



His Majesty Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva,
Maharajadhiraja of Nepal

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Nepal and the Gurkhas

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Preface

The original version of this book was published in 1883 by Major E. R. Elles, Royal Artillery, under the title 'A Report on Nepal'. It was republished, with considerable additions, by Major Newhan-Davis, The Buffs, and Captain Eden Vansittart, 5th Gurkhas, in 1896 and it is on this publication that later editions were based.

The next edition, under the title 'The Handbook on Gurkhas', was produced by Colonel B. U. Nicolay, 4th Gurkhas, in 1915 and was reprinted in 1918. It was followed by another edition by Major C. J. Morris, 3rd Gurkhas, in 1933, which was revised in 1936 and reprinted in 1942. Colonel R. G. Leonard, late 5th Gurkhas, who has produced the present edition, has drawn on the invaluable work of Major Morris and added a great deal of unpublished material of his own. He has been assisted in the paragraphs on the Eastern tribes by the notes of Lieutenant-Colonel A. V. A. Mercer, 7th Gurkhas. The whole book has been carefully examined by certain serving officers of the Brigade of Gurkhas in the light of the most up-to-date knowledge and information, and has been revised and redrafted where this has seemed necessary.

It should be realised that this book is published, as were its predecessors, primarily for the benefit of officers who serve with Gurkha Regiments. However, in the last decade Nepal has undergone important constitutional changes and travel within its boundaries is now unrestricted. Katmandu has become easily accessible to tourists by road and by air and the many mountaineering and other expeditions which have, in recent years, visited the remote areas of the country, have attracted world-wide attention. For these reasons, and because of the interest aroused by the State visit to Great Britain,

in 1960, of Their Majesties The King and Queen of Nepal, a visit which was reciprocated when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, visited Nepal the following year, it is to be hoped that this book will have a wider and more general appeal.

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The geography of Nepal

Nepal extends for about 520 miles along the southern slopes of the Himalayas. A narrow tract of country, it lies between the 85th and 88th parallels of longitude, its breadth nowhere exceeding 140 miles and averaging between 90 and 100 miles. The country lies from west to east and, without oversimplifying the topography of a complex area, it is convenient to consider it as a number of strips roughly corresponding to the lines of latitude. From south to north these strips are:

The Terai

The Hills

The Snows

The Trans-Himalayan Zone.

In addition, two other areas, the Valley of Nepal and the Pokhara plain, lying like small saucers in the middle of the hills, require special mention.

THE TERA I

The Terai is for the most part 25 to 35 miles wide. Its southern apron, only a little above sea level, is of open fields where rice, sugar cane and wheat and, to the east, jute, are cultivated. These open fields merge, to the north, into gently rising forests which are slowly being cleared, so that year by year there is an increase in the amount of open country. This is the Outer Terai. Here lies Dharan (semi-forested), Paklihawa (open), and the airstrips of Simra (semi-forested) and of Biratnagar and Bhairwa both of which are in open country.

The forests of the outer Terai run into the Siwalik Mountains, a discontinuous range of dry sandstone hills, some 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level, lying parallel with the Himalayas. Beyond the Siwaliks the country flattens again into the Inner Terai. Here are plains of virgin jungle and elephant grass, traversed by slow flowing rivers. In many places, however, the jungle is being cleared to provide timber and areas for cultivation.

The Terai is inhabited mainly by Indians in the south and by Tharus in the Forest areas, but hill tribesmen, many of them ex-servicemen, are tending to migrate south in search of land, and this element of the population is increasing. In the outer Terai are the only places, outside the valley and Pokhara, which could be called towns. These, from east to west, are Biratnagar, Birganj, Bhairwa, Nepalganj and Dhangarhi.

THE HILLS

Beyond the flat lands of the Inner Terai rise the foothills of the main Himalayan range, running up in great ridges into the snows, inhabited up to a height of about 8,000 feet and grazed in summer to about 13,000 feet. The big rivers, coming down from the snows, descend steeply and run in deep gorges, in general flowing at a height of 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level between hills 6,000 to 7,000 feet high. This is the country of the Gurkha as we know him in the British and Indian Armies.

Where irrigation is possible the hills are intensely cultivated and terraced. Apart from the southern flanks of the main range there are now few extensive areas of real jungle. In many parts heavy deforestation has produced country almost arid in appearance. The valley bottoms are, however, more lush, with bamboos, peepuls, and, lower down, mango groves. The villages lying higher up are strongly built, the houses being of locally quarried stone, with stout beams and slate roofs. Lower lying houses are usually made of local bricks and mud, and have thatched roofs.

Where there are fields and water there are villages. These are connected by a network of footpaths, by which movement

across the country is possible throughout the year, although in the monsoon, landslides, broken bridges or suspended ferries, often make detours necessary. In the dry season ponies can be taken over many of these paths but in the monsoon they are able to move only on a very few main tracks.

The climate in the hills varies according to altitude. Spring and autumn are very pleasant, with warm sunny days and cool nights, and though summer days can be hot and oppressive, the winter is not excessively cold. From October to February little rain falls. There are storms in March, April and May, but no continuous rain. The monsoon begins in June and continues, usually, until the end of September, with the heaviest rainfall in July and August.

THE SNOWS

The main Himalayan range, which includes, in addition to Mount Everest, seven mountains over 26,000 feet in height, runs right along the northern part of Nepal. In some places there are passes across the range and in others rivers have cut right through it in deep precipitous gorges.

THE TRANS-HIMALAYAN ZONE

The northern border of Nepal does not everywhere follow the crest line of the Himalayas. There are strips of Nepalese territory lying to the north of the main range and inhabited by Tibetans. Most of the country above the tree line is snowbound in winter. However, as is proved by the extensive use of yaks, dzos and mules for transport, the going is easier than in the more tangled country to the south. Where the northern frontier and the crest line coincide there are Tibetans, or closely related tribes such as Sherpas, living in the highest villages along the southern flanks of the range.

THE VALLEY OF NEPAL

The Valley of Nepal, which contains the capital, Katmandu, is the cultural and administrative heart of the country. It is

a flat and intensively cultivated saucer, some 300 square miles in extent, about 4,500 feet above sea level and surrounded by hills rising from 6,000 to 9,000 feet. The central government and civil service, the bulk of the Army, banks, schools, hospitals and administrative services of Nepal, are concentrated here.

THE PLAIN OF POKHARA

Although it cannot be classed as a separate topographical area, note must also be made of the plain of Pokhara. About 150 square miles in extent, it lies at a height of 2,500 to 3,000 feet above sea level, with the Annapurna Range to the north rising to a height of 26,000 feet. The plain contains three large lakes and the scenery makes it one of the most beautiful places in the world. Pokhara lies in the interior of Nepal and is surrounded by hill villages. In some ways it is the hill capital of Central Nepal and will play a part of considerable importance in the future development and history of the country. There are schemes to make it into a tourist resort, but the climate during the summer tends to be hot and oppressive.

THE COUNTRY FROM WEST TO EAST AND ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

From west to east the hill country can be divided into four areas. On the western border, next to the Indian district of Kumaon, is far West Nepal, inhabited by Nepalis with no claim to the name of Gurkha. This region lies between the rivers Maha Kali, or Sarda, and Karnali. The second region, Western Nepal, which is the basin of the River Bheri, extends from the Karnali to the eastern border of Piuthan. Beyond this, in the basin of the River Kali (or Sapt Gandaki—the Seven Gandaks), is Central Nepal. East of the Nepal Valley and stretching to Sikkim and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal, is the fourth region, Eastern Nepal.

For administrative purposes Nepal is divided into Tahsils under Governors, or Bara Hakims, and districts or jillas.

They are:

Far West

Doti, Baitadi, Dandelhura.

Western

Dailekh, Sallyan (and Jumla), Piuthan.

Central

Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 West, Gulmi and Palpa.

Eastern

No. 1 East (Chautara), No. 2 East (Ramechhap), No. 3 East (Okhaldhunga), No. 4 East (Bhojpur), Dhankuta, Ilam.

Terai

(a) In the west, Nepalganj (includes Bardia and Banke), Kanchanpur, Kailali, Dangdeokhuri. The senior Bara Hakim is at Nepalganj and this jilla is also referred to as Naya Mulk (the new country).

(b) Seoraj, Batoli and Palhi Majhkand, with a Bara Hakim at Bhairwa.

(c) To the south of the Valley, Parsa, Bara and Rautahat, all under Birganj.

(d) North of the above, and under Chisapani, Chitawan and Nawalpur.

(e) In the East, Sirha and Saptari, both under Rajbiraj, and Mahotari and Sarlahi, both under Jaleshwar.

(f) Udaipur Garhi and Sindhuli Garhi, north of the above.

(g) Morang, with Bara Hakim at Biratnagar. There is also a Bara Hakim at Jhapa (Bhadrapur).

The hill districts are sub-divided into Thums, which might be described as parishes, each under a senior *Mukhiya*, or Headman. In some areas in the Western districts, Thums are known as Daras or Kharges and may be under *Jimwals*. Central Nepal, the area with the largest population and longest under administration, has the *Jilla* as an intermediate division between the Tahsil and the Thum.

Far Western Nepal, containing no Gurkhas, is of little interest here, except as the home of the Dotiyals who have, in the past, provided some excellent stretcher-bearers and porters.

Western Nepal consists of the three one-Jilla Tahsils of Dailekh, Piuthan and Sallyan, the last named of which should not be confused with its namesake in No. 1 West. Dailekh might rightly be named the New Territory. It has only had Gurkhas settled in it for three or four generations, the colonisation resulting from the desire of certain Gurungs, Magars, Chhetris, and a few others, to seek less crowded areas in which to live. Piuthan and Sallyan both contain large colonies of the Bura and Gharti clans of the Magar tribe.

Central Nepal Jillas are:

No. 1 West: Dhading, Lamudanra, Nawakot, Sallyan.

No. 2 West: Gorkha.

No. 3 West: Dhor, Kaski, Rising, Tanhu, Lamjung.

No. 4 West: Bhirkot, Garhung, part of Char Hajar Parbat, Syangja Nawakot, Payung, Satung.

Gulmi: Argha, Dhurkot, Galkot, Gulmi, Isma, Khanchi, Musikot, and part of Char Hajar Parbat.

Palpa: Palpa.

The Jilla of Nawakot in No. 1 West is known as Wallo Nawakot, that is the Nawakot near to Katmandu, whilst the Jilla of the same name in No. 4 West is known officially in Katmandu as Pallo Nawakot, the Nawakot far from Katmandu. Locally, however, the latter is known as Syangja Nawakot, Syanja being the name of a small, but old, town which is nearby.

The Jillas of Char Hajar Parbat come in both No. 4 West and in Gulmi. It seems probable that originally this was one area paying taxes to the amount of four thousand *mohurs*, but for the sake of convenience that portion of it lying to the east of the River Kali was included in No. 4 West. In Char Hajar lies Baglung, a town and market of some importance. Many Gurkhas claim it as part of their address although, in fact, their homes may be several days' march away from the town.

Eastern Nepal is divided into Tahsils but not into Jillas and most have alternative titles. They are:

No. 1 East (or Chautara).

No. 2 East (or Ramechhap).

No. 3 East (or Okhaldhunga).

No. 4 East (or Bhojpur).

Dhankuta.

Ilam.

The Thums of Taplejung and Chainpur in Dhankuta were originally known as Nos. 5 and 6 East. Ilam was previously known as Charkhola because of its four rivers—Mai, Jogmai, Deomai and Puwa. Dhankuta and Ilam, lying to the east of the Arun river, are the homes of the Limbus and are therefore known collectively as Limbuan.

POPULATION

It was not until 1952-54 that an accurate census of Nepal was taken, the detailed statistics of which were published in January 1958. The Census Commissioner's report which has been extremely well produced, contains a mass of accurate information but is far too lengthy to be given in detail in this book. Some of the more interesting figures are, however, quoted below.

The first census for which data is available was made in 1911 and population counts have been made approximately every ten years since that time. There is, however, some evidence that a census of some kind was made by Jang Bahadur, the first Rana Prime Minister, who died in 1877. In 1952 a census began in all districts of Eastern Nepal except Mahatari, but it was not completed on a nation-wide basis until 1954, when final figures for Western Nepal were received. This census was the first to make use of modern techniques.

The census figures, including those absent from home for more than six months, are as follows:

Eastern Hills	1,834,711
East Inner Terai	89,309
Eastern Terai	1,843,740
Katmandu Valley	415,761
Western Hills	3,509,609
Centre Inner Terai	180,214
Mid Western Terai	364,791
Far Western Terai	235,343
	<hr/>
	8,473,478
	<hr/>

Seventy-one per cent of the population live in the highlands or hill regions which comprise 83 per cent of the total area, and 29 per cent live in the lowlands of the Terai. The average population density in the Terai is 258 per square mile whereas in the hills it is 130 per square mile, the density in the Eastern hills (169 per square mile) slightly exceeding that of the Western hills (108 per square mile). The most densely populated area is Lamjung with 822 persons per square mile.

There are certain areas in both the eastern and western hills which are not recruited and if these are excluded the population of the hill areas recruited by the British and Indian Armies is roughly as follows:

Eastern Hills	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,346,501
Western Hills	.	.	.	.	.	.	2,265,886

THE RIVER SYSTEM

Nearly all the rivers in Nepal rise in the high valleys of the Himalayas or beyond and, collecting tributaries, flow southward through the foothills until they meet the ranges running from west to east in the south of the country. They are then deflected east and west until they force passages southward, finally breaking through the Siwalik Range into the plains of India. There are three main basins: the Karnali in the west, the Gandaki in the centre and the Kosi in the east.

