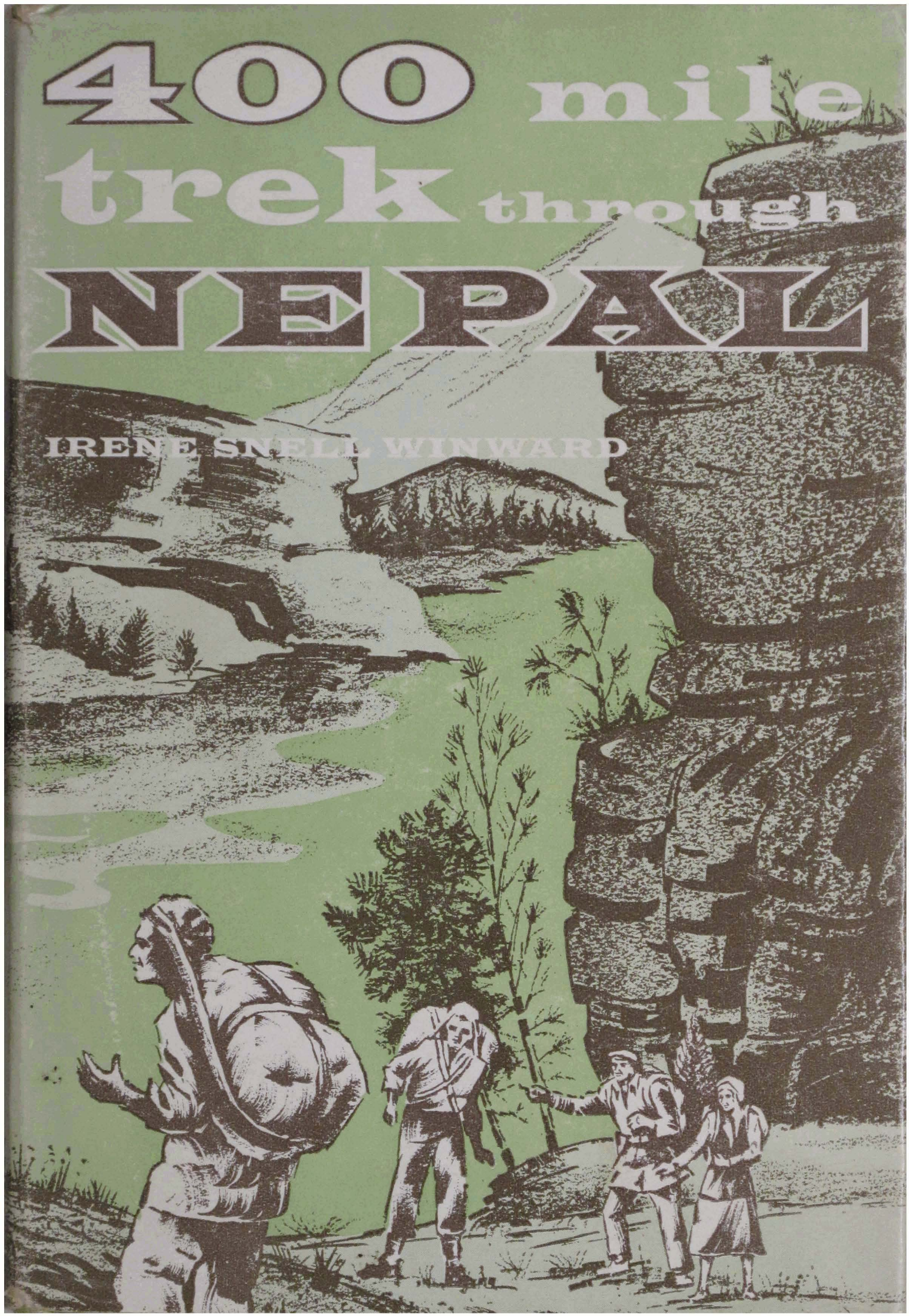
400 mile trek through NEPAL

IRENE SNELL WINWARD



400-MILE TREK THROUGH NEPAL

Many times on my missionary journeys along the Nepal-Tibetan frontier of India I have lifted the binoculars to examine the great ice walls of Api and Nampa mountain range. From icy crags the avalanche scourings led the eye to the high hills and the just-visible path to bring you to the hamlets of Nepal. For many years it was a closed land, a challenge that we accepted in prayer and intercession. Today, to a limited degree, the missionary has his opportunity.

The response to this opportunity has been heartening. It has been interpreted in several ministries and service. Not one could have been so thrilling and with such potential of spiritual results as that recorded in this book. Frank and Irene Winward are, from my personal observation and intimate Christian fellowship, two utterly devoted people who seek first the Kingdom of God. I pray that the sacrifice and tenacious spirit of these pioneers may challenge every reader to a greater effort of service and obedience to our Lord's Commission.

LEN MOULES,
British Secretary,
The Worldwide
Evangelization Crusade

The Author

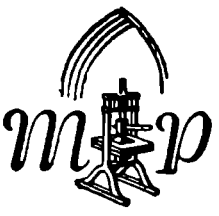
Mrs. Frank (Irene Snell) Winward, a Registered Nurse, and her husband served with the Tibetan Mission in Darjeeling, India. They undertook the hazardous 400-mile trek into the high mountains of Nepal to further minister to a young man who had been with them the year before during his recovery from an accident which took one of his legs and one of his arms. Mary Anne Winward, their little daughter and only child, was left with Swedish missionary friends at Kalimpong to await their return.

Nepal is more open today to the Gospel than it was when Mr. and Mrs. Winward began their journey under special permission. At present Mr. Winward has assumed pastoral responsibilities in England with the co-operation of Mrs. Winward and Mary Anne.

400-MILE TREK THROUGH NEPAL

By

IRENE SNELL WINWARD



MOODY PRESS
CHICAGO

Dedicated to my daughter, Mary Anne. She was seven years old when she prayed for eighteen months, morning and evening that "Mummy and Daddy would get a pass [visa] to see Goray" in Sherpaland, Nepal—the outcome is this book.

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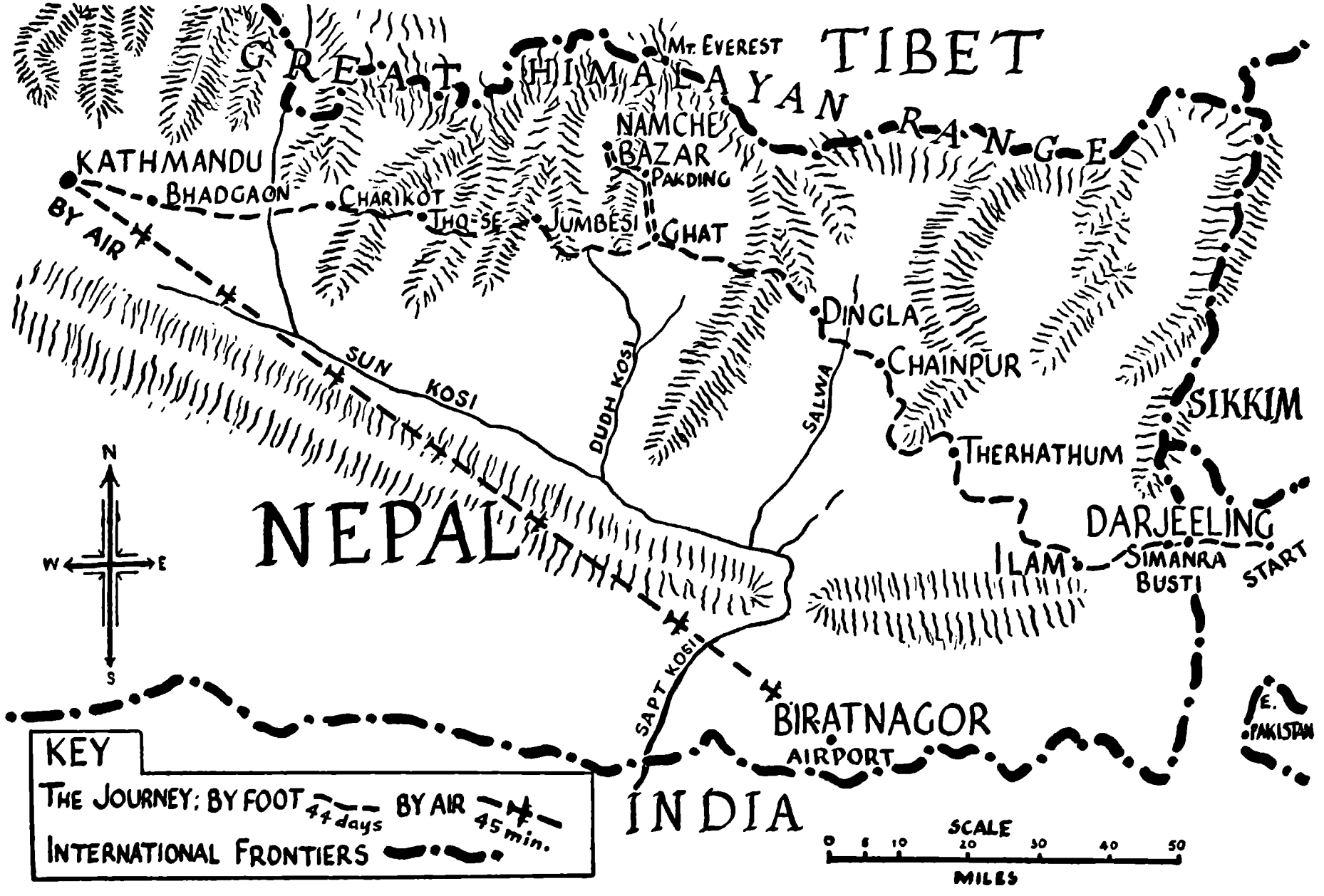
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FOREWORD

Christian Missions in Nepal

The Kingdom of Nepal was forged into its present shape and size by war and conquest. One family of petty kings overran their neighbors and established their rule across the backs of the mountain ridges for more than 500 miles east and west. Their authority was absolute and they took careful measures to keep it so.

They firmly promoted the Hindu religion with its caste system and fostered the idea that the king ruled by divine right, a right given him by the Hindu gods. They shut up their borders against the outside world and made their kingdom a "hermit nation" where none of the influences, forces and people of other nations could interfere with their rule and way of life.

About two centuries ago, in spite of these protective precautions, Roman Catholic missionaries went into Nepal and began work in Patan, next door to the capital city of Kathmandu. But their efforts came to a fast stop when they were expelled from the country because they were suspected of meddling in politics.

One long and important stride was taken toward Nepal by the great missionary scholar and pioneer, William Carey, and his colleagues when they translated the Bible into the Nepali language more than 130 years ago. How far the Bible got into the land no one can tell. Its service even then was quite limited because few people could read. But it put a strong focus upon Nepal and provided an essential tool for those who later on would be working with Nepali people.

In recent times the need for reaching Nepal with the Christian Gospel has been strongly felt by many Christians. More

than 40 years ago some Christian mothers in the Mar Thoma Church at Travancore, down in the very "bottom" of south India, were moved to dedicate their children to the Lord when the noted preacher and mystic, Sadhu Sundar Singh, visited the church and appealed for workers to go to Nepal and Tibet. Missionaries came from other lands and worked for years and years along the borders of Nepal, among the Nepalese who had spilled over into India (some think as many as 4 million), waiting prayerfully for an opportunity to go over the border and take the Gospel to those "inside."

Many of these missionaries thought of Nepal as a modern "Jericho," recalling the story of Joshua's day when the children of Israel marched around the city of Jericho, in the land of Canaan, until the walls were brought down by the power of God and they could go in and possess the city. Nepal was surrounded by high "walls" of mountains, laws and religion which gave no entrance for the Gospel. Only the power of God could remove these obstacles. It was felt that as the people of God would surround the land of Nepal with prayer and faith the day would soon come when the "walls" would come down and men could freely go in and "possess" the land for Christ.

To strengthen this concept of surrounding the land by prayer a *Nepal Border Fellowship* was formed. The missionaries who worked on the borders were separated from each other. They served under various missionary societies that often had little contact or connection with one another. They came from different foreign countries. They were deeply absorbed in the work at their immediate "border point." The *Border Fellowship* helped to bring them together. They learned to know one another. They went to visit other mission stations along the border. They corresponded with each other. Above all they found a strong unity in prayer and in faith toward the opening of Nepal. For many years

the *Border Fellowship* drew all those who were concerned about Nepal into a circle of prayer and co-operation. Perhaps more than anyone knows, it helped to make ready the day when Nepal opened the gates and invited those who had been waiting on the doorstep to come in.

In the middle of February, 1951 the "walls" began coming down. A very big change took place in the government of Nepal. With power now in the hands of different rulers, Nepal came out of hiding and set about to make friends with the rest of the world. Outsiders were invited to come in and visit Nepal and those who offered various kinds of services were given a genuine welcome. Almost right away the United States Overseas Mission came in with staff, money and equipment to help Nepal with agriculture, public education, engineering projects and other development programs. Since then Nepal has received help and services from the foreign aid programs of other nations as well. The result is that now there are several hundred foreign nationals in Nepal giving their services as advisors or technicians. They come from India, China, Russia, Switzerland, England, U.S.A. and from various agencies of the United Nations.

When the "New Nepal" was barely five months old the first Christian mission was admitted to the land. This was the Roman Catholic Mission from Patna, India (American Jesuits). They settled down within easy reach of the capital and established excellent English language schools for both boys and girls who come from the upper classes of the community.

Two young seminary students from Travancore spent their summer vacation in 1950 making a survey tour of some parts of Nepal, feeling that God had called them to work there. Then in 1952 four seminary students from the Mar Thoma Church in South India began working in Terai, the low-lying plains just inside the border from India. A few months later, in early 1953, they moved on to Kathmandu and worked as

teachers in a commercial school, also conducting English classes. They began to hold meetings for worship and preaching in a house where one of them lived and have continued having regular services ever since. With the permission of the Government they have bought a fine lot in a good location in Kathmandu and are building a hall, which in time will have all the markings and dimensions of a church.

Christians from other parts of India have also come to Nepal. Some have come on their own to make their homes and to find employment. Others have come as missionaries to preach and teach the Gospel. They come freely and are not subject to the regulations that restrict other foreign workers. Here and there they conduct meetings and in some places they are forming small Christian congregations. They have no official ties with any organized Christian missions, but there is coming to be among them a *Nepal Christian Fellowship* through which they are finding a closer relationship with one another. Thus far groups of this kind may be found in more than a dozen places. This is the emerging Church. It is too early to say what form this Church will take, but there is a strong desire among almost all of the Christians to co-operate closely with each other and to seek for one united Church throughout the country.

The regular, old-line foreign missionary societies have also been admitted to Nepal. These missions have made certain agreements with the Government which allow them to set up hospitals, dispensaries and schools, and to give other types of services useful to the community.

In 1953 one missionary group known as the *Nepali Evangelistic Band,* a British Mission, moved in from India and established themselves at Pokhara, north-west from Kathmandu about ten-days journey by walking. There they have a hospital and a leper colony and they expect to branch out to other places in the future.

The Seventh Day Adventists have also come to Nepal and have a small but excellent hospital not far from Kathmandu at a place called Banepa.

The largest organized society is the *United Mission to Nepal.* This Mission is to a very large extent the outgrowth of the *Nepal Border Fellowship.* Its immediate beginnings are in quite another direction.

From time to time various scientific expeditions were admitted into Nepal by the Government, some of them even before the revolution which came in the winter of 1950-51. Two such expeditions were led by Dr. Robert Fleming, a Methodist missionary in India, who came to Nepal searching for birds on behalf of the Chicago Natural History Museum.

On these trips he was accompanied by missionary medical doctors who gave help to large numbers of sick people that they saw along the way. Their medical services were greatly appreciated and reports of what the doctors were doing reached the capital. When later they visited Kathmandu, the Ministry of Health of the Nepal Government invited the doctors to open hospitals in Kathmandu and also in Tansen, which is in western Nepal.

This invitation was passed on to the Methodist and Presbyterian Mission Boards, under whose appointment the doctors were serving in India. It was felt that the answer to this invitation should be given by all interested missions acting together, so the invitation was passed along to the National Christian Council of India.

Before the end of 1953 members of several missions working along the borders of Nepal were called together and a *United Mission To Nepal* was formed. The Government welcomed this Mission and drew up a five-year plan of agreement by which permission was granted to open two hospitals, one in Kathmandu and one in Tansen. In January, 1954 the first

medical center was begun in Kathmandu, in a building loaned for this purpose by the Government.

Though the early work was only medical, the projects of the *United Mission* have been increased to include schools and schemes for village development. When the first plan of agreement expired at the end of five years a second plan of agreement was made with the Government for a period of ten years. The terms of this agreement may be summarized as follows:

1. Members of the Mission shall obey the laws of the land.
2. Institutions of the Mission shall be subject to the general rules framed by the Directorate within whose purview they fall.
3. The Mission shall pay its own way, and not get financial aid from the Government.
4. Government permission must be obtained to expand existing activities or open new projects.
5. Members shall not engage in extra-curricular activities which are not permitted under the law.
6. Disposal of Mission property shall be with permission of Government.
7. The Government may nationalize any or all institutions at will, and if within ten years, shall pay compensation.
8. The agreement may be renewed and revised.
9. Preference shall be given to Nepalese citizens in paid posts.

United Mission is managed by a Board made up of representatives from all participating and co-operating missions. There are now 108 Christian workers on the mission staff, representing twelve nationalities and being supported by seventeen different missions and churches of various denominations. The program of the *United Mission* has been ex-

panding swiftly and plans call for much more development in other parts of the country in the future.

In 1959 a newly adopted constitution of Nepal stated the attitude and position of the Government as to religion in the following words:

> "Every citizen, subject to the current traditions, shall practice and profess his own religion as handed down from ancient time. It is provided that no person shall be entitled to convert another person to his religion."

This law provoked many questions as to its meaning, but before it could gain any significant interpretations it was suspended together with the rest of the Constitution when the King dismissed the elected government and assumed full, royal authority in the winter of 1960-61. The situation with relation to religion then reverted to the old law. For generations it has forbidden any citizen to change his religion on pain of imprisonment. This law was brought into play at least once, when in December of 1960 several converts from Hinduism to Christianity were imprisoned in Tansen because they freely testified that they had broken the law by being baptized into the name of Christ.

It is not strange that such incidents should happen in a country that today is boldly breaking with a medieval past and taking to itself all the confusing advances of the modern world. Such changes do not come easily or gently. They are attended by strife and upheaval. And Christians who move in upon a closely protected sanctuary of ancient pagan religion, such as that of Nepal, can hardly expect to escape sharing in the tug and pull that is part of the process when a nation is being reborn.

—Paul J. Lindell
World Mission Prayer League
Minneapolis

PREFACE

ENTERING THE "CLOSED LAND" OF NEPAL, to visit one Sherpa friend, Goray Angmingma, Sherpaland, Nepal, was so different from going to the "closed lands" of Tibet and Sikkim. Those lands we seemed just to enter (of course always with a government pass) but for Nepal it took nearly 18 months to secure the necessary visas. Then we had to pay ten rupees each! It did seem a lot when for Tibet and Sikkim we only paid eight annas for the Frontier Pass, and in Sikkim they allowed us to use their Dak Bungalows (government rest houses) for one night free of charge as we had a medical pass. The first time we applied to go to Namche Bazaar, Nepal, we did not receive a reply and wondered if our letter had reached the right people. Later, when in the capital, Kathmandu, the British ambassador informed us he had never received our application (not unusual in the East!). We did receive an answer over the Radio! We listened seldom to the news, but on one rare occasion we did. The announcer on the All India Radio said, "No foreigners will be allowed to enter Nepal for six weeks," so we were not unduly disappointed at receiving no reply.

We did not apply again until one year later. Owing to pressure of work, we could not have gone if permission had been granted. This time a reply came from the British Ambassador, saying that ours was an unusual request but they hoped to give us a favorable reply soon. They did—but the letter authorizing the issue of visas went astray in the post!

Our unusual request: We had been the means of helping a young Sherpa lad who was almost electrocuted; that necessitated a complete amputation of his right arm and leg. We first contacted him on one of our routine visits to the hospital. For days it was "touch and go" whether he would live or die. He rallied, only to be a sad, despondent boy with no hope in life or the future. After one year he was well enough to be discharged, the doctors needed his bed. Where could he go? Many of his friends had deserted him. It was impossible for him to walk with only one arm and leg, or even to use a crutch. We brought him to our mission where he stayed for nearly three months. During this time, having heard the "Good News of the Gospel," which he accepted, his life was like a flower opening to the sun. What a change in his face and life—now a happy, normal boy again! We sent to Calcutta and obtained an artificial leg and my husband made an arm for him with a hook. I question if we have ever seen a happier boy than he was on the day when he was able to walk again. Round and round our house he went, disregarding polished floors, gradually finding his equilibrium. A few days of practice and he was walking well, then he returned to his home in Pakding, Namche Bazaar, Nepal, about twenty-two days' march from Darjeeling, the only "modum factum" being one's own two legs. A friend carried him most of the way. Also Goray had a little money due to him for work done before the accident. My husband went with him to collect it, but on arriving at the place, the employer said: "I am sorry I have not got the money now." Using one of our English phrases in the Nepali language, he quoted "You can't get blood out of a stone. But if you come on July 1, I will give you the money." Goray, of course, was disappointed as he was leaving before that date. The man assured him if he could not come he would give it to my husband. We had heard these tales

before in India, but my husband Frank went in July and fortunately obtained the money. Our unusual request was to take this money to our friend. It was only 75 rupees but to him it meant wages for two months. Though it cost us over 1,000 rupees to get it to him, plus many hair-raising experiences, it was worth it.

On the third application our visas for Nepal really came duly stamped on our British passports. They were in our possession for several months before we used them because they arrived when the monsoon was in full force. We postponed our trek as long as we could, owing to unusual floods, but finally left on August 23, 1954, as it was imperative that we utilize our visas before August 31, 1954. Before we left there were plenty of "Job's comforters" and "wet blankets." One would say, "The roads in Nepal at this time are impassable, impossible and the rivers too deep and the currents too swift." Even the newspapers seemed to confirm this, as on Monday, August 16, there was a large column in the "Statesman" with the following heading:—

600 LIVES LOST IN NEPAL. WORST FLOOD DISASTER IN 50 YEARS.

Our next "comforter" said we would die of fever as there were so many valleys to go through; another said, "The Communists will capture you." None of these friends reminded us that there was a living God who was able to take care of us, but just before leaving we read "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." We did not expect an easy time—nor did we have it—but we did reach our goal, proving "where there's a will there's a way."

We also made this a medical tour, giving free medicines to those who needed them.

Chapter 1

THE DAY DAWNED

I AWAKENED TO REMEMBER that this was the day to start for Nepal. We are not the excitable type, but were rather thrilled at starting a new adventure, especially as most folks considered us "mad" to go in the height of the monsoon. The day was full of promise; it was not even raining and the magnificent Himalayan snows were also showing, but one "fly in the ointment" was the failure of one of our coolies to make his appearance at the appointed time. Our party consisted of three coolies, so a third of our strength missing was a great setback. Fortunately, a replacement was quickly found and the shadow of a delayed start soon disappeared. In addition to the agreed rate of pay, these three coolies asked for a pair of Lava (rubber) boots as "starting" baksheesh. We did not think this was a "tall order" so supplied them so that they at least started happily. Frank went with the three to buy the boots, but their wide, flat, duck-like feet caused a problem. In the end they were fitted out with boots three sizes too big to accommodate their width! They returned wearing their new blue and white rubber boots, full of pride, then the defaulting coolie put in his appearance with a sheepish look on his face. When we asked him why he had come so late, he casually said, "Well, I went to see some of my friends and relatives and they insisted that I stay awhile as I was going on this long trek and we just had a party." This usually means plenty of Chang (beer) which flows like

water and everyone gets merry. Drunkenness in the east is not considered to be out of order—they say it adds to the merriment of a party! He looked as if he was suffering badly from a "hangover," and we informed him that now we could not take him. We gave him a letter to Tenzing Sherpa, hero of Mount Everest, whom we knew was recruiting coolies for other expeditions; for about ten days before we started our trip to Nepal we had made tentative arrangements with three other Sherpa coolies, but in the meanwhile Tenzing had sent his man to recruit as many coolies as he could, so ours naturally rallied to him, owing to the good rate of remuneration and the excellent equipment that was given gratis, which naturally we could not give.

Just about half an hour before we started for Nepal I met Tenzing Sherpa and jokingly said to him, "Do you know you stole our coolies?" (He knew nothing about what had gone before). "I am so sorry," he replied sympathetically, but I informed him that we now had made a "pucca bandubust" (proper arrangement) with some more Sherpa coolies. He thanked us and wished us good luck and a good journey to Namche Bazaar. I said right from my heart, "And God bless you too." We think Tenzing is one of the most charming men we have ever met. He has no "side," has time for all, even the children, and is quite humble even since his great achievement of scaling the highest peak in the world, Mt. Everest, 29,002 feet.

Just before leaving at 10:30 A.M. for Manay Bhanjan, which is on the border of Nepal, Tashi, one of our Tibetan friends, came and put Katas around our necks (Tibetan ceremonial scarves). It is customary to receive these before leaving for a long journey and at many other times. They are made of fine white muslin and sometimes silk, about 1½ yards long, by 14 inches wide.

The first 15 miles, from Darjeeling to Manay Bhanjan, we

did by Landrover (Jeep); round the winding paths of the mountains we went passing a gang of men squatting under their umbrellas, as it had begun to rain. They were mending the little Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, nicknamed, "Don't-hurry-Railway." Since the regrouping of the railways it has been changed to North Eastern Railway, with just as good a nickname, "Never-early-Railway." Farther along the road were coolie women weeding the path by the mountainside. They were sitting under their homemade umbrellas called "ghooms," which consist of a thin double lattice work of bamboo with dried leaves between, made in the shape of the cover of a half-open book. They seem to serve well the purpose of keeping the women dry and also keeping the wind out.

Four miles from Darjeeling we came to Ghoom, which many folk have renamed Gloom owing to its misty weather. Certainly it was as we passed through, for there was a thick mist, it was cold and breezy and pouring rain. The hill motor drivers on the whole are quite good, but they have developed a technique of their own, using the ignition switch as the controlling method instead of the clutch, thereby saving petrol. This they did on every occasion that offered the slightest declivity, on roads where every furlong undulates steeply. So one can imagine the times this switch is used. Nevertheless, we arrived at the border without any mishaps. This is not always the case as so many of the vehicles are very dilapidated. Tires used until they are threadbare make punctures almost a common occurrence. The one thing that puzzled us, with petrol pumps so few and far between, was why they seldom filled up with sufficient petrol for the complete journey. There was often a sudden petering out of the engine, and a surprised look on the driver's face as he slid out of his seat, lifted up the bonnet and started tinkering. A few minutes later, scratching his head, he confirmed

our suspicions as in a nonchalant tone he uttered, "Tel Chinna" (no petrol). That caused us, the passengers, to wait sometimes several hours, either in the tropical sun or in the torrential rain, according to the season, until petrol was obtained. We seldom traveled in comfort unless we hired the whole car, Landrover or jeep, for the driver packed in as many as possible. I will not give you the approximate number they can get in as you would certainly have a shock and there was worse ahead! The only time the driver seemed slightly concerned was when a policeman came in sight, then he shouted out, "Eh! you there, duck down and make yourselves look like luggage." They obliged!

At Manay Bhanjan the Indian police checked our passports, dubiously eyeing us, obviously thinking, "Here are a couple of fools to start such a long journey with only three coolies and no special equipment in such weather." We left India, cars, roads and civilization as most of us understand it, and entered Nepal, the climber's paradise, but not to us owing to the weather. We were exceedingly thankful to our heavenly Father and the Nepal authorities for the privilege to make this unusual tour—a 400-mile trek through Nepal.

Though the day started with glorious sunshine it soon turned to typical monsoon weather, making the narrow paths as slippery as ice and in many places it seemed we were walking through swift flowing streams. We had been going only a short while when there was a cry of pain from one of our coolies and we turned around to see that he had slipped. Our food box that he was carrying was lying "upside down" on the ground. His knee was sprained, but we treated him and prayed, then he was able to make the grade slowly to the first Tea Shop in Nepal. We all had tea and Nepali bread, and the strange thing was the coolies insisted on paying for us. It is usually the other way, they expect to be paid

for, but this was the first day, so we let them do it. Then we had to walk downhill all the way to the next house, which was several miles away; it was a tea shop cum inn. As the rain appeared to be increasing its torrential force, an unusual hurricane wind was blowing. The coolie's gait was being slowed down by his injured knee; we were all like drowned "rats" so decided to call it a day. The landlord welcomed us and had a blazing open fire with an enormous pot of Chang (beer) brewing on top of it. The smell from the pot did not entice us, but to "drowned rats," the warmth did and the owner most obligingly removed the Chang to enable us to dry quickly. I slipped off my divided skirt (being in my petticoat would not embarrass anyone in the east). One of the coolies wrung out my skirt and dried it for me, and soon I was fully dressed. The Sherpa coolies were very willing to help us get dry; they were not bothering about themselves. I informed them they must dry *their* clothes as they might get sick or even die, but to this they just laughed, and one of them, as if to please me (he had at *least* two or perhaps three soaking wet shirts on, and two pair of trousers, not uncommon in the east) simply bent his body and leaned over the fire for a few minutes to dry his clothes that way! In the middle of this act, when we all seemed to have smelly wet socks or shoes in our hands, trying to dry them, several angry-looking cows appeared at the door and would have entered. This was usually where they stayed at night, but their gotala (shepherd) quickly came and drove them away. They looked really peeved at being sent out in pouring rain (or was it my imagination?). He fed them outside. So much water was added to their diet that night that perhaps it made more milk.

The coolies cooked potatoes for their evening meal and gave us some, insisting on peeling them. The innkeeper's wife made us tea, and we had a couple of buns and some

Gorgonzola cheese. We ate this and retired for the night. They gave us the "best" room to sleep in, with their gods, and the usual little oil lamp. It was their storeroom as well and they had maunds (a maund is 80 lbs.) of potatoes lying everywhere on the ground. I wondered how many rats would come to feed or to visit, but they disappointed me, not one came. Perhaps they were afraid to leave their den in the terrific storm. We put our air mattresses down on the floor, slipped into our sleeping bags and tried to sleep. What a night! It had rained constantly and heavily since we arrived; now the wind was shrieking so loudly that we wondered if the house would be standing in the morning, or if we would look out and find floods everywhere as had happened in many parts of Nepal and Tibet so recently. We had a tent with us but how thankful we were for this inn for we knew that no tent would be able to stand the terrific rain and howling wind.

Later, the husband and wife came to bed, bringing their youngest child. The other children they left in the other room with our coolies. It was the tea shop with all sleeping round the dying embers of the open fire. After the landlord and wife had become settled they put the little lamp out. I thought, "Now it is dark, I will be able to sleep," but I was mistaken. The noise outside—the worst rain and wind I had ever experienced in my life was terrifying. Later we discovered that eleven inches of rain had fallen that night. It seemed possible that anything could have happened, sleep seemed so far away. My mind wandered to the newspaper headings for the last week—"600 LOST THEIR LIVES IN NEPAL! WORST FLOODS FOR 50 YEARS." Here we were, right in that very land. Also reported:"2,000 LIVES LOST IN FLOODS IN GYANTSE TIBET." We could hardly believe this report of the floods because the normal rainfall is so low in Tibet. In India too, there were floods everywhere. Every half-hour or

so the wife or proprietor would light the lamp and get up to shut a window that the wind had forced open, or to see if the animals were still safe. Yes, this was a night you thought anything could happen. How thankful I was to be able to pray and get real comfort at that time. Finally, in the early hours of the morning, I dozed off.

The day *did* dawn, but the weather was the same; wind and heavy rain. I looked out of a little window to see if we were flooded. I was very surprised to see land, with only a galloping stream running wild a few yards from the house. I was feeling very weary with so little sleep, but we got up, hoping for an early start. The coolies were chanting their Buddhist prayers in the next room, muttering unintelligibly except for the oft repeated formula "Om mani pani hum" (O, thou Jewel of the Lotus). A little girl hearing the Buddhists say this so many times, said to her Mother "Mummy, it sounds as if they are saying, "Oh, Mummy, take me home!"

There was a stir everywhere. All the members of the family were doing different chores; one child reviving the dying embers with his hands, and his blowing through a piece of hollow bamboo was soon rewarded with a warm fire. Another was carrying water from the nearby stream, filling up the barrels for the day's use, sweeping the floor with a "hit and miss" touch. Mother was caring for the baby and seeing to the food. Father was looking after the animals, helped by his very little son. Our coolies were packing up their things for we all longed to get moving. They informed us this was impossible as not far from the shop was our first river crossing and until the rains subsided the river would be swollen and impassable. When would the rains cease? It had been raining continually for over 24 hours. By 11:30 A.M. there was a break in the weather. The heavy rain ceased so we pushed on, hoping to make up for lost time by going

quickly, but this was easier said than done for we had to go so slowly because the path downhill was shining like a polished floor and of course just as slippery. "Slow and sure" was our motto.

