in-Council approved of the suggestion of the Agent.<sup>29</sup>

But within a few months other complications arose. The Rajah of Nepal made a complaint to the Governor-General stating that on January 27, 1811, between the hours nine and ten in the morning, Bir Kishore Singh, Zamindar of Bettiah in the district of Saran, had sent to the Pergunnah of Routehat armed sepoys, numbering 1600, who fell upon the said Pergunnah, killed Lochan Gir, Tehsildar of the place, Bhakta Ray, Bechoo Singh Zamindar, and nine sepoys belonging to the *Subah* and carried off all properties and treasures of the Nepal Government.<sup>30</sup> The Rajah of Nepal also pointed out that it would not have been difficult for him to mete out adequate punishment to Bir Kishore Singh, but he refrained from that course, as friendly relations subsisted between the two Governments and, more particularly, on the assurance given by Mr. Hawkins, Magistrate of Patna that Bir Kishore Singh would be punished by the British Government.<sup>31</sup> The Rajah requested the Governor-General in the name of friendship that had been subsisting between the two states either to give Bir Kishore Singh the punishment he deserved or to give him permission to punish Bir Kishore himself for the outrageous act.<sup>32</sup> In reply to this letter, the Governor-General referred to the repeated representations made by the Magistrate of Saran regarding the encroachments and aggressions of the Nepalese people. Even on the 3rd of the following July another affray took place and, it was pointed out by the Governor-General, that according to the Magistrate of Saran the Nepalese officers and people were the aggressors on both these occasions.<sup>33</sup> The Governor-General requested the Rajah to immediately depute a well informed and respectable person to the frontier to meet an officer of the British Government for the settlement of the rights of the two Governments.<sup>34</sup> The Rajah of Nepal, however, wrote to say that if he had any intention

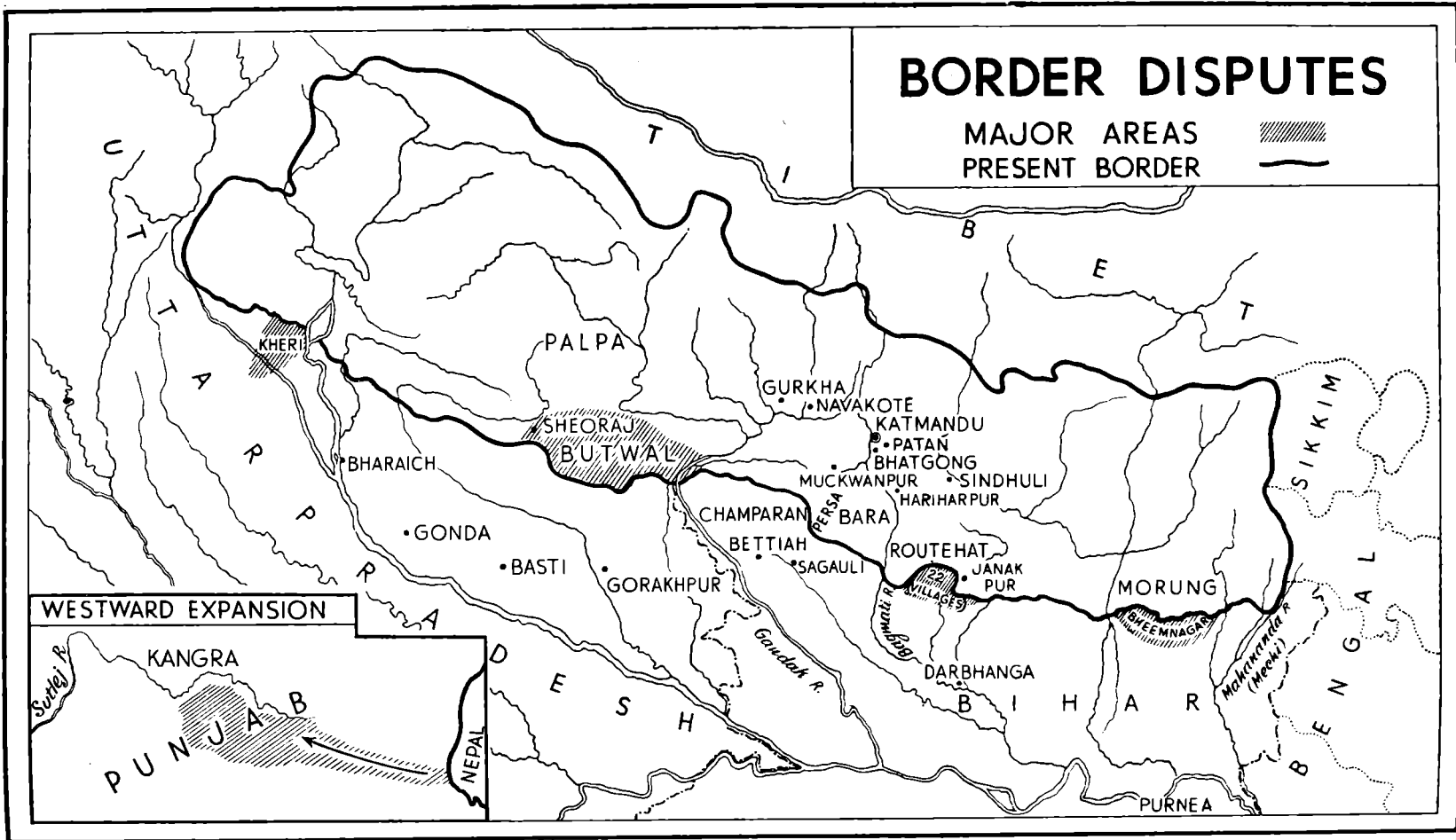
of encroaching upon the territories of the Company, he would not have appealed to the Company's Government for justice. He asserted that it was Bir Kishore Singh who had encroached upon the territories of the state of Nepal. He disavowed any intention on the part of the Government of Nepal and its officers to encroach upon the rights of others. The Rajah, however, agreed to the suggestion of the Governor-General and deputed Kazeo Randip Singh and Sirdar Parasuram Thapa as well as Raghunath Pandit to conduct the enquiry jointly with the representatives of the British Government. He also proposed that a report should be drawn up by them and a copy of it should be sent under their joint signatures to each Government for confirmation.<sup>35</sup>