The Far West is partly drained by the Maha Kali (the Sarda of India), which forms the western border of the country, and partly by the tributaries of the Seti before it joins the Karnali. Western Nepal is drained by the Karnali and by the even larger Bheri (the Gogra of India), which joins the former on its entry to the plains. Southern Salyan has the Babai, which makes its way into the Terai, and Piuthan is drained by the Rapti, which also rises in the foothills and finds its way into the plains and on to Gorakhpur.

Central Nepal is the basin of the Kali which is also known as the Kali Gandaki or Krishna Gandaki. This large river collects the water from all rivers in the area lying between the borders of Piuthan and the country north of the Valley.

It rises north of Mustang and with its tributaries becomes the Sapt Gandaki (or Seven Gandaks) before collecting yet more water to become the Narayani, and finally the Great Gandak of India, which divides the Indian districts of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

The Nepal Valley is drained by the Bagmati, which follows a comparatively straight course into India. The whole of Eastern Nepal is drained by the Sapt Kosi (or Seven Kosis) comprising the Indrawati, the Sun Kosi, the Tamba Kosi, the Likhu, the Dudh Kosi, the Arun and the Tamur. Ilam contains the small basin of the Charkhola, or four Mais, and its eastern border is the River Mechi.

THE PASSES OVER THE NORTHERN BORDER

The most westerly of the Tibetan passes is that of Taklakot (16,085 feet) which crosses the border at Khojarnath on the upper reaches of the Humla branch of the River Karnali. It is little used because no place of importance lies beyond it.

Above Muktinath and beyond the headwaters of the Kali, is the Mustang Pass, which leads to Tradom in Tibet. Although only a rough road, considerable trade passes over this route, carried on yaks and sheep, the principal import being salt.

On the upper reaches of the River Trisuli the fort of Rasua Garhi, on the border, guards the approaches to the Kyerong, a low river pass on which ponies can be used and on which there is, therefore, a considerable volume of traffic.

Eastward from Katmandu, and beyond Kodari on the upper Sun Kosi, is the Kuti Pass. This is the main route to Lhasa and is much used. Like the Kyerong route, it is a river gap.

Just west of Mount Everest lies the 19,000 feet Nangpa-la, which is also much frequented, but the Hatiya Pass, following the course of the River Arun, which rises many miles inside Tibetan Territory, is little used, as is also the frequently mentioned Walungchung Pass lying below the western shoulder of Kanchenjunga.

In addition to the main routes noted above, there are several other passes, all high and difficult, some of which are regularly but sparsely used.

ROUTES INTO NEPAL FROM THE SOUTH

Far Western Nepal

The only route of any importance across the western border is by way of the bridge at Jhulaghat, connecting Baitadi and Pithoragarh and going to Almora. In the south-west corner of Nepal is the railhead of Tanakpur, where a ferry crosses the Sarda to lead into Doti. To the east are the three other railheads of Gauraphanta, Chandan Chauki and Kauriala Ghat, all of which are reached from Lucknow but which are of very minor importance.

Western Nepal

Katarnian Ghat is a railhead on the banks of the Gogra (the Bheri of Nepal) and from here Doti and West Dailekh are reached.

Nepalganj Road is the railhead for Nepalganj, three miles over the border, and is connected to it by a metalled road. From there tracks lead to Dailekh, parts of Sallyan, and Nepalganj itself, which is the headquarters of the Bara Hakim and has courts, hospital, barracks and a busy, clean and neat, bazaar.

Jarwa railhead is connected to Kailabas by two miles of motorable road running through forest. From this frontier post, with its well administered bazaar, a steep path leads up a gorge and bifurcates to Sallyan and Piuthan.

Central Nepal

Nautanwa is the most important railhead and is used by about half the servicemen of both British and Indian armies. From Nautanwa to the village of Sunauli, on the border, there is a metalled and well maintained road of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. On the Nepal side of the border lies a motorable road, 15 miles long, which passes Paklihawa Camp and Bhairwa and leads to Khasoli, where there is a small bazaar and post office. Beyond the bazaar there is an iron suspension bridge over the Tinu Khola and on the far side of this is the large frontier market town of Batoli, or Butwal. From Batoli a track ascends the steep hill of Nawakot, while a shorter route, closed during the monsoon, follows the Tinu Khola river. These routes lead to all parts of Central Nepal.

Near the River Gandak is the railhead of Siswa Bazar leading to Tanhu, and 40 miles east of the river is Bhikna Thori, with roads running through the Chitawan Forests to Tanhu and Gorkha.

The Valley

The short journey from Gorakhpur to the border town of Raxaul involves two changes. From Raxaul the Nepalese Government Railway runs for a further 27 miles to Amlekhganj. This route is described later. It is used by travellers to Katmandu, to the Jillas of No. 1 West and No. 1 East, and to eastern Gorkha.

Eastern Nepal

Jaynagar is the most important eastern railhead, and the tracks from it lead to Nos. 2, 3 and 4 East. The tracks are not motorable and the area is liable to serious flooding. A few miles to the east is Nirmali leading to No. 4 East.

Beyond the Kosi the railhead of Jogbani is connected by a motor road via Biratnagar to Dharan, from which it is only a short journey to Dhankuta.

In the south-east corner of Nepal is the railhead of Naxalbari leading to Ilam.

From the railhead of Ghoom (Darjeeling) there is a nine mile motor road to the border, from which Ilam can be reached via Simana or Manebhanjyang. Further to the north a track through Pul Bazar leads into Dhankuta.

Motor Roads

From the railhead at Amlekhganj an all-weather motor road runs for 100 miles to Katmandu. The 80-mile hill section of this road, known as the Tribhuvan Rajpath after the late King of Nepal, was completed in 1956/57 by Indian Army Engineers: a fine engineering feat which cost several lives. The Rajpath climbs to passes of over 8,000 feet and runs to the west of the old, 18-mile long, pack track to the Valley via Bhimphedi and the Chandragiri Pass. Despite the motor road and air service to Katmandu, this track still carries a fair volume of traffic. The Rajpath and the motor roads from Nautanwa to Batoli, and from Biratnagar to Dharan,

were, in 1959, the only motor roads of any length or importance in Nepal. A very full programme of road construction has, however, been planned, and a number of pack tracks are likely to be transformed during the next five years.

Motor roads from Katmandu to Nawakot No. 1 West, and from Katmandu to Hitaura near Amlekhganj, are nearing completion, the latter taking a line to the east of the old Chandragiri route. Among other roads planned are the following, naming them from west to east:

Nepalganj to Sallyan
Bahadurganj to Piuthan
Bhairwa to Pokhara
Katmandu to Pokhara
Dharan to Dhankuta and beyond.

Air Travel

Air travel now plays an important part in the life of the people of Nepal and is of particular benefit to many servicemen travelling to and from their homes on leave. In 1960 the Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation maintained the following regular services:

(i) *Internal*

Katmandu-Simra (near Amlekhganj)
Katmandu-Biratnagar (near Dharan)
Katmandu-Pokhara-Bhairwa (Paklihawa)
Katmandu-Bhairwa-Dang-Nepalganj-Dhangarhi
Katmandu-Pokhara-Gorkha

(ii) *External*

Katmandu-Delhi-Katmandu
Katmandu-Calcutta-Katmandu
Katmandu-Patna-Katmandu

The India Airlines Corporation also run a daily service from Katmandu to Patna in Bihar, whence connections are obtainable to Calcutta and New Delhi.

Apart from the airport at Katmandu, facilities are limited. Many of the internal services, owing to the lack of radio communications and the waterlogging of the landing strips, have to be suspended in bad weather.

Especially busy, and used by many Western Gurkhas, is the Bhairwa–Pokhara flight which puts some formerly remote Kaski villages well within a day's walk of an airstrip. For about Rs. 40/-, including his excess baggage fee, a leave man can cover in 25 minutes a journey which used to take him four or five days' hard walking and which cost about Rs. 100/- in food and porters' charges.

ROUTES INSIDE NEPAL

It is not possible here to give more than an outline of the main routes in the country, but as far as possible the points where minor routes branch off are indicated. Where suitable stone is available the roads are well paved; where the incline demands it, tracks are stepped with the skill characteristic of the 'field engineering' of the country. In many places steel bridges have been built by the Government or under local arrangements. Many ferries still operate on the broader rivers, where large dug-outs are the only means of crossing and accidents, sometimes involving loss of life, occasionally occur. Lastly there are the locally made wooden bridges and the efficient, but sometimes terrifying, *jhalunga*—a suspension bridge of bamboo and creeper. Most of these makeshift bridges have to be replaced after each monsoon.

Western Nepal

Piuthan can be approached by road from Riri or from the railhead at Jarwa. From Piuthan two roads go northwards but join again before crossing the ridge dividing Piuthan from Rukam, at the headwaters of the Sani Bheri. A more westerly route runs up the Mari Khola and over into Sallyan. This road joins the one to Sallyan from Jarwa via Bijaur. From Sallyan one road runs north to Jajarkot and another north-west to Dailekh.

From Dailekh one road leads north to reach the Taklakot Pass into Tibet, whilst another leads west to Doti and a third goes south to Nepalganj and Katarnian Ghat.

Central Nepal

The main road into Central Nepal starts at Batoli and, after climbing the steep hill of Nawakot, drops down to the steel

suspension bridge at Doban where it is joined by the more direct path from Batoli which leads up the bed' of the Tinu Khola. From Doban the path rises steeply up the Ranibas slope, at the top of which is the old customs house of Marek, now replaced by the present Customs post at Bhairwa in the plains of the Terai. The path then drops again into the Sisne Khola, the course of which it follows for some miles. An abrupt and slippery shale slope is crowned by the *bhattis* or inns of the village of Maseng. From here the main road continues to Tansing, whilst another branches left going via Khasoli to Riri Bazar. From Riri one main road follows the Riri Khola west and leads to Gulmi and Piuthan; another turns north to follow the right bank of the Kali to Baglung.

The Tansing road drops steeply down from Maseng to cross a branch of the Tinu Khola by a low wooden bridge at Dumri and thence through low-lying cultivated ground to the foot of the Tansing Hill. One road leads straight up the hill to the town while others branch left and right. That to the left passes round the hill to cross the Kali by the ferry at Rani Ghat, from which place it climbs over the Garhung ridge at Waigha and follows the left bank of the Kali to a ferry over the Modi at Kusma, and so on to Ghandrung. The road passing to the east of Tansing gives a choice of two main crossings of the Kali, one at Ramdi Ghat and one at Kheladi Ghat, and the possibility of going downstream to other, but more minor, ones. The road to Ramdi Ghat crosses the main Palpa range at Bagnas and descends by the long and steep declines of the Thulo and Sano Ukhals to a narrow gorge crossed by a steel suspension bridge. Beyond the bridge the road turns westward along the north bank of the Kali until it swings north up the Malunga re-entrant. Here the barracks, once built to house an army for the invasion of the Valley, are now used as a leper colony. On this road is the village of Phulebhatti, composed entirely of inns, which is reached before arriving at the crest of the ridge at Bhungre. An excellent path now follows the course of the Andhi Khola up to Nawakot (Syangja) and on to Pokhara.

The crossing at Kheladi Ghat is made by ferry and the road leads via Bhirkot and rising to Bhima on the River Seti.

From here one road goes to Bandipur in south-east Tanhu and another goes to Tanhu itself or on to Sisaghat, on the Madi Khola, and to Kunchha. From Kunchha the road uses the ferry at Chepe Ghat to cross the Marsyandi and thence goes by way of Sangu, in Gorkha, to Arughat, Trisuli Bazar, Wallo Nawakot and finally Katmandu.

Eastern Nepal

Except for the track from Jogbani to Dhankuta, the routes leading from the plains to the hills of Eastern Nepal are all difficult. Along the line of the Kosi a main road runs from Katmandu to Dhankuta and beyond. It goes by way of Dhulikhel in No. 1 East, from where Chautara can be reached, to Ramechhap in No. 2 East. Here one fork leads to Okhaldhunga, whilst the other continues to follow the river. From Okhaldhunga the road goes to Bhojpur, and after crossing the Arun reaches Dhankuta. There is no direct road from Dhankuta to Ilam, the only route being via Tehrathum and thence southwards. From Ilam one road runs along the Namsaling ridge and reaches Darjeeling via Gorkha Jagat and Manebhanjyang. Another reaches Darjeeling via Phikel, Pashupatinagar and Simana.

From Ramechhap a road leads north to the Kuti Pass, going by way of Charikot, from which place a track returns south-eastwards to Okhaldhunga via the Sunwar country of the Likhu Khola. A track running northwards from Okhaldhunga up the Dudh Kosi, reaches the Sherpa country in the Solu-Khumbu area and from Bhojpur a track goes up the valley of the Arun to the Hatiya Pass; whilst from Dhankuta a track follows the Tamur, via Tehrathum and Taplejung, to the Walungchung Pass, west of Kanchenjunga.