We came to our first river in Nepal; I remembered that just before this we had met our first Job's comforter who started the customary trail of questions that continued almost daily and sometimes dozens of times a day during the whole journey to Namche Bazaar: "Where are you going?" "Where have you come from?" "Why have you come?" "What is your business?" We told them the main reason for coming was to visit our friend Goray Sherpa who lived right at the foot of Mount Everest. We had been able to help him (when he was in India) in time of tragedy when he had lost his right arm and leg. Very few, if any, believed us. Then our "wet-blanket" would continue, "But don't you know you can't go any farther, the rivers are swift and swollen and impassable, and there are many landslides." On and on with their tales of woe, but we did not heed them. We went on and on, and I thought of the poem by Joaquin Miller about Christopher Columbus the discoverer of America, "Sail On."

Behind him lay the grey Azores,
  Behind the gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
  Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: "Now we must pray,
  For, lo! the very stars are gone.
Brave Admiral speak, what shall I say?"
  Why, say, "Sail on! Sail on! Sail on!

"My men grow mutinous day by day:
  My men grow ghastly wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
    of salt washed his swarthy cheek.

"What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,
If we sight naught but sea at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day,
Sail on! Sail on! Sail on! and on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
"This mad sea shows its teeth tonight.
He curls his lips, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth as if to bite.
Brave Admiral, say but one good word;
What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leaped like a leaping sword:
"SAIL ON! SAIL ON! SAIL ON! AND ON!"

Then pale and worn he kept his deck
And peered through darkness. Ah! that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck—
A LIGHT! A LIGHT! A LIGHT! A LIGHT!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled:
It grew, to be time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave a world
Its grandest lesson: ON, SAIL ON.

—JOAQUIN MILLER

Chapter 2

RIVERS AND SHIVERS!

LINKING HANDS TOGETHER, we all started to wade across the first river, over wet slippery boulders, visible and invisible. This river was like a snake, turning back on itself as we crossed it seven times at different places within an hour or so. "Practice makes perfect" they say, and certainly this was the beginning of our adventurous and hair-raising experiences.

Soon we came to a second river, eighth crossing. This was a little different for it had a bridge consisting solely of bamboos, very narrow and rickety, hardly anything to hold on to, but welcome. Over and a few more yards nearer our goal, but still 180 miles to go to accomplish half our tour. What a beautiful land Nepal is! Hundreds of hills and valleys and more shades of green than an artist could do justice to. Fascinating rivers, crystal-like spring and waterfalls, but very few bridges. Sometimes the rivers crossed us and we shivered until the sun dried us! The jungles, too, were filled with many kinds of trees and aromas.

Again it was pouring rain, but many were working in their fields planting rice, for they know "No work, no food." They would stop and standing oftentimes knee-deep in water and mud have a few words with us. The question to puzzle them most was, "Why have you come to our land at such a time as this and on bad roads?" It was not easy to give the whys and wherefores in a few minutes.

By late afternoon we had our first contact with a Nepal

Customs Office. We climbed up very rickety stairs and entered a room with scarcely headspace to be confronted by a group of men sitting cross-legged on the floor with reams of paper scattered everywhere. Two officers indifferently checked our Nepalese Visas. They were far more interested in our British Passports and the various Visas. Then we came to a tea shop. How welcome this was and the varied tea which they made! We knew that in a day or two we would be leaving shops, above all tea shops, as we journeyed into the "sticks."

As the evening was drawing nigh, we looked for a place to stay, because pitching tent in the pouring rain was not inviting. Soon a Marwari came and offered us one of his empty shops. We thanked him profusely and entered. It was quite dirty and not free from lice and rats, but it was surprising what a difference one good sweep made. The coolies lit their fire in a corner, and we used our primus stove—which amused the crowds gathered to stare at it. There was a school in this place so some of the children tried out their very limited English on us. They asked very slowly and deliberately "WHAT-IS-YOUR-NAME?" "WHERE-DO-YOU-LIVE?" and then, producing English books, insinuated that they wanted a real English lesson, which we gave them. One boy came and asked me to translate the poem,

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
How I wonder what you are"

into Nepali. Between giving this English lesson and answering all their questions our three Sherpa coolie friends, who were trying to do everything they could to please us, brought to me a welcome mug of smoky tea and even pulled off my wet socks and shoes and dried them. They say "a new broom sweeps clean" but we hoped it would last because we were at their mercy.

It would be good to tell their names and a brief personal description: Nima Dorjee, 40 years of age, our oldest and smallest coolie. He was the "boss of the show," perhaps by nature, but also because the other two were his young nephews. He started being first class but later drink got hold of him and he deteriorated. We nicknamed him "General" which name he liked.

Nga-Ten-Pa, 22 years of age was next. He had been on several expeditions to the high mountains so knew the ropes. He, too, liked a drink, but seemed to know when to stop.

Dorjee, 17 years of age, was the youngest. Although rather inexperienced he was willing to learn. He was the one who slipped on the first day, but they all seemed to have minor accidents in turn. He was scared of crossing many of the bridges with a load, but Nga-Ten-Pa was like a big brother, always willing to help him. The good thing about Dorjee was that he did not drink and we could rely on him.

None of the three Sherpas smoked, which was rather unusual. Many children in the east learn this habit when very young. I can well remember how shocked I was when I first saw a little girl about two years old, after having a good drink of her mother's milk (they often feed them until they are five years old, unless another one arrives before this) and, having been satisfied, leave and take a Biri (country cigarette) light it with a match of a piece of wood taken out of the open fire and smoke it like an old man. We saw a little girl about five years old pleading crossly with tears and temper in her eyes. So I asked her mother, "What does she want?" She replied, "She wants a Biri." I said, "Surely she does not smoke?" The mother answered laughingly, "Oh! yes she does." When I enquired how many she smoked a day she told me "Just as many as I do. If I smoke ten she does, if I smoke 20 a day she does the same." Another thing that horrified me was the casual way they shared a cigarette.

First one would have a few puffs, and then he would pass it on to all his friends. That surely helped to spread contagious diseases, especially T.B., so prevalent there.

We started to cook our evening meal while the crowd watched us. That night we planned sausages and chips, chocolate, biscuits and plenty of tea. We had to plan our meals according to where we stayed. To cook beef sausages in a Hindu house would be to highly insult them. They do not eat beef; they consider the cow to be holy. If our sausages were pork, we would not dare to cook them in a Mohammedan house, or even in some of the high cast Hindu homes. They never touch that kind of meat. What were our sausages that night? The label said, *Beef and Pork Sausages!* It was just as well we were occupying an empty shop as we did not want to offend.

Finishing the evening meal and completely satisfied, we wanted to sleep. How to get rid of the crowd that had gathered? In the fading light we could see that many were nudging each other. One was saying, "You ask," and the next one, "No, you." Finally I asked them what they wanted. After some giggling a boy said, "Will you sing to us?" I did on condition that they would sing to us too. They agreed and after my turn they sang a song which I had never heard, about Tenzing Sherpa. They asked if I had met him and they were very interested to know that he had only lived a stone's throw from our Mission.

Tittering and nudging continued, but finally the ringleader asked, "Do you have medicines with you?" "Yes, we do," I replied. We had hoped to keep them until we got out into the "sticks" but here was a need so we started to treat him and the others. We gave one boy his worm medicines, white tablets for first thing in the morning, followed by brown tablets one hour later, before he had anything to eat. Wrapped separately there should be no mistake. He took

them and thanked us. Putting one little packet into each ear, he said, "This one first, and one hour later, the other." I wonder if he kept them in his ears all night! Another boy who had been a soldier and had mixed with Europeans in India came forward and asked if I had any "springs." Repeating with a question, "Springs? No, I am sorry I don't have any." "Don't you?" he asked in a surprised tone. So I thought, and then asked, "What are they for?" Rubbing his hand across his head he said, "You know, those tablets for headaches." "Oh!" I exclaimed knowingly, "You mean aspirins?" "Yes, yes," he affirmed, "that's right." He went off satisfied as did many others. We often extracted teeth by the roadside or syringed ears from which dead spiders and such would be turned out to the relief of the patient.

One little boy was pushed into asking what my little Nepalese brooch in the shape of a Kukri (Nepalese knife) was. Though only two inches long the knife came out of its sheath. "This is *my* knife," I told them, much to the surprise of all the children and adults. "I have it in case a Chor (thief) comes at night." They all laughed merrily, knowing that it was no good for a real thief. Their questions were going to be endless, so we said, "You'd better go home. It is getting dark and the bears will come." "We don't have any bears here," they assuringly replied. Finally they went. Frank mended one of our umbrellas and my plastic macintosh which had been damaged in the day's escapade. The man who invents a plastic mackintosh that will not tear will make a name.

Turning to settle for the night we discovered the rain was coming in. Up went umbrellas inside the shop and we went to sleep.

I awakened next day to hear someone saying: *"Ram, Ram, Sita Ram"* the name of one of the Hindu Gods. We opened the door, the only means of letting in the light and fresh air,

although there were cracks and holes in the walls and a roof that let in rain and wind. I went to the nearby stream for a wash but Nima Dorjee informed me he had hot water on his fire. I thanked him and said jokingly I did not need it as I was a Tibetan now. It was not essential to wash *too* well! For this trip I had forgotten to take toothpaste so we had to use salt, soda or the good earth to clean our teeth. They were good substitutes, but we were very glad when we got back to our favorite toothpaste.

After we opened the door, the children came running to us, and the first one passed on news excitedly, "Yes, they are still here." Innumerable questions I tried to answer while I cooked the breakfast. They started with, "Have you any children?"

"Yes, we have one daughter," we replied, "seven years of age, named Mary Anne."

"Why did you not bring her?"

"Because this is such a bad time of the year, and your roads and rivers are so bad."

"Where is she?" several asked.

"In Kalimpong with some of our good Swedish friends."

Then the crowd of children, which had grown in number, said, "Please bring her next time you come."

If there is a next time we would certainly choose another season of the year. Then Mary Anne might be able to manage it. She had done much traveling over the Himalayan mountains. Mary Anne once went to Yatang, Tibet, when only 18 months, crossing the Ge-Lap-La (14,390 ft.) and in Sikkim several times.

These Nepalese children were lovable, just typical of hill children, rosy of cheek like pomegranates and, of course, with snub running noses. It was raining hard, and most of the children were wet. They had neither umbrellas nor anything to keep them dry. What is more, they did not seem

to mind about being wet, although personally I think there is nothing worse than being drenched and having to stay that way.

Chapter 3

MAPS, BATS AND RATS!

WE HAD MOVED on into unknown Nepal. How much easier it would have been if we had had a map of this part of the country, but they were unobtainable in India and not usually granted to the likes of us. They were for mountaineers. Even in Kathmandu we tried for maps but none were available. Several of our good friends tried their best to obtain one. Since our return we wrote to the Survey of India that we had just completed a tour from India to, Namche Bazaar, via Elam and then on to Kathmandu and we would like a map to see just where we had been. Here is their reply: "It is regretted the map of Nepal in 3 sheets, on scale 1"—8 miles is not available for issue at present owing to recent Government order." We were fortunate enough to *see* a map of the very part we covered in Nepal. A friend has kindly photographed this one so that you can see where we went.

Starting off again with dry shoes and socks we desired to keep them like that for many hours. Expectations were short lived. Just outside the village was the first river to cross. I tossed up the idea of taking off my shoes and socks and going barefoot through the river. My husband, Frank, did this, but to me it seemed such a bother. I waded through this river with mine on and waited for Frank as he slowly replaced his on the opposite side. I felt a little envious of his dry shoes and socks, but behold, as we turned the next corner

of the mountain, there was another river before us! Frank did the same as before. One of his pet aversions is wet footwear. At the next river he gave a disgusted "Pooh" and went through with shoes on! I smiled at previous wasted time and energy. What a day! Just one of innumerable crossings of rivers, streams and brooks, although this did not detract from enjoyment of wonderful scenery. Trees everywhere, of many descriptions, out of which various kinds of ferns were growing and giving a veritable galaxy of feather foliage only seen in rainy season. There were huge cacti, some great bushes. Trees at least one hundred feet high had glorious orchids hanging from them. The ones seen on that particular day were beautiful yellow ones hanging like golden pineapples. The desire was to pluck them, but they were not within reach. Nepal is considered a land without real bridges. I must remember that we did cross one pucca bridge that day, besides the many difficult rivers where any kind of bridges would have been most acceptable.

There was a new hazard added to our journey, landslides, all kinds and too many to count. The inevitable Job's comforters came to tell that the road was impassable and naturally impossible. At the first big landslide a group came to tell that the day before seven had died when the landslide occurred. Later several had become stuck in the mud up to their waists and they had to pay men two Rupees each (42 cents) to get them out. An elderly Nepalese woman came up to me, repeating this story, perhaps because I did not seem concerned or worried, perhaps because she did not know if I had understood what they said. This time she used a few more actions with her hands showing how far up the mud and slush came, and using her two fingers, which she put right in front of my face, saying most emphatically that they had to give two Rupees (42 cents) each to get out of the mud. She seemed to think it was a terrific amount of

money to pay. I thought it very reasonable. We arrived at this landslide and thought it certainly was a bad one. Due to the heavy rains and the fact that it occurred only the previous day, the situation was still fraught with danger. The whole hillside seemed to be a moving mass with plenty of mud, water and scree. We put our best foot forward and immediately started to sink. First, it was ankle deep, but as we moved on it was knee deep. I began to wonder if I would have to pay someone to pull me out! We both had presence of mind to lift one foot up, sometimes with great difficulty, and place it further forward, hoping to rest on a rock. I never realized before how heavy one's legs could feel when covered with mud. What a mess we were in when we reached the other side. We were thankful for water and soon cleaned up a little. This was the first of many landslides. The lesson—"when crossing a landslide never stop—keep going." Our three Sherpa coolies managed excellently, carrying their heavy loads as if they had wings. They walked over the mud as well as any mountain goat would have done. They went barefoot. We had given them all blue and white canvas rubber shoes, but they had worn them for the first 15 miles of the journey, which was done by Landrover. Perhaps they were keeping them for homecoming in Nepal to look smart. It is quite a usual sight in the east to see Nationals carrying their shoes in their hands or around their necks. Often they are too big or too small, then naturally they hurt. Most of them are not used to them so can walk much better without. They will always slip them on before they arrive at the house they are visiting. At the door it may be the custom to take the shoes off before entering.

We met one of the few Nepalese policemen; he looked surprised to see us, perhaps due to our bedraggled appearance. He confirmed that seven were killed the previous day, and they had just recovered the bodies lower down the river.

Over the mountain, and we soon came to a tea shop, a very welcome place on tour, especially as Nima Dorjee reminded us again that in a day or two there would be no more tea shops until we reached the capital of Nepal, Kathmandu about 350 miles away. We had to do the whole trek on foot so it would be a few weeks before we would see tea shops again.

A Nepalese tea shop is usually fairly clean, though when a friend of ours in Australia saw one on our colored film she said, "I would not keep my chickens in that." They keep chickens in it as well as the customers. In the daytime one often sees ducks, dogs, cats, sheep, goats and pigs going in and out. At night a few more may be added—cows and calves are included unless they have a cow shed. Imagine what it is like to be guests for the night. You settle in your sleeping bag and then hear flick, flick, flick! It is a dog at your head and soon you begin to scratch, scratch, scratch! The parasite the dog has got rid of has come to you! This is not to mention innumerable rats that run about here, there and everywhere. My husband had one in his sleeping bag and was not too scared. One night I was trying hard to go to sleep though I found this was not easy. I kept hearing movements like the rattle of cups and thought, "I do wish those coolies would stop drinking and get to sleep." Suddenly one of them shouted, "*Mensabib* (Mrs.) have you got anything to eat by you for I think there is a rat there." Like lightning I sat bolt upright and put my flashlight on to see the cheeky RAT, with his ears cocked up trying to walk off with my set of teeth! How thankful I was he didn't. They did take a few of our valuable possessions.

Most tea shops are made with mud walls and thatched roofs. The walls are plastered with local cement, like mud, which is sometimes red and sometimes white. Inside they usually have a few benches and plain wooden tables with an

open wood fire in one corner and shelves on which they put brass tea glasses. These are in the shape of the silver cups one sees at school sports. Sometimes they will sell Roti (Nepalese bread) but always there will be tea, usually smoked, hot, cold, or indifferent with sugar or salt. Most of the Nepali tea shops will have a vase of flowers inside, as the Nepalese are very fond of flowers and they will have pots of growing flowers.

After our "cup that cheers" we moved on in the pouring rain, and a terrific wind which made it impossible to keep our light-weight macs. where they ought to be. Every endeavor to adjust them sent trickles of cold rainwater running up arms and also down necks!

My husband exclaimed, "Why do you walk through the water when there is a path?" This is a very silly thing to do, but as a woman I must have an answer. I thought and replied, "Well, I am like a mule, I am just following the caravan." I was following the coolies; they were barefooted. Drenched with rain and with many rivers before us, I had crossed with my shoes on. Many times the coolies said, "*Memsahib,* you must take your shoes off to get across this river [or bridge]." I found it impossible because my feet were tender.

We came to another part of the road that was completely under water, so I shouted to my husband, "Frank, keep to the path, darling!"

The rain eased, and the sun started to shine. What a difference this made! Off came our macs. The sun helped to dry our clothes as we walked. Nepal is sparsely populated, yet every house had young children. I am sure that if many crowded cities of the world could be evacuated to Nepal there would be room for each family to have a house and a lovely garden. The latter would have to be on the slope of a mountain. How hard those villagers worked! They really

believed and knew, "No work, no food." They seemed to use everything. We saw Nepalese using the outside leaves of the corn on the cob to make lovely strong baskets.

We came to a village school. The teacher was pleased to see us, particularly as we were from India. He said, "You come from Darjeeling and teach people about God?" "Yes," we replied. Then he told us, "I have a Bible and teach your songs to my school." Wondering if I had heard right I asked him to let the children sing and they did—"It is a wonderful thing that God loves me." His mother gave us a cucumber for baksheesh (gift). We ate it and found it most refreshing, so much so that when we came to the next tea shop we decided not to stop but to press on. The owner of the shop shouted to us: "Please stop, I want to ask you something." Reluctantly we went in and had tea and some bad *tukpa* (kind of macaroni) soup and never did discover what it was he had wanted to ask us.

The sun began to set when we arrived at the village where we were all glad to stay for the night. The Headman accommodated us. As the coolies put down their loads they said, half in Nepali and half in Tibetan: *"Bala Bala Lep Song"* which means, "With difficulty we have arrived." They were not complaining, just stating a fact. This phrase we heard hundreds of times en route.

This was a picturesque, clean village. Many of the villagers had freshly cleaned their houses with whitish mud, giving a cement appearance, or with cow dung, which they use for so many things especially for cooking purposes. You can always tell when it is eventide as you see the smoke ascending through the roofs of their houses, winding its way heavenward. They cook their meal before retiring, but the same can be seen first thing in the morning. Often in the daytime their villages are almost deserted as they are out in the fields working.

Before we settled, a crowd gathered and the children were full of the usual questions. They giggled and pushed each other to ask the question, but as they did not speak I asked them what they wanted to know. To this they all shyly put their hands over their mouths, and said, "Nothing." I have learned that this means "Something." Finally, one boy took courage: "Jesus Christ is your God?" "Yes," I happily told him. "Ram's mine," he remarked.

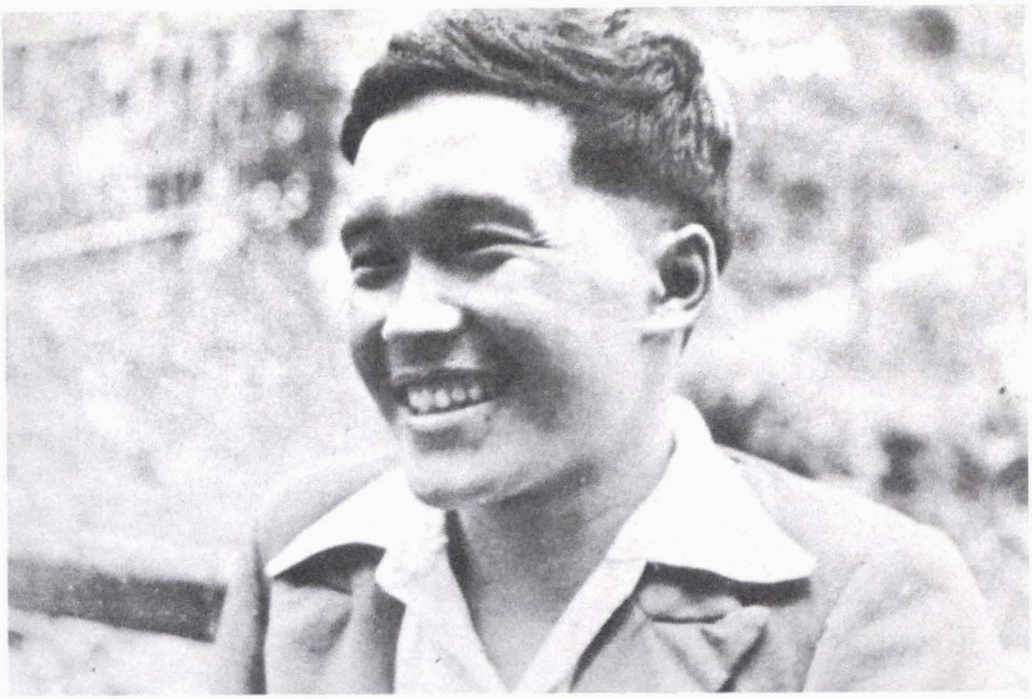
We told the crowd we had brought them good medicines, free of charge to those who really needed them. If only you could have seen their expressions. "Good medicines—free of charge," the news went round the village like wild fire. We could not believe there could be so many sick, or so many get sick overnight, in one village! We had to stop giving medicines and say we would give them early in the morning. We cooked our simple evening meal and retired, almost exhausted. Sleep did not come easily as we were on the first floor of a wooden hut. Some Nepalese underneath talked all night and their dogs barked incessantly. We did not have so many rats as bats which constantly fluttered here and there. Although it was a hot night I tucked my head inside the sheet of my sleeping bag and tried to sleep. I had no desire to have them get into my hair.

Chapter 4

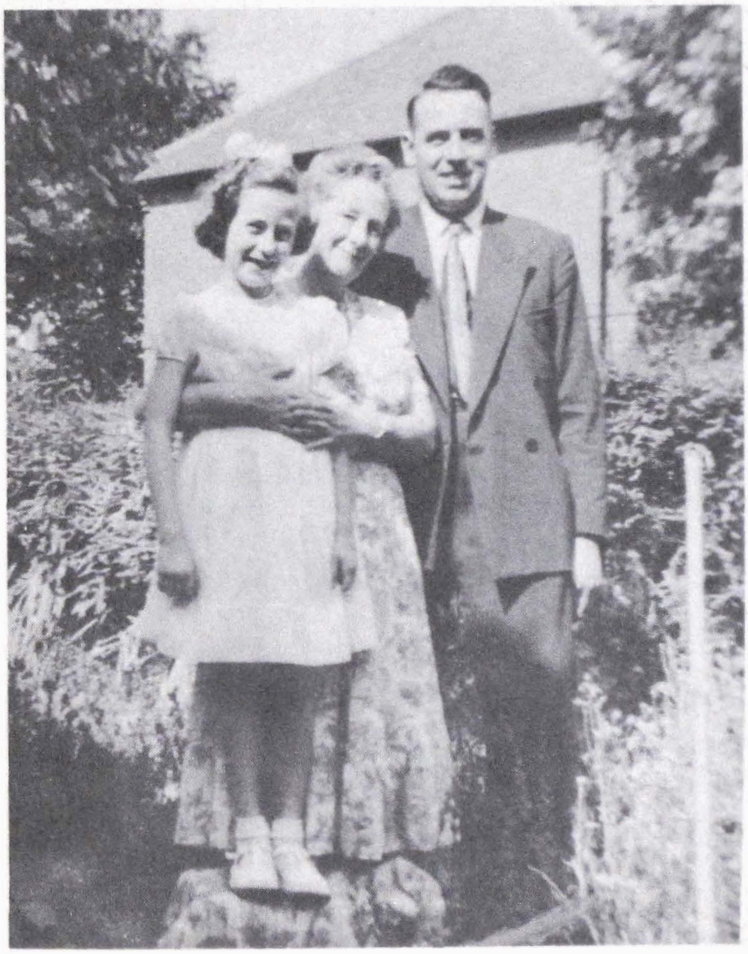
THE USUAL CRY

AWAKENED EARLY NEXT MORNING by a hum of voices outside our door. They were waiting for medicines, mostly worm medicines. They were very expensive medicines and I liked to watch them take them. They were all very thankful saying, "We have no doctors, hospitals or dispensaries here." For this reason we had kept our medicines until this time. We extracted teeth on the roadside without giving injections and most of our patients were good—only wanting to keep their teeth for souveniers! A Tibetan surprised me after I had taken his back tooth out. He drew his huge sword and started to chop his tooth into many pieces. I asked him what he was doing but I got no reply until he had finished chopping. He said, quite seriously, "I am looking for the worm"! It would take a book to tell their queer ideas, so real to them. Attending to the patients delayed our start, but we felt we could not refuse. Hopeless cases, too, were brought. Some of them were very young, but we could do nothing for them in one day. We could pray in the name of the Living God.

Finally, we traveled on, thinking how little we could do for such needy people. Those by the wayside stared at us, asking the usual questions. One man said in a very surprised tone, "Can they walk OUR roads?—a horse cannot." Others, too, repeatedly asked, "Did you really walk our roads?" We would not call them roads, just mountainous tracks. I should



Goray Ang Nima; spent two and a half months in our home where he became a Christian



The author with husband and daughter, Mary Anne

Bridges—
more than 57 varieties

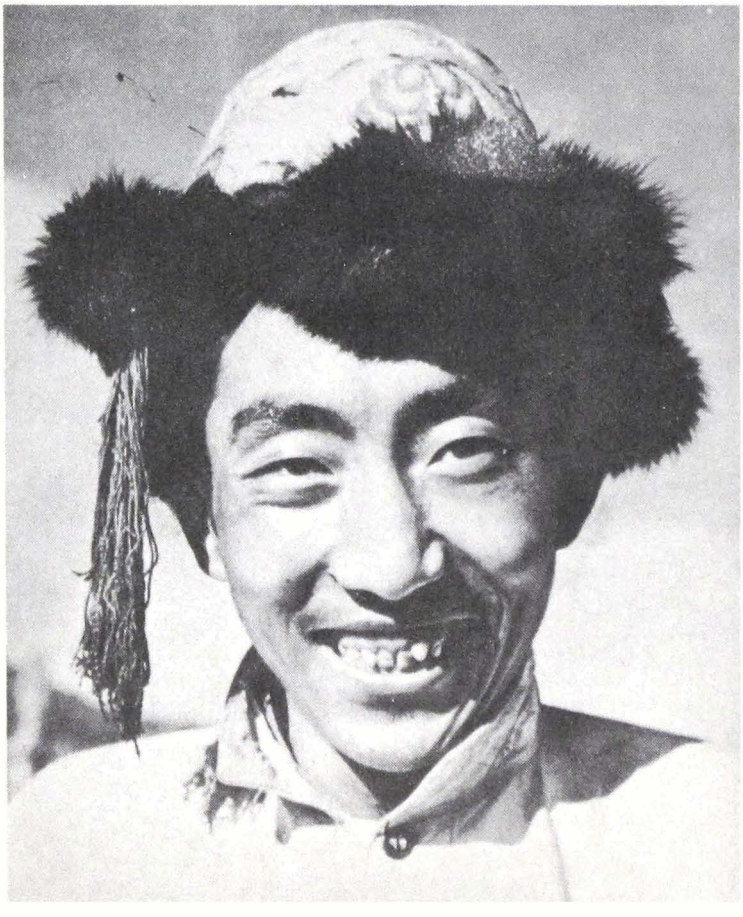
Refreshment by the
wayside

How children love to be photographed! Sherpa children, no exception

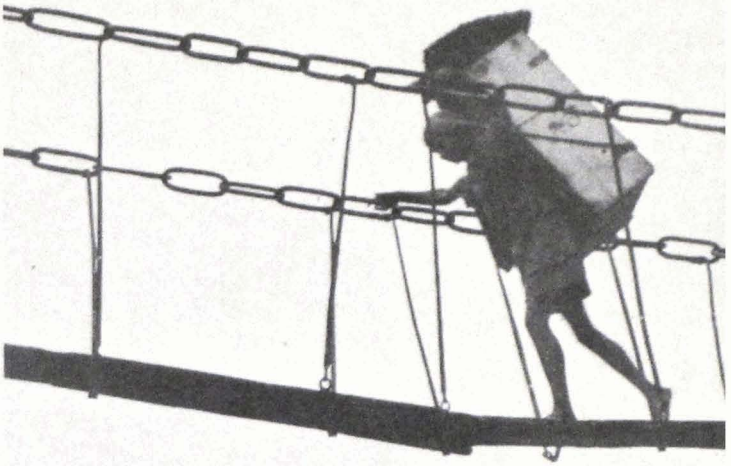
Yaks

The author (second from right) in national dress with some Nepalese friends

A young Tibetan



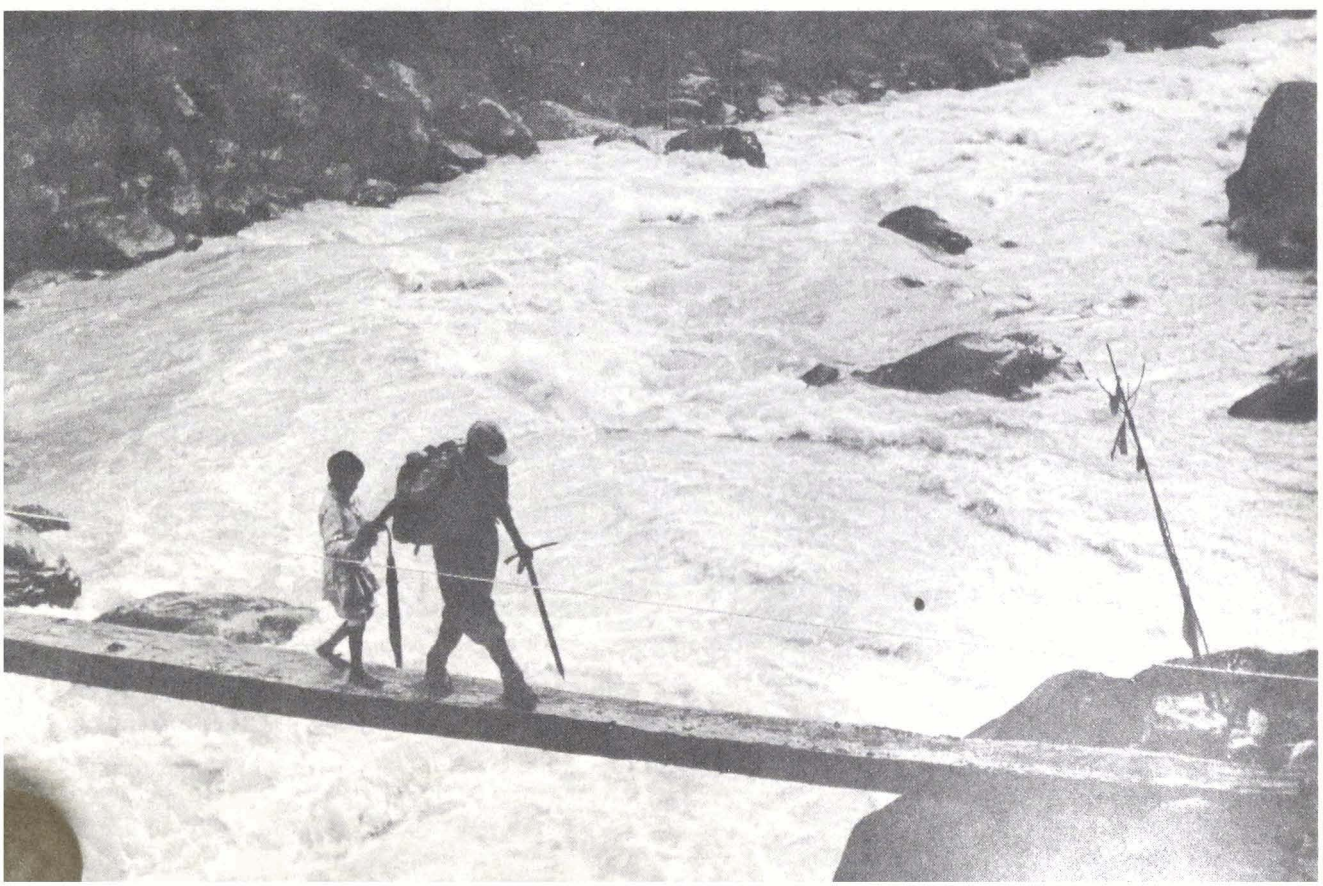
A suspension bridge
that held me in suspense



Nepalese mother and child

Nepalese lama and wife

A bridge near Namche Bazaar



Tibetan lamas

Lamas

Hill women picking tea

A Nepal village near Kathmandu

have thought our presence alone would have been sufficient to prove we had walked. One of the crowd said, "Whatever made you come here from your land that has cars and good roads?" We discovered that the children and many of the adults had never seen a white person or a car, train or bicycle but they had seen an aeroplane. One young boy said: "All we have around here are chickens, goats, and cows!" Strange to say, but Nepal has airports before roads, though they have started making the latter. The boy had seen an airplane.