In a letter addressed to the Rajah of Nepal by the Company's Government, which was sent through Raj Kissen Pandit, the Nepalese officers were called the aggressors in both the affrays of the 27th June and 3rd July, 1811. The Rajah of Nepal was a little annoyed at this repeated allegations against his officers. He expressed his surprise at the British Government's reliance on the unfounded representations made by Raja Bir Kishore to them<sup>36</sup> and emphatically charged the latter as the murderer of the *Tehsildar* of Routehat. In fact, he did not mince words in telling the Governor-General that the officers of the Nepal Government had been for a long time putting up with many indignities from the subjects of the British Government, only out of the consideration of harmony and friendship that existed between the two governments. If the British Government were disposed to friendship, the Nepal Government would certainly reciprocate ; but if the officers of the British Government were out on all occasions to side with the aggressors, he warned that the friendship of the two states would be at stake, and the Nepalese officers, on their part, would remain firm on the territory belonging to the Nepal Government and would not hesitate to punish the aggressor. But at the same time he expressed his desire for continued friendship with the British Government.<sup>37</sup> In disputes arising out of an undefined boundary in hilly terrain, both sides had a natural tendency to support and

stand by their respective officers and subjects who would encroach upon the territories on the other side of the customary border. That there was some truth in the allegation of the Rajah against the officers of the British Governments stationed at the bordering areas goes without saying, although the Nepalese officers and subjects were more often the aggressors.

Quite a number of border disputes arose on the frontiers of Purnea, Saran, Gorakhpur, Bareilly etc. But those relating to Saran and Gorakhpur were intractable and had "in fact been the proximate causes of the War (Gurkha War)"<sup>38</sup> between the British Government and Nepal. It is not the purpose of this work to enter into any discussion on the causes of the Anglo-Nepalese War (1814-16) but in determining the relations between the two Governments till the outbreak of hostilities, it will be in the fitness of things to discuss at some length how efforts were made to settle these disputes and how their failure made war inevitable.

With regard to the dispute in which the Nepalese *Subah* Lochan Gir was slain, the British Government deputed one of their civil officers, Mr. Young, to the place where he was met by his Nepalese counterpart for an on-the-spot enquiry to ascertain the truth of the conflicting claims of the parties. But after the investigation was agreed to and the deputation had already been sent, the Nepalese officers suddenly seized some more villages in the neighbourhood of the disputed lands with regard to which there was an affray and *Subah* Lochan Gir, Tehsilder of the area, lost his life. This fresh incident was also made a subject of enquiry by the deputation. The charge of aggression against the Nepalese related to no less than 22 villages which the Nepal Government claimed as part of the Pergunnah of Routehat which was restored to them in 1783 by Warren Hastings. But on enquiry it appeared that the villages belonged not to the Pergunnah of Routehat but to the Pergunnah of Nunnore which was not included in the territories ceded by the Company to Nepal in 1783. Each party claimed that the result of the enquiry was favourable to it.<sup>39</sup> But, on the Company's side, a very forceful argument was that tacit acquiescence by the Nepal Government to leave the lands



under the Company's possession for long thirty years was tantamount to a waiver.<sup>40</sup> It is needless to emphasise that after a lapse of thirty years sudden occupation of the lands in question was a gross violation of the rules of good neighbourliness.

However, nothing came out of the enquiry held by Mr. Young concurrently with the Nepalese representatives, and this necessitated the appointment of a new commission. This was done at the request of the Rajah of Nepal. The new commission was to decide the question of the boundary disputes relating to Butwal and Sheoraj, in addition to that of the 22 villages. Major Paris Bradshaw was deputed by the Company's Government to meet the Nepalese Commissioner on the frontier. The first thing that Major Bradshaw did was to insist upon the Nepal Government's handing over to him in trust the disputed 22 villages, to be held by him till a decision about them was arrived at. However extraordinary the demand of Major Bradshaw might have been, the Nepal Government agreed to it at the request of Guru Raj Kissen Pandit. The Nepal Government's compliance with the request of handing over the 22 disputed villages to the British Commissioner could have been either the result of fear or of over-confidence in the legitimacy of their claim on them. That there was no fear complex on the part of the Nepal Government appears to be clear from their subsequent action in forcibly reoccupying the villages. The only construction that could possibly be put to the conduct of the Nepal Government in handing over the disputed villages in trust to Major Bradshaw was their eagerness to see the dispute settled amicably and their sanguineness in the justice of their claim.