2

The history of Nepal

The origin of the word 'Nepal' is still in some doubt. Some authorities give its more popular derivation as 'The Cherished of Ne', from 'Ne', a saint who lived at the junction of the Bagmati and Kesasoti rivers, and 'pal', from the word 'palnu' to cherish. Others connect the word with Newar, the original inhabitants of the Valley. Whatever the origin, its present official use is to denote the whole of the country lying within the boundaries of the Kingdom of Nepal, and it is in this sense that it is used in this book. However, it is to be noted that the one person who sometimes disagrees is the Gurkha himself. Many hill Gurkhas still restrict its meaning to the Valley of Nepal and describe only men living in this particular area as 'coming from Nepal'. These hill Gurkhas refer to their own part of the country as 'pahar', the hills, or, if pressed to be more specific, by some such name as Andhi Khola or Kaski, the name of their own river valley or jilla. They may even give the name of a town, such as Bhojpur, meaning an unlimited and undefined area around that town.

It is proposed here to divide the history of Nepal into three periods; from early times up to the middle of the eighteenth century; the formation of the kingdom by Prithwi Narayan and the rise to power of the Rana family in the person of Jang Bahadur; and, thirdly, the modern history of the country.

Early Days

The first part is ill-recorded, vague and distorted by fable, and chroniclers have credited their heroes with having

reigned for many centuries and have interposed famous kings from elsewhere. What authentic details are to be gathered refer almost exclusively to the Valley. This is not strange, as the hills must have been sparsely inhabited and then only by tribes with few, if any, literate members.

Little trace of Nepalese history can be found in early Hindu or Buddhist literature and there is no mention of the country in the Mahabharat or the Ramayan, although references to the Himalayas are plentiful. This is not so remarkable when it is considered how small and numerous the little kingdoms and principalities were, and, cut off in their mountain fastnesses, how very isolated from India.

Mythologically the Valley is said to have been a lake which was drained, by a single cut of a sword, to form the present fertile valley, and to this day the gorge where the Bagmati leaves the Valley is known as The Sword Cut. Hindus credit Krishna with the act and Buddhists give thanks to Manjusri. The likelihood of there having been a lake is borne out by similar formations elsewhere in the Himalayas which are known to have been natural reservoirs. Manjusri, the Venerable One from Manchuria, is said to have come on a pilgrimage from China and to have brought with him Dharmakar, The Treasure of the Law, whom he then enthroned. Some authorities credit this king with having introduced the pagoda-like roofs into the Valley, whilst others suggest that Newar craftsmen, skilled in their construction, were among the artisans Nepal is known to have sent to China.

A later king, Dharma Datta, reputed to have come all the way from Goonjeeveram, is credited with the building of Pashupati, the most holy and venerated of all Hindu temples in Katmandu, and to have introduced the Hindu four caste system. The famous Buddhist shrine of Bodhnath, a little outside Katmandu, is thought to have been built a few reigns later. There then followed dynasties of cowherd (Gothala) and shepherd (Ahir) kings, after which the eastern tribes are first noted when they overran the Valley and set up a Kiranti rule. It was during the reign of the fourteenth king of this dynasty, Sthunko, that the Emperor Asoka left his capital of Pataliputra, now Patna in India, and visited

Nepal, where his daughter founded the town of Devapatan. In 250 B.C. he set up a pillar, which can still be seen, at Lumbini, near Bhairwa, to commemorate the birth of Buddha at that place in 566 B.C.

One of the earliest known references to Nepal is to be found in the fourth century inscription in praise of the Emperor Samudra Gupta on a pillar in Allahabad; the King of Nepal is mentioned as a neighbouring sovereign. It is known that in A.D. 543 a Chinese mission visited Nepal and that a second one was sent four years later. Katmandu itself is reputed to have been founded in A.D. 723.

Dynasty now followed dynasty, confused by the historians who, with the object of making the chronicles more imposing, introduced famous rulers from other nations but recorded few happenings of national interest. To add to the confusion, several kings existed at the same time in the Valley, each ruling his own area and periodically conquering his neighbours, only to be overthrown in his turn. At one period each ward of Patan had its own king, whilst no less than twelve ruled at the same time in Katmandu and Bhatgaon.

In the fourteenth century a Karnataki dynasty was in power. This is reputed to have come from Malabar, the modern Carnatic, and to have colonised part of the Valley with its army from the Nair country. It is from them that the Newars sometimes claim descent; but it is much more likely that they were in existence in the Valley centuries earlier. The last Karnataki king, Hari Deva, was overthrown by a powerful Magar king from the west, Makunda Sen, whose clan name should not be confused with the Thakur clan of Sen. Makunda Sen thus brought to history the first mention of the Magar tribe.

The story goes that a Magar who had an appointment at the court of Nepal was dismissed by the machinations of some of the ministers. On his return to Palpa he spread the information, like the story in the *Mountains of Mourne*, that the streets of Katmandu were paved with gold. On hearing this the Magar king, Makunda Sen, 'a powerful and valiant potentate', led his Magar army, in which were also a good number of Chhetris, to the attack. Many of the Nepalese

troops were slain and many fled. The invaders desecrated the temples of the gods, removing the Bhairab in front of the temple of Machendra Nath to their own country where, to this day, on a hill-top to the west of Tansing, stands the small township of Bhairabthan. Legend states that when the invaders reached Patan the festival of Machendra Nath was being observed and that the priests fled on seeing the conquerors, leaving their god abandoned. At this moment the five nags, or cobras, forming the gilt canopy over the god's head, spouted out five jets of water. Seeing this Makunda Sen is reported to have removed the gold chain adorning his horse's neck and to have cast it over the image, whereupon Machendra took it and adjusted it around his own neck where it has remained ever since. The victorious army is said to have committed such horrible atrocities that the goddess of pestilence visited her wrath on them. It is more than probable that some virulent epidemic was caused by the corpses of the slain. Whatever it was, the victors were forced for their own safety to withdraw from the area to Nawakot valley in what is now No. 1 West. There their leader himself contracted the disease and died. No successor came forward and it appears likely that his army returned to Palpa bearing their loot; for complete anarchy reigned in the Valley for the next seven or eight years. The Vaisya Thakurs of Nawakot then regained power and continued their rule for the next two hundred and twenty-five years.

The Thakurs were later overwhelmed by Harising Deva, King of Simraon, the old and strongly fortified capital of Mithila, now Tirhut in Bihar. Simraon had, until that time, stood out against the tide of the Mohammedan invasion which had submerged the great Brahmanical empire surrounding Tirhut, but in the year 1321 Harising found himself unable any longer to resist the advance of the Emperor of Delhi, Gheyas-Udun Taghlak. His kingdom was annexed and the capital destroyed, but rather than submit to Moslem domination, Harising fled to Nepal where he founded the Ajodhya dynasty.

The Ajodhya kings were followed by the third Thakur Dynasty. The last of this line was Yaksha Malla, and following

his death there was for a long time no overall ruler of Nepal as such, but only a king of Katmandu and another of Bhatgaon. Yaksha had been a powerful monarch. He annexed Morang Tirhut and Gaya; he conquered Gorkha to the west and Shekar Dzong in Tibet; and he completely subdued the refractory rajahs of Patan and Katmandu. However, on his death the kingdom again disintegrated and the small and separate principalities of the Valley once more emerged. Yaksha Malla's younger son, Ratna Malla, succeeded to the throne of Katmandu, from which he had thrust out the Thakurs of Nawakot. He was later saved from defeat at the hands of the Tibetans and Bhotiyas by the timely intervention of the Magar king of Palpa. It was at this time that Mohammedans were first seen in Nepal, where they had come to trade. Ratna Malla was succeeded by Mahendra Malla who gave his name to the silver coins which are still used to this day. One of the later kings, Pratap Malla, who reigned for fifty years, was responsible for the construction of the Rani Pokhri, the ornamental water tank between the present king's palace and the Tundikhel, the big Katmandu parade ground. The twelfth king of this line, Jagat Jaya, was attacked in 1736 by the King of Gorkha, whom he drove back.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century a Thakur stronghold to the west of the Valley still existed in Wallo Nawakot. Gorkha was independent under its own kings. Most of what is now Central Nepal formed 'The Twenty-Four States' of the Chaubisi Raj and most of what is now Western Nepal and the further western provinces formed 'The Twenty-Two States' of the Baisi Raj. Nearly all these states can still be traced, though the old lists vary.

They were:

Chaubisi Raj

Lamjung	Bhirkot	Galkot	Char Hajar Parbat
Dhor	Garhung	Gulmi	Palpa
Kaski	Pallo Nawakot	Isma	Piuthan
Tanhu	Payung	Khanchi	Sallyan
Rising	Satung	Musikot	Dang
Ghiring	Dhurkot	Argha	Lattahung

Baisi Raj

Jumla	Rolpa	Mullijanta	Dailekh
Jajarkot	Bajhang	Bamphi	Kalagaon
Achham	Gajur	Jehari	Bilaspur
Rukum	Ghorai	Gotam	Malibum
Musikot	Chainpur	Darimecha	Bajura
	Baitadi	Doti	

The inhabitants of these states were of Mongolian origin and considerably more warlike than the Newars, but just as the Newars had been dominated by Hindus withdrawing before the Moslem invaders of India, so had many of the forty-six states taken colour from the Brahman and Rajput immigrants who had also fled from Moslem domination. In these states, although the Brahman infiltration was less orthodox than in the valley itself, the earlier and more eager converts were, in defiance of all custom, admitted as Ksatriyas, as were the offspring of the irregular unions between Brahmans and hill women. In addition to these adopted Hindus, there were also many families of undoubted Rajput origin who acquired the sovereignty of many of the states. Hinduism sat very lightly on the original Gurkhas and on the people of other hill states, amounting to little more than respect for the Brahman and reverence for the cow.

To the east, an undelineated region was known as the country of the Kirantis, now Rais. Their religion was animistic more than Buddhist and each village or clan lived a more independent existence than that of the principalities.

The Rise of Prithwi Narayan

The previous section, except for its concluding paragraphs, has really only given the history of the Valley and not of the country as a whole. Before beginning the story of Prithwi Narayan it is necessary to study what is known of the early history of the Gurkhas, the new nation which from now on was to dominate the whole of Nepal.

In fact little is known of the Gurkhas as a nation prior to their invasion of the Valley of Nepal, but ancient legend points to their royal family having descended from the Rajput princes of Udaipur. Their connection with that place is traceable from the early history of India. The two most

powerful monarchs of the Surjabansi and Chandrabansi, the Sun and the Moon dynasties, who are said to have ruled over India in early days and until they were defeated by the Mohammedans, were Vikramaditya and Salivahana. It is generally believed by Hindu authorities that the former was installed about the year 57 B.C. and the latter about 80 A.D. These two monarchs selected a large number of rajahs from amongst the remnants of the two dynasties and divided the country into various small principalities. Amongst these was Rishi Rajah Rana, who was made Rajah of Chitoragarh; his descendants ruled over this country for thirteen generations. The last rajah of the line, Deva Sharma Bhattarak, was defeated by the Mohammedans and forced to leave the country. On the loss of his independence his son, by name Ayutaban, gave up the title of Bhattarak and retained only the caste name of Rana, a name which occupies a prominent place in the Magar and Chhetri tribes of the present day. A descendant of this line, one Bhupati Rana, to whose title of Rana was subsequently added that of Raya or Rao, had three sons, Udayaban Ranaji Rava, Phatte Sing Ranaji Rava and Manmath Ranaji Rava. The unrivalled beauty of Sadal, the daughter of Phatte Sing, attracted the attention of the Mohammedan Emperor, who demanded her hand in marriage. When the proud Hindus summarily rejected this indignity, the Emperor attacked Chitor with an overwhelming force. King Bhupati, Phatte Sing and a large number of Rajputs were killed; the holy threads collected from the necks of the slain were said to have weighed seventy-four-and-a-half maunds, or about six thousand pounds. The sign 74½, used on the flaps of envelopes to ensure privacy, is derived from this. The beautiful Sadal, rather than fall into the hands of the conqueror, committed suicide by throwing herself into a vat of boiling oil.

Of the two remaining sons of the late king, Udayaban founded Udaipur, where he settled with those of his followers who had escaped from the battle, while his brother Manmath went to Ujjain. Manmath had two sons who in course of time quarrelled and agreed to separate. The elder remained at Ujjain while the younger set out towards the great

mountains to the north of India. After wandering for some time he eventually reached the country now known to us as Nepal. Here his son, Bhupal Rana Rava, settled down in Bhirkot of No. 4 West, from which his two sons, Mincha and Kancha, set out to carve themselves kingdoms. According to Hamilton these two were of Magar descent. In his account of Nepal, published a hundred and fifty years ago, he writes: 'The first two persons of the Gurkha family of whom I have heard were two brothers named Kancha and Mincha, words altogether barbarous, denoting their descent from a Magar family and not from the Pramaras as they pretend.' In fact, of course, the word Kancha is used throughout Nepal to denote a youngest son.

Kancha proceeded to subjugate the Magar country, and included in his kingdom the districts of Bhirkot, Garhung, Satung, Dhor and Gulmi. Although he was in reality the founder of the imperial branch of the Gurkha family, he and his descendants remained for the time being Magars by religion and custom. Mincha, already chief of Nawakot, extended his rule to the Gurung districts of Kaski, Lamjung and Tanhu. He, however, adopted the Hindu religion and although this was looked upon with disfavour by many of their relatives, his descendants inter-married with the best families.