A dear, aged Nepalese woman, who had seen very little of the world, saw a plane come down and start unloading jeeps which drivers then drove down the gangway. Aghast, she said, "Now I can die, for I have seen aeroplanes giving birth to babies!"

Up and down those mountain paths, we left everything of civilization behind us. In perfect solitude, the sharp retort of a gunshot shattered the stillness; we saw a small cloud of smoke wreathing its way heavenward. The fortunate bird was flying away and the hunter did not get his dinner. More river crossings, and various landslides.

We met more folk on the road and by their remarks we could tell they thought us very foolish, and they were right if we had no object. We were traveling in the worst season of the year. An object we did have; we meant to visit one friend, Goray Sherpa, the Lord helping us. Several times we heard folk say, in a whisper, "They are Americans." I informed them: "No, we are British."

We passed several water mills, and saw them grinding corn and making it into flour. At one we saw a blind young man; how well he worked with his fingers and how happy he looked, despite his disability! Later, we were told of a young Nepalese girl in Kathmandu who had no hands or arms. With her feet she could write, eat, do her hair and even thread a needle and do beautiful embroidery.

There are not enough adjectives to describe the beauty of God's creation which reminded me of the story of a friend on tour in beautiful Sikkim. Alone except for her horseman, she did want to try to share her delight so she paused and said, "See, this is just magnificent—glorious, look at the rushing river!" The horseman just grunted, and said, "Just like sheep's intestines."

We came to a little village where we put up for the night. This time an empty room with a low fireplace was offered. A supply of wood for cooking was greatly appreciated as it was still pouring rain. If the coolies had had to go to the jungle for wood it would have come back soaking wet. We used our primus stove, which caused much amusement and surprise. Once, a man watched my husband light it and as he pumped it and it began to roar, said in simplicity, "Salaam, Bhagwan, how do you do God?" (Bhagwan is their name for God).

With three coolies and ourselves in a small room we had to be methodical. We put our beds in a row and ate our evening meal. One day we have plenty of tea, egg and chips, the next day, plenty of tea, chips and eggs! Many mountaineers grumble at their diets; they usually get a good variety. We are thankful for all we got. After the meal we tried to satisfy the people's curiosity and need for medicine. Then we shut the door, much as I hated to do so as there was no means of ventilation except the numerous cracks in the walls. Our coolies blew up our air mattresses. Again in our cosy sleeping bags—mine happened to be the one Tenzing Sherpa had used on the Swiss Expedition to Everest. It had been taken up over 28,000 feet. My husband had the sleeping bag of Tenzing's cook. It felt good to stretch out and relax, even if we did suffer from rats, beetles, cockroaches, and hundreds of smaller parasites. The coolies were cooking their simple meal of semolina, boiled ata (wholemeal flour) and

some spinach (I thought it looked like turnip tops) and tea. I could see all that was going on though there was only the light from the fire. When cooked, they all ate a huge plateful, and I wondered how they could put away such stodgy food and really seem to enjoy it. Afterward they settled beside us for the night, snoring almost immediately. I did not begrudge them peaceful sleep as they had worked very hard. I could not undress so did not feel too comfortable, but as I *tried* to sleep a large drop of rain splashed on my face, and then I found that there were several wet places on our sleeping bags. With little room to move, we covered ourselves with mackintoshes and hoped for the best.

Chapter 5

HOW THEY THINK

A FAIRLY GOOD NIGHT, even if the coolies did snore and the rain christened us. We got an early start as there were not so many people to attend at this place. It was still raining heavily. We waded many streams and through various landslides, scrambled and slipped; but by mid-day the rain had eased and the sun shone brightly. There were many dirty, pinkish-looking crabs, but they did not tempt us. The last time we had had this fish it had come from a can and was delicious. My socks were filled with stones and sand. Finally I had to stop to wash them and put them on again. They were wet and shrinking and I wondered if they would last the trek.

We started to ask a very ordinary question of travelers we met on the road, but they gave us extraordinary answers. We asked, "How far is it to Elam?" We knew this was one of the few big cities we would have to pass. Everyone gave a different answer; the more miles we walked, the longer the distance stated. I wondered why, until we met another man. He thought, and said, "Well, come to think of it, I have never done this hisab [sum]." He spoke the truth—he had never measured the distance. Others had said whatever came into their heads. Most of the people did not know that three feet make one yard, let alone that 1,760 yards make a mile. One child said, "I think it is fifteen miles to Elam, but it seems like twenty-five miles." We understood because

we had to crawl up steep mountainsides which took hours—then to be informed we had only done four miles! It seemed like forty! Another question was most strange to them. It was, "How high is this place?" Coming from Darjeeling, about 7,000 feet, was it higher or lower than where we were at the moment. No one knew and one man said, "I have never bothered to measure the height of this mountain." We were sure they had never heard of an altimeter!

Only the fifth day of our trek! Already I was getting tired of everyone asking, "Where are you going?" They usually asked us, "Are you going to Nepal?" At first this was strange as we had thought we were in Nepal, and we were. Later, after being asked the same question many times, we discovered Nepal to them meant their capital, Kathmandu. No place else is called Nepal. The rest of the country is called Pahar (mountains).

We stopped at a tea shop, had smoky tea and roasted corn on the cob. The corn was very hard. What a noise the coolies made eating it! They were enjoying themselves. The Nepalese woman dressed so differently here from those in Darjeeling. They plaited their hair to one side, right up to the crown of their heads. Their dress was more colorful and yet not worn artistically as in India. They wore a blouse and sarie, with a belt of five yards of cloth around their waists. But it was their manner of putting it on that mystified me. When they had finished they had a huge lump of cloth at the front. They usually wore their valuables round their necks, in necklaces of forty silver rupees (28¢); sometimes they had forty eight-anna pieces (20¢), and the children often had necklaces made of four-anna pieces (12¢). Besides this, many had necklaces of large red beads. Their ear plates (you could hardly call them earrings) made of thin gold were as big as English coffee saucers. Some had their ears pierced twelve times up each lobe; they wore some

small gold or silver rings in each hole. Nose rings, too, varied in size, some were tremendous. They said they had this all done for beauty, truly "pride is painful." Bangles of silver or gold (quite heavy) were worn on their hands and feet. It was not uncommon to see them carrying their anklets when walking over the mountains. Most of them wore a bundle of little oddments, something like a manicure set, around their necks. These consisted of four things: one was like a very small salt spoon. There was a small pair of tweezers, a little brush of pig's bristle, oranments and necklaces and an awl-like instrument. Most of them had a bunch of English keys. Many times I said to them: "You must have a lot of money to need all those keys." They just laughed and said, "We don't have all those boxes—only the keys!" Keys seem to go with the east, so many of them locked every possible article. This habit seemed to have been transferred to almost every European who lived there. Alas, one often heard the cry, "Where are my keys?" After searching in vain the loser would ask the servant if he knew where they were, only to hear the servant calmly ask, *"Memsahib,* have you looked under your pillow?!"

KEYS

I could write my autobiography and entitle it, "Up from Slavery." That may be my only connection with the hero of that book, but it's not my only connection with the truly great, for I am also like Mary Slessor in one respect. She would walk a mile to avoid meeting a cow.

This is an essay on keys, not cows—the slavery of keys. I started life in India as a missionary shackled and chained to keys. Every time a jharan, a stamp, or a cup of milk was needed, out jangled my keys. I failed to recognize quickly a shallow notch from a deep notch, a

square hole from a round one. I'm not sure what psychologists would call it—perhaps an inhibition; anyway, instead of learning Persian derivatives and Arabic measure I spent long hours becoming automatic in key recognition—table linen, long and thin; supplies, hollow and round; coal, brass, solid.

Just as I was beginning to feel efficient in key recogtion a new form of distress appeared . . . I was strangely puzzled when this efficiency did not carry over to keys. I would slip them under the baby's mattress—I was sure I did—and lo! they would appear in my work basket. I would drop them in a drawer only to find them in my pocket. At times, in despair and chagrin, I would appeal to the bearer, "Have you by any chance seen my keys lying around?" "O yes, Madam, they are under your pillow."

After some months of humiliation, I discovered that word-combination locks were available in India. I invested, and consigned to the safe my keys as relics of the days of ignorance. True, I could not allow the opened combination locks lying around to be investigated by aspiring students of English.

One dark night thieves entered and demolished the hasp and carried off my precious combination locks as keepsakes. On inquiry I found that no more locks were for sale. What should I do? Go back to keys? In one mighty effort I broke with tradition, and left all—unlocked!

—Julia Norton Clemes

The fifth day turned into a perfect day. We began to wonder if it had ever rained. Perhaps that it what Noah thought after the rain had ceased. We saw a magnificent rainbow.

We picked wild lemons and were given pears and cucumbers. I had often wondered why the pears there looked so

lovely, but were so tasteless and watery. That day I found out. They were as refreshing as a glass of cold water.

It seemed to become routine that we should climb right up to the top of a steep mountain, and then right down to the valley several times a day. Nepal should be called, "A land with a thousand hills and valleys." We had to remember we were crossing the grain of Nepal. Many times we were at sea level in the extreme hot fever-infested valleys. At another part of the day we would be at 10,000 to 14,000 ft. above sea level. Of course, the weather had changed. Often there would be winds that made you feel you had no protection, though jackets were supposed to be windproof. Sometimes there was snow, and the cold would make our teeth chatter.

Arriving at the village for the night, we were offered a nice room to ourselves, a real treat. The coolies slept in the adjoining room. It was upstairs, folk were underneath so I proceeded to hope that they would not talk all night. After our evening meal of egg, chips, and plenty of tea, we started to think about bed. Nima Dorjee did our washing up. I found him wiping our few enamel plates with Frank's handkerchief. Why?—I did not know. I had brought two good red and white striped tea towels. Perhaps they did not know the difference.

Jharans—Hindu (English Tea-Cloth)

They told us of plague that comes with a swoop,
And cholera, too, that's quicker than croup
But never a word about *Jharans.*

They told us that smallpox would seem like a curse,
And leprosy surely was something much worse.
But never a word about *jharans.*

Of scorpions black they told quite a lot,
And said we'd have swarms of mosquitoes to swat,
But never a word about *jharans.*

"Your books will be eaten by white ants," they said,
"And brown ants will pester, and black ones and red,"
But never one word about *jharans.*

They told us about the omnivorous rats,
And cobras and jackals and lizards and bats,
But never a word about *jharans.*

They fully explained that, not even in fun,
Could we go without topies' whenever there's sun,
But never one word about *jharans.*

"In torrents the rain always comes," they declared,
Of mildew and mould they revealed all they dared,
But never one word about *jharans.*

They even suggested that those who aspire
To speak Hindustani, some brains would require!
But never one word about *jharans.*

There's reason enough for this silence discreet,
I know fully well why they always delete
Every word they might say about *jharans.*

I boldly assert that some of our zeal
Would quaver and waver at what they'd reveal
If they told the truth about *jharans.*

Jharans for *degchis*[1] and *jharans* for shoes,
Jharans to pilfer and *jharans* to lose,
Jharans to bring home the sugar and meat,
Jharans to dust with and *jharans* to burn,
Jharans you know that will never return,
Jharans to wrap up the raisins and dal,
Jharans, I fear, that are used for *rumal,*[2]
Jharans consume all the money you save,

Jharans are known to make some people rave,
Jharans bring worry and *jharans* bring strife,
Jharans, I say, are the bane of my life!

—JULIA NORTON CLEMES

It was good to be sleeping on our own. I had not undressed for several days. We had had coolies with us. Most of our snorers were now in the next room.

The first hour of the night went peacefully, then I began to hear voices in the village. High tones, low tones, shrieking tones, and one could tell there was a fierce row. Just as I was wondering what was going on, the door below was opened with such force that it shook our room. A boy was saying in a scared and breathless voice, "Mother, Mother, open the door, they have caught a thief and one has escaped." Then for hours everyone talked. In the early hours of the morning the village quietened, except the dogs and the insects which were rather active.

A lovely morning! Frank rose at 4 A.M. and called the coolies. He lit the primus stove, and we asked about the previous night's episode. The whole tale about one thief caught and the other escaped, was repeated. They asked, "Remember the two men who were drinking tea in the tea shop we were in? Well, they were the thieves." We had already gone through much jungle; the folk we met seemed so friendly that we never thought of them being thieves.

Breakfast over, the sick were treated, and a man came to ask us to come to his house to see a very sick child. We consented. He said he had seen us in Darjeeling Bazaar teaching religion and playing the Bhaja (piano accordion).

So far, there had been no rain. How glad we were as the path would have been very slippery if wet! It was extremely

[1]Saucepans [2]Handkerchief

hot climbing and just the same going down almost unbearable by the time we reached the valley.

No land we had ever visited could compare with Nepal. Both Sikkim and Tibet are magnificent but Nepal even was more so. The hardships encountered served only to enhance its natural glory. There were majestic waterfalls; roaring, foaming, flooded rivers and streams. There were very rickety rustic bamboo bridges. Reaching the top of one of Nepal's mountains we rested a short while under shady pipal burr trees—at intervals you could see these trees which had been planted to give ease to the weary traveler. At most of them someone for Gewa (good works) had built up stones around the trees to make bench-like seats. The coolies rested their loads on them. Our coolies often used to play five-stones for a few minutes, or they would throw stones using a tree for their goal.

As we were descending from this mountain we met a frail, old man of over eighty years. He could hardly see or walk, and was just able to totter with the aid of a stick. There he was, hobbling over a road of which every yard was interspersed with rocks, boulders and water. It taxed even good eyes and nimble feet. My heart went out to him as I heard him say to our coolies, "Friend, will you carry my load, I am so tired?" They refused because their own loads were heavy. I said to him, "Grandfather, [old men in Nepalese], I will carry your load down to the river." He had two dirty bundles done up in a shawl, Nepalese style, oversized version of a tramp's red handkerchief. He was carrying his necessities of life slung around his shoulders. He looked for all the world like Christian in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.* He was a pilgrim returning from a long pilgrimage; he still had several days' journey to go before he reached his home. He told us that this was his last pilgrimage and we wondered if he would ever reach home. When my husband saw the old

man's poor physical condition he took the other load. The old man was so thankful, and said we were doing great *Gewa* —good works. People in the East believe a lot in this but we informed him we were only doing it to help him. Our Bible said, "Salvation is not of works lest any man should boast." With our loads slung over our shoulders we all descended slowly to the river. Perspiration poured from us, sometimes dripping off our temples or running off our noses. Two of our coolies carried a piece of rag on a string attached to the boxes they were carrying. The rag looked like a Buddhist prayer flag. The other used his finger and thumb to flick it off. At the river we stopped and made tea, because the coolies thought there would be no tea shop on the day's march. We gave the feeble old man some tea and a little money and left him. What a steep climb we now began and we wondered if the hill had a top! When we thought we had come to the summit we found there was another. A bright black and yellow snake slid quickly across our path. The coolies informed us that they had just seen a very poisonous snake. The *'A-me-me'*—a surprised tone of exclamation from the folk we met daily—would fill a book. Living in Darjeeling with thousands of Nepalese, Sherpas, and Tibetans around them, the inhabitants think nothing about Europeans. In Nepal we were told daily that they had never seen the likes of us unless they had been to India. So many times I was asked, "Are you a woman?" I answered in the affirmative, but it did not always satsify. They had an idea Frank was a man, because of the beard he was growing. One woman was very persistent. In doubt, she turned to Frank and asked slowly and deliberately, "Is she a woman?" He said, "She is a mother and has a little girl aged seven years." Here she, and the crowd of women, laughed. She said, "Well, you wear that funny thing on your head [my sun hat] and I just a piece of cloth." I think I got in the last word, though it was

hard, by saying, "Well, if you will give me your piece of cloth I will wear it." I never dressed like a man, but always wore a divided skirt, dress or Tibetan dress. The more I thought of it, I realized what a difference there is between eastern and western dress. I thought of an instance that had happened in Darjeeling.

A Roman Catholic French woman had given up her religion and become a Buddhist Nun. She had had her hair shaved off and wore the plain loose red and yellow dress of that sect. When *I* saw her I wondered what she was, and later an Indian friend on first seeing her said, "What was that he-she or it?" That was what I was sure many were thinking about me.

We were approaching Elam now—such a big town, one and one-half Lakhs (lacs) [1] of people in the middle of nowhere. Not a decent road to it, yet we were informed that it was a self-contained town except for salt and some cloth. It was Bazaar Day when we arrived, so there were crowds. What a welcome they gave us! We were surrounded by hundreds of nationals who had never seen a white person. Questions poured out, and they were amused that we could answer them in their own language. To the Tibetans we spoke Tibetan; to the Nepalese, Nepali; and to the Marwari we spoke Hindi. Marwaris are to be found in many lands in the East. They were like the Jews, astute businessmen and very different in features and dress from the hill folk.

My husband went with the police to have our passports checked and to find a place for us to stay that night. He seemed to be gone for ages, and I was getting so tired of standing with a huge, curious crowd around me. Walking is no hardship, but standing is. I was thankful when he returned and said that the people of Elam had offered us their

[1]One hundred thousand; also, a vaguely great number.

new Public Hall. Frank was surprised to see the crowds. From the center a man came forward and presented each of us with a cucumber. As we moved off to the Public Hall the people followed us. I felt like the Pied Piper of Hamlin. The hall was an excellent place, but not completed. It had twenty-seven frames for windows but no glass in them. We had plenty of fresh air, and plenty of peering faces. Another snag was that there had been a feast a few days previously and there were hundreds of empty banana leaf plates and crumbs all over the floor. The *chowkidar* (caretaker) cleared a small portion for us and we all slept on the raised platform with the coolies.

As we entered the hall the people thronged around the door seeking to enter with us, although we tried to keep them out by shutting the door. We had forgotten that this means nothing in the east; the children were soon climbing in the glassless windows. Finally, I went out and sat on the steps with the children while Frank spoke to the police, teachers, and educated people inside. I did not feel at all glamorous for we were both very sunburned, dirty and muddy. The children and young people did not seem to notice this, though one woman did ask me quietly, "What disease are you suffering from?" I answered, "Nothing," she asked, "Well, what is that?" (pointing to my sunburned arms, face and neck). "Oh, that is sunburn,"I laughingly replied. She did not understand, for the sun never burns them! They were anxious to try out their English on us. Though some of the young men had passed their matriculation they still persisted in saying, "Yes, Sir," and "No, Sir," to me. I questioned them about their town and was informed that there were four high schools and one night college. "Night school?" I queried. "Oh, no," one student confidently replied, "Night college." "How many students do you have at your night

college?" I inquired. "Well, only six or seven students at present."

Finally I dispersed most of my crowd and went inside. One of the policemen asked me, "Why have you come to Nepal?" Of course, we told him the truth; it was quite evident that he did not believe it. Then he said in a "know-all" way, "I think I know why you have come; to find an opportunity to preach your religion." I asked, "Well, would you mind?" "Oh, no," he said, nonchalantly, "You see, now we are a democratic country."

Eventually we were able to cook our evening meal. The coolies went to a nearby shop to buy theirs, but we could not venture out as the crowds were so persistent. We were both getting exhausted, not just with the day's toil, but with the hours of talking and answering their constant questions.

Our three Sherpa coolies were really continuing to do very well, they were really first-class, so helpful and cheerful with never a grumble. The mountain track we had to climb daily would make most coolies cross. They did not mind what they did—they would take off our wet filthy socks and wash them. Our wet, muddy shoes and boots they would fill with hot wood-ash to help them to dry—unfortunately, they shrank them in the bargain! We nicknamed our three friends. Nima Dorjee was called "General" and though he was the shortest one this title served to add inches to him. Certainly he was good at giving the orders and taking command. He knew a little English and loved to use his knowledge. "Come on," "Let's go," and "Finished," was about the whole. The two others, Nga-ten-pa and Dorjee, were just like two overgrown schoolboys. In fun we called them "monkeys" for often after carrying their loads for miles they would set them down to rest awhile. Incidentally, it was marvelous to see the way they carried their loads. A rope slipped round one corner of the box is then taken around the load and

across the forehead. With such a simple string-like affair, even the heaviest loads are carried. Immediately the two "monkeys" had set down their loads, they would do physical jerks to straighten their back muscles and then climb a near-by tree. While perched up the tree, they would mimic perfectly the noise that the monkey makes. They, too, knew a little English and often we would hear them say the first few letters of the alphabet: A-B-C-T, as they entered a tea shop. We presumed that they thought the fourth letter was Tea. Dorjee was our youngest coolie, the baby. He seemed so pleased with life and his very few worldly possessions, one was a new schoolboy's cap, at least six sizes too small, so that he had difficulty in keeping it on his head. He also had one new shirt which he wore with an air of pride. Perhaps he thought its beauty was enhanced by the manufacturer's stamp and the retailer's price still was printed on it. This is often seen in the east; the wearer cannot read and so does not know that the price can be read.

By the time night had fallen, everywhere was quiet except for a few rats and fleas. We both had a good night, perhaps due to the fact that we had no talkative people underneath us.

My husband, Frank, acted as our alarm clock. He went to the coolies shaking them and saying, "Come on, let's go." On some mornings it took time before they got going, but this morning we managed to get an early start as we did not wish to make it known that we had medicines. The town had a dispensary. I wrote a letter of thanks to the secretary of the public hall, and we left.

Weather was just perfect for a picnic, or for the weekly wash, but not for a long trek over the mountains—in an hour or two it would be "a scorcher." My eyes and hands were a little swollen with the sun and I had turned very red. Frank's face had changed to red and black—he was growing a beard! We heard the villagers saying, "How white they are."

It is hard to describe the beautiful country of Nepal with its magnificent scenery of jungle, waterfalls, tumultuous rushing rivers, rice and corn fields, besides numerous hills and valleys. So far we had seen very few birds or wild flowers, yet we knew that we could not judge as we would be there for a few weeks and there are twelve months in a year. Certainly we had seen some of the most stately and sturdy trees. Some of them must have been forty to fifty feet in diameter. The roots extended so far on the ground that they formed uneven steps up to the center of the tree.

By 11 A.M. it was very hot and we all longed for a cup of tea. The thought that there was a tea shop on the day's route spurred us on. We started asking another simple question which met with the usual success: "How far is it to the next tea shop?" The first man said, "Around the next corner." We were climbing a very steep hill and were puffing and panting, so we naturally longed to see the tea shop around the next bend. Round and round the mountain we went, but no tea shop. At one place Frank was just ahead, and as I could see we were coming to another bend I shouted, "What can you see around the corner?" hoping the tea shop was in sight. "Just another corner," was his reply. We then met a party of Nepalese coming down the mountain we were laboriously trying to climb so we asked, "How far is it to the next tea shop?" One man cheerfully replied, "When you get thirsty you will be there!" Our thermos flask was usually drained early in the day. Someone gave us a huge cucumber which must have weighed about eight to ten lbs. We devoured it, finding it most refreshing, and none complained of indigestion.

Finally, we wearily arrived at a tea shop, a temporary place of four bamboo posts and a grass roof. There was a small wood fire at one side. What did our eyes see?—a quart of milk, "Keventer's Pasteurized Milk" marked on the bottle.

Keventer's had one of the best farms in India. We had visited their farm, seen them pasteurize their milk. This bottle had come a long way! No wonder some of the shopkeepers ask you to pay a R1-O-O deposit if you take the milk away. This bottle was filthy! Dirt was ground in at the rim; it was half filled with milk, or more likely milk and water. At any rate, we all drank several glasses of their lukewarm, smoky tea and felt refreshed.

We had not reached the top of the mountain, and with the heat of the day our speed was slower. What a blessing the umbrella was! We used it for so many things, sunshine, rain and, how would I have been able to cross the rivers without the aid of it? I plunged it into the river bed as we crossed to see how deep it was. We used our umbrellas to stick in the holes of the walls to hang clothes on at night, or even to hang our little paraffin hurricane lamp upon. Several times we used an umbrella as a windscreen to keep the wind away from our lighted primus stove. An umbrella was also a useful adjunct for carrying all sorts of things.

We started to descend, much to the relief of our aching legs, even though we now were stubbing our toes. We passed more landslides, saw that many rice and corn fields were completely destroyed by falling rocks and earth. We knew there must be many sad hearts. There is such a lot of hard labor in field work; the workers really know what it is to work by the sweat of the brow. Next time you go to well-supplied grocers to buy tea, stop and think how it got there. First, in this place, the preparation of the ground, ploughing with oxen and crude primitive instruments; then fertilizing of a very impoverished soil. After this, the seed bed is prepared and for rice it has to be well watered and puddled when the seed has germinated, until shoots are strong enough to be transplanted into flooded terraced fields. The formation of this has called for many an hour of back-breaking toil to men,

women, and even children, standing knee-deep in mud, water and slush. Later it has to be weeded (the weeds looked exactly like the rice to me). Near harvest time the fields have to be watched. Not everyone is honest. Someone sleeps right by the fields in a little open grass hut, not unlike the *Shikar Machan* (hunter's loft) and often can be as dangerous. Then the rice is cut, dried and hulled. Some that is sold is exported.

We could see our coolies were getting tired as it had been a hot, strenuous day. When we came to a Nepalese inn which they called "party," we halted. No one was in charge. It was constructed for pilgrims and had no windows or doors; it was built with irregular stones daubed with mud with arch-like openings to serve as doors. We looked inside and could just see that it was very dirty. The last "pilgrims" seemed to have been cows and goats. The coolies got a few twigs together to make a broom and gave the Inn a good sweep before we entered. By this was a field of withered Indian corn-stalks. The coolies went off and brought armfuls of this for mattresses. The thing that induced me to stop was a lovely stream where I could bathe. Though we were right out in the wilds there were one or two to watch us. One of the little watchers came down with us and helped us to wash our clothes and to use our precious soap that we wanted to last our trip. She was trying, she told me as she applied our soap with great vigor, to see if she could become white like us. After great effort she stopped: "It is not good, it won't work!" As soon as we settled, Frank and I went off and had a swim. I gave worm medicines, taking the receivers to the nearby stream and using a leaf for a cup. I watched the tablets disappear, as I did whenever possible, for two reasons: 1) the medicines were expensive, 2) I did not want them to waste them.

How dirty we got with honest sweat! I recently read of

a mother who said, "I know no greater transformation than to take my dirty little boy after a day's play and give him a good bath." I agree. We climbed up from the stream to the inn; found the coolies chewing raw corn stalks which they informed us were good. When we sampled them we found they were almost as sweet as sugar cane. Though our lodging place was far from the village the news that we were there soon spread. Folk came to see us and to get medicines. They brought us gifts, too, of corn, fruit, and eggs. We met some school children with their teacher and they sang for us. We cooked our usual evening meal between us (egg and chips), while attending to the villagers' needs. When our hunger was satisfied, we read the Bible giving thanks to the ever living and only true God for His protection in so many ways, then we retired. It was our first night of sleeping without doors, but certainly not the last. Once in the night I awakened to see a black object in the archway. My heartbeats quickened. I reached for my torch wondering if it could be a black Himalayan bear, but it was a friendly black dog!

We arose before 5:00 A.M. to see a magnificent Eastern sunrise. It was a lovely cool morning with no one to disturb us but a couple of hungry-looking dogs. We moved along, the first mile or two of our journey being moderately flat for Nepal. We had to remember that we were going across the grain of the country which accounted for the many hills and valleys. We passed many cactus bushes all covered with spiders' webs, glittering like so many tiny crystals in the sunlight. We passed clusters of bamboo trees which rustled, creaked and swayed. They afforded us lovely shade and breeze as we walked along.

A Nepalese asked us: "Where are you going? Why have you come to a fool's land? We have no cars, roads, or railways like you have in your land, why do you come?" Such a beautiful, mountainous country—a fool's land? I replied, "No, you

have not the conveniences we have, but you do have a marvelous view of God's great handiwork." Another asked: "Did the King send you?" "No," I replied, "but the King's sent-one (British Ambassador) helped us." His last question surprised me: "Is the Government paying for you?" I replied in the negative. Then he said knowingly, "I think I know who sent you." "Who?" I asked curiously and he answered, "The King of kings." He then told how he had been to India and heard about our "good religion." He asked me why I did not stay in Nepal and open a hospital and school. We told him that we would be happy to do it, but only when they had freedom of religion. We knew ours was good.

When we were in Nepal no European was allowed to preach the Gospel. We did the next best thing, we talked for and of Jesus and we realized how true the saying, "What fills the heart wags the tongue."

Here was a very good spot for leeches. They were a real pest and one became very tired trying to pull them off. I had many leech-bite sores so I did not feel too comfortable with a few more clinging to me. Before coming to the East I had seen those little creatures in a jar of water in the "Lab." of the hospital in which I was training. I had learned all about them; how they relieved pressure and I felt sure I could have written a "paper" on them. I was determined now to write a horrid paper on those pests. When we did return to India I went to libraries. I did not find much information, so one day I walked into one of the big bookshops in Calcutta and asked if they had any books on leeches and water buffaloes. Usually assistants looked queerly at me and said, "No," but this day another Indian apparently heard me and he asked, "Did I hear you say you wanted a book on leeches?"

"Yes, that is right," I answered brightly. He told me that he had a book and gave me permission to take down a few notes from it. I thought there would be only a few unpleas-

ant things written about them, but I found there were pages and pages. Strange to say, it was all so wonderful then that I forgot they had been a pest. I saw them as some of God's little creatures. Although they are as thin as the finest thread, they have *every organ* which we have in our bodies and they can see for a longer distance than we can. They have three sets of teeth. That I could well believe, as I remembered their clinging power! As I read on and on, I found myself singing in my heart:

> Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee
> How great Thou art, how great Thou art.

For us this trek was relaxation of mind, although climbing at times can be very strenuous. In Darjeeling we worked by a timetable, almost every hour of the day or week we had something to do or think about. That day, as we approached a big tree we heard a buzzing noise and the nearer we got to it, the volume increased, like swarms of angry bees. We afterward thought they must have been some kind of cricket. We stopped to see what caused the noise but could see nothing although the buzzing was deafening. As soon as we had passed the tree there was dead silence.

A man who was of the village and also a self-trained teacher, and who really had a keen interest in the village boys, asked us as we walked along together if we would go and open a hospital and school there. He told us, "I will give you a house, some land, rice and vegetables and also will collect money for your medicines." We told him we would be happy to do this, or to see it done, but we could not come without a pass from the Government of Nepal. Later, we arrived at his village and he showed us his little school then in progress. It was something I will never forget. The teacher had been to Elam to buy school things and other essentials, and must have been gone for at least two days, yet his school went on

without its teacher. Here the boys were all working very orderly. I judged the age of the eldest school boy to be about twelve years. There were about twenty boys. They taught me a deeper meaning to the text, "Occupy till I come." As their teacher entered the class the boys rose, and salaamed him and us. Several of them gave reports of what they had done. The teacher asked one of the boys to make us tea and then the bell (just an ordinary garden spade and an old bolt) rang for recreation. The children were very well behaved, full, too, of unusual questions. They had never seen a white person, a fountain pen, or a watch. Some gathered around my husband's watch and some around mine. One said, as he saw the little hand moving, "It runs." Another, as I put it to his ear, "Why it talks!" Their teacher had just bought a ball pen in Elam and he showed it to his boys. What excitement when he told them that it wrote with ink! "Oh, teacher," they cried, "buy me one next time you go." They asked how much it had cost and he told them 12 annas (fifteen cents). They used only wooden slates covered with charcoal, or pencils and very *kuchha* (crude) white paper, so this was a great novelty to them. School restarted, and the teacher gave the different classes their work; some were learning the Nepali letters, others the English alphabet. Others were reading aloud, which is quite in order for schools in the East.

We left this school feeling that we had gained more than we had given. We wondered how many schools could be left in any land, like these boys had been for several days without a teacher.

It was a dull, cloudy day and we had miles of jungle to walk through. Although the declines and inclines were only gradual it was very difficult, due to the dangerous undergrowth—some of the mountain tracks almost impassable. This was a good hiding place for snakes. We saw several

but always a few feet away, to our relief. We passed a most picturesque little village with only one shop where we bought bananas—three for an anna (2 cents)—but they were not nice. Until I went to the East I had never realized that bananas could have so many different flavors.

The houses in the village were made of mud, light grey at the top and the bottom half orange colored. Well thatched roofs with decorated latticework windows completed them. Everything about this village was pretty. We saw cows with their calves, goats surrounded by playful kids, and baby pigs. On seeing a woman with a letter we asked, "How often does the postman call?" "Once every six weeks or so," she indifferently replied. "It's according to the roads and floods."

Another question we were asked several times was, "Have they started to accept recruits yet?" They took us to be Recruiting Officers for the British Gurkha Army, probably because of our peaked sunhats and the fact that I wore my S.R.N. badge on the front of mine. We knew it was customary to recruit twice a year. Although we did not know the dates for this we hardly thought it was possible at monsoon time.

At a village called *"Ta-pe"* we were given a grand welcome, and asked to stay there and not to go further. We were getting tired so yielded; then I heard one of the women say under her breath, "They may not like our home." "Oh, yes we will." I answered reassuringly. But they did offer us the darkest, largest room I have ever seen. There were no windows and only one door. A veranda outside obscured what little light there was. We thanked them and told them the veranda would be sufficient. Frank cooked the meal while I treated the sick. I wondered what he would produce. It turned out to be fried rice, onions and eggs, plenty of tea and a piece of cake. The latter, which we had taken with

us, was quickly diminishing. I decided I should make some more in the hot ashes.