The subsequent proceedings of the boundary commission were, however, as desultory as they were unedifying. The records show two different versions of the proceedings, one British and the other Nepalese, each side accusing the other.

It appears from the letters of Major Bradshaw, the Commissioner on the British side, that the Nepalese Commissioners adopted a shilly-shally attitude from the very outset. They not only tried to avoid straight discussions



but failed to justify their claim to Sheoraj or to the 22 disputed villages.<sup>41</sup> When the result of the deliberations of the Governor-General-in-Council, on the basis of the information supplied by Major Bradshaw, was communicated to the Rajah of Nepal and the latter called upon to acknowledge the right of the Company over the disputed lands and to make them over to the Company's Government without delay, the Rajah of Nepal refused to comply. The Governor-General-in-Council also let the Rajah know that the demand of the Company's Government would be supported by arms, if necessary.<sup>42</sup>

The allegation of the Nepalese Commissioners, as contained in a letter addressed by them<sup>43</sup> to Major Bradshaw, referred to the latter's partiality towards the Company's Zamindars. It was also alleged that Major Bradshaw did not take into consideration the documents which were produced on behalf of the British Government during Mr. Young's investigation, but put up new documents rejecting those submitted during Mr. Young's enquiry as unauthentic and invalid.<sup>44</sup> They also alleged that Major Bradshaw was very harsh in his manners and his dealings with the accredited representatives of the Nepal Government left much to be desired. Needless to say, in the circumstances the two sides could not see their way to a fruitful discussion, far less to a reasonable solution of the disputes. The Nepalese Commissioners left the frontiers peremptorily asking Major Bradshaw to withdraw from the 22 villages which had been earlier handed over to him in trust pending decision of the investigation.

During the course of the investigation, the Nepalese Guru Raj Kissen Pandit had hinted to the *Munshi* of Bradshaw in an unofficial capacity that should the Company be willing to farm out the entire Terai to the Nepal Government, the latter might consider handing over the disputed territories to the Company's Government. The Governor-General-in-Council considered this proposal as a virtual confession on the part of the Nepalese *Vakeel* of the inability of the Nepal Government to maintain their claim to Butwal and Sheoraj and rejected it. Their decision in this regard was also influenced by two other important considerations:

First, the experience they had had of the inefficacy of forbearance and conciliation in producing a spirit of justice and moderation on the part of the Nepalese, and secondly, 'the portion of Bootwul proposed by Kishsen Pundit to be given up to the Nipaulese' formed the 'best cultivated and most populous' part of the territory.<sup>45</sup>

There was also a proposal from the Nepalese Commissioners for the renewal of the former treaty (1801) as an expression of the goodwill between the two states. But this also did not find favour with the Governor-General-in-Council since it was considered to be 'entirely delusive' and thus inexpedient.<sup>46</sup>

The relation between the two states gradually degenerated into one of open hostility. There can be little doubt that the conduct of Major Bradshaw somewhat precipitated the issue. The Nepalese occupation of the 22 villages claiming them as a part of the Pergunnah of Routehat 30 years after the latter had been occupied by the British was tantamount to breach of faith particularly when an on-the-spot enquiry into the incident arising out of Bir Kishore's attack on Routehat in which Lochan Gir was murdered, was in progress. Likewise, the British claim on Sheoraj which had been occupied by the Nepal Government long before 1801 when the Nawab Vizier of Oudh ceded to the Company the territory to which Sheoraj originally belonged, was no more defensible than the Nepalese occupation of the 22 villages. Yet, when the number of aggressions across the borders were concerned the balance was on Nepal's side.

What for their traditional suspicion in dealing with the British and what for their desire to somehow extend their frontier towards the south, the Nepal Government's dealings with the British Commissioner had not been straight. Earlier forbearance and moderation on the part of the British Government were taken as signs of weakness or, at least, of their reluctance to enter the fastnesses of the Himalayan hills. The delusion of the impregnability of the Nepalese dominions and the invincibility of the Gurkhas emboldened the Nepalese Government to adopt a policy of systematic encroachment<sup>47</sup> upon the Company's territories. Admitting that Rajah Bir Kishore of Bettiah encroached upon the terri-

tories of Nepal the fact remains that not infrequently the Nepalese appeared to have been in the wrong. Attempts at amicable settlement of the border disputes were also useless for want of any straight discussions between the two sides.