It will now be necessary to turn to that branch of the Mincha family which ruled at Kaski. There the constant quarrelling between the chief and his neighbours of Lamjung and Tanhung led to the capture of the town of Gorkha, from which place the modern inhabitants of Nepal take their name. The chief of Lamjung, a small town to the north of Gorkha, was descended from the family which was in power at Kaski and was a powerful and influential chief whose word not only the Kaski ruler, but also the Rajah of Tanhung, were only too ready to obey.

The rulers of Nawakot have survived only in name, but the son of the forty-third, Jagdeva, who obtained power at Kaski, had seven sons, of whom the eldest succeeded him and the second, Kalu Shah, became king of Lamjung. Kalu Shah was murdered by the Gurungs and was succeeded

by his youngest brother, Yasobam. Yasobam had two sons of whom the elder ruled over Lamjung; the younger, Drabva Shah, decided to cut himself adrift from his family and seized the city of Gorkha. After killing, the Khandka or Chhetri, rajah of that town, by his own hand, he occupied the throne and proclaimed himself king in the year 1559. The kings who followed Drabva left little or no mark upon the history of the times, but Sri Rama Shah, the fourth of the line, achieved some small fame as a legislator and as the introducer of weights and measures, some of which are still in use today.

In 1736 the ninth king of the house of Gorkha, Marbhupal Shah, hoping to profit from the numerous petty quarrels in which the three principalities of Katmandu, Patan and Bhatgaon were constantly involved, invaded the Valley. The raid proved unsuccessful, for Jagat Jaya Malla forced him to beat an ignominious retreat. On the death of Narbhupal in 1742, his son, Prithwi Narayan Shah, succeeded to the throne at the early age of twelve and inherited his father's ambition to conquer the Valley. To this end he spent his first few years in annexing some of the Chaubisi States and in assuming the domination of the confederacy. Inflated by these successes he turned his eyes towards the rich Valley of Nepal.

The little kingdoms, or principalities, of Katmandu and Bhatgaon, were in an unsettled state, while Patan was torn by internal dissension. The murder of a king of Patan was the occasion for Prithwi Narayan to be invited to ascend that throne. This he refused to do, not being ready to move, but he nominated his brother in his stead. This brother was, however, deposed after a reign of four years. Prithwi Narayan, an unmatched master of diplomacy, now insinuated himself into the councils of the King of Bhatgaon. He was received with great friendliness and made good use of the opportunity offered him by the conspiracy of the King's seven illegitimate sons against the rightful heir. His next step was to try and seize Wallo Nawakot in No. 1 West, the key to the Valley, but in this he was unsuccessful. Failing in a direct assault, he managed to turn the flank of the Valley by annexing the

principality of a brother-in-law, which lay in the hills to the east. His final chance came when the Kings of Bhatgaon and Katmandu quarrelled and the former called on him for aid. Nawakot fell, this time without opposition, and he set himself to besiege Kirtipur in the Valley. The King of Patan, to whom Kirtipur belonged, did not raise a finger, but the King of Katmandu attacked the Gurkhas and routed them. Prithwi Narayan retreated to Nawakot, but the insane conduct of the King of Katmandu soon dispelled the advantage he had gained. The nobles of Kirtipur, grateful for the king's aid, offered to transfer their allegiance from Patan to Katmandu, but he met their overtures by imprisoning some and insulting others. In revenge they surrendered, to the Gurkha King, several of the strong points in the hills around the Valley, and the King, realising that his forces were insufficient for direct assault, established a blockade of the passes and hanged everyone endeavouring to supply food to the Valley. Meanwhile two thousand Brahmans were employed in canvassing the country in his favour.

When his brutal blockade and religious propaganda had produced their effect, Prithwi Narayan judged it possible to besiege Kirtipur once more. Again he was repulsed. A third time he attacked the town and this time the lower part of it was delivered into his hands by the nobles who had been so mortally insulted by the King of Katmandu. The inhabitants retreated into the upper town, which was almost impregnable, but Prithwi Narayan promised an amnesty and they thereupon surrendered. Having got them into his power, however, he gave orders to cut off the lips and noses of all males and to change the name of the town from Kirtipur to Naskatipur—the City of Cut Noses. Only the lips and noses of male children under twelve and the lips of players of wind instruments, were spared.

Prithwi Narayan next besieged Patan and threatened the inhabitants that, if they did not surrender, he would cut off their right hands as well as their lips and noses. They were saved for the time being by a diversion made by a small force of the Honourable East India Company's troops, under a Captain Kinloch, sent in response to an appeal from

Katmandu and Bhatgaon. This force was stopped by swollen rivers and the deadly malaria of the Terai, and never actually encountered the Gurkha troops.

Returning from the position it had taken up to repel the Company's forces, Prithwi Narayan's army now besieged Katmandu. While the populace was celebrating the festival of Indra Jatra, the Gurkhas slipped in unperceived. This repetition of the action by the Magar King of Palpa, when he attacked the city at the time of the Machendra Jatra, should be noted. The king, who was worshipping in a temple, laid a mine on the temple steps and fled to Patan, with whose King he went on to take asylum in Bhatgaon. Many Gurkhas are said to have been killed by the mine. Patan surrendered, but Bhatgaon held out for eight months before being handed over by the same seven illegitimate sons of the king, whom Prithwi Narayan had known when staying as their father's guest. They were rewarded by the confiscation of their property and the cutting off of their noses. The Gurkhas were now masters of the whole Valley of Nepal as well as dominating the confederacy of the western hills and having a footing in the states to the east of the Valley.

The mastery of Nepal was a complete conquest. The Newars were relegated to the position of a subject race, their kings disappeared, and their families were merged in the ordinary gentry of the Valley, whilst the Hindu nobles lost all power and only the Brahmans retained their status. The Gurkhas assumed a position of great superiority and their Rajput nobles held all the positions of honour and trust and became owners of much of the best land in the Valley. The conquest of the Valley was completed in 1768, and Prithwi Narayan established his capital at Katmandu, where it has been ever since. He now straightaway set himself to consolidate his power in the Chaubisi Raj. However, his attempt to absorb the remainder of the Twenty-Four States met with the usual reverse he seems to have sustained at the beginning of all his enterprises. The Rajah of Tanhung, who remained independent until after the Nepalese wars with the British, inflicted a heavy defeat on him, and he sought relief by an expedition of conquest in the eastern

states, carrying his arms to what is now the eastern border of Nepal. He died in 1775 at the early age of forty-five.

The story of Prithwi Narayan's conquest of Nepal has been given at some length as it shows how the infusion of north Indian blood into the brave, but unenterprising, hill tribes of the Chaubisi Raj, together with the leadership of the Rajput nobles, gave the Gurkhas the impetus to conquer the Newars. Because of his poor tactics, Prithwi Narayan was almost invariably beaten when it came to open fighting, in spite of the warlike quality of his Gurkhas. It was his mastery of intrigue and propaganda, and his untiring persistence, that gave him the victory, just as it was the disunion and ineptitude of their rulers that brought the Newars to grief.

The Expansion of the Gurkha Kingdom

Prithwi Narayan's son, Singha Pratap Shah, only survived him by three years, and was succeeded by his infant son Rana Bahadur Shah. The new king's uncle, who acted as Regent, was as active in continuing the expansion of the Gurkha Kingdom as he was in internal intrigue. Not strong enough to conquer the remainder of the Twenty-Four States unaided, he sought alliance with the Rajah of Palpa and, with his assistance, conquered most of them, as well as those of the Baisi Raj, three of whose states fell to the share of Palpa. He then went on to invade Kumaon, whilst eastward invasion was carried as far as Sikkim and Shigatse in Tibet, one-hundred-and-fifty miles north of Gangtok. This roused the Chinese, who repulsed the Gurkhas and followed them up almost to the Valley itself. Impressed with the valour of the Gurkhas, the Chinese general eventually retired after arranging for a quinquennial trade mission to Peking. While the issue with China was still in doubt, the Regent had requested aid from The East India Company, but before a mission of conciliation could reach Nepal, peace had been declared and the Commissioner, Colonel Kirkpatrick, was compelled to withdraw after a month's stay. No sooner was the Chinese imbroglio settled than the Regent continued his conquests to the west. Kumaon, Garhwal, and what was

later to be the Simla Hill States, were annexed, and by 1794 the Gurkha Kingdom extended from Sikkim to the borders of Kashmir.

The following year Rana Bahadur Shah took over the reins of government himself, and his first act was to imprison the Regent, his own uncle, who had won so much territory for him. He then confiscated the principality of Jumla, one of the very few western states remaining independent at that time. Two years later he put his uncle to death. Rana Bahadur, had at an early age, shown signs of insanity, but it was his sacrilegious conduct that was to be his undoing. His Queen having given him no children, he married a lady of high Brahman lineage and this act outraged the priests, who pronounced a curse on the marriage. This junior Queen, having given birth to a son, fell ill and the Brahmans accepted one hundred thousand rupees as the price for lifting the curse. In spite of this, or because her disease was serious and beyond the powers of the baidayas, she died. The King, in his fury, besides demanding the return of his money, desecrated the Taleju temple and shattered the god. The chiefs and nobles thereupon forced him to abdicate in favour of his infant illegitimate son. One of the King's concubines and Damodar Panre, a Brahman, were made Regents. The King fled to Benares with his Queen, but his behaviour forced her to return to Nepal. A commercial treaty, accepting the presence of a Resident, had been made with the Honourable East India Company. This treaty had been agreed to primarily because of the Nepalese Government's fear that the King might otherwise enter into negotiations with the Company with a view to being assisted back to the throne. The conduct of the Nepal Government, however, was such that the Resident was forced to withdraw within a year.

With the Queen's assistance, and in spite of what had previously happened, Rana Bahadur returned to Katmandu bringing with him Bhim Sen Thapa, a Gorkha noble, who was the son of Amarsing Thapa, one of the most able Gurkha generals, and who was related by marriage to Bal Narsing. After executing the Regent, Damodar Panre, who had been in part instrumental in effecting his return to the

capital, the King at Bhim Sen's instigation made Bhim Sen his Prime Minister.

The Rajah of Palpa, who had been one of the King's allies, and who had been summoned to assist in the investiture of the infant son when the King had fled to Benares, was now again summoned to Katmandu. On arrival he and all his officers were murdered and Palpa was annexed, thereby increasing the warlike population on which the Gurkha King could draw. Most of the western tribes were admitted into the social system on the same footing as the Gurkhas, and their nobles entered the service of the King. The tribes of the eastern states, whose veneer of Hinduism was even thinner, and whose social development was of a considerably lower order, remained outside the social pale for a time, but afforded a valuable recruiting ground for the Nepalese army.

The way was now clear for Bhim Sen to consolidate and extend the Gurkha conquests to the west. Garhwal was re-occupied but, in attempting to annexe Kangra, the Gurkhas were brought to a stop by Ranjit Singh's Sikhs. Money was wanted for these conquests and Rana Bahadur committed his crowning act of folly in trying to obtain it. In 1807 he decreed the confiscation of temple property and of all personal effects of the Brahmans. In the confusion that arose, Rana Bahadur was slain by his illegitimate half-brother who, in turn, fell to the sword of Bal Narsing. Bhim Sen then placed on the throne Girvana Judha Bikram, who was the infant son of Rana Bahadur's Brahman wife, and took as his co-Regent Rana Bahadur's senior Queen. Bhim Sen's policy was always to feed the jingoism of the Gurkhas and to avoid complications at home by conquest abroad. To the west he had been stopped by the Sikhs; to the north the Himalayas blocked the way; in the north-east China had already shown her strength; to the east Bhutan showed little profit to be gained. There remained only the rich plains to the south. Here there was much talk of the weakness of the East India Company, the effect of the victories of Wellesley and Lake having died away, and the Company's policy of retrenchment being well known.

The Wars with the Honourable East India Company

The sole cause of the Nepal Wars may be put down to the desire of the Nepal Government to expand in the only direction left to them, coupled with contempt for a Company that appeared to be decadent. In addition to encouraging dacoity into the rich plains of the south, Nepalese forces were continually making raids into what they claimed to be their territory. Finally, after repeated raids, and after their boundary commissioners had been ignominiously ordered away, the Company decided that there was no alternative to a declaration of war. Four divisions were ordered into the field, together with some small columns. Two of these divisions failed to advance, and only one achieved success. Three generals were considered to have failed to have sustained their reputations; but Ochterlony, after many hardships, bitter fighting and great difficulties, defeated the main Gurkha army, under Amarsing Thapa, in the Garhwal hills. An armistice was declared early in 1815. In Katmandu, however, the war party pressed for a continuance of the struggle, and as the ratified treaty, with the Red Seal of the Court of Nepal, had not been received by Christmas, General Ochterlony was ordered to advance on the Valley by the direct route. His successes alarmed the Nepalese, who feared for the safety of Katmandu, and in a short time the ratified treaty was delivered. It was from volunteers from General Amarsing's army that the first three Gurkha regiments to serve the British Crown, were raised. The treaty of peace, signed at Sagauli in March 1816, confined Nepal to the country between the Kali and the Mechi rivers; that is, Nepal gave up all claims to Kumaon, Garhwal and the other hill states on the west and to Sikkim in the east. In the south, Nepal was compelled to cede the Terai, subject to payment by the Company of two 'lakhs' (two hundred thousand) of rupees a year as compensation to certain owners of 'jagirs' (grants of land) in the Terai, with whom there was no quarrel. The eastern Terai was annexed by the Company and the western Terai was handed over to the Kingdom of Oudh. The Government of Nepal also agreed to receive a Resident at Katmandu. As a mark of his intentions to create friendly

relations with Nepal, Lord Hastings, in the same year, restored a large part of the Terai in lieu of the annual payment. A very few years afterwards the revenue from these re-ceded lands amounted to ten lakhs of rupees.