We had a gramophone and this we played at most villages. We had records in Tibetan, Nepali and one in English. The villagers were really thrilled with it and the children wondered where the man was in the box! At this village as they sat around listening to the records in their own language, some said, "This is a great day for us, we must sit up all night and enjoy ourselves. Today the gods have come to us." I had listened to all they were saying and said nothing. At this I quickly replied, "No, we are not gods, we're just like you." What a poor conception they had of God, who is so pure and holy. We were not flattered at being called gods. We knew St. Paul was so called in the Book of Acts. I recalled some of the pictures we had seen of their gods; some were far too disgusting to describe.

Chapter 6

VILLAGE LIFE AND LURID DETAILS

DAY BY DAY we went farther from civilization and not once did we hear that most detestable word 'bakhshees' in this beautiful land. We had not seen anyone chewing that horrid *pan* (betel nut) which disfigures and ruins teeth. Consequently, we had not seen the filthy habit of spitting out a red substance from the betel nut. The pavements of India appear as if thousands are suffering with the last stages of T.B. Here, several of the aged folk who had been to India came to me and asked shyly and quietly, "Will you give me a few tea leaves?" We obliged, but were so sad that we had not been told that tea was almost unobtainable in this part of Nepal. We had only carried 1 pound of tea with us. We found that in this part they did not usually drink tea but chang. We did hope the day would not come when we would be tealess!

After our very simple meal, I went into the Nepali's house and watched them prepare theirs. I learned the full meaning of the English saying, "Have you been to make it?" Here they literally had to make it. First, they had to grow the food and then day by day they had to grind it, really hard work. It usually took two, mother and daughter. They would squat on the ground on the opposite sides of the grinding stones (heavy stones consist of upper and lower, the lower one permanently fixed and the upper one free to rotate on a pivot with a small hole in the center; into this the grain is poured).

There is another hole on the outer circle in which is inserted a wooden peg which serves as a handle. Then the two start slowly turning the very heavy stones, themselves swaying rhythmically and often their brows wet with perspiration. I tried to do it but found it too hard. They just smiled and said, "It is not your *bani* [custom]."

The sun was setting and the members of the household were returning from the fields, each member being given work to do in the house. The mother had put the baby, about ten months old, to bed in the sack-like hammock suspended from one of the beams with tape made from cornstalks. The job for the next little boy, aged about three years, was to get the baby to sleep. He sat watching his mother and sister grinding the meal for cooking—he was so hungry! He rocked the baby at the same time with the back of his head. I noticed, too, that when the baby was asleep he was still nodding his head backward and forward—habit.

Another child's task was to get the wood-fire going. She only had two or three pieces of wood, a piece of round hollow bamboo through which to blow, but in a very short while she had an excellent fire. One young boy was told to go and fetch a tin of water. He grumbled, stating all the things he had done in the day and that he was tired, and asked if someone else could go. Procuring water is a great problem in the East. One often has to carry it long distances if it is fit to drink. I could understand anyone wanting to get out of this job; it often means walking up or down a steep mountain. In the midst of his grumbles the little oil lamp went out. This had to be attended. Afterward he continued to grumble, but finally went and brought a tin of the water badly needed. Father was taking the corn off the cob as quickly as one would shell peas. I am afraid the meal took longer to prepare than usual as they kept asking me questions, "We will not have this pleasure tomorrow, you will be gone."

Frank and the coolies went to bed; I continued to listen and talk to these lovely Nepalese friends until finally Nima Dorjee (General) came and said politely, but firmly, "*Memsahib,* don't you think you ought to go to bed, as we have to get an early start tomorrow." I was tired and the good folk would have kept me up all night, so I was thankful for the advice. They watched me go to bed. It was a very hot valley so I just slipped into my white sleeping bag sheet, first having sprinkled some D.D.T. into the bag and round about. Even this did not seem to dope those Nepal parasites; I had a very restless night. As we did not sleep well, the night seemed endless although we were on the open verandah. I discovered a black jungly dog sleeping at our heads and a more respectable brown one at our feet. Two of the coolies were almost touching us as the verandah was not very wide. The baby in the house seemed to cry on and off the whole night for no reason at all. Many babies in the East cry for everything they want during the day, and it becomes a habit so they do it through the night.

We were up before 5 A.M. cooking our breakfast, though the household was grinding corn long before that. I daily had a cat's lick with a mug of water, first pouring a little into my hand and washing half my face, and then the other. Frank did not even bother as his beard covered much of the dirt. We both enjoyed bathing in the streams, whenever possible.

Another question we were asked was, "How many children have you?" On being told we only had one they looked surprised and said, "I have so many."

We had become famous here for our worm tablets as in India and Sikkim (if this could be described as fame). Now the news was spreading over Nepal. We were happy to treat the people. They had so many kinds which caused death. It was quite common to see children vomiting them. A patient after praising the medicines said, with little knowl-

edge of English, "a double thank you." He meant "many thanks." There were so many wormy folk to treat, but it was worth it to hear them say, "How much better I feel after the medicine!"

A very dull day, not so hot, but we still had to face the inevitable climb up and down the mountains and walk for miles along the side of very flooded rivers, on very rickety bamboo, none-too-safe bridges. Again, leeches and we decided that, without a doubt, Nepal was the very worst for leeches. There were many kinds and sizes, but they all knew how to cling. Tobacco leaves or the application of salt was helpful, but we longed for someone to discover something which would stop them from desiring human blood. The leeches had a very good sense of smell. If we stood still for a second we could see them coming toward us from several feet away. We had been told they were naturally vegetarian and so wondered why they had changed diet when they met us. So many leeches had entered our socks to draw blood it was hard to distinguish the color of our socks.

In the valley the corn had been cut, but as we climbed higher up the mountain it was unripe. Heavy rain during the day made me wish someone would produce a raincoat that was really waterproof. We needed one that was light and would not make us perspire unduly, and would not tear. Not one I have tried in all the years of traveling has met my need. They have all let in water making me feel miserable. I would have to remain in this discomfort for hours.

One of the boys asked the eternal question, "Where are you going?" during this particular day. He had been in India with the military. We informed him that we were going to Namche Bazaar at the foot of Mt. Everest and then on to Kathmandu, the capital. He said in cocksure tone, "You can't be going there, you have not enough food with you. What you have will only last you a few days." It was

true, we had but three boxes with us. Only one contained food, but our friend did not know we were going to buy what we could (chickens, rice, corn and eggs) from the people we met en route. What we could not get we were willing to go without. He was used to seeing the military officers and many mountaineers going to camp. They had everything—even to beds, tables and chairs. We had none of these. Our coolies were very amused to see how little we ate. I would take the cup of our one pint thermos and fill it with enough rice for both of us. The coolies could eat two pounds of rice a day. We were getting slim on our diet—though usually we had chips and eggs, as fortunately this was the potato season. We ate no other vegetable for twenty-six days until we got to our friend Goray's house. He grew his own beans and peas. How we appreciated eating them! Apart from getting slim, we felt well. With little food, we had to rely on the villagers and their willingness to sell or give to us. In this way we got to know them very well—often eating with them. What a blessing it was that we could speak their main language.

We climbed and climbed, crossed many streams and scrambled over slippery boulders, wondering if we would ever reach a summit. We were happy to see a Sherpa village. Sherpas usually live at higher altitudes than do the Nepalese. This village must have been between 10,000 and 12,000 feet high. The Sherpas are very much akin to the Tibetans. The main difference is that they wear their colorful Joseph's coat-like apron at the back instead of the front. The national dresses are called *Chupas,* and are somewhat like an Englishman's dressing gown. The women's dresses usually do not have sleeves. They were very adaptable garments as at night the wearer would just loosen them, slip their arms out and use them as covers.

At one of the Tibetan tea shops in Sikkim, where we made

regular medical tours, the woman knew us quite well. On our arrival she made tea for us, first taking the corner of her filthy *Chupa* (used for many purposes and in all probability had never been washed) and gave the glass in which she was going to pour my tea an extra wipe with it to make sure it was clean!

The Sherpas, too, wear their wealth in the form of a string of coins around their necks, together with strings of large, colorful beads. They wear little hats, with rows of money dangling from them. The men wear money on their waistcoats as buttons. When I asked one man why he did that (he must have had anything from twelve to twenty four-anna pieces as money buttons) he said, "Because it looks beautiful." Vain? I noticed that when the Sherpas did not wear their national hats, they often wore white, red or blue English-like Turkish towels on their heads. It had been many a day since these had seen soap and water! At this village the Sherpa women had extremely long hair. As I examined it, I found it was made up from every strand of hair loosened in combing, mingled with the growing hair. At the end of the plait they wore a pretty ornament and more beads.

Still raining! Our feet were wet and we were very cold. We asked for a cup of tea. "No," they replied, "but we can give you *chang*." "No thanks," we said, "we do not drink." Two of our coolies accepted, saying it warmed them inside and helped them carry the loads. Apparently our shivering must have awakened sympathy because they gave us corn on the cob and a glass of hot milk—it looked like milk! We gave them medicine. "General" Lima Dorjee loved to help... he thought he knew which bottle was for each disease. I overheard him say to one of the Sherpas, "You see the doctor; she will take your pulse, then she will tell you just what is wrong with you."

They had great faith in having their pulses taken. I must

have taken hundreds. Each one would say, "Am I all right, or is there anything wrong with me?" I usually answered, "Well, you will die one day." "Will I?" they would query in an astonished tone. I would smile and say, "Why, of course—one day!" I am not a doctor, but a S.R.N., S.C.M. They did not understand the difference. The definition of a doctor in India has been given: "A man who walks around all day with a stethoscope around his neck and takes your pulse!"

We moved on, hardly able to see through the mist; it was still so cold. We met another military boy. When he knew where we were going he tried to give us good advice. "Keep near your coolies. You are days away from India and they might tell you they are going to Namche Bazaar. They might run off with your things." He finished by saying, "and there is no telephone or wireless here"—in other words, "You will have had it!" We thanked him for his advice, but we could not believe our three Sherpa coolie friends would do this. We had lived together, slept together, eaten together and even scratched together, for many days! We could never be sure, so we felt we must try to be careful. Certainly it would have been an easy thing to escape with our worldly belongings.

We were approaching the end of another day's journey—rain had ceased but it was still very cold. Some children were taking their cattle home for the night so we all walked along together. As we passed a big pool I asked them if they could swim there. "Surely," said one, "if the sun was shining!" The poor cows, goats and sheep all had leeches clinging to them. Some were trying to kick and dance the pests off with their feet. The cows were trying to sneeze free from the huge horse leeches that had ascended their nasal tracts.

A few yards before we came to the village we passed *Chortens,* prayer flags and prayer walls, which reminded us so

much of Tibet. We expected it would be many a day before we were there again. If we did re-visit it, how changed it would be.

Chapter 7

I HAVE SEEN A VISION!

THE LAST INTERESTING GROUP of Nepalese we met that day came around the bend of the hillside where the Sherpa house which was to be ours for the night came into sight. There were about ten; all were very clean and dressed with all their jewels and best clothes, but carrying their shoes. They had been to visit some relatives several day's journey away. There were several men, women and children, including a baby of about six months. When they saw us they started saying, *Am-e-e-e-ee!"* It is an exclamation of surprise, and they said it with all the strength they could muster. One woman said, "I've seen a VISION. What kind of a vision have I seen?" When we met on the path she continued, "Oh, do sit down and let us talk." She "pawed" me and remarked about how very white I was. Literally, I was very red with sunburn. The customary questions were asked and then she told us she had never seen anyone my "color." She had heard about us and explained she really thought she had seen a vision. "Oh, do hold my baby," she implored and this I joyfully did. He was a lovely, smiling baby, wearing a new rainbow-striped sweater and *tope* (hat) to match. Of course, he did not have any undergarments or three-cornered trousers! Most babies go about like that, whether they live in mountain or valley. You wonder why "tummy" trouble is not more prevalent. I could never understand why mothers let their children go pantless.

The very talkative woman said enthusiastically, "What can I give you?" After pausing for a minute, she added, "and what can you give me?" I thought and asked her, "Have you any Nepal money for which I can give you Indian money?" Here she laughed and said, "I have only Indian money; don't you know we don't like Nepal money. It is not worth as much?" She was right. A Nepal rupee is only worth 12 annas (not quite 15 cents) and an Indian rupee is worth about 25 cents.

Frank, perhaps bored moved on. He was cooking the evening meal when I arrived. How good the tea tasted! It was a very small room that we all shared. It was very cold; we must have been about 10,000 ft. above sea level. The coolies drank their smoky tea then took our drenched boots and dried them with the hot ashes. We hoped they would last out the trek without shrinking too much. All wood varied when put on the fire. This was the worst for making us weep. I must have soaked several hankies. It was the only wash my face was given that day. I baked bread with flour and soda and put it into the ashes after the coolies had made their meal. Too tired and too cold to sit up while it cooked I went to bed—hoping it would cook without my watching it. It did although the bottom was a little burned!

We spent a restless, cold night. We had hot water bottles, but the wind howled and the building had many large cracks. The dogs howled and the jackals yapped. Peaceful sleep was an impossibility. At 3:30 I was wide awake as the owners of the house were grinding their corn. We got up at 4 A.M., called the coolies who were reluctant to move (weather was very nippy) and were breakfasting at 4:30 A.M. Our meal consisted of tea, bacon (which we had been able to keep by putting it into deep fat before leaving Darjeeling) and our home-made bread which, although not quite done in the middle, was better than nothing. I took the *Kuchha* (under-

done) part and fried it with the bacon. We wondered what we would do for bread in a day or two, but we were living a day at a time. We got an early start on the road at 5:45 A.M., but the village was wide awake and everyone was working. Some were washing their few cooking utensils left from the night before. One young girl was picking real mushrooms from the cowshed roof. We had met "things" which looked like mushrooms several times, but we were never quite sure and passed them by.

Each individual hill had one cloud resting on its peak. It was so cold and windy and we had climbed so far up a very steep track that it seemed we were really "on top of the world." On all sides were mountains and as we stood there we saw nothing higher than the mountain we were on. Very soon we were to experience much more treacherous climbing to higher heights. My thoughts wandered—could there really be a Mount Everest over 29,000 feet? Of course, our friend Tenzing Sherpa had climbed it with Sir Edmund Hillary. What a grand feeling it was to be at this height! Then we rapidly descended, jumping from boulder to boulder into extreme heat of one more of Nepal's many, many beautiful valleys. Not only the folk stared at us in this valley but also the animals. They cocked their ears and glared. Only the chickens did not seem interested. We were interested in them, hoping to be able to buy eggs or chickens, a change of diet.

One morning, after I had been trying to get eggs for several days, "General" Nima Dorjee came and said in a very certain tone, "*Memsahib,* you will get eggs today." I must have looked dubious as he continued, "not many miles away there will be a bazaar today so we will meet lots of folk going there, some will have eggs for sale." We met the people—but not the eggs. I asked dozens of times and all informed me, "No eggs." Now I said to myself. "I will not

ask any more." I walked on letting the Nepalese pass by, but I thought I would try again. I could not believe my ears when, to my question, one Sherpa boy replied, "Yes." He was not visibly carrying eggs, but he started to undo his *Ke-rap* (five yards of cloth worn as a belt) and produced five eggs in one row and four in the next roll of cloth. He only wanted one anna each, although we usually paid two or three annas for each egg in Darjeeling, India.

We passed a herd of startled cows, each one seemed to have a big black crow on its back. All the animals and birds are smaller than the same kind at home, but I was sure that the crow was bigger in the East, also a bigger thief. One would swoop down and take anything out of one's hands—if it could catch the victim unawares. I had known them to take whole eggs from my hands. I could mention many more of their underhanded tricks. The children who were looking after the cows were pretty and friendly but, oh, how dirty! One girl's hair was black, with millions of white nit eggs—which reminded of "dotted Swiss" material. We walked through much jungle during the day. With the leeches waiting for us we hurried as much as possible. Our speed was better than that of the coolies. They each had a load of about eighty pounds to carry. Several times we sat down and waited for them at a village, or just on the wayside. Once we were waiting at a Sherpa house and for the first time met an unfriendly man. He was a very sick man; he had what I thought was probably the last stages of T.B. He said there was a drought and it had hardly rained for ten months—which meant famine for him. This was hard to believe after all the rain we had seen, and yet we knew it was possible. In India, one state can have floods while the next is suffering a drought. He was trying to work against the terrible odds of his extremely weak body. He went to cut down a bamboo and could hardly carry it. Frank went to help him, and he

seemed somewhat grateful. Of course, he asked every question of which he could think. Referring to our coolies, he kept repeating, "They have not come yet?" This we well knew and were beginning to think something must have happened. Immediately my thoughts went back to the good advice of our friend of the previous day. They might be thieves—was this true? Had one of them met with an accident? I could not believe they would steal our boxes—what good would they be to them? We had only three, one of which, it was true, contained our butter, soda and tea. That would have made them good Tibetan tea! The second one had in it our bedding and clothes, and the third our primus stove, oil, gramophone and medicines.

Again our Job's comforter came and grunted, "What are you writing about? Your coolies have not yet come." I told him I was writing about his beautiful land.

By this time I was not feeling too happy. I thought something was wrong, but I tried to say complacently, "They *will* come." The minutes seemed like hours. We waited and finally our two youngest monkey-like coolies came scrambling up the mountainside in front of us. They were both breathless and perspiring, saying, "You have taken the wrong track." "We?" I cried. All that time I had thought it was they who had gone wrong, but lo, we were the culprits! The coolies were very happy to find us, and we them. We had to suffer in getting back to the right track. They said, "Nima Dorjee was right over there looking after the boxes." To get "there" we had to walk around the edge of a mountain with no tracks. The grass was very wet and slippery, even though the last man had said that it had not rained for ten months. We had to cross and walk through several streams, climb over a Nepal stile that gave way as I was crossing it, leaving me hanging on to one bamboo rod with my body hanging over the mountain side. Nga-ten-pa came quickly to my res-

cue. I repented and decided from that day to keep near the coolies. We were so pleased to see Nima Dorjee and our boxes, so we celebrated by eating another enormous cucumber which we found most refreshing. They peeled it away from them—just the opposite to the way we would do. They did the same with matches, always striking them away from them. Many things in the East are opposite from our method, or vice versa. We write on the line, they underneath; we cover our feet and leave our heads uncovered while they cover their heads and leave their feet exposed to the cold.

It was very hot and we were very sunburned so we were happy for a lovely avenue of pine trees. The pine odor was grand. We passed a very unusual tree; the roots went upward at about a 60° angle for approximately six yards before they met the trunk. Each day we walked not knowing where we would stay for the night. We had a tent but so far we had not used it. Carefree life was wonderful. We had been so used to working by the clock—here no clock and also no watch as my watch spring had given out. I decided to do like my friends in Nepal, try and tell the time by the sun which never fails, when it is shining!

We walked for hours without seeing anyone and then around a bend of the mountain what did we see? A beautiful, large, well-built building in the middle of nowhere. There was one shop about two hundred yards away from the building. It was the first real Nepal-type shop that we had seen. It looked like a prison cell, only the bars and doors were made of wood. You had to push your hands through the bars to get purchases. We asked the man, who was playing cards with three other men in the shop, "What is that over there?" "A school," he replied. There was not a person in sight, but when the bell rang at 4 P.M., five minutes later, about two hundred children came running out. How I wish I could describe them! There were small boys and big

boys, and girls too. There were the intelligent-looking and the unintelligent. They were wearing many kinds of clothes; some were dressed in the national costume of Nepal, others were wearing the European style of pants and shirt for boys and pretty, colorful dresses for the girls. Many of the boys, though they had short hair had a long tuft hanging down the back of their heads, denoting that they were Hindus. On some, this tuft of hair was so long that they tied it into a bow. Others had Hindu marks painted on their faces. The teacher wore shoes; most of the children were barefooted. The little children carried slates; most of the older children had bags for their books. Many carried a wee bottle swinging from their hands by the end of a string around the neck of the bottle. It contained ink, colored water! Already I had worn out a new ball point pen. I had carried my fountain pen just in case of emergency, but this was one of the very first places where we could refill it. How different Nepal was to any other land we had been in! The people seemed to do without so many things that we would consider essential. Half the world does not know how the other half lives. Of course, the children stared at us and were talkative. We were introduced to the head master and six of the teachers. They were charming and offered us their large school for the night. When we told them we had brought medicine, the good news spread like wild fire and we did not think that so many people could come from "out of the blue." We were overrun with patients. The head master gave us as many classrooms as we needed, so we took one for the coolies to sleep in, one for ourselves, and the office we used as our consulting room. The patients sat on the benches and one by one they came to us. I felt like a specialist. It was good to sit on a chair again and to have a table on to which to put the medicines, for it must have been over a week since we had such luxuries.

We both treated dozens of patients. All wanted to have their pulses taken. I was very thankful when Nima Dorjee came and said tea was ready. The head master had been sitting with us all this time so naturally I asked him to have tea with us. He declined, saying it was against the rules of his caste to eat with others, so I asked him to have one of our wrapped sweets. He smiled and putting his hands together, as a child does when praying, said, "Please excuse me." What bondage they are in, and how strict they are to their caste. Later he sent by his servant, milk, potatoes, corn and bananas, which we gladly accepted—no caste!

We paused to drink our tea, but the crowds remained so we afterward continued until sunset. Gifts poured in from the thankful patients but we were very glad when the last patient was treated. We were very tired, but later the teacher returned and we talked on many topics. They would not speak to us in English, though they knew it, saying they were shy and had not practiced. One of the teachers asked us to open a hospital and the other teachers agreed, but we told them we could do nothing without the permission from their Government.

I did not sleep well although we had plenty of room because Dorjee's hacking cough often shattered the stillness. The other coolies in the next room were all snoring at different speeds and tones. We were up with the dawn—made pancakes, and had a very inquisitive crowd blocking the light that was coming through the door.

We soon opened our consulting room and started work. Where did all the sick come from? If we had not come they would have had to suffer. We closed up at about 7:30 A.M. and were all set to go, but several groups of very sick folk were hobbling toward us. I could not be hard-hearted. I could see by Nima Dorjee's expression that he did not want to undo his load (he was carrying medicines) but I insisted.

These folk had walked miles to reach us and were very sick. One baby was just skin and bone; many of the children suffered from beri-beri. How needed are vitamins!

We pushed off again and this time we found our kettle was leaking. We had been given a gift of good milk and I had not wanted to leave it behind so we poured it into the kettle and put adhesive tape around the spout. When it started leaking around the lid I felt I could not ask Nima Dorjee to undo his load again. It might have put him into a bad mood for the rest of the day. I carried the kettle and felt like a real Tibetan. They usually have a kettle with them. Theirs is seldom used for water, sometimes for tea, more often for *chang*—beer.

We walked miles around the mountain side, down to another river. The stones and rocks were very slippery, and Frank had a nasty fall and hurt his knee. It soon began to swell and was very painful. During the day we met more people and passed more villages. We stopped to have tea out of the flask; it seemed we had left tea shops behind. As usual we were stared at by a crowd. Frank asked them kindly, "What are you staring at?" One man spoke with a smile, "Well, you know, we have never seen people like you before. You are so white." We walked on and had to go through a very narrow gorge. We saw huge buffaloes coming toward us in the charge of a little girl of about nine years. First the buffaloes stopped and glared at us, then the little girl saw us and screamed out with fright, "Get out of the way, they will biff you." Almost in the same breath she shrieked, "Oh Mother, Mother! come quickly there are some funny white creatures on the road that I have never seen before." Whether the buffaloes understood all she said I did not know, but at this point they took fright and almost did a somersault in the small alley-like path. They ran from us toward the poor child who was running away from us with buffaloes follow-

ing. She was still crying, "Oh Mother, Mother, Mother!" We waited to see if she would come back, but as she did not we continued.

Next we met a group of Limbus carrying the body of one of their friends who was wrapped in yards of new white cloth. They told us they believed in burying; many of the castes in the East burn their dead. Death in the East is an expensive business. They must have new cloth and feed the poor and give money to their priests. We climbed up and then down—down—down—again into the hot valley. We passed orange trees but the fruit was not ripe, then through fields of stunted corn. As we were descending the steep mountain we could see the so-called mile-long bridge through our binoculars (our coolies had mentioned it). Just as if there were two ropes along it—excellent for a monkey. As we got a little nearer, we could see that what we had thought was rope was a reflection in the water. It rained and this was followed by thunder and lightning. We welcomed the change. My arms were covered with hundreds of little blisters due to the sun; my nose and neck were very sore. The scenery and colors of the hillside that day were so magnificent! There were fields with tall, golden corn rustling in the gentle breeze; emerald green rice fields which looked like beautiful lawns. On the outer edge of this were fields of dal (lentils) which were a richer, deep green. There were newly ploughed fields with clods turned heavenward revealing a lovely hue of a brilliant reddish-brown color.

Our miles to the river were the hardest. There were no visible tracks so we had to jump down from field to field along the terraces; sometimes we walked along the very narrow ridges of the rice fields, which were flooded with water. Our drops from field to field were as much as six to eight feet. I thought I was doing well, but when I saw the coolies do it with their loads on their backs, I realized they took the

prize. Going down for two miles, jumping from field to field, was very strenuous so when we arrived close to the river, we decided to call it a day and cross the bridge the next day. We hoped to be able to swim in the river but my dream soon vanished. Though we were very near to it we could not find a way down. There was just a very steep precipice of about two hundred feet to the water.

There was another one of Nepal's inns and though it was a two story house, it was very dirty and dilapidated. There were small holes for windows which made it very dark. Most pilgrims consider only themselves so there were large holes in the upper room where whole planks had been taken out to make a fire for cooking (the same with the roof) it would be reckoned too dangerous to live in any Western country. We slept upstairs and in parts we could see the moon brightly shining through the missing planks. The stairs were a log of wood (secured against the wall) into which had been hacked crude notches to serve as treads. In the daylight it was not too difficult using that, but in the dark it would have been just as easy to climb up a greasy pole. It was extremely hot there and oh, how thirsty we all were! Truly it was a case of, "water, water, everywhere and not a drop to drink." There was a stream about half a mile away and to this the coolies went for water. They returned with what looked like orangeade due to the nearby newly-ploughed fields! Some of the mud had gotten into the stream. We were not fussy but this looked too bad. I wondered if we had enough rope to put on to the end of our canvas bucket and let it down from the bridge to the river. This bridge was a very high one and as we looked at the rushing torrent below we could imagine it pulling our little bucket downstream. We were in desperate need of water. With prayer and half a desire I said, "Oh, Lord, if only you could send rain it would solve our problem." Never had a prayer or a desire been answered

so quickly. It *poured.* I confess we were all taken by surprise and the text, "Oh, thou of little faith" came to mind. We filled everything we had, but vessels were few as we were traveling as light as possible. In what could we collect this very precious "God-sent" clean water? I remembered we had a large piece of rubber sheeting which was covering one of the boxes. Quickly this was brought and Nga-ten-pa and I held it out. It was full in no time, though both of us were drenched. We could not hold it continually so Frank tied rope to the corners and slung the sheet on two of the overhanging beams of the roof. Immediately one of the coolies ran in to the jungle to cut down two fork-like sticks which he put into the ends of the rubber sheet to keep it open. They always seemed to know how to improvise. What they could make from bamboo would have filled a book. They could make houses, beds, schools, furniture, cooking utensils, toys and whips. They would use the bamboo, in some places, to irrigate fields or to bring the water nearer to their village. The shoots of the bamboo were very tasty when cooked. The East without its bamboo would be like the West without its automobiles.

Our meal was very simple, just tea which we literally drank by the pint, and some biscuits. Neither of us had an appetite; it was so unbearably hot! The coolies ate less, as they had hoped to be able to buy rice on the way but found it unobtainable. As they only had enough for one meal, they decided to eat the small quantity of dried corn they had and the tea which we gave them. They would eat the full meal in the morning. I had been trying to get eggs during the day but only succeeded in getting one. I paid two annas. It must have been very stale for when I cracked the shell there was an obnoxious smell; the inside was black!

We decided to sleep upstairs and leave the coolies downstairs to mind the luggage as some other Nepalese pilgrims

had arrived to spend the night. When they knew we had medicines they asked for malaria tablets and gave us corn on the cob in exchange. This we quietly gave to our coolies, hoping it would help to fill their nearly empty stomachs.

The pilgrims retired, but before doing so they put leaves of citranella into the ashes. These sent a lovely perfume up to us. It is supposed to keep the insects away, especially mosquitoes which were very dangerous there. I cannot say that it did this, but we did appreciate the lovely smell of lemons instead of the constant *odor* of sweat, rats and bats.

Up the very slippery, wet, carved or hacked-out steps we went. I used D. D.T. on part of the floor. My good husband laughed, as he had no faith in it. Certainly it did not seem to kill Nepal's parasites, but I hoped it helped. There were lots of mosquitoes and we had no nets, so we put insect repellent on our hands and face and hoped for the best. Then our coolies asked for medicine to prevent them having fever. This we supplied. They said, "Now we are in the Awal District (hot climate) we need it."

We too retired, and again I was thankful to be able to undress. I slipped into my sleeping bag sheet, tied my hair into horse-tail fashion for coolness. Still we remained uncomfortably hot. The mosquitoes buzzed around our faces and large moths, bats, or whatever they were, flew constantly over and on us. There were fleas and bugs everywhere; several times I dived into my bed to catch the intruders with the aid of my flashlight. I banged this way and that, usually to see the little creatures hop away. I could almost hear some of my Buddhist friends say (for many of them do not believe in killing), "Live and let live." I would not mind them living if they would let me sleep. I was pestered with hosts of creepy, crawly ants of different sizes and colors and how they could nip!

Salt has an advertisement slogan, "It runs." I wondered if

table salt would run in the East where it rains for five or six months of the year. If it did, it would be ideal to have tubes or bottles that could be squeezed over those ever-clinging leeches. The best thing would have been some ointment that would be absolutely leech-proof.

My husband spent this airless night repeatedly slapping his almost bare body, trying to catch the pests. The noise would have given the coolies the idea that we were fighting, but they were peacefully snoring. Nothing seemed to disturb their rest!

Chapter 8

DRESSING IN THE DARK

By 3:00 A.M. we had had enough of the disturbances of the night, so we got up and I started to dress in the dark. This was not easy. I felt sure I had put an article of clothing "just there," but I would pat here and there and not find it. The morning was so still, except for the noise of the roaring river and the jackals (or they may have been hyenas), that came so near at different times during the night. My husband said that jackals yap. These surely did as well at shrieking, screaming, howling and making a most horrid, weird noise that seemed to go up and down the scale—out of tune!

Down the awkward steps we went, lit the primus stove and made tea and porridge. We called the coolies with our daily phrase, "Come on, let's go." This had to be repeated several times before they even grunted. Finally we would hear a, *"La-so, Sahib"* (O.K. Sahib). They got up, made their mashed corn and potatoes, and we moved off. The coolies were very pleased to leave one of Nepal's extremely hot valleys.

We reached the "mile-long" bridge. It looked an exaggerated mile. It was high, too, with angry torrents flowing underneath. Actually only eighty yards long, it seemed much more because of its kind and condition. It was a rickety, cable suspension bridge, very narrow at the beginning with insecure planks. I thought that when I got to the middle of

the bridge I would stop and have a good look around. As soon as I started I changed my mind and the only halting place for me was the other side! It was slow progress. As I got nearer to the middle of the bridge the hand cables got wider and wider, I wondered what I would do when I could not hold on. Some of the wires were broken and some of the planks were missing. With one false step you were likely to slip right through to instant death.

Just as I was thinking, "I cannot stretch my hands any farther," I found I did not need to as the cables were closing in. I was now nearer the other side. What a grand feeling on my last step! I was not used to sea sickness and knew very little about air sickness. On this occasion I felt somewhat "bridge-sick." On solid ground I was composed enough to take a movie of my fellow travelers in distress. My husband looked so weird holding on to this crude bridge. When he arrived on firm ground, I asked him how he felt on the bridge. "Not so good," he replied. "This is better." I snapped the coolies as they were crossing with their loads. How the bridge rocked and how serious they all looked—until they had passed over! They turned back to look at the bridge and all of us had a good laugh.

I never realized that we could walk up so many hills or through so many valleys in one day, or have so many streams, rivers and landslides to cross. It was becoming common; I even forgot to report them all. That day we were told that the next river was impassable and as the coolies seemed to believe it, we had to make a long detour right through a jungle. I was thankful it was morning. We walked for many hours up the middle of a mountain. It was quite dark, due to the dense foliage. Once again we were pestered by clinging leeches. I offered a prayer for guidance. Finally we came into the open and how thankful we were! My husband looked rather ragged with his twelve-day beard.

We met several children who were supposed to be *gotalas* (shepherds). Like all children they were happier playing five-stones or shooting birds with their catapults, while the cows were in the fields eating the corn! We dropped into a Nepali house and the woman made us tea which had a horrid taste, just like burned wood. But it was hot and wet and it quenched our intense thirst. She had a lovely field of ripened corn, but told us that she could not give us any, nor could they eat it, until the Lama (priest) had been to bless it. We hoped he would arrive soon so that the poor folk would not starve.