One thing is, however, certain, that in border negotiations the British Government did not follow their policy of moderation and forbearance which characterised their earlier relations with the Nepal Government. It will be evident from the withdrawal of the offer made by Sir George Barlow and later, by Lord Minto, to give up Company's claim over Sheoraj, should the Nepal Government agree to evacuate Butwal. This offer was not renewed by the British Commissioners to their Nepalese counterpart. It is, however, doubtful if such an offer would have influenced the policy of the Nepal Government to any degree. For the time being at least the warlike spirit was dominant in the court of Nepal and the British Government felt that the old policy of forbearance and moderation would not respond to the new situation.<sup>48</sup>

The stiffness of attitude of the Nepalese Government in respect of the boundary disputes might have been, at least to some extent, due to Amar Singh Thapa's confidence in the supposed strength of the newly trained corps "which cost him time, expense and trouble to organise after the manner of British Sepoys".<sup>49</sup> He urged one attempt, at least to "vindicate the character of the nation from what he termed pusillanimous concession".<sup>50</sup> "He and his advocates represent peace as always to be had when asked for ; that if advantage at first attend hostile measures on their part their strength becomes ascertained, and that though ultimately obliged to give up the contested territory, yet the state would be more powerful in proportion to the reputation it would derive from the attempt. Many Sardars are summoned to give their counsel on this occasion".<sup>51</sup> That the sense of grievance was not very strong in Nepal is clear enough from the discussion held at the Nepal Durbar among the Ministers on the eve of the Gurkha War. The Rajah of Nepal posed the question of war before the Durbar when it became almost inevitable and the discussions that followed showed two distinct opinions, one in favour of war, the other against it. Although

the war party influenced the decision of the Durbar, yet Raj Guru Raghunath Pandit did not hesitate to point out that "there was no injury done to Nepal that called for an appeal to arms".<sup>52</sup> He also advised that half of the disputed lands "should be relinquished as a price of peace".<sup>53</sup> The decision to go to war on the boundary disputes was mainly due to Bhim Sen Thapa's confidence in the fighting strength of the Gurkhas. His speech before the Durbar resembled, within smaller limits, the Periclean speech before the Athenian Ecclesia on the eve of the Peloponnesian War.<sup>54</sup> What is significant is that no positive complaint was made against the English or their encroachment. In a Durbar where opinions, both in favour and against war, were being expressed, those in favour of war would have certainly mentioned the injustice and wrong that the war was expected to remove. On the contrary, Raj Guru Raghunath Pandit pointed out categorically that no injury to the Nepal Government had been done to justify an appeal to arms, and none contradicted him. All this will give one the impression that the Nepal Government—at least those in charge of affairs at that time—cared more for maintaining hold on the recently encroached territories than for the English friendship.<sup>55</sup> From a letter intercepted by the British it appears that there was a secret arrangement with Rajah Ranjit Singh of Lahore that if the Gurkhas would succeed against the British upto a certain point, he would rise against the British.<sup>56</sup> This is also borne out by an intelligence received by Mr. Edward Gardner, Resident at the Nepal Court immediately after the signing of the treaty of Sagauli. According to this intelligence there was 'a good understanding between this Durbar (Nepal) and those of Dowlut Rao Scindiah and Ranjeet Singh'.<sup>57</sup> The secret negotiations between the Nepal Durbar and those of Ranjit Singh and Dowlat Rao, and certainly between Nepal and Lahore, must have been going on even before the commencement of hostilities. All this will explain the conduct of the Nepal Government in deciding for an immediate show down with the English.

Lord Moira made last minute efforts to induce the Nepal Government to agree to the Company's demand to evacuate the disputed territories, but to no purpose; the war party

in the Nepal Durbar was in the ascendant and war became inevitable.<sup>58</sup> The actual declaration of war was, however, preceded by acts short of war or what may be called police action. On the Nepal Government's refusal to evacuate the disputed lands, an armed force was sent which brought them under the British occupation without any opposition from the Nepalese forces which quietly withdrew, and several police posts were established there. But the insalubrity of the hilly countries obliged the British Government to withdraw the armed forces during the rains leaving the police establishments to maintain the British hold there. On the morning of the 29th May, 1814, the principal police establishment in Butwal was attacked by a large body of the Nepalese troops headed by an officer named Munraj Foujdar and the force stationed there was driven out with the loss of 18 men killed and 6 wounded. Among the killed was the *Daroga* or the principal officer of the Butwal police station who was murdered in cold blood in the presence of Munraj Foujdar although he had surrendered. Likewise, another Thana, i.e., police station was attacked and destroyed. The British Government, realising the impracticability of supporting the police stations during the rains by sending armed forces, ordered the withdrawal of other Thanas. The Nepalese forces occupied the whole of the disputed territories in the Terai. Action on the British side was delayed, however, only till the next dry season. On the first of November, 1814, war was declared after another attempt at peace by Lord Moira.

The war terminated with the Peace of Sagauli signed on the 2nd December, 1815 and ratified in March, 1816, which gave highly important advantages to the British Government.<sup>59</sup> The acquisition of the Kumaon Division comprising Naini Tal, Almora and the Garhwal districts under the terms of the treaty proved to be of great value. The Dehra Dun district, in which later on the hill station of Mussoorie was built, was also annexed. However, parts of the existing Simla district were made over by the Nepal Government to the British and an extensive tract of territories was ceded to the Rajah of Sikkim. With the cession of these territories the boundaries between India and Nepal,

as well as between Nepal and Sikkim became well defined<sup>60</sup> and the causes of border conflicts were eliminated. A British Resident had to be received at Katmandu, an arrangement certainly more distasteful to the Nepalese than loss of territories. But this treaty ushered in an era of friendly relationship between India and Nepal which continues till now. Needless to say, the customary trade relations between the two states were gradually revived.