Shortly after the war, in 1816, the King died at the very early age of eighteen. Girvana Judha Bikram Shah was succeeded by his infant son Rajendra Bikram Shah and this consolidated the powers of the co-regency of Bhim Sen Thapa and Rana Bahadur's senior Queen, a regency which lasted until the Queen's death in 1832. Although Bhim Sen realised the strength of the Company he remained a bad neighbour. Friendliness was no part of his policy. Every obstacle was thrown in the way of trade, dacoity on a very large scale was encouraged, demarcation of the new frontier refused, and negotiations were opened up with every enemy of the Company. However, after the death of the Queen, the young King began to take other advisers, and Bhim Sen's power began to wane. The King had been married to two daughters of Indian Zemindars of Gorakhpur, and their intrigues and intrusions into Nepal's affairs were to have the unhappiest results. In Nepal there was an annual ceremony, the Pajani, at which every official in the realm was either confirmed in his appointment or had his services dispensed with. At this ceremony in 1833, Bhim Sen was not reappointed. Although he was restored after a few days, his power was clearly shaken.

The Rise of Jang Bahadur and the Establishment of the Rana Regime

Now began a bitter struggle between the Thapas and the Panres, the Brahman family of Damodar Panre, who had been executed at Bhim Sen's instigation on Rana Bahadur's return from Benares. In 1837 Bhim Sen was thrown into prison on a charge of poisoning one of the King's sons. Released, he was again imprisoned on the same charge two years later and, while still a prisoner, subjected to torture and indignities. Threatened with the public disgrace of his womenfolk, he committed suicide in his cell.

There now followed a period of ferment and confusion. For six years there was no Prime Minister and Mathbar Sing Thapa, appointed in 1843, was assassinated the following

year. It was not until 1846 that Jang Bahadur came to power; he remained in power until he died thirty-one years later, after having founded, and consolidated, present day Nepal.

The detailed history of this unhappy intervening period can be studied elsewhere. It is sufficient, here, merely to recall the actual events leading to the rise to power of Jang Bahadur. The accounts of the final coup, known to history as the 'Massacre of the Kot', are so many, so varied, and so partisan, that it is unlikely that any one of them can be taken as accurate.

Mathbar Sing had been recalled from exile in the Punjab to become Prime Minister. He was murdered, at the instigation of the Queen and her favourite, Gagan Sing, by Jang Bahadur, his own nephew; the King himself put the fatal musket in his hand. After the murder the Queen wished to make Jang Bahadur Prime Minister, but he wisely refused the honour whilst Gagan Sing remained so powerful. The Queen had no shame in her liaison with Gagan Sing. The King, driven to a frenzy by this public disgrace, ordered his sons to cleanse the family honour by slaying the Queen's lover, and this they did. Wild with rage and grief at this deed, the Queen called an assembly of the chiefs, nobles and officers of the state, in the Kot, where she accused all the council of the murder, and demanded their execution. The King, alarmed at the Queen's fury, and for his own safety, took refuge in the British Residency. Whatever now happened was unpremeditated, but Jang Bahadur had put himself in a firm position by arriving first on the scene and bringing with him his own regiments which he placed in strategic positions. The result of the massacre was the death of fifty-five powerful nobles and officials and of many hundreds of men of lesser degree. There and then the Queen made Jang Bahadur Prime Minister and on the following day he was confirmed in that appointment, as well as that of Commander-in-Chief, by the King. Those of the Panre family who had not been killed, fled the country and their property was confiscated.

The King was now anxious to follow royal precedent and depart for Benares, while the Queen was intriguing to murder her stepsons and secure the succession of her own son. Jang

Bahadur, to secure their safety, took the heir apparent and his brother into his own charge and, seizing his opportunity, slew the Queen's hired assassins. He then faced the King and Queen with the demand for the latter's banishment. The heir, Surendra Bikram, was formally appointed Regent, and the King and Queen departed to Benares after giving Jang Bahadur supreme authority over all departments, military and civil, and so placing him in a position in which he was able to overrule the orders of even the King and Queen themselves.

King Rana Bahadur made an attempt to regain power, but his adherents deserted him as soon as he entered Nepal and he fell into the hands of Jang Bahadur. On his abdication in favour of his son, he was handed over to the Government of India, who kept him in safe custody in Allahabad.

Jang Bahadur in Power

Details of Jang Bahadur's long and eventful life are available elsewhere. Here it is only intended to refer briefly to the more outstanding acts and achievements of this great Nepalese statesman, who lifted his country out of a state of medieval oblivion and set it firmly on the road of modern progress.

Jang Bahadur, unlike his predecessors, had the vision to foresee that, if she were to make headway, Nepal must become a close ally of the British. Accordingly, shortly after his rise to power, he offered six regiments of Nepalese troops to the Governor-General, for services in the Punjab, where a British army was being maintained after the conclusion of the second Sikh War. His offer was declined, but Nepal was ever after looked on in a somewhat different light. By way of cementing his control over the King, Jang Bahadur had married his own daughters to the King's sons. In the offspring of one of these unions, the heir presumptive to the throne, were centred many of Jang Bahadur's hopes, and it is significant of the orientation of his policy at this time that he sent one of his grandsons to Darjeeling to be educated by Brian Hodgson, who was living in retirement in that place.

By 1850 Jang Bahadur felt sufficiently secure to leave Nepal in charge of his brothers and adherents and, in that year,

he made the journey to England which was to mark still more clearly the independent status of his country. His return to Nepal was marked by a plot to murder him, on the grounds that his act of going overseas had offended against accepted religious principles.

When the Sepoy Mutiny broke out, Jang Bahadur immediately offered to send Nepalese troops to the aid of the Company. After the recapture of Delhi his offer was accepted and three thousand Gurkhas were sent to India, to be followed later by another thousand. Jang Bahadur himself also took the field with eight thousand men and played no mean part in the Relief of Lucknow and in the subsequent operations on the border of Nepal. In recognition of these services, the British Crown, which had then assumed the sovereignty of India, restored a part of the Terai annexed in 1816, and Jang Bahadur was appointed a GCB. His services in the war with Tibet and in the Mutiny, are commemorated in a 'lal mohor' (Royal Seal of Nepal), granting him and his successors three *Sris* to their titles instead of the one *Sri* which he had previously borne. The King bore five *Sris*. On account of the number of *Sris* to which the King and Prime Minister were entitled, they became known to their people as Panch (5) Sarkar and Tin (3) Sarkar respectively.

Jang Bahadur died in 1877 at the age of sixty. Some twenty years before his death he had given much thought to the question of his successor. The Royal house was an example of the difficulties to be expected when an infant heir succeeded his father. To overcome this it was decided that the roll of succession of the Rana family to the hereditary position of Prime Minister, should be by male agnate; that is to say from brother to brother or brother to cousin, and not from father to son. In theory, and at that time, it was a wise decision. At a later period, with assassination less in vogue, this system can produce as heirs men who are past their prime. If, for any reason, an heir is removed from the succession, the way is open to dissension and intrigue for many years to come. Then, too, the sons of a minister, who had held high and responsible positions during their father's life, were likely, on

his death, to find themselves, if not banished altogether, at least relegated to the background.

Jang Bahadur had been the second of eight brothers and only the three youngest were surviving when the eldest, Rana Udip Sing, succeeded. The Prime Minister's title of Maharaja of Lamjung and Kaski was claimed by his son under the *sanad* (authorisation) that had given the roll of succession, but this title Rana Udip also assumed, thus causing a breach in the Rana family. Jang Bahadur's descendants were omitted from the roll, and succession has been limited to the line of the youngest of his brothers, Dhir Shamsher, who did not himself succeed, having died a year before Rana Udip, in 1884.

In 1881 the King, Surendra Bir Bikram Shah, died. His own son, Trailokya Bir Bikram Shah, having pre-deceased him, he was succeeded by his grandson Prithwi Bir Bikram Shah, at that time a boy only six years of age.

For the next few years there were plots and counterplots. After his brother Dhir Shamsher died, Maharaja Rana Udip stood alone. The sons of Dhir Shamsher were plotting to get all power into their branch of the family; the sons of Jang Bahadur were scheming for their branch; the King's party was planning to reassume the Royal powers; the Thapas were out for their own ends and revenge; and the King's uncle was attempting to secure the throne for himself. In the end, after the plot of the Thapas had been denounced, the Dhir Shamsher family murdered their uncle the Maharaja, as well as Jang Bahadur's son and grandson. They then placed in power, as Maharaja, their own eldest brother Bir Shamsher, at the same time taking the boy King into their custody.

Recent History

Bir Shamsher was to rule from 1885 to 1901. On assuming power he put certain of his opponents to death, excluded his next brother, Khadga, from the roll, and filled all the principal offices with his own adherents. Bir Shamsher was succeeded by his brother, Dev Shamsher, who had taken no part in the murder of Rana Udip. In his short time in power

Dev Shamsher erected drinking water tanks on the Terai road and attempted to forestall his successor in the liberation of slaves, but after only three months his brothers forced him to resign in favour of the next brother, Chandra Shamsher, the strongest willed of the family. Chandra Shamsher had been educated at Calcutta University and was widely read and highly educated in the broadest sense. In his twenty-eight years as ruler of Nepal, Chandra Shamsher reorganised the army, gave every assistance to the Gurkha regiments of the Indian Army, founded many educational institutions, abolished slavery, revised the judicature and reformed the whole administrative machine of the country.

As early as 3rd August 1914, Sir Chandra Shamsher called on the British representative in Katmandu and informed him of his readiness to place the whole of the military resources of Nepal at the disposal of the British Government, should they be needed. The offer was gratefully accepted and took the following form. First, the loan of a contingent of Nepalese troops; second, assistance rendered in connection with the special recruiting measures necessary for the maintenance of the existing Gurkha regiments of the Indian Army; and third, the provision of additional battalions for those regiments. During the War over 200,000 Gurkhas joined the British service and 55,000 of these were enlisted in the regular battalions. The casualties totalled no less than 20,000—rather more than the strength of the entire Gurkha Brigade before the war. In addition to these gifts of man-power, Sir Chandra Shamsher made considerable monetary contributions, provided a quantity of machine-guns, and made available much of the produce of his country.

His Highness Maharaja Sir Chandra Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana was an Honorary General in the British Army, a GCB, a GCSI, a GCMG, and a GCVO. He also received the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, the Chinese title of Thong-lin-pimma-kojang-wang-syan and was a Doctor of Civil Law at the University of Oxford. He died on 25th November 1929, at the age of sixty-six, having administered the Kingdom of Nepal for twenty-eight years.

Sir Chandra Shamsher was succeeded by his brother, Sir Bhim Shamsher, who, an elderly man at the time of his succession, only survived him by three years. On his death he was succeeded by his last surviving brother, Judha Shamsher.

Sir Judha Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, GCB, GCSI, GCIE, came to power at the age of fifty-eight and proved himself a staunch ally of Great Britain. Holder of French, Belgian, Italian and Chinese orders, he had accompanied Maharaja Chandra Shamsher to England in 1908 and it was he who had raised and trained the Nepalese contingent in 1914. On his succession he applied himself to the carrying out of many necessary reforms and he was preparing others when Nepal was struck by the violent earthquake of 1934, which created havoc in his country and caused over nine thousand deaths. But because the damage in India had been even greater, he refused all offers of assistance and the reconstruction work was carried out by funds entirely raised in Nepal, the greater amount being provided by himself and his family. In the same year he despatched to England a mission, headed by his eldest son, to invest King George V with the Nepalese Order of Ojaswi Rajanya. At the same time this son, General Bahadur Shamsher, opened the Nepalese Legation in London.

As in the past, so in 1939, Nepal came forward with offers of assistance even before the actual declaration of war. This offer was gratefully accepted and, early in 1940, two brigades of four battalions each were despatched to India, one being sent to Kakul, near Abbottabad, and the other to Dehra Dun. At the same time General Bahadur Shamsher, GBE, took up his post as Inspector of the Nepalese Contingent, at Army Headquarters in New Delhi. Throughout the war most of the Contingent was kept fully occupied on the North-West Frontier, where they performed their arduous duties with diligence and zeal, and released battalions of the Indian Army to fight elsewhere. Three battalions fought in the Japanese campaign in Assam and Burma, where they further enhanced the high reputation of the Nepalese Army. As well as the Contingent, two pioneer battalions were

despatched for work in Assam and on the Ledo road into Burma.

In 1940, the Maharaja authorised the raising of a third battalion and, shortly afterwards, of a fourth battalion, for each of the ten regular regiments of the Gurkha Brigade. At the same time regimental centres, or expanded depots, were formed and garrison battalions and companies raised. Altogether some 130,000 men enlisted into the Gurkha Brigade and a further 30,000 into other units, including 2,000 Dotiyals to form two porter battalions. Special laws were passed in Nepal to protect the rights of men absent from their homes on war service.