As we were passing a Nepalese house of Chattersees, they called us in or rather to their compound where we all sat on the verandah. For us the father asked the daughter to roast corn which was freshly picked from the fields. It was greatly appreciated, but not the wood which was feeding the fire. This caused me to weep and weep. I found it difficult to keep up wiping my nose and eyes while answering their stream of questions. The wood reminded me of that which I had read of in one of the Sikkim Dak Bungalow report books. This book was used by travelers to write their name and to state the time of arrival and departure, also to list any remarks. One particular traveler wrote, "Is it not possible to obtain wood of a less tear-producing kind?" In another bungalow, where it was very hot, a traveler had written, "We certainly do not need fires for heat, but it is rather difficult to try and dry one's clothes with the aid of candles!" There were no fireplaces in that bungalow.

While we waited for our corn, the man smoked his hooker, a peculiar pipe made up from water in the bottom part and coals of fire at the top. The smoker then blows into it like a child trying to make bubbles, and this produces smoke. He talked to us about his fields, animals and children and I

noticed the contrast between the townfolk and this old man. They mostly talked of money, clothes, and food.

We walked and walked after this and with no houses in sight we decided to pitch our tent for the first time. It was difficult but we finally erected it on the mountainside near the river. The plot was only about twelve feet square, and as straight as we could find. We had no sooner got settled when a passer-by stopped, had a good look at us, and then said, "Why, you are not going to stay here for the night? Thieves will come and these rocks might slip. Don't you know there are landslides everywhere? Didn't you hear about the villagers who were killed yesterday?" We knew all this was true but we had to stay somewhere. Seeing that we were not perturbed, he stopped talking and we told him we had a Living God who neither slumbers nor sleeps, and we would ask Him to look after us. The man then gave us a big piece of cucumber which he carried like a handbag with a narrow piece of bamboo through it for a handle, and some beautiful ripe guavas which were the first we had had. He asked for medicines and I wondered how he knew. How the news traveled! As it was getting dark I said, "You had better hurry home or the bears will come after YOU." They really seemed to have cat's eyes, for they could easily walk in the dark and on very rough and ragged tracks. As he left I shouted after him, "Mind you don't come and visit us in the night." He laughed and went off happily.

We had a better night as it was a little cooler. Awakening several times, we found nothing undesirable around but as the tent was pitched on a slant, I kept slipping down toward the tent door. I got up and put one of our boxes at my feet to stop me from sliding out to a deep precipice and then the river! We arose at 3:00 A.M. with thankful hearts for protection of our guardian angel. The thieves had not visited us, nor the wild animals, though we could hear them in the

nearby jungle; nor did the rocks fall on us. We knew all these things could happen; during the last few days as we looked in another direction we saw a cloud of dust which meant another landslide.

Sometimes we had had to wait while the rocks, mud and earth stopped moving before we could pass. Once we walked over the track and then just where we had trodden a few minutes before, there was a landslide.

We had our light breakfast at 3:45 A.M., but it was a hard job to get the coolies up. They seemed to be in a slow mood and I timed them to discover that after the boxes were packed, it took them over half an hour to put their few things on top and tie them. Then I began to wonder why it is that civilized people work by the clock. Time does not mean anything to the Nepalese.

> Here lies a man who tried to hurry the unhurried East.
>
> —RUDYARD KIPLING

The coolies did not want to hurry. I saw them all sleeping after my husband had called them the first time, and thought I would do them a good turn. We had finished our breakfast and were waiting for them so I lit a wood fire. I had been on my hands and knees, and nearly my head, blowing the embers left from the night before. I called them again, "I have lit your fire and put on the water for your tea so *do* get up." I managed to get one of the three to sit up and get a *"Laso"* out of him. I left them, feeling very pleased with myself and my good deed. About ten minutes later I went back. They were getting on fine—all asleep—and my wood fire had died a natural death. Finally, they did get up and left without even making a cup of tea, partly because I reprimaded them. This put Nima Dorjee into one of his bad moods. There was a village a mile or so on where they thought they could get tea. We left at 6:5 A.M., but

it could have easily been 5:6 A.M. if they had hurried. We crossed a small wobbly wooden bridge and then started an intensely steep climb; we should have accomplished this the previous day at 3 P.M.

We climbed and climbed, but where was the top? Our motto for climbers was, "Walk a little, pant a lot, and rest a while!" In Tibet and Sikkim we had ridden up the steep inclines but Nepal's mountains were not suitable for horse-riding.

The coolies were working very well; and one of the advantages was that they do not cost as much as horses. They often ate as early as 4 A.M. and lastly at 6 or 7 P.M. They had nothing in between except something very light, unless they had something given to them, such as cucumber, fruit, corn and cooked potatoes. We had the same. The cucumbers were as big as English marrows and we never had salt with them or did we suffer from indigestion.

After three solid hours we were still climbing, then we came to two ways. As they both looked alike to us we waited for our coolies to come. They arrived, glanced at the two very narrow tracks, and said, "This is the way." I asked them how they knew and they casually replied, "We just look to see which has the most footprints on and then we know this must be the main road." To us they appeared exactly alike!

We bought a chicken that day with some difficulty. The young hen must have had an intuition of her imminent fate. She scooted here and there and we had to leave without her. Later we saw a young lad running behind us, very breathlessly. He had our chicken. Frank took it, wrung its neck, and within half an hour it was featherless. It made us a good meal that we appreciated as we had not had any meat on the tour, except a tin of pork and beef sausages.

We had never seen a road like the one we traveled that day. Six hours of stiff climbing, then we reached a little

bazaar. There were just a few Nepalese shops, a post office, a few temples, a weaving factory where they were dying their own threads—a colorful sight. We often saw them picking wild rhubarb. Thinking they could not eat it all, I asked what they did with it. "We don't eat it," they said emphatically. "We dye our cloth with it." Then they showed us the material, and they said the dye was very *pucca* (fast). Sometimes we saw them picking walnuts; these two were used for dyeing.

They had a small broadcasting station, short wave, and a village school. We visited the school and the headmaster welcomed us. The children were most interested in us; we were the only foreigners they had ever seen. One man tried out his English. "Where you going—touring?" We answered and so he continued, "You going many cities?" I smiled for we had passed hundreds of villages but only one city, Elam. We were in a completely new land; at Thera-Thun everything was done in Nepalese style. The shops all had the wooden frames in front making them look like prison cells. Things were dearer than in India. We could understand when we thought of the hardships they had in procuring goods. The coolies bought rice and *ata* (whole meal flour); the price of the latter was very high. It had to be carried days before it reached this place.

The radio officer came and had a chat with us. He had been to India so he asked us about many things.

The temples looked similar to those in India. There were a few *Sadhus* (Indian holy men) sitting doing penances. A few Nepali priests were giving the pilgrims flowers which they took to their gods.

We met a group of coolies carrying loads of butter, country-made paper, and other materials in flat, conical-shaped bamboo baskets. They said for ten days traveling, with no food allowance, they would get twelve rupees ($2.65) a mere

pittance. They asked us for cigarettes but we informed them that we did not smoke, that none of our coolies did.

It thundered and rained—it had done the same for four days at exactly the same time. If we happened to be passing through a village at that time we naturally saw mother, or someone, bring the washing in. You could hardly call it clothes. I had never seen so many dirty pieces of rag in my life. The villagers are mostly poorly and scantily dressed. This may be because they all work hard in the field. Although in rags and working hard in the fields they all wore heavy beads and necklaces of money. Surely this could not help in the field work. I was told that they must not take them off.

Next month everything would be changed as it would be their *Bara Din* (great day). They celebrate this as we celebrate Christmas. Everyone has new clothes and it is a great time for eating and drinking. Special attraction for children would be a large ping (swing) made of strong bamboo poles and ropes. The children love it. One wonders why they allow the children to play with it for such a short while and once a year. I know because children in the East have to work really hard, even from a very early age. A beautiful swing would be a distraction from work.

The day's march ended, after that stiff, endless climb. We stayed at a Limbo Inn where the folk were very kind, giving us chillies, squash, and an open cow-shed-like verandah to sleep on. There was a low open fireplace in one corner and a dekhi in the middle. This instrument is used for cleaning rice, and consists of a long piece of wood with a wooden hinge. One person pushes the wood up and down with the feet; at the other end there is a hole in the ground into which the rice is put. The *dekhi,* having an extended piece of wood, goes into the hole to clean the rice. The one who is at that end has to be very careful that she does not let her

hand get into the hold of the *dekhi.* I saw several folk with badly lacerated wounds.

Our shed was open on three sides so we soon had a crowd. We were getting used to that. I started to prepare the chicken curry, giving the remainder, chicken head and feet to the coolies. They got their wood fire going and I started to weep—smoke, smoke, smoke!

Just as we were settling at the Inn a band of Nepali pilgrims arrived. They gave us a glare as if to say: "What are you doing here? This is where we stay." The host said they could not stay as he had not enough wood for their fire. The coolies soon got over this obstacle by producing their own wood, which they had collected on the way. Reluctantly he gave them a small room above the cowshed. I wondered how twenty-five men would be able to get in, but they did and must have been packed in like sardines.

The inquisitive crowd watched us work and eat. Different ones said, *"Amee-e-e,"* and put their anemic tongues out as far as possible, signs of surprise. Our primus stove took their attention, also the gramophone when we played records in their language. Their eyes opened wide when they saw us eat curry and rice with our hands, just as they did.

Two children were amused with my little Nepali knife brooch. Almost daily we had a crowd to watch us go to bed. I slipped into my sleeping bag and turned down the lamp. Frank did not undress. I undressed inside the bag in semi-darkness, the crowd remained. The limboes and Nepalies did not seem to undress. The Sherpas and Tibetans loosened their clothes, slipped their arms out. They used their clothes for a covering. To put on a pretty, nylon nightgown would have been absolutely out of place. We were not anxious that these people should remember us by such, but by much more important things. If Frank had walked out in pajamas there would be nothing strange in that. In India we often saw

Bengali men walking out in pajamas and dressing gown. They thought they were dressed. Truly, it is a strange world with strange folk in it!

In every village we stayed, the evenings seemed the same—water to be carried; grain to be ground, cleaned and cooked; a few vegetables to be picked and peeled (The peelings were left where they fell, as there was usually a pig, goats or chickens waiting to devour what was thrown away); animals to be tied up; cow milked, though it might only give one to two pints; fire to be lit and, of course, the baby to be rocked incessantly.

So far there seemed to have been a young baby in every house we had stayed. Usually the baby seemed to cry almost every hour of the night. I could not understand why they would not train their babies, for it would have been so much easier for all. Often the children ruled. When they did not get their way they cried, yelled, stamped their feet and threw themselves on the ground (often banging their heads) until they had won.

After evening devotions, we retired. We were reading Acts of the Apostles in the evenings—the book Christians should live in today, though few do—the Psalms by David in the morning. As we read it seemed that David knew all about Nepal. He portrayed so many things that were the same in Nepal as found in Psalm 65.

> Thou visiteth the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.
>
> Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers. Thou blessest the springing thereof.
>
> Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

> They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.
>
> The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing (Psalm 65, vv. 9-13).

Up before dawn! Two big black dogs were prowling around. My daily routine started with a daily st-r-e-t-ch, but also a daily sc-r-a-t-ch; there were so many pests. It seemed rather comical to see the three coolies and myself sit up in the mornings on the portion of ground we had occupied for the night, and scratch. Frank did not join us; he said the pests did not bite him. How fortunate!

The coolies got up that morning and lit their fire before daybreak. Lifting a piece of their lighted wood from the fire they looked to see if the water was boiling for tea. While eating our breakfast an old woman who lived at the Inn came and said that one of the twenty-five coolies had stolen her basket and *lamlo* (rope for carrying the basket). "Would you think anyone would do this, when we gave them a place to sleep?" We felt sorry for her as she seemed so upset.

We set off for another day's march toward our goal. The sunrise was magnificent. For the last two days Mount Kinchinjunga had been showing its snow-capped top, a most exquisite golden color. At sunrise and sunset the weather was perfect though quite warm by midday.

I had complained about the cold, icy breezes of the Phari Plains of Tibet (14,000 feet). The post office there is the highest in the world. The entrance is through a dirty alley, and the customer must bend down to enter into a dark room where a Tibetan man sits with a box in front of him. This is the post office. There, on the plateau, about 2 P.M. on most days the terrifically cold wind blows up and it almost suffocates. It penetrates even the most suitable and windproof clothing.

It was the third day we had not found any facilities for drying clothes. As it was fine we decided to put some of the clothes on the back of the boxes the coolies were carrying. We were traveling toward the west and the sun would be on them most of the day. I had a dress to dry, so one of the coolies went to a nearby field of finished corn and cut down one of the stalks which he pushed through the sleeves of the dress to serve as a coat-hanger. It was not long before it was dry.

Around this part it was indescribably beautiful; innumerable hills, valleys, waterfalls and picturesque villages. We went through miles of jungles. We also went through much deep grass where thousands of burrs attached to our clothes.

We passed several miles of bushes with red, holly-like berries. "How lovely they would look at Christmas," but that was three months ahead. Walking farther I said to myself, "My! look at those pretty holly bushes," though they were a little different. As I approached, I found they were evergreen bushes covered with black beetles with red heads!

Then we came to a spring of clear, cold water—what a life saver when one is so thirsty! So high up, we thought it could not be contaminated so we had a good drink, asking the Lord's blessing on it. We also had a small piece of cake and I decided I must soon make some more as we were both fond of it.

We sat down there and rested until the coolies caught up with us, for though we had resolved to stay with them we found it very hard to walk at their pace. Frank put cold compresses on his swollen and painful knee while I had a good wash and then sat down to enjoy the magnificent scenery.

We entered a jungle which was cool and pleasant after the blazing sun. The only sound was the chirping of crickets

and other insects, some insects that I had never seen in any museum. In the jungle the ferns and mosses are many different shades. There are many kinds of fir trees, which give an appearance of fairyland.

Apart from our slimness, Frank's bad knee, and my sunburn, which had by that time reached the peeling stage, we were both feeling well.

We met a *gotala* (shepherd) so we sat on a beautiful strawberry patch (the fruit was not ready) and had a little chat. He was interesting and told us about the small plant which was poisonous to the cow. He went to a nearby bush and produced it, saying, "I think this is it." It had a small rhododendron-like leaf, and flowers which were similar to the lily of the valley. He took it and threw it into the bush so that his cows would not eat it.

Our route took us past many prayer walls and one, the longest we had ever seen, was approximately one hundred yards or longer. Each one had written on it many times, *"Om Mani Padmi Hum"*—Oh, thou jewel of the Lotus! I had yet to meet a Lama (priest) who could explain the meaning of these words. We passed a Tibetan burning ghat. In the East there are several ways of disposing of the dead: burying, burning, and, where it is very cold, and wood is scarce as in some parts of Tibet and Nepal, they cut up the body on some mountain top and then the vultures come for it.

It was a much easier walk that day. The way was not as steep—a welcome change. We even found a poriton that was almost straight and looked like a well-watered lawn. A Nepali who was walking along with us told us that several years before an American had stayed there fifteen days to shoot birds. He pointed to his landmark, a most beautiful spot. I felt sure that man had not been there in September as we

had seen so few birds. We had come to believe that they must stay in their nests during the monsoon!

We passed miles of rhododendron trees; not bushes as in England, but trees. What a sight they must be when they are flowering: red ones, pink ones, white ones, sometimes interlaced, giving the appearance of a skein of varigated mercerized silk!

We passed many wild rose trees, and met an unusual party of ten women, all with babies of about age four to six months old. This party looked as if they had come from a baby show—nothing like that here.

We stopped and gave medicine, and as we moved on a dear old wizened woman, who must have been three score years and ten, came hobbling toward me as quickly as she could with the aid of a stick. I asked her what she wanted, naturally thinking it was medicines. She said, "Nothing, I have just come to see you." I asked her if she had been to Darjeeling and she answered, "I have not been anywhere." I thought how true! Half the world does not know what the other half is like. She would have never seen a car, tram, bus, train, or even a horse in that part of the world. She had never seen foreigners and was surprised that we could speak to her in her own language. She felt my hands and face as if she was stroking a cat. She remarked on the great work we were doing, giving medicines to all the folk and said, "My! what good, religious people you are, and what good works you will be storing up for yourselves." We said we did not do it for good works. We were happy to help others as we had a God who had been so good to us. She nodded her head, and did so constantly as I talked to her. I left her, wondering whether I would ever see her again.

We went through wet grass where we found our enemies, the leeches. Our three barefoot coolies and ourselves seemed to get a double portion of them that day. After descending

several thousand feet over a track where uneven stones and rocks had been thrown we arrived at another river where I was glad to pull off those leeches. We had another one of Nepal's so called bridges, just two small tree trunks, with no hand rails. What a difference a hand rail makes! It looked to me like a greasy log you see at the fairs for balance and stay-on tests. You either had to cross that one or fall into the river beneath. It was the kind of bridge at which we did not dare to look too long. I managed by sitting down and going across much as our own daughter had done before she could walk.

At the other side of the bridge, a boy offered us a cucumber, perhaps as a sort of reward. The coolies seemed to be able to cross easily with bare feet. I cannot count how many cucumbers we were given. Each cucumber was very welcome as they were so watery and refreshing. I was asked many times, "Are you a woman?" Of the Tibetans and Sherpas it is often difficult to know which sex is which. They both have long plaits of hair.

Chapter 9

ONE MORE RIVER TO CROSS

WE CROSSED HUNDREDS of different rivers; some just forest streams, others swift rapids. Some were bridgeless, many had unreliable bridges. Few were so impassable that we had to make long detours. The experience we gained while crossing the next was the worst. We arrived at one of Nepal's extremely hot valleys alone, the coolies were not in sight. How we wished they were near! We were in the "middle of nowhere" and oh so thirsty! There was a wide "mixed" river just ahead. The first half was beautifully calm; the second half (about ten yards) was swiftly flowing and looked deep. Frank decided to see if he could cross. I was to follow.

Off he went with no difficulties encountered in crossing the first half. It was not too deep, but I doubt if I will ever forget his attempt to cross the second half. As his legs touched the rushing torrents, his whole body was pulled into the merciless stream. He was carried for several hundred yards. It seemed as though he was miles away. Glued to the spot, I could not even pray, only whisper that precions name, "Jesus—Jesus." I thought that was the last time I would see my husband on earth, but as I watched him going farther and farther away, a miracle happened. The river made a turn and with great difficulty he managed to get out. What a reunion! His knee was bruised and a bursa appeared. Up to now it is still not quite right. We naturally gave thanks

to God for His protecting care. We both sat down to try to recover from the shock.

I was still extremely thirsty. Frank had swallowed so much of the river his thirst was almost quenched. In the meanwhile our coolies appeared and I related the story of how I had nearly lost my husband. Wiping the perspiration from their foreheads, they exclaimed, *"A-me-me-ee!"* They, too, were very thirsty, so I made tea.

Our thirsts quenched, we were all perspiring. We wondered how we could get across the river as we must, to reach our dear friend Goray at Pakding, Near Namche Bazaar, Nepal. While we were discussing the situation, there came a group of village men who told us where it was easiest to cross. They were used to this river Salwa and they would carry the loads for certain money. This was one of the places we did not barter, for the quicker we were across the river, the better. Our coolies were very relieved that they would not have to carry their loads. None of them were swimmers. The villagers suggested we hold hands to cross, so Frank and I went on the outside; the three coolies went in the middle. Frank carried my little bag containing medicines and our movie camera as he was the tallest.

The first part we all managed, but again when we touched the torrents we could not hold our own and we were all sucked under. The coolie holding my hand squeezed it so tightly that it was extremely painful. I yelled, "Let me go! Let me go!" The poor, scared coolie did. Frank and I swam out and the three coolies had to be pulled out by the experienced villagers. They had managed to get over, even with the loads on their heads, although everything was drenched.

All the way along the trek we had tried to be good "press photographers." Even there, although shaken, I tried to take some shots. The camera would not work; I found the water

had penetrated. My husband's 35 m.m. color camera was completely destroyed. We were rather sad about that.

We climbed up the valley only a few hundred yards before we "called it a day." We spent the evening trying to dry everything. All our rupee notes were wet and we hoped the villagers would take them. It was so hot we did not feel hungry, so we drank tea and ate biscuits. It was a lovely, moonlight night so we sat outside our little tent to think over the day's experiences and again give thanks to our heavenly Father for all His help. How thankful we were for our coolies, for after that terrifying experience they could easily have complained or given up. They were still happy and willing to carry on. I knew that Sherpas were given medals and were called "Tigers" if they climbed over 22,000 feet, but our Sherpas would never do this probably, as 15,000 feet was the highest we climbed. We thought they were worthy of gold medals for all they had gone through and done—without Everest equipment!

It was quite awhile before either of us got to sleep. It seemed hard to relax, partly because of the croaking of innumerable frogs and a choir of "singing" mosquitoes. The "singing" ones are not malarious. During the night we had a thunder storm and it was hard to keep the rain out of the tent. The thunder's roar, scared the coolies; the lightning flashed zigzag streaks through the sky all night. That is not an unusual thing in the East. Lightning often continues all night even when there is no thunder.

I awakened in the morning, not too fresh, but I got up and we moved off. We climbed up the mountain for six hours. Slithering and sliding over wet boulders and wallowing in the mud and mire, which would have been more suitable for pigs! We came to the village of Chainpur where they were beating brass. All, from the youngest to the eldest of the family, were working at this trade. They had the

strangest post office. Some children showed me where it was. I was told I had to climb up some very rickety stairs. This I did and the people inside were most surprised to see me. One young man, sitting cross-legged, with papers all around him, quickly rose to meet me, saying in his best English, *"Oh, Moder, Moder"* (some find it very hard to say the English "th" as we experienced difficulty in the pronunciation of some of their sounds not included in the English language) "don't you know you ought not to be here; don't you know you can't come to our land without permission?" On and on he went. When he had finished, I informed him we did have a pass. He seemed satisfied, and by that time my husband came to give him another surprise! I asked the post office man where the post box was and he pointed to a little portable box on the floor. In went my few precious letters to my little daughter and others. I wondered if ever they would reach India, but they did.

We moved on and outside this village we camped for the night. As we were erecting our tent, one of the coolies said, "You see that?" pointing to a huge stone wall. "Yes," I replied. "Well, that's where they put the murderers of Nepal." My heart was saddened when they told us some were very young and it was imprisonment for *life* until death. The coolies continued, saying, "They are handcuffed, and have their feet in shackles, and are given no work to do." "My!" I thought, "this is punishment, but not corrective punishment." How I longed to be able to see them and tell them the good news of the Gospel that had changed and does change lives. The opportunity was not given to us. I was glad when we moved on, as I could not get the thought of the prisoners out of my mind with the clanging of their chains. How I appreciated freedom and thanked God because we were on the outside of bars and wall, because of His grace and keeping power.

Chapter 10

A CANOE RIDE

THE FOLLOWING MORNING the coolies informed us we had another river to cross in Dingla. This one had a ferry. They seemed unduly concerned, and I wondered why. On reaching the bank I knew! The river was the biggest we had seen in Nepal. It was in flood. The sight of the ferry did little to inspire enthusiasm for the crossing. It was a roughly dug out canoe made from a tree trunk. We had to wait in the valley until the boatmen arrived. Looking around, it reminded me of the English seaside with the shingle and rocks. Again we gave the boatman the price asked, knowing we would be pleased to be over the treacherous river.

We looked again at the River Arun. Above and below it were tremendous rapids. A man could not live for a minute in them before he would be battered to pieces. The water poured down in galloping surges. It looked impossible! How could such a frail boat breast those waters? The men began to drag the canoe upstream, bidding us to follow. We trailed behind feeling anything but excited. We put the coolies and part of the loads in first; the younger coolies were definitely scared. They made no attempt to hide their fears, gripping the sides of the boat till their knuckles showed white. One of the men gave a hearty push and the canoe was afloat; in a moment it was being carried rapidly downstream. I had visions of our coolies and loads finishing up miles downstream on the way to India! Amid such thoughts we

saw the boatmen make a few flashing strokes with the paddles and, lo! the frail craft was sailing into the slack water on the other side! As casually the boatmen made the return trip to carry us over. Feeling somewhat reassured we took our places, sitting down in about three inches of water, naturally getting wet which was anything but pleasant since we stayed wet throughout the rest of the day! Again the men pushed out unconcernedly. The old boat rocked and we found it hard to hold on. The men took their paddles and started to work furiously, but we were caught in the rapids and with great speed went down the river. I wondered how they could ever stop. Suddenly they seemed to alter their course and twist around, and in a moment, we were in mid stream with water surging all around. Certainly a thrill, but hardly one which we appreciated in such cramped quarters. Down, down, we went, to another part of the river, then one of the men jumped out and pulled the boat into the sandy shore. What a relief to be out of that canoe! We felt the ferrymen had certainly earned their money and we did not begrudge it.

We were happy to be on dry ground again even if we did have wet shoes, socks and clothing. The climb seemed endless that day. Torrential rain started to fall and I discovered that I had left my mackintosh on the other side of the river. As far as I was concerned it could stay there. We did have one extra mackintosh cape so I used that, although it did not protect all of me. As we continued climbing—thinking the mountain had no summit—we met a group of pilgrims who asked for medicines. When I inquired what was wrong, one said, "I get breathless and my heart beats too quickly when climbing these mountains." I turned and said, "That is just the medicine I am needing and I don't have any!" We treated many different kinds of sores; some were caused by insects, some by poisonous spiders, others by malnutrition,

and a few by leprosy. How we longed, at times, to be able to treat them until they were well. We had to move on, leaving our friends, some examining each others' heads for lice!

At last we reached a Sherpa house where we stayed for the night. It was rather cold, at least 10,000 feet high. We had to sleep on the windy verandah. The usual crowd gathered to see us and to ask for medicines, also to hear the "man in a box" (gramophone). We tried to put up an old piece of sacking to keep the wind and the crowd out, but with little success. The coolies got a good fire going. We appreciated this, but oh! the wood! I do not know what kind it was; it did not make us weep, but there were constant explosions so we had to be alert.

I was often asked to give eye medicines due to the various kinds of flys which cause eye diseases. One case stands out before me. I was told my patient was upstairs, so up some rickety bamboo stairs I went and although daytime it was almost pitch dark. I asked for a light and they brought me a small hurricane lamp that was not much use as the glass was dirty. I could just see a poor old woman huddled on the floor. What a mess her eyes were in. They were pouring pus, and she was almost unable to open them. I asked for some warm water and a little salt with which to bathe them. It was surprising what a difference this made. Then I asked for a match, which her married daughter supplied. I twisted some cotton wool on one end to make my swab and squeezed a little of my good eye ointment (Burnol) on to this, applying it very gently. I then gave the match to her daughter, asking her to throw it into the fire. To my horror (this sent a shudder down my back) she applied it to her own eyes! She must have thought there was magic in the medicine. They seemed well satisfied and gave me a red yak's tail as a parting gift.

It had been a wearying and exhausting day, climbing miles and miles. We were so thankful that at the end of each day we could rest. I often thought of the poet who wrote, "Are there beds for all?" We did not sleep on a "bed" for forty days but we did have our air mattresses which we put down whenever we could. That helped us forget the hardness of the ground, if not of the road!

Up Hill

Does the road wind uphill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss the inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you standing at the door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labor you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yes, beds for all who come.

—Christina Georgina Rossetti

Chapter 11

OUR GOAL IN SIGHT

WE BEGAN TO SAY, "Perhaps by this time next week we will have reached the house of Goray Sherpa." Days went by; we had to make detours owing to landslides and it seemed that only very slowly were we reaching our goal. We had to pay our coolies by the day and now they did not seem to be going so quickly. Were they trying to get a few more days' pay, or was it our imagination? Were they really tired? We made up our minds to reach Goray Sherpa's house by a certain time, although our coolies said it was impossible. When we were about fifteen miles from his house we told the coolies we were going on. If they could make it, O.K. If not, they were to take their time. They seemed surprised and wondered why the hurry, but we were tired of dawdling. Every day our purses were lighter and we did not want to be stranded in Nepal without money. Off we went, round and round the mountains. Several stared at the speed we were using over such dangerous roads. The East does not hurry (they have a saying, "Hurry does not make good curry)!"

There was one group of women resting on the mountain side and just ready to move on. They were tidying themselves and tightening their belts which, as previously stated, consisted of five yards of cloth that they wrapped round and round their waists. One of the women asked, "Don't you have to wear a *karup* (belt) around your waist?" "No," I

replied. They looked surprised and said, "Why, we cannot walk or work without one."

There, the snow-capped mountains were magnificent. They seemed so near! At that point we were much nearer to Everest than we had ever been and in a day or two nearer than we ever shall be again. The foliage of the trees and the undergrowth was glorious as the sun broke through the clouds. It had been raining, the leaves sparkled like diamonds. Many gorgeous, superb waterfalls went dashing over boulders, creating masses of foam like soap suds.

On the trek we had been through every possible climate. In the valleys it was hot, and we became sunburned; as we climbed up and down the mountains it often rained and thunderstorms were frequent with lightning which outlasted the thunder by hours. Wet roads were extremely treacherous and slippery as ice. Naturally on the high mountain passes we shivered and were very cold, often with icicles hanging on our foreheads from our hair. We were constantly traveling through rivers so we did not have dry feet for forty days. Our socks shrank and I wondered if mine would last. I wore the ones which had become too small for Frank but were fine for me. I ran out of mending wool. Usually we did not have many holes but this was an extraordinary trip so socks had to be mended for which work I pulled some threads of wool from a blue shawl we had.

My shoes at last started to give me trouble. I had two pair —one strong and one pair not so strong, which, I had thought, would be plenty; normally they would have been. Frank came to the rescue, repaired my soles with a piece of something which looked like leather and did quite well.

During the march we met some yaks (beasts of burden). These animals usually live at high altitudes (we were at more than 10,000 feet) and they travel at the very slow speed of about one mile an hour! The little milk they give is usu-

ally made into butter or cheese and this can be quite tasty. They are curious, big, black creatures to look at, with a thick fringe of long hair hanging down. Their tails are huge, thick and bushy, and sometimes white. They are often used for theatrical purposes. Many of Father-Christmas type of wigs are of yak's tails. The one which was given to me in return for treating the old woman's eyes had been dyed a brilliant red. Yaks look vicious, but are really docile.

We asked how many miles to Pakding. One person told us it was five; another said we might get there before the sunset; another something else. Then I remembered that they had not been to school and did not know that 1,760 yards make a mile.

One Nepalese man told me how they measure in Nepal. He said, "You pluck a fresh leaf and you walk along with this in your hand. When it droops, you have gone two miles." I did not think this could be accurate and my thoughts must have been read for he continued, "Here is another way: wet the corner of a piece of cloth, hold it up, and when this is dry you will have traveled one *kost* (two miles)." I was still not impressed. He told me one more—to the last I listened. "Follow the elephants to where they go to drink and you will have done one *kost*." There were no elephants in sight, so we moved off, realizing we were none the wiser and not much nearer our goal.

We asked a Sherpa and he said, "You see that village over there? Well that is it." It looked a long way, but we had seen it and so we were spurred on. As the sun was beginning to set we arrived at the village of Goray Sherpa.

Chapter 12

REAL SHERPA VILLAGE LIFE

WE PASSED THROUGH the first section of the village, naturally with everyone staring. At last we came to Goray's house. He was standing as if waiting for us. It reminded us of how the father must have waited for his prodigal son. Goray came to greet us, and said, as if he could not believe it, "You *have c*ome, you *have* really come!"

"Yes, we *have* come," we assured him. "Didn't we say we would come one day?"

"Yes, yes," he happily replied and gave orders—"Bring two stools. Make some tea." In a moment we seemed to be surrounded by a mass of people, young and old, many of whom were Goray's relatives, the remainder local village folk. The chatter was incessant. We could hear, "these are the folk he stayed with after he lost his right arm and leg."

Goray left us for a moment, but returned with a bunch of flowers he had picked from his field. He sweetly said, "These are for you." He had remembered how I loved flowers. I put them into one of their brass mugs and treasured them while I was there with him. He said, "I still remember the texts you taught me," and slowly but quite correctly went on: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8: 12) ; "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14: 6) . This gladdened our hearts. He had been away for over a

year and was unable to read. We wonder how much of the Bible readers who live in so-called Christian lands know.

Introduced to his family, they were pleased to see us, and grateful for what we had done for Goray. His mother said, "Since Goray has come back to us he does not do *puja,* and he will not wear the charms we do." (*Puja* is their Buddhist religion worship). How true it is that when one has really tasted the joy of serving the living God he has no time for mere rituals.

How thrilled we were to have reached Goray's house! The journey (two hundred miles) had taken twenty-six days, with only three coolies to help. So many told us before we started that the journey was impossible. Almost every day on trek we had met someone who had said we could not go any farther; but we had. We were sure the last part of the trek could not be any worse than the first. It did prove to be easier.

We continued to talk about Darjeeling and old times, drinking tea and eating Sherpa bread to our hearts' content, then our coolies came. We were very pleased to see them as we had not thought they would manage. Goray suggested we put up our tent in his courtyard, as he knew the living conditions we were used to in India. Of course, we ate with them all and enjoyed seeing real Sherpa village life.

Goray did not kill the fatted calf for us, but he did kill two chickens which he insisted on dressing. As he has only one arm we constantly heard him say, "Eh! you, come here and hold this." The obedient onlooker would obey, holding the chicken while Goray plucked it. We were happy to see he had initiative, although he was so terribly handicapped. His relatives told us he still could do field work and drive the oxen. That demonstrated to us, "where there's a will, there's a way," and that it is possible to surmount difficulty. When he had plucked the chickens, Goray cleaned them, giv-

ing the innards, heads and feet to the coolies. They had a good feast too!