1. Sect. Cons. April 26, 1804. No. 297, paras 22 and 24.
2. Sect. Cons. June 30, 1802. No. 45, para 3; Mr. Neave the Magistrate of Benares also attributed Rani Tripura Sundari's return to her attempt at reinstatement of her husband Ran Bahadur to the *musnad* of Nepal.
3. Sect. Cons. June 30, 1802. No. 5.
4. Sect. Cons. Decr. 20, 1814. No. 3; also vide Balchandra Sharma: *Nepalko Aitihasik Rupa Rekha* (in Nepalese), pp. 247-48.
5. Sect. Cons. June 30, 1802. No. 24, 43.
6. Balchandra Sharma: *Nepalko Aithihasik Rupa-Rekha*, p. 248.
7. Pol. Cons. Octr. 4, 1811. No. 19, para 6; also vide Atchison, Vol. VIII (4th Edn.); Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, p. 31.
8. Pol. Cons. Octr. 4, 1811, No. 17, para 2.
9. Pol. Cons. Octr. 4, 1811, No. 17, para 7.
10. Pol. Cons. Octr. 4, 1811, No. 17, para. 7.
11. Pol. Cons. Decr. 4, 1811, No. 17.
12. Op. Cit.
13. Pol. Cons. Octr. 4, 1811, No. 19, para 2.
14. Op. Cit.
15. Op. Cit.
16. Op. Cit.
17. Op. Cit.
18. Pol. Cons. Septr. 13, 1811. No. 56.
19. Op. Cit.
20. Op. Cit.
21. Chandra Sekhar Upadhyaya, the Nepalese *Vakeel* was instructed to represent as follows: "Friendship has subsisted between the Nepal and the British Governments for upwards of fifty years and this circumstance has contributed greatly to the success of each. The Sutledge has hitherto been the limit to the progress of the possessions of both states to the westwards. If they were to unite they could with ease carry their arms beyond that, by which the British Government might obtain possession of territories yielding crores of rupees while the Gurkha Government would be content with a fourth share. If the British Government should enter into this project I am ready to set vigorously about the execution of it. It is desirable that a mutual friendship should subsist between the two states conducive to their mutual advantage. It is not only useless and injurious to both to quarrel about a little bit of land. It is not my wish to do so" (From the Rajah of Nepal) *Home Misc. Series, India Office Records*, Vol. 648, pp. 246-47.
22. Pol. Cons. Octr. 10, 1809. No. 47.
23. "As the best mode of extracting Tar from the Fir is unknown in Nepal and as a considerable trade might be carried on in that valuable article to the mutual advantage of both countries, I have directed Mr. Rutherford, a gentleman of high respectability to proceed with your permission, into the hills of Nipaul for the express purpose of instructing the natives in the improved mode of extracting Tar from the Fir, and in constructing

proper furnaces for carrying on the process". From the Governor-General to the Nepal Rajah. Pol. Cons. April 10, 1809. No. 84.

24. Pol. Cons. April 26, 1811. No. 27, para 9.

25. "The British Government patiently awaited the result of that communication (March, 1807) for the evacuation of the usurped lands for the space of two years, when as your officers still maintained their authority in them, it became the duty of Government to vindicate its rights and to restore to its subjects possession of their property" Pol. Cons. June 13, 1809, No. 72.

26. Op. Cit.

27. Pol. Cons. Decr. 5, 1809. No. 130, also vide Balchandra Sharma: *Nepalko Aitihashik Rupa-Rekha*, p. 251.

28. Pol. Cons. April, 26, 1811. No. 27.

29. Pol. Cons. April, 26, 1811. No. 50.

30. Pol. Cons. Novr. 8, 1811. No. 69.

31. *Home Misc. Series India Office Records*, Vol. 648, p. 235.

32. Pol. Cons. Novr. 8, 1811. No. 69.

33. "From the information received from that officer (Magistrate of Saran) it seems that your (Nepal Rajah's) officers and the people were the aggressors on both these occasions", Pol. Cons. Novr. 8, 1811. No. 70.

34. Op. Cit.

35. Sect. Cons. March 13, 1812. No. 38.

36. "I am much surprised at the unfounded representation which Rajah Beer Kishwur Singh has made to you. That person like robbers (sic) attacked and murdered the Tehsildar Luchun Gir Soobah". Sect. Cons. March 13, 1812. No. 39.

37. Sect. Cons. March 13, 1812. No. 39—"I assure Your Excellency the fact is that my officers, on the strength of the long standing friendship and harmony subsisting between the two states, have to this day borne with many indignities from the subjects of the British Government. If the British Government is disposed to friendship, there is no other disposition on the part of this Government. But if the officers of the British Government are determined at all events to protect the aggressors, and thus wish to make a breach in the ancient friendship between the two states, my officers on their part will remain firm on the territory belonging to their own government and inflict punishment to any encroacher".

38. Sect. Cons. Decr. 20, 1814. No. 3.

39. ". . . by the evidence taken by Mr. Young, which clearly established that the disputed lands were situated in the Tuppah of Nunnore, a portion of the pergunnah Simrawun which had been reserved by the Company at the time of the restitution of Routehat and remainder of Muckwanpore"—Sect. Cons. Decr. 1814, No. 3.