At the Victory Parade in London in 1946, the Nepalese Contingent was headed by General Baber Shamsheer who also led the special mission to present to King George VI the sword and ceremonial helmet of an Honorary Commanding-General of the Nepalese Army, and to present the insignia of the Order of Ojaswi Rajanya to Queen Elizabeth. General Baber Shamsheer was invested with the insignia of the GCVO.

The war years saw many changes in Nepal, some of which are described in the paragraphs which follow.

No King of Nepal had previously been allowed to leave his country, except under duress, let alone set sail on the high seas, but in 1944 King Tribhuban visited India, and later Europe.

In 1942 a grass airstrip was laid down at Simra, near the Amlekhganj railhead, and a few years afterwards the first airstrip in the Valley was opened at Gaucher; so the route to Katmandu, which entailed a long and tedious railway journey followed by a motor drive and then two days by pony or dhooly or on foot, was considerably eased.

Until the last war, the British Minister at the Court of Nepal had been assisted in dealing with the pension work for men of the Gurkha Brigade, by the Legation Surgeon, who did this in addition to his other duties. It was obvious that this work would increase and that other functions of the Recruiting Staff, such as the payment of family pensions and family allotments of those living near the Valley, would

devolve on the Legation—later to become the Embassy. For this reason it was decided that an officer who had completed his command of a Gurkha battalion would be a suitable addition to the Legation Staff, and in 1941 the first First Secretary was appointed in Katmandu. In 1958 a Military Attaché was also appointed and he it is who now undertakes the paying of pensions in addition to his other duties.

Another change in the Embassy was the disbanding of the old Escort of Biharis. It should here be put on record that the Escort had always been a very smart unit, of great credit to all concerned with its running. Despite the lack of time available for practice and the poor allotment of practice ammunition it received, it had consistently won a most coveted musketry prize.

A problem that Nepal had to face during the early stages of the Burma campaign was that raised by the large number of Gurkha refugees who escaped from Burma. Gurkha units had been stationed in Burma in the old days and Gurkhas had been enlisted in the Burma Military Police. Many of these, having settled in the country on retirement, had lost close touch with their homeland. The majority of those who left Burma before the advancing Japanese could only turn their eyes towards Nepal. There was no immediate solution to this problem and to house them a large camp was pitched at Motihari. As additional aid the Maharaja was most generous in making a considerable grant from his privy purse.

For some time Maharaja Judha Shamsheer had been suffering from poor health and only continued in office to ensure there could be no interruption to Nepal's war effort. Thus it was that on 29th November 1945, he retired, placing the Maharaja's Pearl Headdress on the head of his nephew, General Padma Shamsheer Jang Bahadur Rana, GBE, KCSI, KCIE, the son of the late Maharaja Bhim Shamsheer. Sir Judha Shamsheer remained in retirement at Palpa for three years and then moved to Dehra Dun, where he passed the remainder of his life in religious meditation. He died in 1953.

Sir Padma Shamsheer had had many years of experience in senior administrative posts and as Commander-in-Chief,

but at the time of his accession was over sixty years of age and was not in robust health. During his time in office the Tripartite Agreement, which authorised the enrolment, after Indian Independence, of Gurkha soldiers into both the British and Indian Armies and consented to the transfer to the British Army of the two battalions of the 2nd, 6th, 7th and 10th Gurkha Rifles, was signed. Sir Padma Shamsher also introduced, on 13th April 1948, the Constitutional Act of 2004 Sambat which, while providing for the continued hereditary succession to the office of Prime Minister, of members of the Rana family, and ensuring that the Prime Minister retained the final decision in all matters, laid the foundations of a democratic form of government by specifying the fundamental rights and duties of the people and by providing for a Council of Ministers and a Central Legislature of partly elected and partly nominated members. The Act also provided for village and district *panchayats*, or councils of five members.

In 1948, Sir Padma Shamsher's health broke down and he travelled to India for treatment. On the advice of his medical attendants he announced his intention to retire and on 30th April 1948 handed over his office to the eldest son of the late Maharaja Chandra Shamsher and his own cousin, Sir Mohan Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, GCIE, GBE. Sir Mohan Shamsher came to office at a most difficult period. There was a growing political awareness which, though confined mostly to the people of the Valley and of the Terai, was given impetus by a strong following outside the country. The former policy of strict seclusion had also been relaxed and visitors to the Valley were now comparatively many and diverse.

In 1947 the British Legation had been raised to the status of an Embassy, with an Ambassador accredited to the Court of Nepal. At the same time the Nepalese representative in London was raised to the status of Ambassador and accredited to the Court of St. James. In the last months of 1947 India also established an Embassy at Katmandu, and in 1948 America appointed an Ambassador, although he was also Ambassador to India and was resident in New

Delhi. In 1959, however, both the USA and Soviet Russia established Embassies in Katmandu, and were followed a year later by Communist China.

With her own army heavily committed on her borders and in Kashmir, India, in 1948, gratefully accepted the loan of ten Nepalese battalions to staff her garrison towns; this contingent returned home after a year. In 1949 Nepal applied for membership of the United Nations Organisation, but this application was unfortunately used as a bargaining point by Russia who demanded the simultaneous entry of her satellites. The motion was defeated by a vote of seven to two, but it is a happy outcome to her aspirations that Nepal was admitted to the United Nations early in 1956.

Because of the great changes that had taken place, the 1923 Treaty of Friendship between Nepal and Great Britain was replaced in 1947 by new treaties between Nepal and the United Kingdom, and between Nepal and India. These provided for perpetual peace and friendship between the contracting states and recognised the complete independence of Nepal.

Many of the panchayats authorised by the Constitutional Act of 1948 had by 1950 come into being, and the National Assembly, having been convened, met for the first time in September of that year; but the newly awakened politicians thought the tempo was too slow. In November the King sought refuge in the Indian Embassy and refused to return to his palace until a democratic form of government, under a constitutional monarchy, had been established. A few days later he left by air for India. The Nepali Congress Party seized this opportunity to launch an insurrection in several places in the Terai, and supporters quickly joined. The Gurkha tribes of the hills remained unaffected and the Nepalese army stemmed any advance towards the Valley, but bands of dacoits made the most of the chance to operate in the Terai and in the foothills.

Negotiations now began in Delhi between the King, the Ranas, and the Nepali Congress, and the Government of India gave advice. Agreement was eventually reached and the King returned to Katmandu where, on 18th February

1951, he issued a proclamation inaugurating a democratic form of government. This day is now observed as the National Day of Nepal. As an interim measure, a Cabinet was formed consisting of five Congress representatives. This Cabinet lasted nine months before Congress, on 13th November 1951, forced a revision which replaced Sir Mohan Shamsher, last of the hereditary Rana Prime Ministers, by Mr. M. P. Koirala.

The next period, of over three years, saw a succession of cabinets each torn by disagreement, or possibly personal ambition, until, early in 1955, the last cabinet was dissolved and a Council of Advisers, under the Crown Prince, was formed. At this time King Tribhuban was in very poor health and was undergoing treatment in Europe. In March 1955 he died and was succeeded by his eldest son, the present King, Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva. The coronation took place amidst unsurpassed oriental pomp and splendour, reminiscent of the scale and grandeur of the British ceremony, and was attended by the highest foreign dignitaries and by contingents from Gurkha units of both the British and the Indian Armies.

In January 1956, after nine months of political uncertainty, a Government was formed under the leadership of Tanka Prasad Acharya, leader of the Praja Parishad (Socialist) party. Tanka Prasad was replaced as Prime Minister, in July 1957, by Dr. K. I. Singh who lasted only until November. A further interim Government of direct rule by the King followed. Elections, originally timed to take place in October 1957, were postponed until February 1959, and the formation of a provisional Advisory Assembly and Executive Council was foreshadowed by a Royal proclamation dated 1st February 1958, while preparations were made to frame a constitution under which the elections could be held.

On 12th February 1959, the day of Basant Panchami, the King proclaimed the first Constitution. It established a constitutional monarchy, bicameral Parliament, Cabinet, Privy Council and Supreme Court.

Under the provisions of this Constitution the first elections, for Members of the Lower House, were begun on the National Day, 18th February 1959. As a result, the Nepali Congress

Party won 74 of the total number of seats and gained a comfortable over-all majority. The King chose Mr. Bisheshwar Prasad Koirala, leader of the Party, to be his Prime Minister. The Members of the Cabinet were sworn in on 27th May 1959, and the Constitution was formally inaugurated on 30th June 1959.

Some eighteen months later, on 15th December 1960, the King dissolved Parliament, suspended the Constitution, and assumed direct rule of his country, which he now exercises through a Council of Ministers.

Shortly before this, in October 1960, Their Majesties The King and Queen paid a State Visit to Great Britain. During this visit a contingent from the Brigade of Gurkhas was privileged to provide a Guard of Honour when Their Majesties visited Westminster Abbey, and there was also a parade which was inspected by Queen Elizabeth and King Mahendra.

In February 1961, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, paid a reciprocal State Visit to Nepal.

In taking over the reins of Government on 15th December 1960, King Mahendra acted on his conviction that party politics and the parliamentary system of Government as practised in the West was not suited to the needs of Nepal. He believed that a system of democracy based on village panchayats or councils was required. The country was reorganised into 75 districts and 14 zones (anchals). Development officers were sent out to each district to explain the new panchayat system to the people. By April 1962 village panchayats throughout the country had been elected. Elections to district and anchal panchayats followed and finally in March 1963 the Rashtriya (or National) Panchayat was elected. Its first session began on 18th April 1963.

The Rashtriya Panchayat consists of 135 members, 90 of whom are elected from anchal panchayats, 15 from class organisations (i.e. ex-servicemen's organisations (2), labourers' (2), peasants' (4), Youth (4) and women's (3)), 4 from graduates and 16 members are nominated by His Majesty the King. Meetings are held in camera, and sessions are held

when ordered by the King. The King may also prorogue a session, but not for a period of more than six months. A simple majority of those present is required for decisions taken to be legal provided at least one-third of the members are present.

The Raj Sabha, whose functions correspond roughly to the British Privy Council, has 69 members appointed by the King. It deliberates on subjects referred to it by the King and meets when ordered to do so by the King. It has a Standing Committee of 14 members consisting of the leading personalities of the land including former ministers and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

The Council of Ministers, or Cabinet, consists of 14 Ministers and Assistant Ministers presided over by a Chairman (at present Dr. Tulsi Giri) appointed by the King.

3

The people of Nepal

The people of Nepal are still very clearly divided into races and tribes with considerable differences in features, characteristics and customs. Inter-marriage between certain tribes is nowadays not so rare as it was in the past and may be expected to become more common. The tribe can be defined as the largest body of people who describe themselves by a common name as opposed to the general terms of 'pahari', applicable to all hill people, 'Gurkhali', applicable to the Gurkha tribes as described below, or 'Nepali', applicable in general to any inhabitant of Nepal. Each tribe is sub-divided into a number of clans (thar) and the clans are further divided into kindreds (gotra).

The Mongolian element, which forms the bulk of the population of Nepal, presents some curious contradictions. Ethnologically, their Mongolian features point to their having come, originally, from the north of Tibet, and from even further to the east, and their tribal languages confirm this. However, much of their culture, literature, script, art, food, music, songs, and many of their dances, have come from India and the south.

By definition a Gurkha is a man of one of the tribes which formed the Army of King Prithwi Narayan, King of Gorkha, and captured the Valley, but the definition has now been extended to include the martial tribes of Eastern Nepal. Also included, by courtesy, are certain less martial tribes and some artisan tribes. Many show strong Mongolian characteristics while others are clearly of Aryan stock.

The true Gurkha martial tribes are: Thakur, Chhetri, Gurung, Magar, Rai, Limbu, Sunwar and Tamang.

Miscellaneous tribes include:

(a) Enlisted at times: Lepcha, Newar, Thakali, Punyal, Sherpa, Manjhi, Kumhal, Nagarkoti, Bhujel.

(b) Not enlisted as such: Tharu, Bhote (i.e. Tibetan), Bajanghi, Dotiyal, Kisundo, Chepang, Thami.

(c) Tradesmen: Sarki, Kami, Damai, Sunar.

(d) Others: Gaini, Argi, Bhanra, Chunara, Draï, Kasai, Pore.

The highest in the social scale is the Brahman, or priestly, caste and the Brahman of Nepal is pure bred, having little Mongolian blood in his veins and being generally very similar in appearance to his blood brother of India. The highest clan of the Brahman caste is the Upaddhe or Upaddhya, who is to be met in the army in his capacity as regimental priest or religious teacher. The High Priest of Nepal, the Raj Guru, is of this order. Next comes the Ksatriya, or warrior, caste. Members of both the foregoing castes wear the sacred thread, *janai*. Third is the Vaishya, the merchant, or common man caste, and fourth the Sudra, or menial, caste. As in all orthodox Hinduism, these constitute the four main castes, said to have been introduced into Nepal by King Dharma Datta, builder of the holy Pashupati temple.

The place of the Gurkha martial tribes in this caste system, apart from the Thakurs and Chhetris, has never been clearly determined. Some authorities maintain that, as they provided the bulk of the fighting men of Nepal, they should, as warriors, have been classified in the second order—that of Ksatriya. However, because the Brahmans had not given them the right to wear the sacred thread, this could not be, and they have in consequence been relegated to an undefined position below that of the Ksatriya and above that of the Vaishya.