Besides the chicken, Goray also gave us something which we had not eaten for twenty-six days—since we left Darjeeling —fresh vegetables, beans and peas which he was growing. What a luxury with roast, fried, boiled (?) chicken and plenty of his potatoes, and tea.

As we entered Goray's dark Sherpa home, the sun had set, so we gathered around an open wood fire over which hung a huge iron tripod. In the middle of it the cooking was done. Everyone seemed busy with chores; bringing in wood and water; putting chickens under big baskets for the night and tying up the few goats. There were one or two stray dogs about. Then I saw the biggest iron bowl I had seen in my life, filled with potatoes (unwashed and unpeeled). They were put on the fire for the whole family's evening meal. There must have been twenty pounds in it. Goray even insisted on cooking the meal for us; we heard him giving orders: "Do this, do that, take the lid off this tin and bring me that Dekshi (saucepan)." Soon there was a delicious aroma of spices and chickens cooking, which two hungry, thankful, missionaries were waiting to eat. Naturally, we wanted to share this good meal with all the occupants. I suppose the number would be about twenty. Where they all slept I did not know, nor did I find out. Goray said the meal was just for us and that we must eat it *all.* Although I never liked to make a glutton of myself (I did not like the feeling), when we had finished it was one occasion when I knew I had had enough. My skirt seemed to fit, and Frank loosened the piece of string around his trousers! How good everything tasted! It was all cooked by the one we had been able to help in India. We had not thought at the time that he would ever be able to do *us* a good turn. This was one of the best meals we had eaten in our lives. The others were eating

potatoes and various concoctions, throwing the potato peelings, which the dogs were waiting for, over their shoulders. In some homes it would have been the pigs! Goray continually insisted we have more, but there was a limit. I felt I had come to this. The way to show satisfaction of a meal in the East is to produce a series of sounds which Europeans would consider extremely rude. They say it shows satisfaction and contentment.

How good to relax after such a meal! We talked and talked and answered questions on many things. One of the men cut some pine wood into thin splinters which readily burned because of the resin. They used them for lights, sticking them into the crevices in the walls and renewing them as soon as they burned out. The huge, wood fire made us sleepy and we watched the children of the family one by one fall asleep on their mothers' knees, or while lying on the ground. I watched the women undo their plaits, then run their fingers through their hair. I could see dimly that they were throwing something over their shoulders. Not potato peelings, but *lice!* How I hoped they would not hop to me!

We gave Goray the gramophone as a gift. All the folk were thrilled to hear records in their own Sherpa tongue. They did not have a written language. The fact that records are made in Sherpa language is due to the marvelous work of Gospel Recordings, Incorporated, Los Angeles, California U.S.A. Again and again the records were played. Each time Goray insisted on winding the handle. He said to the nearest listener, "Put your hand here." He would wind it up. At last someone suggested going to bed and how happy we were! Although we enjoyed every moment, we were weary. How surprised they were that we could sit as they did, cross-legged, and eat as they did, with our hands.

Goray insisted in filling my hot bottle, then we dragged ourselves away from the fire out into the cold night air to

our tents. We slipped into our sleeping bags, giving thanks to our heavenly Father for all His goodness in allowing us to accomplish what some had told us was not possible. We remembered, "All things are possible to him that believeth."

Chapter 13

OFF TO NAMCHE BAZAAR

IT WAS A JOY to awaken and know that we had reached Pakding. I wondered if I was dreaming. Before we got up, Goray was at our tent door, saying, *"Salaam, Memsahib;* hot water." I thought for a moment I was back in civilization! We got up to find patients waiting for medicines, but instead of hearing "Dawai," the word for medicines in Nepal, we heard "mem." That is what it is called in the Sherpa and Tibetan languages. We were in Sola Khumba District, Sherpaland, so there were very few Nepalese. The main language is Sherpa-Tibetan. We had passed the birthplace of Tenzing Sherpa. Near this part was also the home of our excellent and faithful Sherpa coolies. We paid off the "General," but kept on the two younger ones for two more days. We then employed three new coolies for the last half of the journey; two were Goray's brothers. Our coolies kept repeating a phrase in their language. The nearest I can translate it into English is: "Sola Khumba is a nice place, but a cold place to live." Certainly it was chilly! The icy winds could blow, but then we were between 10,000 and 13,000 feet above sea level! We went outside to treat our patients. There was hustle and bustle everywhere. One was sweeping up the remains of last evening's meal with a broom made of coarse dried grass and twigs. Water had been used to keep down the clouds of dust. Goray served our breakfast and we decided to go fifteen miles to Namche Bazaar to the rendezvous for climbers, see it for

ourselves, also glimpse Mount Everest from this vantage point, the nearest we would ever reach to its lofty heights. We planned to return the next day to spend one more night with Goray before going on to the capital, Kathmandu.

Several miles on the day's march toward Namche Bazaar, we were accosted by a Sherpa wearing clothes true to Sherpa style. Though he had a very comical hat on, to all appearances it had started life in Regent Street, London! He asked for worm medicines and he did not put the little packets in his ears as others had done. One went in one side of the hat band and one in the other. He gave me four new-laid eggs as a gift. I walked off with the eggs feeling pleased, knowing that again we would be able to have an evening meal of eggs and chips.

This area reminded us of Tibet. We were thankful to God for the privilege of being able to go right to Gyantze, third largest city in Tibet, also to have met many of our friends. Many think of these lands as mysterious, but we felt as much at home there as in England or America.

At last we saw a few horses and mules. Up to that time the "roads" (only narrow, mountainous tracks, partly covered with undergrowth) were not even "horse able." Also, in this area they were used to seeing European men. Namche Bazaar is the place of the gathering of the clans before ascending several of the high mountains. They were sure of Frank, for one thing his beard was twenty-six days old. I was a "curio." The women tittered, giggled, and muttered one to another. Used to this and their staring, I asked, "What do you want to know?" One of the Sherpanies (Sherpa women) asked, "Are you a woman?" "Yes," I replied, but she was not too sure so came nearer and repeated, "Are you a woman like me?" Patting me backward and forward made me think we were playing a game. I never objected to their questions as I wanted to get to know them, then many times we were in-

vited into their homes. They usually had a dog or two and in this area they were a special kind. I think the Tibetan mastiffs are the most vicious breed I have met. They look fairly docile when trotting along behind their masters or the caravan on the road, but meet them when they are in charge of a load or a house, then it is a different story. They are quite large with rough, thick hair which is usually black or very dark brown. They have curled, bushy tails. They do not have leather collars, but usually a cream woollen ruffle that serves the same purpose. Many have chains around their necks when they are tied. I am fond of dogs, but I must confess I preferred to see that kind tied and know how long their chains were, generally much longer than we would think necessary! They said, "His bark is worse than his bite" but what a noise those dogs could make—growl, snarl, fight, and almost go frantic when anyone went near. The only good thing is they are good watchdogs. One day when visiting a Tibetan Inn, a caravan of mules had just been unloaded for the night. They were carrying raw wool, and their faithful Tibetan mastiff dog had been put in charge. Suddenly there was a terrified scream. The Inn keeper's daughter, about ten years old, had been attacked by their watchdog. He had caught her on the thigh and bitten right through her *chupa* (Tibetan dress). There was a nasty laceration, which we treated and she survived it.

A typical Tibetan muleteer's dress is a single-piece garment, something like a dressing gown with a double fold across the breast. The women also wear them, the only difference is that they do not have sleeves. The material used for the men is coarser than that used for the women's garment. They have thick woolen rope-soled boots with colored cloth tops. An industrious muleteer can walk along spinning his wool, often collecting the raw pieces that have caught on the nearby bushes as the mules passed by. With the raw wool

in one hand and a crude, homemade bamboo spinning top in the other, he makes a swift movement and before one's eyes there is wool yarn growing by the yard. Later, he takes this and twists the strands together to form the rope for the soles of his shoes. They truly believe, "Waste not, want not."

All carried swords, generally long ones, about two feet long, in silver sheaths; these were used for many purposes. Their hats were conical felt ones with fur around the brim, giving the appearance of a shamrock leaf. Men and women wore the same kind, but the women put theirs on straight, men put theirs on at an angle.

We were given Tibetan tea. Of course, we were used to this, but it did vary. Tea was made in tall, wooden or bamboo containers bound with brass bands. A wooden pestle did the churning. The tea consisted of tea brick from China, rancid butter, salt and soda. We tasted many different flavors, and sometimes wondered what else had been added! Usually, the butter was well mingled with yaks' hair. When the tea is poured, the hairs and fat come to the top, reminding one of scum. This day we appreciated it as we had had meager rations for days, and this reminded us of soup. They kept up their Tibetan custom of filling up the wooden, bowl-like cup after every few sips taken, until I finally drank the lot. Then, cupping my hands over the bowl, I said profusely: *"Thu che che"* (many, many thanks, I have had enough). We left them feeling more energetic and warmed in the cockles of our hearts. We climbed over a pass covered with snow. The winds were howling and we were very cold. Through it all we could see the sweetest little, colored mountain flowers swaying in the breeze, triumphantly standing the severe winds.

As we approached Namche Bazaar we saw about eighty houses on terraces. It is not true to its name, for there is not one real shop. All around, we could see prayer flags flutter-

ing, just pieces of white cloth with prayers written on them and attached to long poles. Some houses had one, others had many. They believe that as the wind moves the flag, it prays for them. We saw, also, many prayer wheels. There were small ones and large ones; the folk using them for hours at a time, muttering the set formula of prayers, usually, *"Om Mani Padmi Hum,"* as the wheel went round and round.

The average prayer wheel was about three inches in length, often made of copper cylinders, the outside of which was set with precious stones. The whole revolved on a central pivot that terminated in a wooden handle. A little chain with a weight on the end was attached to the top edge of the wheel to provide impetus, as they keep it spinning with a circular movement of the hand. Inside a roll of prayers is written on bamboo paper. The missionaries use a saying, which they teach the Tibetans: "It is not much use spinning a prayer wheel, if with the right hand you pray and with the left hand you steal!"

At last we arrived at Namche Bazaar, at the foot of Mount Everest, the name heard so often and read about. We pitched our tent just by the outpost police station, but even there we were not spared the gaze of the inquisitive crowd. They were particularly cheeky, too, for when we finally went inside our tent, the children kept peeping in under the lower flap.

Later, we ventured out to "tour" the village. Frank went one way and I the other as time was precious. We were interested in different things. Children followed me, but I went to quite a few of the houses and learned many things. I was trying to buy some flour and eggs. Each one told me I would get it in the next house! I saw them weaving beautiful, colored Sherpa-Tibetan aprons made with extremely primitive weaving looms; four pieces of bamboo and many strands of cotton fixed on the loom. They sat on the ground, using a piece of bamboo for a shuttle. Although most of

them, perhaps all of them, could not read, nor write, I marveled at the excellent work they were doing. They showed excellent taste in color combinations. I have just counted the colors in my Tibetan apron and I find I have thirteen different, beautifully blended colors. They only wove these pieces seven inches wide, but later they stitched three of them together, not matching the colors but blending them, giving a rich, exquisite, multi-colored pattern. I thought the most attractive part of the Tibetan and Sherpa women's dresses were their intriguing, colorful aprons. I moved off with my chattering tribe of children—loveable, though not too clean. They did not use handkerchiefs and thought it most unhygenic!

I approached another house for my eggs and flour. As I did so, I heard Lamas muttering mournful prayers, beating drums, and clanging cymbals. I knew it must be an important occasion, but did not know whether it was a birth, marriage, or death. Lamas are called for all these occasions and many more besides. I was invited in and given some Tibetan tea. Before my very eyes I saw the corpse of a young man trussed up like a chicken. Buddhists are all burned in this position. I naturally asked a few questions and heard that the young man, about twenty-one years of age, had only suffered with fever for a few hours before he had, as his mother said, "just died." We found a lot of "just dying" in the East. One minute the victim was well and the next minute he was dead. This does happen with tropical fever. Speaking from many years of experience, however, I am afraid that some of those who "just die" are not accidental deaths. I wended my way back to our tent, minus any eggs or flour, watching, as I went, many of the weary villagers carrying heavy wooden or metal drums of water from a distance. Water is really precious and in many parts, scarce. At one time before the monsoon our servant had to carry

water for a mile up and down the mountain in Pedong, India. It was not clean as it had been obtained from a pool which had seeped through the mountains. Sometimes the thirsty cows partake before us. We were thankful for what we could get. I doubt if many others have used the same water for so many things, as we did. First, bathed my little daughter, then adults had a "cat's lick." Then we wash clothes; the servant cleans the saucepans and washes wooden floors. Finally, what's left is thrown on the garden to save a few precious vegetables.

Frank and I talked on the things and interesting folk we had met. We both went again to see the police at the outstation. There were two, both Indians who spoke English. They were very kind to us, supplying our immediate needs. They did not show much caste system. We drank tea together and they were happy to accept some of our boiled sweets. While we were there, the mail runner arrived, from Kathmandu (a walk of two hundred miles) with a few letters. We gave him ours, one for our daughter and one for a friend. Mary Anne received hers, but the other never did arrive. Many letters are lost in the East. Darkness had now fallen, so we bid farewell to our new friends and returned to our little tent. It was quite cold, so we slipped into our sleeping bags and huddled to keep warm.

During the day I had caught Frank singing a nursery rhyme:

> Hey diddle, diddle
> The cat and the fiddle,
> The cow jumped over the moon.

This was due to the altitude, 13,000 feet above sea level. Frank would sing; I would usually acquire a headache. I could not decide whether this was due to the altitude, or the peculiarly potent smell given from the miles of huge rhoden-

dron trees we passed. Ten grains of aspirin soon put me right. We had taken Mary Anne to Tibet when she was only eighteen months old. At 12,000 feet she would sit up in bed about every half-hour throughout the night, and give a hearty laugh. At 15,000 feet she had no effects from the altitude, nor did we.

We both tried to settle down for the night, but a crowd was going around the village with lighted torches, probably corn stalks, shrieking and shouting. This was often done when there was a death. Finally, we both fell asleep, again thankful to know we were at peace with God.

The morning dawned very dull and cold. One of the coolies offered to make us some Tibetan bread. As Frank was having a really hard time trying to persuade our one and only primus stove to work, we were very grateful. The bread was made with far from clean hands, but we did not worry, knowing that when it was cooked it would be sterilized! After we had breakfasted and fulfilled the medicinal needs of the villagers, we decided to climb up to have a close view of Everest before commencing the last half of our journey. As we started to climb, the snows were *Bemar* (sick), the expression the nationals use when the snows are covered with clouds. We were disappointed, as that point was the nearest we would ever be to Everest (or ever desire to be). We were not climbing mountains day after day solely because "they were there," but because of our friend, Goray Sherpa. As we waited on the mountain (altitude, 13,000 feet) hoping to get a good view of Everest, the clouds suddenly rolled back and we saw it once again in all its magnificent glory, towering above everything. It was just like the curtain going up on a stage.

Chapter 14

THE HOMEWARD TRAIL

WE CAME DOWN from Mt. Everest to retrace our steps back to the house of Goray Sherpa. Although on the homeward trail we did not cover the same ground. We took the main Everest route, Namche Bazaar—Kathmandu. We started from Darjeeling, India, walking eastward to Namche Bazaar, and from there we walked west to Kathmandu. Finally, we flew from Kathmandu to Biratnager Air Port. By the time we had finished, we had walked and flown a complete triangle of Nepal.

Bridges or landslides were still daily occurrences; we had experienced some new kinds. Owing to landslides, someone had put bamboo poles up the side of the precipice with pieces crudely hacked out for steps. This led to the road again. There was nothing to hold except a few dangling creepers (they may have been roots of trees disturbed by the landslides), but once again we climbed up and down these slippery, slimy, poles, feeling, when we finished, that we might have been in training for a circus. We had no desire to change our occupation as ambassadors of Jesus Christ. We saw an unusual occurrence at a hair-raising bridge. We could hear the roar of the water as we were descending the steep slopes of the cliff face, as slippery as any part we had met. Then, before us, we saw a slender bridge of arched bamboo poles; we wondered whether they had been arched merely to enhance its beauty! This bridge was resting on

two poles at each end; these were loosely anchored between the rocks and were wrapped with the creeper ropes from the lofty trees nearby; but there was no kind of hand rail. Before us there was a group of Sherpas trying to get across. One of the women became frantic and started to scream, then she bowed herself down to the ground three times, calling upon her god for help. We tried to encourage her into attempting the crossing, but to no avail. We did not feel very brave ourselves, but we went forward, the coolies waddling over like ducks, with their flat bare feet. I climbed up the first half like a cat, on hands and knees, and then sitting, slid down the last half, holding on like grim death.

I have not yet fathomed why, when a bridge is only a few inches or a foot above a rushing torrent it is easy to cross; when the bridge is high up it seems almost impossible.

Over the bridge, far too slender for our liking, I looked back to see if the panic-stricken woman had made the crossing, but we did not see her do it.

Just then we met the Austrian party which were attempting to climb Mt. Cho Oyo, the seventh highest mountain in the world. (Later heard that they had succeeded, the first party to reach the top.) They were more surprised to see us than we them, as we had heard that they were somewhere on the road. Naturally, they had not heard of two missionaries climbing to see their friend Goray! We had a chat. A member of the party, a geologist, was tapping all the rocks.

We also met the coolie who was supposed to have come with us when we had first started the trek, but whom, owing to a "party" the night before we left, had not managed to come. He was attached to the party of Austrians. Most of their coolies we knew; the majority had come from Darjeeling. There was one who had been on the Everest expedition. While on it, he had had a toothache, but he told us the doctor would not take out his tooth because of the height, so

when he returned to India he came to our mission dispensary and I took it out. We take them out without injections and they are usually very brave.

Later we wrote and asked them if they could help us secure a map of the route we had taken. They were very kind and photographed the one you see in this book. Our attempts to obtain one from the British, Indian and Nepalese Governments failed.

Truly, it was very beautiful, just like a veritable fairyland. We passed miles of conical-shaped pine trees which looked like Christmas trees festooned with pale green, fluffy moss and blue cones which looked like candles. We saw several varieties of beautiful orchids. It has been stated there are five hundred varieties of orchids and the same number of butterflies. Certainly there are magnificent specimens of both! Some of the butterflies we saw were almost as big as my hand and the exquisite patterns and coloring were indescribable.

It was a hard climb that day and we wished we had wings. Someone has said, "Tibet is the tableland of the world," (Nepal is next door). We felt this part must have been the corkscrew legs of the table! We went round and round and round the mountainside.

We met a Sherpani carrying a load of chillies (red peppers) in a conical bamboo basket on her back. Suddenly, she seemed to throw it down in a temper and to make matters worse, the whole basket upset. Why had she done it? We soon knew for she was pulling down the irritating leeches which were clinging to her legs. We understood how she felt, so we helped pick up the chillies. She was thankful and gave us a handful as a parting gift. At Goray's house again; we were happy to spend one more night with him.

We had no need to think about food. Goray had it all planned and ready. We called him into our tent and gave

him the money we had brought for him from India. It was only seventy-five rupees (it cost us over 1,000 rupees to get it to him), but we felt every foot of the trek had been worthwhile. We encouraged him in the things we know to be true and hoped that one day we would be able to return to see him and to take him a new artificial leg. We noticed his first one was wearing out. We had another enjoyable evening around a wood fire. It was the first time I had been really warm for forty-eight hours. The "man-in-a-box" had been in great demand and Goray's mother said to us, "Now we have this (pointing to the gramophone), we too can learn about your religion." We often wondered how the gramophone listening was getting on, so we were thrilled when recently we had a letter from one of our missionary friends who stated, "Recently we had a very unusual request. Two Lamas came right from Sherpaland to Darjeeling (two hundred miles) and asked us for some 'special' needles. I thought of sewing needles, darning needles, knitting needles —but no! it was "man-in-the-box" needles they wanted!"

How pleased we were, for we had left him two boxes of needles, telling him each needle would play twenty records. He was using it and since then we have been able to send him more records in his own and the Nepali languages. Gramophones are certainly doing a grand work where missionaries are not able or allowed to stay.

A friend of ours left a gramophone in a village, but had to move on and did not return for weeks. When he did, he found that not a sound came forth as they had played the records so much. But, *they could repeat them word by word!*

It would have taken a missionary a lifetime to accomplish that but a "man-in-a-box" had done it in a few weeks. One national said: "This must be the true religion for it always says the same!" We thank God for the invention of the gramophone.

We reluctantly drew ourselves away from the wood fire and hopped over the raised wooden door to go to our little tent. The winds outside were howling, but we soon got into sleeping bags and away to sleep.

We awakened to hear Goray's familiar voice, "Hot water, Memsahib." That was the last time I had any until we arrived at the capital. Breakfast followed, and Goray insisted that we both eat two eggs, a thing I very seldom do. Then he produced his parting gifts. We were overwhelmed when he gave us flour, beans, potatoes, peas, and fifty newly laid eggs, among others. We certainly needed the food, for we were getting very low, but we wondered how we would be able to carry it. Though we had three new coolies, two of whom were Goray's brothers, they would not want to carry more than eighty pounds on their backs. We thanked him profusely, but said we did not need it all. He insisted so we took it *all*. His two brothers did not seem to mind, so we packed. I had six of the eggs hard-boiled; the rest we wrapped in pieces of newspaper which we then put between wholemeal flour and sugar. I am afraid, however, that was not too successful—we had a *smashing* time (!)—but every one was used. We made pancakes with those which had broken in with the flour, and desi (country) cakes with those which had broken in with the sugar. We certainly were grateful for all that was given. We paid off our two younger coolies as they wanted to go to their homes nearby. We would recommend them to anyone and wondered if we would be the first to write without complaints about the trouble the coolies give. Most complain they want more money, more baksheesh, or that their loads are too heavy—extra money would always lighten their loads! We realized we had only three and many of the mountaineering parties had several hundred. For the Everest Expedition there were four hundred seventy three loads and over one hundred firms helped them. We

were not envious, but sometimes when our rations were low I wished a few had helped us. No one came to our help even when our camera and films spoiled through going in a river deeper than we were. Did I say no one? Yes, we did have *real friends.* They gave of their substance to make the trek possible, their prayers went with us and above all, we had Him with us who has promised and He cannot fail. "I will never leave you nor forsake you." How we had proved it true!

The time came to say good-by to our coolies, to Goray and his folk. It was essential we move off. We had only a visa for thirty days and it was the twenty-seventh day already. We had two hundred miles to do. Most mountaineers took about three weeks to cover that distance, but we did it in thirteen days as we did not stop anywhere more than one night. We knew our little daughter, Mary Anne, would be waiting for us in India and we were running out of money. We had only planned on thirty days and it took forty days plus four days at Kathmandu. Our pockets were getting lighter; we had to pay our coolies by the day. We marched along beside the river, Dudh Kosi, then started to climb a steep mountain. When we came to the pass (the highest point) there was the usually huge pile of stones. Every Buddhist traveler had cast one stone on the pile while chanting a prayer for the safety of reaching the top. Some carried paper prayers on a string, and this would be hung on the pass. It gave the appearance of dolls' clothes on the line! If the men were wearing hats, they would raise them at that point. We gave thanks to the Living God for His strength to climb. At most of the bridges the pilgrims and travelers, too, raised their hats and put flowers, leaves or shrubs somewhere on the bridge as a little offering to their god. Many of those dear folk were fearful that if they did not do those things the god would be displeased and punish them. Ours is a God of

love, though many of us are less consistent than our oriental friends in our thanksgiving.

Often those passes were covered with deep snows; sometimes they were impassable. We had seen ten feet of snow on Mt. Jelap La (14,390 feet) in Tibet, but when we were in Nepal there was only a slight fall of snow, for that we were thankful. I remembered vividly seeing snow blindness in Tibet a few years previously. Many of the pilgrims and traders were suffering with this; they complained of extremely painful, sore eyes and headaches. Some were not able to see. We treated them, and tried to be wise ourselves. Many of the Tibetans covered their faces with thin red muslin as they walked. Frank put a thin scarf over his face, but as I was riding a horse at this time I wanted to see clearly where the horse was going. Often the horse led me! I constantly removed my coverings so I had sunblisters on my face and my eyes were swollen from sun and snow. I thanked God that I could still see. I tried to remember to wear my snow-glasses which I detested. We met a group of dirty, loveable, rosy-cheeked children tobogganing down the side of the hard snow-covered mountains on just a piece of tin from a paraffin can. They asked us to join them in their fun—we did and found that going down was fun, but that climbing up was anything but easy on a very steep incline.

That night at Junbesi, we were offered a private monastery (*gompa*) in which to stay. We climbed up some dirty wooden stairs into semidarkness, but someone opened the little glassless window and the welcome sunlight came streaming in. The oblong room was surmounted by a dome from which a long cone arose. This gave the appearance that it was made of real gold which I doubt, but the one we went in at Gyantze, Tibet, was pure gold at the dome. Every tier had precious stones around it. There was no lack in any of the monasteries we had seen.

This monastery seemed extremely cold and to me it seemed to have an unpleasant odor. Of course there was the altar at one end with a large image of Buddha, and other gods around. Many little lighted lamps were kept going day and night by use of pure butter. Small plates of *tsamba* (barley flour), rice and butter were on the altar.

The one hundred and eight Tibetan religious books were on the side. Each of these was quite large, about six inches wide, two feet long,and three inches deep, very heavy and dusty. How thankful we were to have our Saviour in our hearts, for to be a real Christian is to have "Christ in you!" (Colossians 1:27). We could carry the best seller, the Bible, with its 66 books and in our pockets! What a blessing the Word has been to us !

At that monastery we had a luxury, a toilet, though very primitive. They gave us real Tibetan beds, just raised platforms with beautiful colored, homemade rugs on the top. The occupants were amused to see me make and cook an "English" cake in a biscuit tin in their hot ashes; later they enjoyed sampling it. Although I had hoped it would last many days, it soon disappeared. We do believe and have proved, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We had our evening meal together—just hard-boiled eggs and potatoes boiled in their jackets and salt (in some places salt was not available as it was scarce and consequently extremely expensive). Once or twice during the trip folk came and asked quietly, "Could you give me a little salt?" making a sign with their thumb and fingers to indicate the amount they required. We obliged, though we had very little to give.

We were always glad when it was bedtime so we withdrew as soon as possible to our sleeping quarters. The place had a damp, moldy-monastery smell. I got out my D.D.T. and put some into my sleeping bag—I was not very keen on that smell either, but it was preferable to that of the monastery.

I tried to sleep, and as usual Frank was sleeping peacefully before I had thought about it. I was just about to doze when I felt some irritation on my shoulder so I sat up and found a bug. I was thrilled when I caught and even killed it. Frank was roused and sleepily asked what I was doing. "I have just caught a bug," I replied, and he merely said, "Why don't you go to sleep?" I was glad to get up the following morning and have a quick wash. I put a wee spot of Californian perfume behind my ears to try to counter the prevalent odor. It was hard to cook as the altitude was 12,000 feet. Boiling point was T. 180° F. instead of T. 212° F. The tea soon became cold, although we made it in the kettle as we did not have a teapot with us. Neither of us was fussy about food; we could eat about anything, but we both disliked warm tea. After our first cup we put it back into the ashes to reheat.

Chapter 15

BETTER SMELT THAN TELT!

BY THIS TIME we were leaving the Sola Khumba District behind us—the part where mostly Sherpas live. We were sorry as we had felt at home with them all—our major work in Darjeeling had been among Tibetans and Sherpas. The Sherpas have pronounced Mongolian features and all the women have long hair, as also many of the men have. They often wore it braided and wound around their heads, halo fashion. The women love their heavy, silver-studded ornaments, which have coral, jade and turquoise stones inset. I have heard that they are not beautiful and that some could never love these folk also some were glad that they did not have to work among them. They are very often quite dirty. We disagree, I think many of the women are very beautiful and many of the men handsome. They have a strong physique, and although it is obvious that some are not too clean, they are often only a shade darker than we are when they have washed. God has given us a real love for them and we are delighted when we are able to sit where they sit, to eat what they eat, also to talk over with them things that really matter. We did much work among Tibetan and Sherpa pilgrims who came to India; yet I must confess sometimes I have been a little wary of their Tibetan dresses. They have usually worn them for many weeks, perhaps months or years, without being washed. The color is generally black or dark red but there are always the inevitable grease spots especially

at the sides where they dry their hands. The industrious Tibetan will often have several patches on his garment, of any material. I definitely have seen some with more patches than the original material! It was the folds and hems of their Tibetan dress that I was shy of for they are literally alive often with lice and look almost as though they had threaded the seams with little and big beads! Someone has aptly said, "A Tibetan garment is like a zoological preserve!" Good Buddhists do not kill bugs, but throw them over their shoulders. The not-so-orthodox Buddhists will kill them or even eat them! With all this there was a typical Tibetan-Sherpa smell, hard to define, certainly "better smelt than telt!" I have sometimes been thousands of miles away from Tibet or Sherpaland, at a railway station or in the City of Calcutta or Bombay, and I have automatically given a sniff and said, "Ah, one of my Sherpa-Tibetans is about." I then have turned to see some of our beloved tribe. When I bought Tenzing's sleeping bag it had this typical smell and I would have loved to have brought it home with its ever-clinging smell so you could know. As I was wanting to use it on this trek I gave it a good wash in Lux, dried it in the oriental sun, and it lost its famous odor. The Tibetans, Sherpas, Nepalese, and other eastern races, say we have a strange European smell. When their phrase is translated straight into English it means, "Europeans stink." Oh, the gift to see ourselves as others see us!

Moving toward Kathmandu we came to more houses, cultivation, and Nepalese, but we were sorry to leave real Sherpaland as the scenery had been truly Himalayan. It was goodby to a near view of Mt. Everest and many other nameless snow-capped peaks. Every time we show our film I am reminded of our great and powerful God. I constantly think of Psalm 19—"The Heavens declare the glory of God."

I suppose there were several things we were glad to leave:

the high passes which were between 9,000 and 13,000 feet; the summits which seemed endless and were only attained after a very stiff climb; the two famous rivers, Dudh Kosi and Sun Kosi, in which we had many never-to-forget experiences. Many had lost their lives in them, and while we were on trek another mountaineering party who were somewhere on route lost two or three of their Sherpa porters in one of those rivers. Dudh means milk in Hindi. Though we had heard that the water of the Dudh Kosi river was often transparent blue-green, all the time we saw it, during the numerous times we zigzagged across it, it was just the color of Indian milk, watery white, as the turbulent torrents raged furiously down the deep gorges. Sun—means gold and I suppose with a vivid imagination you could say it was the color of gold, or did it contain *real* gold?

I remember once one of the coolies looked at the river and used his expression of intense surprise—"*A-mee-mee-e-e.*" I naturally asked him what was wrong; he turned and said, "You see that thick, dirty, muddy water going wild and rushing madly down the river?" I nodded, still none the wiser, so he continued. "Well, that means up there (pointing with his finger) it's pouring, and down here it will be flooded. We won't be able to get across so we will have to wait, until it subsides." So we tarried in a nearby Sherpa house and had Tibetan Tea and *tsampa* (roasted barley flour). There are several ways of eating this. It can be made into delicious porridge and eaten with sugar and milk. In the Tibetan or Sherpa houses we ate it this way: they would give us a bowl of Tibetan tea and a bowl of *tsampa,* and we would first dip our forefinger into our tea and then transfer it to the bowl of dry *tsampa,* which then adhered. We would then either pop it straight into our mouths or knead it into a little ball first—it always seemed to swell and stick when it reached our mouths. I found that I needed a lot of tea to

wash it down. The nationals made and ate their *tsampa* perfectly, but we had to practice many times before we were successful. I remember what Frank looked like when an amateur, just like a baby learning to feed himself with ground rice pudding! If a fly should "drop in on us" while we were maneuvering and practicing making *tsamba* balls, we could not kill it, but just flick it out and continue to drink as though nothing had happened. Buddhists believe in reincarnation and think the fly might be their grandfather or grandmother!

We gave out medicines. Some asked for fever tablets as they were going to the "hot country." We gave them Paludrine, though we ourselves never took them. We have been very fortunate missionaries never to have had malaria, something for which we constantly thank God. Most of the medicines were in tablet form as it was an easier way to carry them; for coughs, however, we had a good mixture. We had to ask them for a bottle, which was often the hardest thing in the world for them to find, as very few things came in bottles. I was asked to fill many queer things, tins and bottles of all sizes and shapes, and never was a really clean one produced so I would have to tell them to go and wash it. Once in the process of cleaning the bottle, the girl dropped it, but came triumphantly forward saying, "It's only the neck that has gone!" as she held it for me to fill. When I took it, I saw that the bottom was filled with splintered glass—enough to kill the patient, but of this she was so innocent! Well I produced one of my few precious bottles for her, putting the dangerous broken bottle out of sight. After putting the medicine in, I had to stick on a label, from which I had snipped pieces to show how much for a dose. They knew nothing of tablespoons or medicine glasses so they would usually put their fingers on the mark of the bottle, and then put the bottle straight to their mouths. They consume the dose.

If they have not taken enough, they repeat the method; if they have taken too much, they have had it! As cough medicine is usually nice to taste, I think they were guilty of taking an overdose, but I seldom gave them more than four or six doses so they could not kill themselves. Quite a few times, in many years of experience, I have had patients come for medicines for their friends, saying that they were too sick and could not come to the dispensary. I would take the history of the patient and treat them, saying, "I will visit them later in the day, or tomorrow." When I arrived, it was usually true that the patient was sick, but his friend would have taken both his and his own medicines! The two complaints may have been entirely different!