40. "Mr. Young was afterwards sent to investigate the question respecting these villages. By his enquiries the right of his Government and the aggressions of the Zamindar of Bittiah were fully established". *India Office Records, Home Misc. Ser.*, Vol. 648, p. 234.

41. Pol. Cons. April 30, 1813. Nos. 40, 50, 52 also Sect. Cons. Decr. 20, 1814. No. 3.

42. Pol. Cons. March 11, 1814, No. 29.

43. Sect. Cons. June 23, 1814. No. 20. The letter dated 1st April 1814 was written by the Nepalese Commissioners: Raghunath Pandit, Pran Shah, Beer Bhunjan Pande and Parasuram Thapa.

44. Sect. Cons. June, 23, 1814. No. 20: The Nepalese Commissioners wrote as follows "In order to prove the fact of the 22 villages being comprehended within the Tuppah of Nanour, you have adduced no argument from documents which were produced on the part of your Government in Mr. Young's investigation. But considering those documents as unauthentic and invalid you have sent new ones brought forward by yourself. It is clear from this that you are yourself aware that the result of the former investigation proved the 22 villages to be compre-

hended within the Tuppah of Rotyt'. Also vide *India Office Records, Home Misc. Ser.*, Vol. 648, pp. 235-36.

45. "The Governor-General-in-Council is entirely satisfied of the inexpediency of permitting the Nepalese to retain any portion of the land to which the rights of the Company may be established . . ." Sect. Cons. June 18, 1813, No. 23, paras 13-16.

46. Op. Cit. para 16.

47. Sect. Cons. March 4, 1814, Nos. 57-58, paras 4 & 9.

48. "The British Government has long borne the conduct of the Nepalese Government with unexampled patience, opposing to their violence, insolence and rapacity, a course of procedure uniformly just and moderate. But forbearance must have their limits and the British Government having been compelled to take up arms in defence of its rights, its interests and its honour . . ." *Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons, Vol. XI, 1817, p. 8.*

49. Pol. Cons. April 22, 1814, No. 43, para 10.

50. Op. Cit.

51. Op. Cit.

52. Prinsep: *Political and Military Transactions in India, Vol. I, Appendix A*—"Translation of a copy of the written opinions of the Principal Gurkha Chiefs on the Question of Peace or War with the British Government" dated, 2nd April 1814, pp. 457-61.

53. Idem.

54. "The Chinese once made war, but were reduced to seek peace. How then will the English be able to penetrate into the hills? Under your auspices, we shall by our own exertions be able to oppose to them a force of fifty-two lacks of men with which we will expel them. The small fort at Bharatpore was the work of man, yet the English being worsted before it desisted from the attempt to conquer it; our hills and fastnesses are impregnable. I, therefore, recommend hostilities. We can make peace afterwards on such terms as may suit our convenience" Prinsep: *Political and Military Transactions in India, Vol. I, Appendix—A, pp. 458-59.*

55. From a letter containing the written opinions of all the Nepalese Chiefs which was sent to Amar Singh Thapa along with the instructions for the deployment of soldiers, presumably intercepted by the British, and from Major Bradshaw's report dated the 8th April, 1814, more or less a full narrative of the opinions expressed in the Nepal Durbar on the question of peace or war may be found. Vide Prinsep: *Political and Military Transactions in India, Vol. I, Appendix—A, pp. 457-61*; Pol. Cons. April 22, 1814, No. 43.

56. "If I succeed against General Ochterlony, and Runjoor Singh with Juspao Thapa and his officers prevail at Jythuk, Ranjeet Singh will rise against the enemy. In conjunction with the Seikhs (Sikhs) my army will make a descent into the plains . . . Fear nothing even though the Seikhs should not join us." Amar Singh Thapa's letter to Rajah of Nepal, dated March 2, 1815. This letter was intercepted by the British. Vide Prinsep: *Political and Military Transactions in India, Vol. I, Appendix—B, pp. 465-66.*

57. Sect. Cons. Nov. 2, 1816, No. 13; Sect. Cons. Sept. 7, 1816, No. 16.

58. Pol. Cons. March 11, 1814, No. 29.

59. Treaty of Peace between the E. I. Co. & Maharajah Bikram Shah of Nepal: Art. 2. "Rajah of Nipal renounces all claim to the lands which were the subject of discussion between the two states before the war, and acknowledges the right of the Hon'ble Company to the sovereignty of those lands".

Atchison: *Treaties, Engagements and Sunnuds, Vol. II, pp. 110-12. No. XXV.*



60. By article 3 of the treaty of Sagauli the boundary between the two states became well defined as the Nepal Government ceded the following territories bounded by rivers and hills on the northern border of the Company's territories. "(a) 'The whole of the low lands between the rivers Kali and Rapti', (b) whole of the low lands (with the exception of Butwal Khas) lying between the Rapti and the Gunduck', (c) 'The whole of the low lands between the Gunduck and the Coosah (Kosi)', (d) 'All the low lands between the river Mitchee and Teestah', (e) 'All the territories within the hills eastwards of the river Mitchee including the fort and lands of Nagree and the pass of Nagarcote, leading from the Morung into the hills together with territory lying between that pass and Nagree'" Ibid; also Prinsep: *Political and Military Transactions in India*, Vol. I, Appendix--C, p. 473.