Characteristics

Although amongst certain tribes, such as the Chhetri, the admixture of Rajput blood produces a darker, slighter and taller type, with Aryan features, the Gurkha is generally

strongly Mongolian in appearance, being thickset, with a fair skin, and of an average height of some 5 feet 3 inches. His upper lip, chin and cheeks, are usually hairless, even middle age producing but a few hairs on the upper lip and permitting a soldier to complete most of his service with the razor replaced by a pair of tweezers. He has the typical high cheek-bone of the Mongolian as well as the epicanthic fold at the inner junction of the eyelids. From carrying heavy loads up and down his steep hillsides, the Gurkha has abnormally well-developed thigh and calf muscles, and his feet, which are apt to be broad but short enough only to demand a No. 6 sized shoe, are well arched. At a first glance his nose might appear slightly negroid but closer inspection will show that it is broad across the base, so much so that his nostrils are sometimes nearer being parallel to his upper lip rather than standing out at right angles to it, whilst a side view will show the crest to be well, and even delicately, formed. The hair of the head is sometimes wiry but can also be smooth, and, though normally black, it often has a brown sheen in it. Formerly the Gurkha soldier kept his head close cropped all over except for his *tupi*, the Hindu scalplock, and this was reflected in the villages where hair was left unkempt between clippings. Since the soldier has been allowed to grow his hair, European type hair cuts have become more common in the hills.

In character the Gurkha is normally light-hearted and cheerful and he has a keen sense of humour. As Brook-Northey wrote, his open character permits an intimacy in his intercourse with Europeans that is seldom achieved by other races in the East. The Gurkha is self-confident and independent, and has but little interest in those who cannot speak his language, being prone to hold them in some contempt. Though he can thus appear to be somewhat truculent, he suffers in no way from an inferiority complex. Shy with strangers, he is lively with his friends and has a well-developed sense of humour which includes an appreciation of witty sarcasm which he uses most effectively himself.

The average Gurkha is far from teetotal, being fond of strong drink which he is skilful at brewing and distilling;

on the other hand he usually holds his drink like the gentleman he is. A great man with the girls, a Gurkha is permitted polygamy, but seldom has more than two wives, for whom he has a genuine love which is sometimes missing in Eastern peoples. When walking, the wife normally follows her husband and carries the parcels. She does all the cooking and only eats herself after her menfolk have finished, even waiting many hours for their return. Gurkha women, nevertheless, enjoy a freedom unusual in the East and are well able to stand up for themselves. They smoke and drink only slightly less than their menfolk and are very outspoken. They make excellent knitters, and whilst in barracks soon learn to sew. This, however, they will not do in the hills, sewing being the work of the Damai.

Perhaps the Gurkha's greatest vice is gambling, over which he can lose all sense of time and values. In the past, it is said, men even wagered their wives and, on at least one occasion, their hands! Gambling, however, is strictly forbidden by law except for the period of the Tewar festival (Dewali). Normally truthful they make clumsy liars, and cheats and thieves are quickly brought to book. The Gurkha is sometimes thoughtlessly accused of dirtiness but it must be remembered that in villages, where every drop of water must be carried by women, often for a considerable distance, complete cleanliness is very hard to achieve. When near a stream a Gurkha will readily bathe and, where facilities are available, as in the army, he is fastidious about his personal hygiene.

His bravery speaks for itself in the records of the Gurkha Brigade, which show ten VCs for the last War. He is an enthusiastic soldier and, when kept up to the mark, is second to none in smartness both in uniform and mufti. For generations the Gurkha has been a soldier, and youths are brought up in an atmosphere which looks down on a man without military experience. In consequence, when several brothers are serving in the Army at the same time, they often have to hold a family conference to decide who will serve on for promotion and pension, and who must go home to run the land. Few who have not served with him realise that the

average Gurkha is a yeoman of some substance, and joins the army for tradition and the position it gives him at home as much as for the financial advantage. Although sometimes inclined to be a spendthrift, the Gurkha returning home on leave invariably takes with him clothes, ornaments and money, for the household and for many of his relations. The money that returning soldiers bring into the country plays an important part in the national economy as is shown by the fact that during the release period, at the end of the War, the Gurkha Recruiting Depots paid out £3½ million to be taken home by men going on discharge.

Dress

The national dress of the upper classes of Nepal is a double breasted garment, known as a *chaubandi*, fitting tight over the waist, and fastened inside and outside at the shoulders, and at the waist, by tapes. They wear loose trousers of the same material as the coat, a long length of thin white cloth wound round the waist, the distinctive Nepali cap, high on one side, low on the other, and Nepali, or more often now-a-days, European, shoes. A tweed coat of European cut and pattern is often worn over the *chaubandi*.

The dress of the country people, such as we enlist in our regiments, varies greatly in minor details from place to place, but in general it is a *langauti*, or loin cloth, worn suspended from a cord round the waist; a *patuka*, or thin piece of cloth wound round and round the waist without being folded, into which the Kukri is tucked, and which, coming down to just above the knees, may be likened to a kind of thin kilt; a European type waistcoat, usually of thick black cotton material and often with coins as buttons; and under the waistcoat a double-breasted garment of country homespun material, similar to the *chaubandi* described above but only reaching down to the waist. They wear, too, the Nepali cap, usually white or black in colour, and, on occasions, stout Nepali shoes fastened with strips of raw hide. These latter, however, are not often worn as the people usually go about barefooted. In addition to the above, Gurungs and some of the mountain tribes have a thick, rough, homespun sheet,

known as *khadim* or *ainti bhanro*, which is worn over the top part of the body and knotted about the centre of the chest in such a way as to leave the arms bare, and forming a large bag in the small of the back in which various odds and ends are carried. The *khadim* is never worn in Eastern Nepal and is one of the many small points in which hill dress varies. Limbus, Rais and other eastern tribes also do not wear the *patuka* described above, but in its place have loose-fitting trousers of homespun cloth which they call *suruwal*. The reason for this is that, generally speaking, they live in a colder climate and accordingly require more protection for their legs. Necklaces, often of bright red beads imported from India, are popular, as are plain gold ear rings, but, as with dress, the custom of wearing ear rings differs from place to place. The men of Gulmi, for instance, never wear them, although their ears are pierced soon after birth, as is usual throughout Nepal. Some young men wear heavy plain silver or gilt bracelets on both wrists.

Women's dress usually consists of a bodice, known as *choli*, a skirt, called either *phariya* or *guniu*, formed of many thicknesses of cloth wound round the waist, and a shawl or veil worn over the head, but leaving the face uncovered. This is known as *majetro*, and is usually of some brightly-coloured material and often with a sprigged design. Jewellery, in addition to serving as ornaments for the women, has a much more practical value as it is usual to invest the family savings in it.

Commoner types of jewellery are large gold ear rings, called *kana ko sun*, bracelets, known as *balo*, anklets, either *curi* or *kalli*, nose rings, known as *bulaki*, and necklaces of various types, prominent amongst them being one, known as *tilari*, which is a heavy ornament composed of alternate reels of gilt and coloured thread. The *bulaki*, or nose ring, is not universal; many Gurung women, for instance, never wear it.

Language

The lingua franca of the country has been referred to by a variety of names. The original term of Parbatiya, meaning a hill language, has long been obsolete, but controversy still

exists regarding the use of the other names—Khaskura, Nepali and Gurkhali. Khaskura means the language of the Khas, which is an old and derogatory name of the Chhetri, 'the fallen', and this word is therefore not approved of by the Nepalese authorities, at whose request the official name of the language in the Indian Army was changed from Khaskura to Nepali. The term Gurkhali has been adopted by the British Army.

Gurkhali is derived from Sanskrit, coming from Indo-Aryan, and is therefore affiliated to Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu. It is a smooth language, easy to learn, and with a full and comprehensive vocabulary. It is used exclusively as the common language throughout Nepal, Darjeeling District and Sikkim, and is well understood in Kumaon and Garhwal. Minor differences may give a clue as to where a speaker comes from, but even the larger differences between Western and Eastern Nepal present no difficulties to free intercourse. Until the late 1930s many recruits on first arrival in their battalion, spoke only their own dialects, but now-a-days it is unusual to find a recruit who cannot speak Gurkhali. Among the women, however, the language is not so well known.

Each Nepali tribe has its own tribal language which is that employed in the house and village. These languages—Gurungkura, Magarkura, Limbukura, etc.—are etymologically derived from the Tibeto-Burmese group related to Chinese. Incomprehensible to a member of another tribe, these dialects vary considerably, Gurungkura being the most marked in this respect. Nearly every Gurung of Central and Western Nepal speaks Gurungkura, but words used by a Gurung from Ghandrung are often different from those in the vocabulary of one from the east of Gorkha.

(A kind of backslang employed by youngsters is Pharsekura, in which the commonest form is to interchange syllables. For example, khanchi, a darling, becomes 'chikhan', and an anglicised example would be 'tenlis meto' for 'listen to me'. Other forms are also used and it can be introduced into tribal languages as well as Gurkhali.)

Though tribal languages are purely spoken ones and cannot be written down, Gurkhali can be recorded in both the Roman

and Deva Nagri characters. Paper for writing is imported by returning leave men but a home-made variety is still much in use, and is manufactured from the daphne, which is a type of laurel. Pens are made from sharpened bamboo shoots and ink from lamp black or the chestnut, whilst sand is used for blotting paper.

The postal system (hulak) in Nepal is fast and fairly efficient on the main routes, but correspondence for people living off such routes may lie in a post office for some considerable time before someone reliable can be found to take it to its destination. The postman carries the mail on his back and can be readily recognised by his special staff, the bells of which demand, and receive, right of way however crowded the path may be. Nepal joined the International Postal Union in 1959.

Food

Gurkhas serving in the British Army overseas are excused, by a charter issued by the Raj Guru, from all caste restrictions as to food except that they must not eat beef or any form of beef extract. On return to India, and before proceeding to their homes, all Gurkhas are supposed to perform a purification ceremony, and this is catered for at the recruiting depot.

Rice forms the staple diet of the Gurkha, though hill dwellers often have to content themselves with maize, buckwheat and millet.

No Gurkha will willingly eat the female of any domestic animal. This is understandable since the females breed when young and are likely to be tough when old. This does not, however, apply to wild game, which comes under the overall title of 'Shikar'. There is, in places, a prejudice against eating the long tailed sheep, though the fat tailed variety is enjoyed, and this is perhaps because the long tailed sheep was a valuable beast of burden in the bringing of rock salt over the passes from Tibet into Nepal. Gurungs will not eat tame pig; Ghales will not eat chickens or eggs; in certain Rai kindreds the eldest son of the family may not eat meat after his father has died; and though some tribes will eat buffalo meat in the hills, it is not done in battalions.

Dances

West Nepal

The profusion of dances now existing is a reflection of the Gurkha's love for this pastime and for singing. In a country where travel at any time is not easy and where both travel and work are impossible during the long weeks of the monsoon, dancing provides exercise and entertainment. It follows then, that though some dances are of a classical nature and are performed at festivals in accordance with rigid tradition, each district also has a number of dances peculiar to that area and, to distinguish these dances, many are known by the name of the place in which they originated—hence *Sallyane*, which is peculiar to the Tahsil of that name; *Lamjunge*, which originated at the darbar in Lamjung; and so on.

In these country dances it is customary for youths, dressed in feminine costume, to take the place of women. They are called *Maruni*, whilst the male dancer is called *Porsenge*. There are, however, four women's dances: *Ratoli*, *Jora*, *Ghanto* and *Juwari*. The *Ratoli* only takes place on a wedding day and is held in the bridegroom's house, after the menfolk have left for the house of the bride. Men are forbidden to attend and any Paul Pry is soon chased away by irate and muscular maidens armed with nettles. The *Jora* is very similar and is only performed during the women's festival of Tij. The *Ghanto* should properly take place only between the middle of Magh and the full moon of Jeth (February to June). Though married women may attend with their husband's permission, the actual dancing is done by unmarried girls, and a male chorus accompanies the dancers. This is a form of subscription dance. Men arrive with their entrance fee bound to their foreheads but during the dancing girls try to collect more, pouring scorn and even vituperation on the man who is slow to pay up. Woe betide him should he offer it in a clenched fist, for sharp nails will be pressed between his knuckles and, if he is still slow, the *thokar* or spiked bangle is considered a fair weapon to employ. The last of the four dances, the *Juwari*, consists of men and girls dancing and singing in pairs.

Girls also take part in the *Lakhe* dance, which is a spectacular affair with a large chorus. In many districts this is only performed by Newars.

Most dances are performed by four to six marunis and two porsenges, with three or four drummers, or *madales*. The Lamjunge is usually danced by larger numbers. It is of recent origin and is not peculiar to any particular festival. The porsenges represent Krishna and the marunis his milkmaids, but the dresses are very much of Tibetan origin. The *Thali*, originally a Pun dance, in which the performer most cleverly balances two large, flat trays on the open palms of his hands, is normally a solo, the maruni being assisted by one madale only.

East Nepal

The Eastern Gurkha does not dance so readily as the Western, the opportunities being less frequent.

The best known Eastern dances are the *Dhan Nach*, the *Chyabrung*, the *Damphu*, the *Khyali*, the *Birani*, the *Somala*, the *Jehauri* and the *Chandi*.