After drinking innumerable bowls of tea, we got ready to leave. The track dropped steeply down until it came to a ravine, and then zigzagged until we came to the mighty flowing river which, with difficulty, we managed to cross. Snow, hail, wind, rain, sunshine and storms were daily occurrences, but we rarely heard the nationals complaining about the weather as the English do. If they did not like the weather, or their crops were in danger, they would offer sacrifices to their gods; but at home, I am afraid, we get tired of the almost daily remarks we hear. Many folk get up in the morning at home and look out and say in a surprised tone, "It looks like rain (or snow)," as if their whole life depends upon it. Or, "Isn't it an awful day?" or, "This weather gives me a pain." It seems strange to us that so much time is wasted on talking weather.

We passed a huge chörten. These are Buddhist religious monuments where the ashes of some Lama or person of note have been placed. They are usually made of stones gathered from the mountains. It looks somewhat like a big four-tier cake, each tier being beautifully carved. Many are very dirty and dilapidated, but we could tell that this one was a re-

cently-erected one as it looked clean. The chörten was decorated all around with prayer flags, most of which were white but several were made of red and yellow material. Not far away was a *mani* wall (prayer wall) and if we had been good Buddhists we would have walked on the left side going and on the other side on the return journey. We know that death is an expense in any land, but as I looked, I wondered if those folk had been able to pay or whether it had put them into debt for the rest of their lives. The Kubuli tribe are great moneylenders in the East. Of course they do not do it without a high interest, so whenever I saw them approaching a house I knew they were after their money and interest. If the people are unable to pay, the tribe will get their money one way or another by taking the precious jewels—or even worse, their land.

We walked and climbed a very poorly defined path which led to a beautiful gorge with a forest stream which looked safe enough for a swim. We enjoyed ourselves, first removing leeches by the dozen, then giving ourselves a good wash and five minutes of refreshing swimming. We moved on to start to climb once again. The gradient got steeper and steeper and the weather seemed to be getting colder and colder. We found that we were panting and resting about every hundred yards or so to get our breath. As we reached higher altitudes the outlook was exhilarating, a splendid view of the valleys and the rugged mountains. The magnificent sunset was indescribable, but this did not last for long. As we moved on, the black clouds came down and a mist rose from the valley. It started to pour and everything became invisible. No village was in sight so we decided to sleep in caves by the mountainside. They were really only rocks which were not even tall enough to stand up in, but we would be out of the mist and rain if not the cold. The coolies wanted to stop but they said, "We cannot stay here

as thieves will come." Of course they had to relate a story they had "heard" and quite likely it was true. Well, we once again assured them we had a Living heavenly Father and He would take care of us. So we prepared to settle for the night, ate, read our Bible and had prayer. We went to sleep and how restful to know, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round them that fear him" (Psalm 34:7).

Chapter 16

ARE YOU GOING TO NEPAL?

UP WITH THE LARK the following morning, we were still rather high and it was chilly. I was glad to squat near the coolies' smoky, wood fire to warm myself before starting on the day's journey—even if it did make my eyes water. There were few folk about, so we were able to get an early start without being hindered. We were glad to be on the move to keep warm. At first we had to descend a steep decline causing stubbed toes, then another causing calves to ache. Some real Nepalese asked us, "Are you going to Nepal?" We told them that we were—having previously been instructed that to them Nepal meant Kathmandu—the capital. Some of the Nepalese were women, carrying babies on their backs. They wrap them in shawls which have been folded triangularly, slung around their shoulders and tied in the front. The babies fall asleep and their little heads sway from side to side. Sometimes the babies are carried on top of a load and I marvel at their survival.

We halted at a Nepalese village where they gave us tea. We thought there were very few about, but it was only for a moment. Just like bees around honey, folk started to stream in and soon the little room became filled with Nepalese and Sherpas of every age and description. They forced their way in, chattering incessantly, and turning one to another. We were used to crowds and to being stared at, but their pressure was irresistible. I wondered why they were so per-

sistent—what had they heard? You would have thought we were giving out gold. We were giving free medicines. That was something they did not really understand as they had to pay for good medicines—indeed they do in most countries.

We made them sit down and we had some form of order before we started to attend to them. We treated them for coughs, worms, sores, constipation, diarrhea and anemia. Several old folk asked us for *new* eyes. We told them we could not do miracles. One man complained of "singing in his ears." This could have been due to several things, among them an overdose of aspirin. I knew this was not the cause as he had never had one in his life. It could have been caused by altitude, and I thought this must be the reason. I assured him that when he got a little lower he would be O.K. One Sherpa woman asked me for a piece of adhesive tape to put on her temples. She said it relieved headaches! I supplied her. I had often wondered why they put the little black patches on their temples; what they were made of I never discovered. If they lived in an area where charcoal was used they made charcoal balls with the dust and very small pieces by mixing it with cow dung and cut, dried grass. But the main use of cow dung was for fuel.

At the next village where we called, we had a surprise. We saw a beautiful, blue-eyed, little boy of about six years. He had a very fair complexion and light-brown, curly hair. I innocently said, "Well, you are a nice little chap, and what lovely blue eyes you have." His grandfather grunted in reply, "His mother works in Calcutta and who his father is—God only knows." How sad to see that little boy, right in the jungle. I knew that when he grew up the others would tease him for being different. If only folk would think of the consequences, I feel sure there would be less unhappiness.

We met a whole family of Nepalese children with auburn hair, and they told us that, although this was very unusual,

both their parents were Nepalese. We came to a stream which had watercress growing in it. It was quite a thrill to devour as much of this as we wanted. It made a pleasant change in our "much-of-a-muchness" diet.

After several days of very cold winds we passed through an extremely hot forest valley; as it had been raining the climate was ideal for leeches. We had hundreds and we got fairly used to them; we just walked on, leaving a trail of trickling blood. The first thing I wanted to do at the end of the day was remove them and try to stop the bleeding. That day we were offered the top of a cowshed to sleep in. After our simple evening meal, which included boiled watercress, we retired up a very narrow and rickety ladder and there we stretched out. It was more like a barn, as we had plenty of straw as well as cows under us. I was awakened suddenly in the night to hear what I thought was heavy rain. I automatically sat up and put on my flashlight to see if it was coming in, as so often happened. I realized that it was not rain. By that time I was wide awake and I could see all kinds of "creepy-crawlies" in the straw. I have never been a lover of these beetles with their jointed legs who looked at me as though they would love to have a fight with me. But I could not be bothered so I got down as far as I could into my sleeping bag and went to sleep. We were awakened by the crowing of the cock. We were quite happy to get up and go down to have a breath of fresh air! At a nearby stream we were able to have a "wash and brush up." Many children and adults followed us. Many things, such as why I had no pierced ears (many of them had twelve holes and some of the children had little pieces of wooden stalk put in them to keep them from closing, until they were old enough to marry and have gold or silver rings inserted) or why I had no nose ring, puzzled them. I was thankful to be spared the latter. They told me it was done for *beauty!* I prefer to remain a "plain

Jane." They could not understand why Frank had hairs on his *knees.* The Nepal-Tibetan men seldom have to shave; they feel proud if they can produce one or two long hairs on their faces.

There are many habits of ours which seemed strange to them and to others we met en route.

We hurried over our light breakfast of tea and a piece of soda bread with jam. Often this was all we ate for a whole day, unless we were fortunate enough to be given cucumbers, watery pears, cold cooked potatoes, or corn on the cob.

We supplied the villagers with medicines before we moved off, but the children kept a constant eye on me.

Chapter 17

MIXED MULTITUDES—SHERPAS AND NEPALESE

THE MOONLIGHT was magnificent that night, as it shone on the snow-capped mountains. It made them appear coated with silver. Later when the sun began to rise, they looked as though they were gilded with gold. Much happened between sunset and sunrise, however. Frank acted as our alarm clock, although I always awakened at least once in the night to see the time. Frank sleepily said, "Come, let's get up. It's 4:10." I obediently got up. The coolies were called and after eating our simple breakfast almost in silence, off we went. Frank found that his watch showed the time as 3:10 and he realized that what he had thought was 4:10 must have been 2:20 A.M. Brilliant moonlight had given the appearance of daylight!

Going through dense forest we had the moonlight shining to guide us, but the moon started to wane. If we had not known before that the darkest hour comes before the dawn, we knew it that day. It became pitch-dark; we were groping in the jungle. There was undergrowth all around, huge rocks constantly loomed before, and precipices beneath us. Realizing that one false step would have meant instant death, we struggled on slowly. How we longed for penetrating eyes! Then we went through a muddy patch where "extra-special" virulent, stinging nettles grew. My legs were soon covered with raised white blotches and I tingled right to the tips of

my fingers for many other hours after. The coolies realized that someone had made a mistake on the time, so one of them suggested that we make a wood fire and wait for the break of dawn. We did, realizing that it was wiser. With the first glimpse of light on the horizon, we were stirred into activity and something else stirred. Two greenish, poisonous-looking snakes slid across our path. We had met several en route. Frank tried to kill them, but we did not wait to see if they were really dead.

When we got into the open, we were puzzled because it was a glorious day and the trees seemed to be swaying more than the prevailing wind would cause. Looking up, we saw a troupe of big, black faced, brown, tailless monkeys. They were jumping from tree to tree and never seemed to miss their footing. How they chattered! A little farther on we came across several groups of empty nut shells on the ground. They must have been having their breakfast and did not like to be disturbed. As we moved off, several stones were thrown our way—persumably the big, mischievous monkeys!

We stopped and the coolies stopped, too, to have a good drink of water. They took their aluminum bowl-like plates and drank out of those. This plate they carry in their cross-over—front of their *chupas*—and usually a round, colored, woven, waterproof, bamboo basket in which they carry all sorts of things such as spoons, cigarettes, matches, and money. While we were there, some weary pilgrims came to drink.

One Nepalese took off his little black cloth hat which was filthy with dirt, grease and perspiration. That appeared to make it waterproof, for he filled it before our eyes and drank! We started to talk with them, and when they saw my flexible polythene glass they wanted to drink from it. I let them, but our coolies then became envious and wanted to use it. We obliged, and later, in Kathmandu, I gave it to one of them (part of their bakhshees).

As I was combing out my hair, after washing it, I produced a little mirror which had started out by being 5″ x 3″. It had been broken in one place and was by that time only 3″ x 3″. The mirror caused great surprise in many places; many of the nationals had never seen one. They would gather like ants at a sugar pot. One would say, "That is you!" but "you" found it hard to believe until she looked and saw her friend in the mirror, too, then she would point at her and say, "Why, that is you, too." The ones in the background would shout, "Let me see, Let me see!" Do you realize that you would never have known what your own face was like if you had never looked in a mirror? That is one reason why I like to read the Bible—it is like a mirror and it shows me just what I am like.

We moved on and came to an uninhabited temple where there were thousands of iron, three-pronged forks of all sizes. There was no one to ask why it was there, but perhaps it was used at some special time of the year. I suppose the forks would have reminded some of the Devil and his fork—or at least how an artist usually portrays him. Over on the other side of the mountains we could see a little house which we knew would be a hermitage. Some Lama had gone to do penance, to try to obtain salvation, quite likely enduring great hardships and even dying. How sad we felt when we knew! Salvation is *the Gift of God and for all who will accept it, no matter what their color, race or tribe.* In our time we have visited monasteries and nunneries in Tibet and we have been grieved to see young boys and girls, as well as the very old men and women, who serve in those *gompas* (monastaries), spending hours spinning their prayer wheels, counting their beads, hoping to be something better when they are reborn. At different times of the day they all perform religious rites. In the evening it always seemed rather eery to me to hear drums being beaten, gongs and cymbals giving

long series of slow, deliberate clangs in the darkness. Also, to hear the chief Lama recite different Tibetan verses and the novices answer him in his unintelligible mutterings. For a few moments there might be silence, but it would start over again, first in toning their rites to a sad, mournful, slow, refrain which gradually became faster and faster, was punctuated by the ringing of bells, the beating of drums, the clanging of cymbals, and the sound of Tibetan horns (six feet in length). When the ceremony is finished, there is usually quietness until the next session. In 1951, the only known Tibetan in England at the time wrote an article for the *Daily Mirror*:

> I am so sorry for you, you have no religion. I rise at 5 A.M. and spin my prayer wheel for two hours. Again at 12 noon I spin my prayer wheel for two hours. In the evenings and at midnight, I do the same.

The East has religion, but if we Christians are real, we have Christ in our hearts.

We could by that time see a village, but distance can be deceptive. We walked and walked, went round and round the mountain! Sometimes the village was out of sight, but when it came again into view it did not seem to be nearer! It reminds me of the little boy who was always asking his daddy questions. Sometimes Father did not know the answer, but this one he thought he knew. The little English boy, asked, "Which is nearer—the moon, or America?" "Why," said his father confidently, "America, of course." But his son questioned, "Well, why is it that I can see the moon, but I cannot see America?"

That day, I too had a "Why?" Why did not the village come nearer? Finally we arrived, very exhausted as it had been an extremely hot day, and the gradient for many hours had been consistently steep. The inhabitants of the village

were mixed, Sherpas and Nepalese. We could tell them apart by their looks, dress, language and houses. The Nepalese usually have mud-plastered, bamboo-walled houses with thatched roofs. They looked very picturesque, but are quite dark inside. They love flowers and most of them grow them in pots or tins, as well as in their gardens.

The Sherpa's houses are made of wood and have glassless windows which let in the wind, as well as the light. The roofs of these houses are fairly flat, and they have a stone placed on each piece of wood to keep it in position.

The two people get on very well together, each having their own religion and customs. The Nepalese are cleaner and more particular about their food. Many of them do not eat beef, pork or eggs. Sherpas and Tibetans eat mostly anything and everything. Though most of the villagers are not educated, many of them can speak three or more languages! They know their own village language; the Nepalese know Sherpa; the Sherpas know the village Nepali, and both may know the general Nepali language or Hindi. Yet at home, so few know any other language besides their own! We are living now in one of the most charming parts of Britain, yet we have never heard so many "ain'ts" and "tain'ts." Previously, I had thought these misuses of the English were confined to the slums, but I have been mistaken.

As the coolies arrived in the village, a Sherpani said, "Come and spend the night with me, my daughters will love having you." We naturally thought they knew the woman so we went with her. We crawled up the mountain for another mile and finally reached the house. We were served tea while her fully-grown daughters giggled and laughed. We began to realize the coolies did not know the people at all. After the evening meal all (the inhabitants, the coolies and ourselves) had to sleep in the same room. Drink was handed around, the coolies started to dance national dances with the

daughters, which dancing went on until 2 A.M. We tried to sleep, but it was impossible. At that unearthly hour Frank reprimanded them. We need only say that we were glad when the morning came. We were off as soon as possible, not feeling too fresh or happy that we had an extra mile or so to do to get to the route we wanted to travel. News of our visit had spread and just as we were ready to go some came for medicines.

One asked a question which we heard many times on the trek, "Is it good medicine?" I always gave them the same reply—"Do you think I would carry *bad* medicines all this way?" It was hard for them to believe that they could get good medicines free. They usually said, when they had received them, "What great *ge-wa* they are doing" (*ge-wa* is Tibetan for "good works"). We had to remind them we did it just because God had been so good to us and we were His servants.

We treated a girl with a very swollen leg which had been caused by a *ju-ga* leech). Children asked for medicines, but I could see there was nothing wrong with them so I gave them a boiled sweet and told them to suck it until it was gone by which time they would be better!

Chapter 18

A SUSPENSION BRIDGE THAT HELD ME IN SUSPENSE!

WE WERE ON THE ROAD by 5 A.M. but many were in their fields transplanting rice. To me it looked just like grass, but they knew the difference! I wondered if they suffered with backache as they constantly bend up and down, or from rheumatism as they spend hours daily in water and mud knee-deep—or whether they ever got tired. Often there would be snakes in the water—sometimes poisonous, sometimes not. I remember asking one of the women when she had completed a day's work in the rice field, whether she was tired. To me she looked exhausted. Her face seemed strained, it was spattered with mud, and her hands and fingers looked as though she had been washing clothes all day. The dear soul wearily smiled and did not say a word.

During the day's march we passed a large herd of water buffaloes. Many of them had big black crows on their backs. We used horses or mules in Tibet, but we had not yet seen anyone in Nepal with riding horses or even pack mules. Even when riding mules we preferred to walk downhill for many reasons. When riding up steep hills you sit almost on the animal's tail. If you try to ride down you often sit nearly on his neck. Before you know where you are the animal can throw you on the ground. That is an experience which I had once or twice! The Tibetan's have a saying, "You are no horse if you cannot take me up the hills; and I am no

man if I do not walk down!" I said we passed the buffaloes, but it took a long while as the mountain track was narrow and dangerous. The herd was very large and awkward. They *could* climb up where we could not, but often they did not, so very slowly we made progress to get in front of them. Sometimes we would feel we were winning when we passed two or three of them; but in some very difficult and precarious spot we would have to let many of them go ahead so we could remain in safety. This was one of the places where we wished we had wings. We did have enough patience to dawdle behind them, but there was a nauseating odor—though I think that word is too mild. They were trudging on toward some stream or pool where they could get a little relief from the heat. Buffaloes do not have sweat glands, so it is essential for them to have water to cool themselves.

We chatted with the herdsman between his bat (language) which he carried on with his buffaloes every few seconds. He seemed to bawl at them at the top of his voice in what must have been his village dialect. We did not understand what he said, but supposed it to be, "Eh, you. Get a move on!" He told us that they were all to be offered as sacrifices during the next few days.

Later we met another group, but those were wallowing right up to their chins in muddy water and they really looked contented. I sat down on some wet and slippery rocks to take a deep breath of fresh air. How good it felt to exercise my lungs. I had only been sitting for a few minutes when I felt something nipping me. So my hands brought down several big black ants. How they nipped! They left quite painful marks. In Nepal I learned plenty about ants as I rested here and there to get my breath. The white ants are very destructive to houses and clothes. I watched the little brown ants march in armies, and cross streams by carrying twigs to make their own bridges. The big black (coolie)

ants dig up the ground and carry off pieces of soil bigger than themselves. They make beautiful storehouses for the winter. Often we saw them running up and down rice stalks, carrying grains of rice on their backs. The Bible, the world's best seller speaks about them: "There are four things that are little upon the earth but they are exceeding wise. The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer," Proverbs 30:24, 25.

We climbed up for the last hour or two; it was much cooler although we were still hot and perspiring profusely. Some Sherpas caught up and offered us some cold, cooked potatoes from their dirty chupas. These we humbly accepted, appreciated, and ate without salt. They told of a Sherpa house where we would be able to get some tea, so we trudged on with them in thirsty anticipation. When we arrived at the house we were welcomed, *"Pep ro-nang shu den ja"* (please do come inside and sit down). Outside they were "sunning" their clothes which is so essential. In the East in the monsoons things get mildewed overnight. One of the women showed us her pretty Sherpa gowns and the aprons with multicolored horizontal stripes and golden embroidered corners. Their tall, conical hats, too. had beautiful golden brocade circling them and even the fur around the shamrock-shaped brim looked "good." They were very sociable and friendly and said, "Try them on." I did. One of the women poked me, perhaps she too was not qute sure what I was, but she did not say anything. They giggled and laughed when they saw me turn into a Sherpani, but I did not laugh when I looked down and saw a visible bug. I was wondering how many invisible ones were hidden in the garment. The bugs did no crawl too quickly, but they leave a horrid smell if they are killed. With fleas I did not have much patience, perhaps because they are so tantalizing. I always miss them when trying to catch them. Politely, I removed all their lovely

things. We went inside where we were given what they called Blighty tea (English tea). They had flavored it with salt as I had told them I did not take suger. They naturally supposed I wanted salt. Many Nationals put salt in their tea. I cannot say I like it, although it is good for you. There was a lovely wood fire with a huge pot of boiling water on it, standing in one corner. The Sherpas took a ladle of this and poured it into our glasses through a bamboo sieve containing tea leaves. We had some good, hot, smoky, refreshing tea. With this we ate some freshly made *mo-mo* (little meat dumplings) though the meat did not taste too fresh but very tough. Perhaps it was yak's meat. We had tasted that in Tibet. There it had been like beef though tough. Yaks are very useful animals to Sherpas and Tibetans as they use the yak's wool for clothing and tents, their skins for leather for boats, some of the milk is made into butter and cheese and the dung is used for fuel when dried.

I noticed that there, and in other Sherpa houses, rafters and wood of the house shone as though varnished. This was caused by the type of wood they used on their fires. Everything was neat and orderly.

The day before, a black Tibetan dog began to follow us; we tried to send him back, though I think the coolies encouraged him to follow. He stayed with us for three days. A coolie then gave him to a friend of his. The dog certainly did not like some of the rivers and bridges we had to cross. Once, when crossing a river over which we had to walk part of the way, then jump and slip across rocks and boulders for the remainder, we could see that it would be difficult for the dog. My husband put a piece of bamboo around his neck as a collar in case he fell in—which he obligingly did. My husband was able to pull him out with this. We know that many dogs can swim but that one seemed really scared of water. Only since I have lived in the East have I discovered how well

horses and cows can swim. I have seen them get across a swift river by floating part of the way and then striking out at the narrowest stretch.

Before we moved off from that Sherpa house they asked for *men* (medicines). We treated all sorts, one asked for medicines for a huge goiter, quite common in that part of the world, due to the lack of iodine in the water impossible to treat in a day. We were given some yak's butter in a green leaf as a gift. It was not too fresh, but not mixed with yak's hair however. We were very thankful as we were getting very low on our food supply. How we longed for some English bread and butter. I said I would eat only that until satisfied and I did that when we arrived in India. I had bread and butter morning, noon and night, sometimes even in the night, until I felt I had made up for all I had missed.

We started to climb up then down once again. Clouds ascended from the valleys but there was an almost cloudless, blue sky above us. I still thought, and even do now after visiting eighteen different countries, that Nepal is the most indescribably beautiful land I have ever been in. There are more shades of blending green than I could count. I had only one bad thing to say about the land and that was that the road continued to deteriorate and must have been the world's worst road. You could not really call it a road for in many places it must have been no more than a goat track.

Thinking of all the nice things about Nepal, we moved on, trying to forget the dreadful tracks. The dangerous ridges continued as before and there they seemed even worse. We went around precarious knife-edges, trying to keep our equilibrium. I always finished up by thinking that if the coolies could make it with their loads, we ought to be able to do it without any, at any rate with a very little load. Again we met leeches. I do not like to speak unkindly, but really I could not think of a nice thing to say about those thread-

like creatures which could turn into obese slugs when they had satisfied themselves on human blood. I am sure we must have given thousands of involuntary blood transfusions! They were everywhere, on the nearby bushes, dropping from the trees, in the mud, and then attaching themselves to our flesh. Several times on the trek I felt exhausted trying to pull them off when they clung tenaciously. Frank, like a good husband, came to my rescue when going through infested parts. We had to let them have their way until we came to an open part when we had our way and removed them.

We came to another suspension bridge which held me in suspense. It looked fairly strong with its huge chain links from one end to the other, but some of the iron rods which held in place the planks of wood which we had to cross, were missing. We knew we were reaching the end of our trek so we could not be defeated, and over we went. How it swayed and creaked as we crossed! Again I wondered what I should do if the handrails in the middle were too wide to hold, but I kept my head and just managed. Everyone of us had different methods and strides to get across, but we all managed. How the grim and glum faces of the coolies changed to hearty laughs when we were on the firm ground! I think they must have felt like the Negro who said, "I like terra firma; the more firma the less terra!"

It was a lovely spot on the other side of the suspension bridge. Near the river it was fairly flattish ground so we pitched our tent and had a good bath. Frank did his washing, Indian fashion, on a nearby rock, first soaping the article and then giving it several good bangs on the rock. The definition of an Eastern *dhobi* (washerman) is, "The man who pounds rocks with your best shirt!"

The coolies soon had their rice cooking, as there was plenty of fairly dry wood around. I watched them dish it up, and I wondered where they would put it all. I came to

the conclusion that they must have elastic tummies. What they eat in one meal (one or two pounds) would last me a month or more!

As we relaxed on top of our sleeping bags, it was too hot to climb inside, we thought again of the many things we had endured and we thanked God for His help and strength, which He gave day by day.

There were not many people about in the morning, so we got an early start. The coolies told us that there was a tea shop about a mile ahead so we decided to halt there. As we arrived, the owner was milking his cow, at his side he had a stuffed calf. We knew the reason as we had seen this done in India too. They say that the cow will not give milk unless the calf is there, so if it dies they stuff it. They seemed to believe it.

In the tea shop there were little lizards all over the walls. They had open mouths, waiting to devour a fly or mosquito.

On the road again we had several rivers to cross and how thankful I was for my umbrella for it had helped me across so many times. For hands of my big husband, and for those of the coolies which helped me, I was thankful too.

Mountaineers often use an ax to help them, but we did not have one.

During the day we met another group of monkeys. They were smaller and browner than the last troupe and they had tails. Most of them seemed to have babies of various sizes clinging to them, whether the parent was right side up or upside down dangling by their tails. Their young seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves as they scampered from tree to tree. The old grandpas and grandmas would sit up on the branches looking sad and weary, constantly scratching until they found the irritating parasite. They were all so cute and mischievous, but we had no time to stop and amuse ourselves with them. Here, and in many other places,

we saw numerous bushy-tailed squirrels running in and out like lightening; up and down the trees, cocking their little ears as they beheld us. Some days seemed longer than others, according to the state of the "road," and that day's march seemed easier, perhaps due to the fact that there were patches which we could even call straight, a very unusual occurrence in Nepal. Always we could see the snow-capped mountains and the land with the thousands of hills and valleys, numerous varieties of rivers and many magnificent waterfalls; a land of hundreds of different varieties of wild flowers, butterflies and birds. Orchids grow so freely there, in exquisite colors. If it was not for all these things, Nepal would not have been the most beautiful land we had visited.

Chapter 19

MY! HOW IT RAINED

WE DID NOT GRUMBLE about the weather. We were traveling, climbing or wading in the height of the monsoon which had been abnormally heavy that year? It had rained all night. We had to get up during the night to slacken the tent ropes and to make a little trench around the tent, but still the rain found its way in. Once or twice during the night I awakened to find wet patches on our sleeping bags. As I looked up with my eyes open at the break of day, a nice big spot of rain dropped right into my eye. Packing a drenched tent is not an easy job for it is difficult to get it into its bag, and naturally the weight has increased considerably. Of course, the same coolie had to carry it, but there was not a murmur of complaint from him. Snakes like to get into tents during monsoon, but we were thankful they did not intrude on us. One night I thought a snake had come in when I awakened, too scared to move or shout, as 'something' moved on my foot and was slowly working its way upwards. I plucked up my courage and slowly put my hand under my pillow for my light, fearfully switching it on to see the snake. I found it was the paw of a stray dog which had decided to stretch. He must have found the warmth of my sleeping bag inviting!

Everything we wore that day was wet or clammy. One of our coolies complained of pain in his stomach—with it he was bent almost double. I put it down to the large quantity

of popcorn which he had eaten. It had not really "popped" and hence it was lying heavily. I gave him a good aperient and a hot drink; in an hour or so he felt better. I personally had suffered a similar experience in Tibet after eating Tibetan bread. It did not seem heavy, but when I had eaten it I felt as though there were stones in my stomach and the pains were dreadful. I could not even walk upright. I doctored myself.

We paused at a real Nepal village, some of the women were sitting cross-legged cleaning rice and sieving it on a bamboo tray. Others were taking corn from the cob as quick as lightning. The women did not have very much on and most of the buttons or fasteners were missing from their blouses. They did not seem concerned. One of the little girls of about three years old went up to her mother for a drink of milk. As soon as she had finished, the child went to the nearby fire and took a lighted twig of wood from which she lit herself a *desi* (country) cigarette, just as a man would do. She looked as though her body was full of worms—a very common sight—she was so potbellied. Several children were running around naked except for heavy beads around their necks. While we talked with them, they changed their chores; one started to light a fire with two pieces of wood which she put into the old, red hot ashes, V fashion, and blew with all her might. She took a deep breath, expelling it and soon there was a bright crackling flame. Though their kind of wood did not make me cry, it did make my eyes smart.

Soon a young girl appeared with a new baby a few days old. She had a little brass pot of milk and water and with the aid of a green leaf, which she made into a spoon, she fed the baby, who seemed to take it quite well. As the women stopped to talk to us, they began to examine each other's hair. Soon I heard click! click! click! as they dug their thumbs into the intruders. They invited us to stay and have a cup of tea

and we accepted their invitation. Immediately, one of the women shouted to a girl of about eight years old to bring the *jaru* (broom) and sweep the verandah on which we were to sit. Tea was served and I noticed that the milk was in a dirty-looking bottle and that a piece of charcoal was floating on the top. They said they did this to keep the milk from going bad!

We moved on, passing through several wide rivers which were not too dangerous. I later noticed that my hands and fingers were wrinkled. In one of the hot valleys we went through a swarm of thousands of midges and sandflies, and some seemed to follow us for when we rested by the wayside they insisted on dangling before my eyes while I was trying to write my notes. Every time I tried to kill them I missed. They seemed as hard to catch as mercury! Again we crossed a river. These rivers seem to zigzag and many times we crossed the same river twenty times a day. This part of the river was tumbling and bubbling furiously. The loud, rushing sounds were pleasant to listen to, although that part was not as easy to cross. The wind seemed to be singing, though it lacked harmony! Several men and women passed us with such huge loads of cut grass we could hardly see them. They say, "Donkeys go best loaded," but these were human beings. The grass had been cut for their animals. In Tibet we had seen donkeys weighed down with their enormous and heavy loads, yet they plodded on. The grass *wala* offered us a piece of his large cucumber, and he took out his *kukri* (nepali knife) which was in a silver studded sheath in his waist and with this he cut us a big chunk. We found it most refreshing. We could not say how many we had eaten on the trek. It must have been dozens and never did we suffer from indigestion. We took everything that was offered to us and gave thanks. We lived mostly on the produce of the land as we only had one box of food for the forty days. We did not

have luxuries, but we kept well; naturally, there were things we longed for. The only injury either of us suffered was my husband's injured knee which gave him trouble. It was injured when he nearly lost his life in the River Salwa, but it did not hinder a day's march. I contracted Herpes of my lips, due to the high altitude. It made my lips very painful and they would get in the way when I was eating or drinking, but they soon got better. This reminded me of one of our horsemen in Tibet. He came to me and said, *"Mensahib,* will you take out my front tooth? It gets in the way when I am eating." I obliged; it was loose and not difficult.

We usually had our simple evening meal cooked and ready to eat half an hour after we arrived at our destination. If we had had to rely on a servant to do it, we may have had to wait for several hours! Though we did not take a servant, the coolies were willing to help us. One especially was fascinated with our pot-scourer which was wearing out. They usually clean their pots and pans with mud or ashes and the outside of a coconut hair. So at the end of the journey we gave him the pot-scourer as part of his baksheesh!

Neither of us suffered from mountain-sickness, nor even a blister on our feet. Our socks and shoes wore out and the only special preparation we gave ourselves were six injections of vitamin B_1 complex. I gave them to my husband and myself as I did not trust my husband with the hypodermic needle! Though we went through much, we were able to endure and arrived in Kathmandu feeling fit, though slimmer!

It was market day several miles away from this spot so we encountered different groups of people all dressed in their "Sunday Best." Some of the men were carrying their shoes around their necks. We knew that they would not put them on their feet until just before they entered the market place. The women were carrying their heavy silver anklets (they

were barefooted) and would put these on as they reached their destination. Some were leading rebellious goats by a piece of bamboo string; these they were hoping to sell at the market. Others had bamboo baskets attached to either end of a length of bamboo which they carried slung over their shoulders. These contained dozens of ill-fed chickens, all tied by the feet. At the market they tried to sell them, naturally boosting their wares like any good salesman. How many times I have been "taken in" in India, with newly laid eggs which a vendor will always swear are just laid, though you know they may have been many days on the road. I took every one I could get hold of on the trip as they were our main standby in food. We usually ended up the day eating eggs and chips. The next day it was chips and eggs! Even after I had bought them, I had to watch where I put them if there were monkeys or crows about as they would be waiting to grab them.

We then "heard" a band of Nepalese, chattering like magpies, coming through the beautiful pine tree forest. As they approached they were almost trotting down the mountainside, all out of step. They halted and asked us the question "are you the recruiting office?" They told us they were on their way to "join up." I wondered whether they could ever become soldiers. Some were very short; some were tall and very thin; all were practically without clothes; each man carried on his back, a bamboo conical basket. These were carried by means of a thick band of rope or cloth over the forehead, and this was passed under one of the corners of the basket. In the baskets there was very little, a little rice and a pot or two; I found it very hard to believe that they could do even a "left-right" march. I later saw that it was possible. We met that same day two Nepalese soldiers returning home from Malaya for three-months leave. They wore bush hats, clean khaki tunics, shorts, boots and socks and they were each

carrying an umbrella and a real good flashlight. They greeted us, "Good-morning, *sahib,*" though it was afternoon. To everything we asked, they replied, "Yes, sir" even to me. They had not learned "madam" in the army! They had learned a great deal, as I knew when I compared those coming back with those going. Although they were very much cleaner and they walked much better, they still wore their shirts on the outside of their trousers. I noticed that one of their boot-laces was missing. The nationals call them *booti-suiti* meaning, how like the Europeans they are in their boots and suits!