## APPENDIX A

### CULTURAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEPAL AND THE COMPANY'S TERRITORIES

The Gurkha ruling house traces its origin to the Indian Rajputs. During the period covered by this work, there is at least one instance of a Gurkha Rajah—Prithvi Narayan Shah—marrying a Rajput princess. Prithvi Narayan Shah married the daughter of Abhiman Singh, a Rajput Chief of Benares, who procured ammunition for his son-in-law when the latter



PRIME MINISTER BHIM SEN THAPA.

was defeated in the siege of Navakote.<sup>1</sup> Pilgrimages to Benares, Rajput marriages etc. were certainly helpful in the spread of cultural influences from the Company's territories

to Nepal. One significant instance is the adoption of purely English dress by Prime Minister Bhim Sen Thapa. Use of Broad Cloth and various articles of European manufacture also points to the gradual acquisition of European tastes, although to a limited extent, by the Nepalese during this period.

The present discussion will not perhaps be complete without a reference to the Capuchin missionaries in Nepal. The Newar Kings of Katmandu were liberal in their outlook and permitted the missionaries to establish the first monastery in Katmandu in 1715. But the determined opposition of the Nepalese Brahmins compelled the mission to withdraw to Bhatgong, a more hospitable place for missionary work. But the sacrifice and sufferings of Horace de Penna, who was appointed the Prefect of Nepal Mission, succeeded in inducing the Rajah of Katmandu to permit the Capuchins to return to the city and preach the Gospel. At Bhatgong as well, Rajah Ranjit Malla permitted de Recanti to 'preach, teach and convert to their religion' the natives 'without violence, and of a pure and free will' and the necessary *sanad* was issued (1740). Rajah Jayprakash of Katmandu also issued similar *sanad* to the missionaries in 1742 and made them a gift of a 'beautiful quadrangular mansion in an unoccupied spot' in Katmandu. This grant was followed by another in 1754. The missionaries succeeded in proselytising some of the natives both at Katmandu and Bhatgong. But with the Gurkha conquest of the Katmandu Valley the situation took a turn for the worse for the missionaries. Originally, Prithvi Narayan Shah had reasons to be grateful to the missionaries, one of whom—Michael Angelo—had cured his brother Swarup Ratān of a bad wound which he had received in the siege of Kirtipur. But during the investment of the Katmandu Valley, when Jayprakash was sending repeated requests to the English for military assistance, the Capuchin missionaries also confirmed the seriousness of the situation in reply to the enquiries made by Capt. Kinloch.<sup>2</sup> All this did not miss the alert ears of Prithvi Narayan Shah and he began to suspect the missionaries of political intriguing and peremptorily ordered them to leave Nepal with their converts soon after he had succeeded in storming

Katmandu and Bhatgong in 1768. The Capuchin Fathers withdrew to the Mission Home of Bettiah where they waited long in the hope of returning to Nepal at some favourable turn of events, which, however, did not take place. The Gurkha suspicion of the missionaries is reflected in a saying current in Nepal: 'With the Bible comes the bayonet ; with the missionaries comes the musket.' No wonder, Nepal has remained closed to the missionary enterprise ever since.

It will be evident from this survey that during the period under review, systematic attempts were made by the British to establish commercial and diplomatic relationship with Nepal. Christian missionaries also tried to set up missions with a view to converting the native population. But the traditional and determined exclusiveness of the Nepalese Government and the people did not relax on any front in any appreciable measure. The endeavours of the British to woo Nepal during this period bear a remarkable resemblance to the attempts made by the West to lift the veil of China and Japan during the last quarter of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries.

1. *Ante*, p. 14.

2. Letters from Mr. Rumbold to Sel. Com., vide Sel. Com. Pr., Jan. 12, 1768 ; also vide 'Missionary Pioneers in the Himalayas', Raichoudhury, *The Statesman*, Calcutta Edn., August 24, 1930.

## APPENDIX B

### GAJRAJ MISRA

Like all devout Hindu families, the Nepalese Royal house had been very much devoted to its Guru, that is, the Spiritual Guide. Gajraj Misra was the Raj-Guru of the Nepalese royal house. He was a man of some learning and much intelligence. He would often visit Benares, one of the most sacred places of Hindu pilgrimage. It was fortunate for the Company's Government to have come across such a person who, besides his learning and intelligence, was a man of great practical abilities and held a decisive influence upon the Nepal Administration. During the whole period of the Anglo-Nepalese relations covered by the foregoing chapters, the one Nepalese who had been consistently friendly to the British was Guru Gajraj Misra. He had a special knack of handling delicate situations with success, so far as the relationship between the Company and the Nepal Government was concerned. At times he ran grave personal risks for his attachment to the British cause.

The Anglo-Nepalese Commercial Treaty of 1792 was, to a large extent, the result of the exertions of the Guru and, ever since, his good offices were requisitioned by the Company's Government in straightening out difficulties that arose between themselves and the Nepal Administration.