We also saw some very beautiful carvings and we knew it had been done with just a very crude instrument. I marvel what they can do with a home-made drill—consisting of just a screwdriver and a piece of string and wood at the other end. It goes round and round and they seem to be able to do as much with this as my husband can do with his electric drill!

Later, on the road, we saw a man "doing his accounts." First he was counting on his fingers, not just five on one hand for they use both the joints and the tips of each finger. Then he stooped down and wrote in the sandy soil. He finally stood up and wiped that out with his foot. I presume he walked off with the answer.

Again the evening was drawing in and the sunset was indescribable. Our weary bodies found a place to rest. *Booti Suiti* missionaries were very happy to remove their wet shoes and socks and be barefoot for awhile. How many times we thanked God for health and strength—not even a blister during the whole trek.

After a simple evening meal we again slipped into our sleeping bags on an open verandah. We could see the little lights of the village on the mountainside twinkling through the trees, giving the appearance of glittering gold. Sleep

came easily but I awakened feeling something warm but a weight on my feet. It was a dog and I was a little afraid to rebuke him in the middle of an extremely dark night as he may have bitten me.

Chapter 20

A NEPALESE WEDDING

WE WERE NOW on the thirty-ninth day of our hike. Daily, as we trekked up and down the mountains, I thanked God many times for a big, strong husband who helped me over many of the hard and difficult places. We now decided that he preferred going up hill, but I preferred going down. At last some folk seemed to recognize that I was really a woman for it was quite a few days since I had been asked that question. They still wanted to know where we were going and why had we come? We asked someone, who looked intelligent, how far we were from Nepal (meaning the capital, Kathmandu)—our destination. He said it was about thirteen *kost* (twenty-six miles), but he added: "When you have done five *kost* (ten miles) there is a jeep that runs to Kathmandu, when the condition of the road is good. But nowadays," he continued, "there has been so much rain that there are many landslides, and it is doubtful if it will be running." A jeep!—had we heard aright? Were we returning to civilization? Well, the thought of the jeep spurred us on. We had not a scrap of food left and my shoes were almost soleless! I was wondering if my shoes would hold out until we arrived at the last fifteen miles, which we were told we could do by jeep. Once again, we speeded up, leaving the coolies to follow at their pace.

By that time we were really weather-beaten, quite tanned and very lined—out in all weathers. I knew I looked very

much older and I remembered when I had been with Mary Anne, then aged eighteen months, in the center of Tibet a few years previously, some Tibetans had asked, "Whose baby is it?" I naturally said, "She is my daughter." They had a little confab between themselves, then one said dubiously, "Not your daughter, your grand-daughter!" I laughed, realizing that Mary Anne could have been my granddaughter if I had married at eleven or twelve as many Tibetans did.

My husband had a lovely multicolored beard by now; even with this he still looked youthful.

Once again we had a variety of weather and scenery. It drizzled and wisps of clouds assembled just above and before us. Later there was glorious sunshine and a rainbow to remind us of God's faithfulness. We reached a terrific landslide of shifting rocks and mud. There did not seem to be even a thin ridge to help guide us across as it had so recently happened. There was a steep precipice below, but we had to reach the other side so slowly we started slipping and sliding over disintegrating rocks. It was hard to lift our feet and legs from the mire. Our hands, knees, feet and legs were soon covered with heavy clayish mud, but we succeeded in getting across as also did our coolies with loads on their backs. We were always relieved when, with the help of God's unseen hand we had achieved something which so many had said was impossible. Later, we passed through a burned-out forest. Although a few of the pines were still growing all were blackened. I never did find out if this had been done purposely or whether it had been caused by the heat of the sun. Some of the trees had little pots attached to them to collect gum resin.

We stopped at a village to have tea and while there, treated some sick people, among whom was a very sick, emaciated baby. I believed that the sickness had been caused by opium which many mothers give their babies to keep them quiet

while they work in the fields. They were often quite blatant about this, and some would say proudly, when they returned from the field in the evening, "He is such a good baby. He is still asleep." They then found that he would not feed and even their unenlightened brain knows there is something wrong. Of course, it has been too drugged to feed.

I remember one opium child I treated in India. The mother let me keep her for two whole weeks in the mission. What a change that fortnight made—from a dying three-year-old she was turned into a bonny little girl. I found it difficult to persuade her to take her cod-liver oil until I mixed it with tea. She took that without a sound. Later her mother came to take her and seeing the transformation of her little daughter, said affectionately, "Oh, my darling little daughter!" She thanked me again and again for what I had done. I pleaded with the mother not to give the child opium again, but she replied hopelessly, "What shall I do with her while I go to work?" Some time later I inquired how my little patient was getting on (she came from fifty miles away) and I was told she was dead.

We neared the village of Bhadgaon from where we were hoping to travel by the jeep to Kathmandu—the last stage of our journey in Nepal. It was pouring rain and everything was muddy. We stepped from stone to stone, missing some, and naturally when we entered the village, we looked like a couple of drowned rats speckled with mud. There was a jeep waiting for us as we had hoped—minus driver. We imagined he was eating, drinking or gambling, so Frank ran around trying to find him. He returned, saying that it was not a public jeep as they were not running. It was because of the landslides and bad weather. We asked where the private owner was, hoping he would take pity on us and take us to Kathmandu. When he arrived we found he was a charming young man who spoke English. He was surprised

to find us, two Europeans, but gave us a real welcome, saying, "I will certainly take you to Kathmandu, but I cannot go today as we have come for a wedding and the road is not repaired. Please stay and be our guests."

How welcome was that invitation! We had not a scrap of food left to eat. We thanked him profusely and settled to stay for the wedding. They provided a large, clean room for our use and from the moment we arrived until the moment we left they seemed to be constantly feeding us. First, they supplied each of us with an egg which had been fried in mustard oil, and which we ate without any kind of bread or salt. Later we had *chura* (flattened rice). The evening meal consisted of a delicious curry and *chupattis* (Indian bread). We retired, and that night I "set" my hair as the next day I would be going to a real Nepalie wedding. In our evening devotions we gave thanks to God for the wonderful way in which He had supplied our needs in a place where we did not know a soul. Did our Bible not tell us, "Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of?" This is the Book which we believe.

There was a noise, singing, hustle and bustle very early the next morning as everyone was preparing for the wedding. We were told it was to be an ultramodern one and that was the reason they had invited us. We got up at our leisure, knowing we would not be moving off until after the wedding —some time in the afternoon. Frank put on his long trousers, nylon shirt and a tie for the first time for forty days. I dressed in my beige nylon, permanently pleated dress. Neither of us were elegant about the feet. We did give our shoes a polish, though there was very little shine as they were still wet. We were served with *chota hazri* (tea and toast) which was spread with some rancid butter. I was invited to see the bride-to-be though of course my husband was not allowed. She was a sweet, sensible girl who spoke a little English and

had charge of a Nepal weaving school. Her husband-to-be was one of the stenographers of the Prime Minister of Nepal.

All the men were in one part of the house and the women were in the other. The ladies were fussing over the bride, applying spices and English perfume. I gave her the latter, as a little gift. We had very little else with us that was suitable. The Nepal priest then arrived. He was dressed in white trousers and shirt, with a tight-fitting black cloth hat which looked like a basin turned upside down. The trousers were wide and baggy at the top but they tapered down to the ankles.

We were only asked to remove our shoes as we went into the temple grounds, and they granted us permission to take a movie of the wedding. This was very unusual as many are scared of what the white man's God will do to them. The wedding took place in the open. The bride and bridegroom sat on the ground with the bride's mother to support the bride; also friends to support the bridegroom. The Nepal priest, too, was squatting on the ground and in front of them were flowers, rice and fire. He muttered words which we did not understand and then threw rice and flowers at them, and they, in return, did the same. I wondered whether this could be the origin of rice and flower throwing at our home weddings! All this time the bride, who wore a very pretty sari, had her face covered. The muttering went on for some time, then the priest put some red dye on their foreheads and his own too. All this has a meaning, but we will not go into that.

Then the bride got up, with the help of her mother, and placed a garland of flowers around the neck of her husband-to-be. He, in return, gave her a golden chain and after placing it around her neck, he uncovered her face by pushing back her sari. He then saw his wife's face, for now they were married. They both looked miserable. Then they walked

slowly around the temple grounds with never a smile on their faces, looking as though they had quarreled instead of being newly married. I am told that in the East they are supposed not to smile on their wedding day, and at all the Eastern weddings I have attended I have never seen one smile. Even at Nepalese and Indian Christian weddings, when I had pleaded with them to smile as I was taking photographs which they would always have to keep, but no one has ever obliged me. After the bridegroom had had red dye thrown over his new European-style suit (ruining it as far as I could see) all the guests sat down to a scrumptuous meal of mutton curry followed by *dahi* (sour junket), and delicious Nepalese sweets. How we relished that meal after having eaten so little for many days. I am sure we enjoyed it far more than the bride and bridegroom. The bride kept her head down all the time and seemed to be just pecking at her food, and the bridegroom did not seem to be doing any better. We thoroughly enjoyed every bite. *Chang* (rice beer), *rakshi,* and other drinks were served but we had tea. The men played cards and several came to talk to us about our unusual trek. Then a shout went up, "We are leaving *now* for Kathmandu." So up we rose, only to discover that *now* did not mean *now* as we have proved many times in the East. Folk kept saying good-by to the bride and of course she cried (this is custom) but finally we were all packed into the jeep. Do not ask me how many (!) we were just like "sardines." When we were not far from the village, planks of wood had to be put down to enable the jeep to get across the flooded road. This all took time as we had to walk across and then the jeep slowly followed. Again we all got into the jeep and I wondered if we would all be able to fit in again. Just a little farther on we came to a recent landslide so out we went while the jeep tried to get across; we followed suit. All this time

we were trying to keep ourselves respectable as we were heading for the capital.

As we drove around and around hairpin bends, passing over parts which did not look wide enough for the jeep to go over, with a deep precipice below us in many places, we finally could see Kathmandu in the distance.

We arrived at that city, which seemed to be crowded with houses, idols, temples and people, many varieties. We had descended steeply, but still not to sea level as the capital lies over 4,000 feet above, situated on a broad, fertile plateau, surrounded by high forests and exquisite scenery. The golden, and fiery red rays of the sun shone on the majestic snow-capped peaks to which we had been so near only thirteen days before.

Chapter 21

ARRIVING IN KATHMANDU

SLOWLY AND SURELY we journeyed on toward Kathmandu, arriving only after the jeep had stopped and started many times. The engine gave out twice, but we were not surprised for it was certainly not an unusual occurrence in the East. The driver used the squeeky old horn constantly and rhythmically. I recalled that I had also seen missionaries use their horns with nothing on the road! The jeep's horn at least did its work for as the driver honked away, people walking casually along the middle of the narrow road almost jumped, and some ran into the nearby houses. We got out and said, "Good-by, and many, many thanks," to our new-found friends and to the new Mr. and Mrs. Das. Then we moved on to inquire the whereabouts of the British embassy. We had not far to go. We are not the excitable type, but when we saw the Union Jack flying, we felt like a couple of children seeing the sea for the first time. We knew by this that the Ambassador was there and we hoped he would help us. We were in the land without a visa as the Nepalese Government had allowed us only thirty days to make our trek. The trek had taken us forty days owing to the weather, numerous landslides and detours, although we did not rest for one day and we were on the road for ten to twelve hours most days. After going through a few preliminaries at the office of the British Embassy, where a reporter came, bowed most graciously before us, and took notes of our 400-mile trek, we were taken

to the ambassador's house. He was very pleased to see us, saying, "I wondered where you two had gotten to!" He was an exceedingly charming, understanding and helpful man. When we told him of our predicament he said he would be able to have our visa renewed provided we stayed a few days as it was the *Durga Puja* (religious holiday). We knew what that meant, it was a real holiday when *no one* worked. He casually advised us to stay at the Snow View Hotel until he sent for us. Frank looked at me and I at him. We were both thinking the same, "How can we stay at an hotel?" Our funds had run out—the trek had cost more than we had anticipated. We had planned to fly from Kathmandu to Biratnager Airport, at the border of Nepal and India. We had our fare money but very little else. Frank jingled a few coins in his pockets and I said, "We will *have* to go as the Ambassador may send for us." We still had our tent, but we could not erect it in the center of the capital of Nepal!

So we went to the hotel. The owner seemed very efficient and friendly and I thought his face was familar, although I presumed I must be imagining that. He stated that he was very sorry he could not give us a suite of rooms (it is the custom of many hotels in the East to provide a bedroom, sitting room, and bathroom for every guest) as it was the *Durga* holiday, but that he did have one room on the second floor. When he quoted his charge we found that the room was still too expensive for us, but we decided we would have to pay by check, although many did not like to take checks. As we talked about the 400-mile trek we had just completed, I mentioned that we were not mountaineers (many of them had stayed with him) but missionaries. "What!" he exclaimed. "Missionaries? Why you are the answer to my prayers. I have prayed that missionaries would come to stay at my hotel and you are the *first*. You may stay as long as you like—free of charge!"

We did not know what to say, but we thanked him and I quietly thanked God for the miraculous way in which He had met our needs. Did not our Bible say, "My God shall supply all your needs?" The owner, now our friend, told us how he had come from Calcutta and we later discovered he had been best man at the wedding of one of my American missionary friends. What a small world! We spent four days there and it was wonderful to rest and sleep on real beds, which were clean, to bath in a real bath, to eat really good food and to spend a few days visiting friends.

We paid off our three coolies who had accompanied us from Goray's house in Pakding. I have not even mentioned their names. One was called Nima, which meant he was born on a Sunday as that is the name of the first day of the week; the second was named Pasang, which meant Friday; our third coolie had an unusual name which I cannot remember for we mostly called him *Arku* (uncle).

In Sherpaland and Tibet the boys and girls often use the same names if they are born on the same day of the week and although very few know their birthdays they usually can teli you which year they were born in as they have twelve different names for the years, all taken from animals. For instance, horse, tiger, monkey and many others. We brought up a Tibetan girl from the age of twelve (?) years. When she had been with us for a little while she turned from servant to daughter. It was not long before she saw different people celebrating their birthdays and she thought it would be nice to have a birthday too. One day she said to me, "Mummy, I do not know what day or month I was born, but I do know what year I was born in." I asked her what year she had been born in, expecting her to say 1933 (or thereabout) but she replied, "In the monkey year!" Realizing what she was trying to say, I asked her, "Would you like a birthday?" "Oh yes," she happily replied. "Well," I said,

"you shall have one when you have been with us for one year." Naturally her first birthday thrilled her as she was given an iced cake and presents for the first time in her life. We called her thirteen years old on May 7, a year later fourteen years, and the next year we called her fifteen, years, but on that day she came to me and said simply, "Mummy, I do not think I am big enough to be fifteen years old." "All right, Nima," I replied, "we will say you are fourteen for one more year." Nima is a Sherpa and had never seen anything of what we call the world until she came to us. She lived right in the jungle of beautiful, mountainous Sikkim. Sikkim is a small land (some call it a state) between India and Tibet. It has the smallest capital in the world, Gantok.

Soon after Nima came to us we realized she was capable of learning so we took her to the school I was in before marriage. On the way to the school she saw a car, a motorcycle and a train for the first time. What questions she asked! She did well in the Plains Mission Boarding School where she learned to read and write the Hindi and English languages. She found the excessive heat trying as she was used to a mountainous climate so we later took her back near to us and put her into the Scots Mission Boarding School, Kalimpong. There she learned to read and write Nepali and many other useful accomplishments. We taught her to read and write the Tibetan language, so in a short while she was able to read and write four languages! Tenzing Sherpa's two daughters, Pem Pem and Nima, both started at the Scots Mission School in Darjeeling as day scholars, until he became famous. They were then transferred to a European school, where they certainly would learn good English and perhaps French and German. I am sure that many of the good things they learned at the mission school they will *never* forget.

The things we knew we would not need we gave to our three coolies. We had to lighten our loads for the flight to

India and we knew the coolies coveted some of our possessions. So mugs, plates, cutlery, our old socks, shoes, and empty tins (which were almost as precious as gold) were divided among them and made them very happy. Still they wanted the inevitable baksheesh. Even the best of coolies will try to squeeze more out of their employers, even though they sometimes find it hard. Finally, we thanked them for all their help and they went off, we hope contentedly.

We then retired for the night after a good hot bath. How thankful I was that there was some abrasive in the bathroom with which to clean the bath. I would not have liked anyone to have seen the dirt which rolled from me! Then into delightfully clean, cool sheets and an interior-sprung mattress. My! that was wonderful and we appreciated it, but we were thankful, too, for the experiences of our forty days, the lands of Nepal and Sherpaland! How much we had learned about the people, their ways and how they lived, and about how we, too, could live in circumstances to which we were unaccustomed. We had slept with the rich and the poor, with different castes and tribes, with fleas, bugs, bees, beetles, spiders, ants, rats, bats, dogs, goats, chickens, pigs, leeches and, occasionally, cows! The thrill of being at the top of a mountain and looking around at the different glories of the snow-capped peaks, the numerous, magnificent waterfalls, and many varieties of rivers and bridges, and a thousand and one other things, all of which I have tried to describe, though I have sometimes hopelessly failed, we will never forget. Above all, we were thankful for God who was always there to help us in the accomplishment of a task so many had told us was impossible.

Chapter 22

SIGHTSEEING IN KATHMANDU

WE AWAKENED after a most refreshing night's sleep to hear a knock at the door. In walked the bearer (servant) saying, *"Salaam, Sahib,"* and putting down a little tray with tea and toast on it. We knew we were in a city as there were all sorts of noises outside our bedroom window, among them, that of tins and saucepans being washed and filled with water for the day's use. We could hear some calling upon their gods; others taking their daily bath by just pouring water over their bodies from head to toe. One Nepalese was making such a "to-do" over cleaning his teeth that I arose to watch him through the mosquito-netted window of our bedroom. There he was, squatting on his haunches with a little brass pot of water at his side. He had a twig for a toothbrush and a flat piece of flexible material which looked like plastic, for a tongue-scraper. This he was using on his tongue with great vigor. He was making vile sounds as if his heart would jump up. I was glad when he had finished.

This reminded me of an incident which occurred in a second-class compartment of an Indian train. Educated Indians and Europeans were traveling together. Early in the morning, as the train pulled into a station the educated Indian got out of the train with his little brass pot. He cleaned his teeth in the fashion I have just mentioned. The European was disgusted at all the noises and motions he made. He turned to his English friend and said, "What an

uncouth man he is to make such a noise over cleaning his teeth." The bearer brought this European his *choti hazari* (tea and toast) and he started to eat it, then the whistle sounded for the train to leave. The Indian, having heard what the European had said about him, jumped into the train. He turned to his Indian friend and said, in the Hindi language, "What a filthy man he is to eat his breakfast without cleaning his teeth and mouth first!" True, we do not all think alike. Hindoos would not dream of eating without first cleaning their teeth.

I stopped looking at the Nepalese, got up, had a lovely hot bath, and we went down to breakfast. An appetizing array of food was placed before us and we both did justice to it. I, especially, tucked away rolls and butter, or I think it would be more truthful to say butter and rolls!

Afterward we went out to see the city which was perhaps not quite as fascinating to us as we had spent so many years in India, but there were things that were different. Some of the palaces and big houses looked new and others were very dilapidated. There were temples everywhere and we were told there were more idols than people, easy to believe. We tried hard to purchase a map of the parts we had been through. One Nepalese was sure he knew where we could get one—so off we went with him, through some of the smelly, back chambers and sewerless, narrow roads where there was a variety of bulls, cows, goats, dogs and chickens everywhere, all trying to beg or steal something to eat. We arrived only to be informed that they had just sold out! Many of the streets were very narrow and their little dark houses did not seem too safe or healthy to me. As in most cities, the crowd was cosmopolitan—Nepalese, Tibetans, Sherpas, Indians, Americans, English and other nationalities too. Some appeared rich and some indeed very poor. There were groups of pilgrims who had come miles to visit Bodnath Temple,

and Tibetans and Sherpas who had come to visit other special monasteries. There were prayer wheels on the outside and a large one on the inside, and many nationals were turning this. Folk still stared at us and some Tibetans came up to us with their tongues out (a sign of greeting) and they had their thumbs up and were bowing at the same time, saying, *"Kutchie, Kutchie"*—which means, "Please give me some money." Here also we met some Tibetans who said to us, *"Salaam, Yishu Lama"* (Priest of Jesus) and to me they said, *"Anila"* (nun). This is a term of respect when they know you are missionaries. They had met us in Darjeeling. It was quite likely that they had been to our Mission Dispensary.

We wended our way to the Nepal Post Office where we bought stamps for our philatelic friends. We could not put them on our letters for abroad.

The market place supplied a very interesting scene. Some of the shops were quite modern and sold foreign goods. Many of the traders sat on the ground cross-legged, among their *desi* (country-made) wares and haggled over the prices with the would-be purchasers. I bought some lovely, multicolored, silk, tassled, Nepali ribbons for Nima's hair. Of course the usual bulls, cows, goats and chickens were wandering where they wanted to go, and occasionally we heard a trader say to an animal which he thought had eaten enough of his wares, *"Hat,"* (get off). They were not very obedient, however, for they repeatedly returned.

One man had all sorts of jars and I saw some bore the words, "Pond's cold cream," and others, "Pond's Vanishing Cream." They looked oh! so dirty that I was afraid to buy as I felt the cream might have vanished.

We returned to the hotel for lunch and then went to see our ambassador. We also visited the Mission Hospital and talked with the patients and nurses. Some were Nepalies from India. Later, we went to Bhadgaon and met one of our

missionary friends who has a mission dispensary. She, too, had a "man-in-the-box" (gramophone), and found it very useful there. Just a few days before we arrived someone else had arrived, gone in, and cut off her curtains, leaving about two inches hanging on the rods! I gave her the few medicines I had left from our trek and she was very thankful to have them.

Our friend, the owner of the hotel, took us in his jeep; we appreciated that kindness as he was a very busy man, but we appreciated it more when we knew he had to pay rupees thirteen—almost three dollars (£1) per gallon for gasoline. It had had to be flown in owing to the landslides and floods which were exceptionally bad.

We made several trips to different offices to try to get our visas renewed. At first we were unsuccessful, but finally our good Nepalese friends resumed work after their holidays and in due season our visas were renewed and we were able to leave the land. Perhaps one day we shall be able to return to see our friend Goray Ang Nima and many other friends.

Chapter 23

THIRD CLASS AEROPLANE RIDE

THE PILOT and some of the crew of the 'plane were staying at the same hotel so they promised to show us over the cockpit.

Our hotel friend arranged to take us and other passengers to the airport, and when we had left the city several miles behind us we arrived at Kathmandu Airport. Nothing like London Airport! but quite in keeping with the beautiful land of Nepal. I think a better name would have been air-strip, for it was not much more than a field to look at and the only buildings were little bamboo huts with thatched roofs. There was no radio or control tower visible and only one 'plane landed while we were waiting. We were informed that it might be difficult to get from Biratnagar Airport to Jogbani Railway Station in India, owing to the shortage of petrol (gas) and the price, but we did not worry as we believed, "Where there is a will there is a way." Just before entering the 'plane we were introduced to a government servant who was traveling with us. One of the crew shouted to us to board the 'plane, so we all trailed up the portable gangway. It looked more like a freight 'plane than a passenger 'plane. It appeared to be in a very dilapidated condition. There were no cushions—just rusty old tin seats. The interior looked like an old-fashioned tram; we had to face each other. This was all right at the start, but as soon as we had fixed our safety belts and the pilot started to rev-up

furiously we could see by some of the expressions on the passengers' faces that they were scared. It was quite likely their first air trip!

Later, as promised, one of the crew invited us to go to the cockpit, which was not a very easy thing to do in midair. There were air pockets and up and down we went. They showed us different instruments they were using, but I think my husband took in more than his less air-minded wife. A new sweater belonging to a member of the crew was sucked out of a little window into "the blue" and a few seconds later was just a speck in the sky. We hoped someone who needed it would find it, but we doubted if that would happen as the land beneath us seemed to be very sparsely settled.

I recalled the first time our daughter was taken up. She was only two years old and she looked down and said, "Oh! look at all those dollies' houses."

Our crew pointed out places of interest and we had a lovely view of Mount Everest from a new vantage point. We went through the clouds, above them, and below them, and I compared it to our lives, knowing that sometimes we seem to live in the clouds, sometimes below them, but that it is possible to live above the clouds of life.

We returned to our seats, and fastened our safety belts. No nice meals or titbits were served on the 'plane, and I did not even see a steward or stewardess.

It was the last magnificent view we had of Nepal, but I have tried to store all in my heart. We had climbed to the top of the world at several points, but in the 'plane we were far above all—traveling the easy way. Everything still looked wonderful. We could see we were approaching a village and our 'plane circled many times, finally touched down at Biratnager Airport where, like Kathmandu Airport, it was very rural. We could only call this an airstrip. Our trek had taken us forty-four days from Darjeeling in India, to the foot

of Mount Everest at Namche Bazaar in Sherpaland (13,000 ft.) and then on to Kathmandu in Nepal; walking, climbing, clinging, slithering, up and down the mountains; and in this wonderful air contraption it had only taken us forty-five minutes!

Someone asked us why we did not go there and back by 'plane. Our two main reasons for making the journey by foot were, 'planes did not go where we went, and we would not have been able to call at every village. What a lot of new experiences we would have missed.

We passed through customs and we were then wondering how we would get to the railway station several miles away, when a Government official, to whom we had been introduced at Kathmandu Airport, asked us how we intended getting to Jogbani Station, India. When we replied to the effect that we would have to hire a taxi, he insisted that his servant take us. It was doubtful, he said, whether we would find a taxi as so few were running and of course they were not charging the normal prices, owing to the abnormal price of petrol (gas). He added, "Please come to my house for a meal. I would love my wife and mother to meet you as they have never seen white folk." We were thrilled that, once again, God had met our needs, so we went with him in his car and in a very short while we were sampling a delicious meal. In the room there were *purdah* (curtains) at the doors, and at different intervals we could see eyes peering at us and hear giggles emanating from behind the curtains.

The members of the household were amazed that we ate with our fingers and could speak their language. Finally we coaxed the adults (the children did not need coaxing) to come in and talk with us. Time went all too quickly and we had to leave them to catch our train.

We were now in the plains of India and soon knew it for as we stepped into our friend's car we were off on an extreme-

ly bumpy, holey road, with the driver (mostly they cannot pronounce the English 'dr' so drivers are always called *divers*) honking his horn in the typical Indian fashion, scaring all the folk and animals out of the way until we arrived at Jogbani Station.

Chapter 24

HOME, SWEET HOME

MUCH COULD BE WRITTEN about Jogbani Railway Station and the almost unbearable train ride to the foot of Siliguri hills. I am going to pass over that as I want my story to end like a fairy tale—they lived happily ever after! For twenty-four hours we had nearly suffocated with the heat and congestion of the train, but once again we were out in the open with a majestic view of Mount Kinchinjunga (28,000 feet) before us, and the Himalayan hills all around us—Siliguri Station, India.

Into a taxi we climbed and as soon as the "diver" was ready (which, to us and the other passengers, seemed a long while) we moved off. Up and down we went, around many familiar hairpin bends as the road crossed and recrossed the little miniature railway lines. Even here everything looked picturesque. We passed village after village in which all the houses were newly mud-washed as the villagers in that part, too, had just finished their annual holiday celebration. Many of the huts were brightly decorated with chains of gold and yellow marigolds. We passed miles of tea gardens in which many Nepalese women and girls were working, picking just the bud and two leaves of the tea plant.

Strange to say, we did not often get good tea in Darjeeling, unless we paid a good price. Good tea is often dearer there, as the best is always exported. I have certainly been "had" many times while buying tea in India. Quite often, hawkers

would come to the door and say, "*Mensahib,* I have some really good tea for sale today." They would rub a little in the palm of their hand and give it to me to sniff. It smelled fine so I paid them and off they went. I then would try to make a cup of tea and often wondered what I had bought. It certainly did not taste like it! Later, I became wise, and when they came with their tea I would put the kettle on, saying, "We will both try it"—much to their surprise. Often it was hopeless; I would send them off, telling them it was not the taste I liked! I have since discovered that they often dry their used tea-leaves and sell them. They must believe in, "waste not, want not!"

We were now climbing higher and higher, the air was getting fresher and cooler, and everything looked wonderful, though the scenery was different from that of Nepal. We had to get out to let the car cross a bridge unloaded, and wonder of wonders, the taxi made the trip to Kalimpong without any mishap, an unusual occurrence! One episode which did hinder us a little was when we met some Nepali boys and girls pulling a hand "steam" roller with which they had been tarring the road. They did a strange thing, for as they all pulled up the mountain they *sang,* or rather chanted, then as the roller went down the mountain they had to pull with all their might to hold it back. The Nepalies are very fond of flowers, and the girls wore them in their hair.

At last we arrived at Kalimpong where we had left our little daughter, Mary Anne with our Swedish missionary friends. Naturally she was thrilled to see us, as we were to see her. She cried when she saw her daddy, saying, "Daddy, you promised me you would not come back with your beard on, you look like a pixie and I do not want you to be one!" So into the bathroom went her daddy, with a mug of hot water and plenty of lather and off came the beard (forty-four days' growth)!

We talked with our friends of all the wonderful things which had happened and the next day we left them to return to our own station, Tibetan Mission, Darjeeling. The journey consisted of another thirty miles of rise and fall. This time we went by the public jeep, into which we were packed like "sardines." For the first few miles we descended to a very hot, malarious valley, Tista, and the river that ran through the valley was in flood due to the abnormally heavy rainfall (it was well above the average fall of one hundred fifty to two hundred inches). The Tista village is the most crooked and unsafe village I have seen in my life. We were there in 1951 when they had the terrible landslides after which almost everything seemed to be out of place. Houses fell like packs of cards, some only remained standing on two props instead of four. That made them uninhabitable. This village always brought to my mind that nursery rhyme, about a crooked man, who had a crooked house. He walked a crooked mile and found a crooked sixpence upon a crooked stile. Certainly there were plenty of crooked miles for a long way around. We were always glad when we had passed the village for it was usually extremely hot.

Immediately we had passed through we were faced with a very steep incline, and it was quite a common occurrence for the car or jeep not to "pull" and for the engine to stall. I was always thankful, too, for a car with good brakes as several times cars and jeeps have gone over the mountainside and lives have been lost.

We made it, and up we climbed, passing Peshoke tea garden where the famous Lobchu tea is grown. Once again we went through gloomy Ghoom which was still in the mist, then on to Darjeeling and "home, sweet home." The majestic snows were showing when we arrived and the sun was glittering on them, spreading glorious golden rays. We stepped out of the jeep and our Sherpa-Tibetan friends welcomed us

back to Tibetan Mission, Darjeeling, with cries of *"Cha-pe-nam-chung"* (welcome home, mensahib).

As we sat down to eat our first meal at "home" which included the bread and butter and butter and bread that we ate for many days, my mind passed quickly over many of the things that had happened. We had completed our four hundred-mile trek that so many, like Job's comforters, had said we could never do. Our coolies had not given us trouble, which is very unusual. We had not rested for one day anywhere and we had arrived well and happy, only losing a few pounds and gaining a few grey hairs. Most of us had slipped over at one time or other during the trek, but the Lord seemed to keep me especially and I will tell you why. I am much lighter in weight than my husband and I was always slipping on my own legs when in Tibet, Sikkim and India. My husband would tease me and say, "Why don't you put down your foot with a firm hand?"—easier said than done! Just before we started the trek my husband came with his Bible and said, "I have a verse for you," and he quoted: "When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble" (Prov. 4:12).

From that moment I tried to claim the verse and certainly God did undertake for me, for not once did I really slip. At the end of this day we prayed and thanked God for all He had done for us, feeling that every experience, every mile covered, and every pound spent, had been worthwhile.

How good is the God we adore,
  Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as great as His power,
  And knows neither measure nor end.

EPILOGUE

ALL MY CHRISTIAN LIFE I have had a motto, AIM AT THE MOON IF YOU ONLY HIT THE LAMP POST! (I never thought I would live to see folk trying to do this!)

Going to Nepal was like *Aiming at the Moon,* for most people thought it was impossible, but WITH GOD all things are POSSIBLE as we proved. Who would have thought He would have used a maimed Sherpa boy to get us into Nepal which opened the way for us to tell many of the Saviour for the first time.

Now you may have a BIG spiritual mountain before you, for Nepal or another land, or something you really desire to do for Him, and yet, everything seems impossible. Do not give up—the living God can do what others cannot. SUCCESS comes in CANS . . . and FAILURES come in CAN'TS. Claim "I can do ALL THINGS through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

Nepal is more open to the Gospel today than when we went. Recently several other Missionary Societies have gone into Nepal to start schools, hospitals and dispensaries. Some of the Nepalies have heard the Gospel and have believed and have been baptized.

Of course the fight is on. There are threats from the Eastern borders of Nepal by the Chinese Communists. If you have a burden for this land, keep praying and believing.

Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to God alone,
And laughs at impossibilities
And cries it shall be done.

—IRENE SNELL WINWARD