When Capt. Kirkpatrick was about to set out for Katmandu, and the Rajah of Nepal in a communication to the Governor-General, desired him not to proceed, it was through the efforts of Gajraj Misra that the suspicion and hesitancy on the part of the Nepal Government in admitting an Englishman were allayed and the objection vacated. In a similar situation, when Maulvi Abdul Qadir Khan was asked not to proceed to Nepal with the merchandise, Guru Gajraj played his usual part and convinced the Nepal Government of the friendly intentions of the British in sending the Maulvi. The Nepal Government were convinced and permission for Maulvi's visit was granted.

When Ran Bahadur Shah took shelter in Benares and the Company's Government saw a fresh opportunity of the revival of commercial relation with Nepal, the Treaty of 1792 having failed to achieve anything, Gajraj Misra's good offices were requisitioned. Simultaneous negotiations between the Company and Ran Bahadur Shah, on the one hand, and the former and the actual Government of Nepal, on the other, placed Gajraj Misra in an unevitable position. He carried on negotiations for a treaty between the Company and the actual Government in Nepal and, at the same time, as the royal Guru he had to convey the proposals of Ran Bahadur Shah to the Nepal Government for his restoration. Such attempts at pleasing more than one god at a time led to serious misunderstanding and Capt. Knox began suspecting him of double dealing whereas Ran Bahadur thought him to be a deceitful person "interested in the prosperity of the English" and out to "deceive" the Nepalese. There was a time when Gajraj Misra had to be kept under the protective vigilance of the Company's police against the suspected conspiracy of Ran Bahadur to take his life. Ran Bahadur craftily warned the actual Government in Nepal against trusting Gajraj Misra. All this made the task of Gajraj very difficult, no doubt, but he ultimately came out successful and the Treaty of 1801 was signed on the terms proposed by the Company's Government. Capt. Knox had also to revise his opinion about Guru Gajraj Misra who proved himself demonstratively to be a sincere friend of the British.

Even when Capt. Knox had been installed as the British Resident at Katmandu, according to the terms of the Treaty of 1801, the Nepalese Durbar could not get over their misgivings and suspicions about the real intentions of the British Residency, Gajraj Misra spared no pains to allay the suspicion of the Nepal Durbar and to advise the ministers of the Rajah honestly and judiciously. Whenever there arose any misunderstanding on the part of the Nepal Government about the intentions of the Company, he tried his utmost to remove it. His constant touch with the Company's Government gave him an idea of the power of the British and he, in his own way, tried his utmost to help

the Nepal Government understand where their interest lay. Clever Guru Gajraj realised that the power of the British Government was too strong for Nepal to resist, should the former try force. He did his best to impress this fact upon the Nepal Government.<sup>1</sup>

Although at times Guru Gajraj's over-doing and over-confidence in his own power and influence over the Nepal Government placed him into embarrassing situations, yet there could hardly be any doubt about his sincerity in trying to develop a friendly relationship between the two states. The usefulness of a person of his type can easily be understood when we remember the ceaseless conflict that went on between the British Government and Nepal since the restoration of Ran Bahadur Shah, culminating in the Anglo-Nepalese War (1814-16). Upon Ran Bahadur's restoration Gajraj Misra lost his former influence with the Nepal Government since Ran Bahadur regarded him as his enemy. One might very well say that had there been Gajraj Misra to settle the border disputes between the two states, there might not have been any need for an appeal to arms. The Nepal Government realised the usefulness of Gajraj Misra rather too late and it was only when there was the need for negotiating the peace treaty with the British that Gajraj Misra's services were again requisitioned.

It is necessary to refer to what Capt. Knox wrote to the Company about the services of Gajraj Misra: "His services have been faithful, his zeal undiminished and his sentiments in favour of the British cause unalterable."<sup>2</sup> By espousing the British cause Gajraj Misra had drawn upon himself the wrath of the Nepal Government, and this was responsible for the resumption of his *Jageer* by the latter. But he never mentioned all this to Capt. Knox or to anybody else. But, in spite of the silence of the Guru on his loss, Capt. Knox came to learn of it and he wrote upon the subject to the Governor-General: "He has made no representation to me of the personal loss he has lately sustained by espousing the British interests, but justice requires to state that I have understood from different quarters that his losses have been considerable. The *Jageer* assigned to him as Gooroo and minister of the Nepal Government has been

re-assumed since his departure from that country, and on the return of Ran Bahadur will very probably be bestowed on his (Run Bahadur's) present favourite Rughnath Pundit, a man represented to possess worthless character. In addition to this the Nepal Government is indebted to him for pecuniary obligations which it will be out of his power to recover under the authority of Run Bahadur".<sup>3</sup> Records do not show any attempt made by the Company's Government to indemnify such an unfailing and faithful friend of the British, except the payment of three thousand rupees on a previous occasion. But it will not be unreasonable to suppose that the British Government must have borne the expenses of his journeys on business of the British Government themselves, and that his labour was adequately paid for. At least, records do not indicate any complaint on the part of the Guru on this subject.

1. Sect. Cons., June 30, 1802, No. 45 ; *ante*, p. 128.
2. Sect. Cons., July 18, 1805, No. 42.
3. Sect. Cons., July 18, 1805, No. 42.



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