The Dhan Nach is a Limbu dance in which men and women link arms and dance in a line rather like the 'Palais Glide'. It depicts the sowing, transplanting, harvesting and threshing of rice.

The Chyabrung is another Limbu dance and is performed by a line of drummers, dancing in time to the drum beats. The Chyabrung is a large drum, which produces a deep, resonant note. This dance is usually performed at weddings and house warming parties, and anyone who can hear the Chyabrung is welcome to join the party. Owing to this rule, and the rising cost of living, the dance is not performed as frequently now-a-days as in the past.

The Damphu is a dance peculiar to Sunwars and Tamangs. The instrument from which the dance takes its name is shaped like a tambourine and may have a wooden jointed bird on it, which the dancer manipulates, causing the bird's wings to flap or head to nod. Each dancer normally carries his own damphu, held high in the air and swung about as the movements of the dance require.

The Khyali, Birani, Somala and Jehauri are Rai dances normally performed at the Tewar festival, but in the Army they are also performed at Dashera or any other party. They are Maruni dances in which porsenges do not take part.

The Chandi Nach, also known as Sri Sri Nach, is a Rai dance performed on Baisakhe Purne (the full moon April-May) by men and women with a drum accompaniment.

Games

In a mountainous country flat ground is much too valuable as agricultural land for it to be made available for games. Although, during fallow periods, the irrigation banks and stubble provide hazards that debar serious games, football of the beach variety can occasionally be seen.

A favourite evening game is *dandibiyo*, which is very similar to tipcat. A stick, about 4 inches long, is placed in a hole in the ground in such a way that, when struck on its protruding end, it leaps into the air. The striker then uses his 2-foot long 'bat' to hit it again while it is in the air. If the puck is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground, the striker is out. If it is fielded before it stops, no runs are scored; but if it comes to rest on the ground the batsman scores a run for each length of the 'bat' that the puck lies from the striking point. The game can be played by teams but it is more usually played with all fielding against the batsman.

Forms of pitch and toss are favourite games, as are those with cowries and dice. The Gurkha dice is 3 or 4 inches in length and marked with the ace, two, five and six. Three dice are thrown at a time from the hand which is then brought up to the chest with a resounding slap. Scores of 18, 17, 15 and 13, are winning scores and result in the thrower 'taking all'. Scores of 9, 6 and 3, are losing throws, when the thrower 'pays all'. Remaining scores are neutral and the dice is then passed on to the next man. Similar games are played with 7 or 16 cowries, the score being counted by the number that fall opening upwards. Cowries are also used in a form of ludo.

Among Magars and Gurungs in certain areas, *Chhelo Phalne*, a form of putting the shot, is also popular. A smooth boulder of about 8 lbs in weight, is used, the competitor

taking a run of about 15 yards before throwing. This sport is often played as a form of inter-village team game.

Card games are also popular, but the old, circular, Nepali cards are now never seen, the normal pattern, with Hindustani names, being in universal use. The commonest game is a type of whist, called *trup*, with three-card poker as the favourite for gambling purposes.

Music

Most musical instruments are considered 'unclean' and are only played by professional musicians of the Damai and Gaine tribes. The players in the large bands, seen at marriages and similar functions, are always Damais. Nearly every boy, however, plays a home-made pipe or flute whilst watching his herds of goats. Jews harps and various forms of home-made ocarines are popular. The commonest instrument is the madal—a double-ended drum with one end slightly smaller than the other to give a higher note. It is usually made of Khaya wood with the gut ends laced to each other with thongs of leather, and having black circular centres of *lup*, which are played with the fingers. The madal is held on the thighs when squatting or strapped to the waist when the drummer is standing. It is used to accompany songs and dances.

Animals

A full and technical description of the flora and fauna of Nepal can be found in Landon's 'Nepal'. Reserves in the Terai abound in big game and in game birds, but poaching is common. Elephants, being representations of Ganesh, may not be killed; they are, however, captured for domestic purposes and great use is made of them as transport for shooting parties in the forests. Tigers are Royal game, but should they prey on the villages in the nearer hills they are given short shrift, as are the leopards and smaller cats to be found in the Terai and in the interior. Bear, bison (the *gaur*) and deer, are to be found in the Terai, which is also one of the last homes of the rather rare Indian rhinoceros. Despite heavy penalties these animals are often shot by poachers as the horn fetches fabulous prices as an aphrodisiac, whilst the

blood, flesh and urine are a panacea for all ailments and the hide produces beautiful amber-like material. Peafowl, jungle fowl, duck and black partridge, abound, and there are many snakes.

In the hills the leopard is probably the chief enemy of the villager, but monkeys, both rhesus and langur, cause considerable damage to crops, while hedgehogs and porcupines work on the ground and dig into roots. Jungle fowl and pheasants are fairly common in places, as are quail and partridge. Among the wildfowl are teal, sheldrake, mallard, gadwall, pintail and shoveller. Eagles, hawks and ravens, prey on poultry; mynas, bulbuls and parrots are the ring-leaders of the crop raiders; and many forms of pigeon and dove are welcomed for the pot. Turtles although common are inedible, but a large form of yellow frog, the *paha*, is much relished by some people.

In the higher hills are the wild goats, tahr (called by Gurkhas *ghoral*), serow (called by Gurkhas *thar*), and goral. In the rolling highlands north of the Himalayan range is the *bharal*, a species of wild sheep.

The well-to-do use the hill pony for riding but not for draught work. Both cows and buffaloes are kept for milk and oxen and buffaloes draw the plough. Meat is provided by male sheep and goats and occasionally by buffalo. Most families keep hens, and cage birds, particularly parrots and mynas, are popular. Cats are to be seen in most villages but many of them are almost wild. Every house has a watchdog or two whose principal duty is to keep watch on the goths or cattlesheds. On the Tibetan border, yaks and sheep are used for carrying salt and food grains.

In spite of continuous fishing by net, bomb and even poison, the rivers and streams contain many fish, eels and prawns.

Every village can produce a collection of shotguns used for sport and protection, ranging from excellent modern weapons taken home by pensioners, to ancient muzzle loaders, flint-locks and weird, home-made firearms, as dangerous to friend as to foe. Bows and arrows are not unknown whilst many small boys have *gulelis*, or pellet bows,

with which they are expert. Trapping is also common and includes spring-guns, spring-bows (the use of which are widely publicised), pits, snares, nets and various forms of box-trap (dharap).

Crops

The principal crops grown in the hills are rice (dhan), wheat (gahun), barley (jau), millet (kodo), maize or Indian corn (makai), and buckwheat (phapar).

Though Gurkhas will always eat rice in preference to any other grain, maize is the most important crop in most areas, and on its success or failure depends much of the prosperity of the year.

Houses

Gurkha houses vary in pattern and also in size, and are generally very much larger and better built, and have much cleaner surroundings, than the normal house in the plains. They are of three main types, named according to construction—the *ghumaune ghar*, the *bangale ghar*, and the *pakhe ghar*—but many retired Gurkha Officers have built themselves solid houses of rough dressed stones, which do not fall into any of these three categories. The *ghumaune ghar* is probably the commonest and, as its name suggests, is circular in shape and normally of one storey. Depending on the availability of stone in the neighbourhood, the proportion of stone to mud in the walls of houses varies. The foundation is of solid stone or rammed earth built to a depth of some 3 feet and, to allow for a verandah, normally with a circumference rather greater than that of the actual house. Walls are of stone below and mud above and are of a height sufficient to allow a tall man to stand comfortably anywhere inside. The main roof is borne on rafters to a central peak, but a low thatched roof also covers the verandah which runs three-quarters of the way round the house. Chimneys are unknown and the smoke is left to find its own way out through the roof, thus providing a natural preservative for wood and thatch. In such houses separate rooms are not customary, but the kitchen is divided from the living quarters by mud partitions. The door is a solid wooden

affair, secured from inside by a pivoted beam and, when necessary, it can be locked on the outside by a chain and padlock. The verandah, the four or five steps leading to the door, and the lower part of the walls are washed with red earth; the rest is whitewashed and often embellished with patterns, and sometimes with regimental crests, picked out in red. A *bangale ghar* may have two storeys. All four walls are of equal height and its roof is pointed. A *pakhe ghar* has gabled ends and a ridge to the roof, and is usually of two storeys but may have three. Thatch is the commonest and cheapest form of roofing. Corrugated iron, tiles, slating and wood are alternatives. Floors are made of a plaster of mud and cowdung, which is renewed frequently. Except in the very high country, where wood is scarce, cowdung is not used for fuel as it is in India and apart from the little required for plastering, it is put back into the land.

Many houses have stone-flagged courtyards and flower gardens, and some also have a small banana plantation. In the courtyard are bamboo trellises for hanging out clothes and bedding.

A grain store and a solidly built, two storey barn, which houses domestic animals and implements on the ground floor and has a hay loft above, is normally found close to the houses of land owners. Doors are solidly made of planks, with metal hinges, whilst windows have shutters but are unglazed, and floors, beams supporting pillars, etc. are of dressed wood. Interior stairs, called *lisnu*, consist of a sloping tree-trunk with steps cut in it, a device which is also used for stiles between fields.

Although flocks are penned near the grazing ground and sheds are provided there for the buffalo herds, a certain number of animals are generally kept in the village itself, where there may be sheds for one or two cows in calf, for plough bullocks, and for a few goats and milking buffaloes.

The village water source may well be some little distance away, but the water is often brought to a more convenient spot in bamboo runnels. The area surrounding the water source is flagged and drained, and arrangements are made for washing clothes. Water has to be carried to the home by

the women, in brass or copper vessels. Washing in the home has, therefore, to be restricted, and bathing is confined to visits to streams.

Many villages have a hall known as the *rodi-ghar*. This normally consists of a small entrance lobby, where outdoor clothes can be left, and two rooms, one where the old folk can gossip and another where the young can sing, dance, or have parties, to which they all contribute by bringing bottles of home-brew and food. If there is no *rodi-ghar*, parties are held in any convenient barn.

Shrines of various form and potency are to be found in villages and on the paths leading to them. The shrine known as *Deorali*, from which many villages take their name, may be a rock or a pile of stones. The principal village of the thum will have the *thum maula*, a sacrificial post, firmly embedded in the ground and standing some 4 feet high, at which the sacrifices are made during the important religious festival of Dashera. Nearby will be a *kot*, or store house, and a *dasain-ghar*, in which the priests perform the Dashera rites. These buildings are usually on a hill top and are fenced in, the whole area being referred to as the 'kot'. The *Maula*, which is normally carved and painted, has a hole in it through which is passed the headrope of the animal to be sacrificed.

Though some villages are very compact, the majority consist of scattered farms. Paths are a village responsibility, each village having a well defined area to keep up, a task which is performed conscientiously. Steep slopes are well stepped and boggy areas are paved with stone or any other available material, and well trimmed hedges of thorn or cactus, bamboo fences, and solidly built dry-stone walls, are other features of the Nepalese landscape.

Bridges differ greatly in design and reliability. Those of a steel suspension type, mostly supplied by British firms, are to be found on a few of the main highways, but elsewhere they vary from well built wooden cantilever erections to more fragile affairs constructed from bamboo and creepers.

After each monsoon, when travel once again becomes pleasant, inns known as *bhattis* re-open along the roads. In

villages on the main routes these may well be permanent buildings, but elsewhere they are of the *basha* type popularised by the war in Burma. In Central Nepal these are normally kept by women of the Thakali tribe whose menfolk are occupied in the sheep and salt trades, and they provide excellent meals. Tea, well sugared and peppered, but often without milk, is always available, whilst cheap, locally brewed liquor is usually to be had. The barmaids are sharp-witted enough in their repartee to outwit even the soldier returning on leave, and are willing to go to considerable lengths to entertain their customers. Wooden benches are provided for those who wish to sit outside, but indoors, and except for the important customer, who may be given a folded blanket or a skin rug, the universal rush mat, or *gundri*, is normally used.

Gurkha furniture is simple in the extreme. Beds, when available, are solid wooden affairs, but a *gundri* on the floor provides a more usual sleeping place. The normal seat is also a *gundri*, or a folded blanket, though sometimes a *mohra*, or round cane stool, covered with deer or panther skin, is provided. Tables are seldom used, all meals being taken on the floor, which is kept scrupulously brushed and freshly plastered.

Gurkhas outside Nepal

Settlements exist outside Nepal, from which Gurkhas are recruited into the Indian Army. These are the colonies founded by the early Gurkha regiments in the days when recruiting from Nepal was difficult. Settlement in them was discouraged when recruitment became easier and when the Government of Nepal expressed a desire that Gurkhas should be encouraged to return home on leaving the army. The largest of these colonies is in the Kangra Valley, near the Indo-Kashmir border, where it spread from the early settlements of Dharmsala (known to the Gurkha as Bhagsu) and Bakloh. Others are at Dehra Dun and Shillong. There are also considerable colonies scattered over Burma and Assam, those in the former country having started in the days when Gurkhas were enlisted into the old Burma

Military Police, and those in the latter from pensioners of the Assam Rifles. There are many Nepalis to be found in Calcutta and, to a lesser extent, in other Indian cities, where they are in great demand as civilian guards or watchmen.

For more than a hundred years the Eastern Nepal Gurkha has been migrating south into the Darjeeling District of Bengal, and into Sikkim State, and in these areas the population is now 80 per cent Nepali. The same applies to a lesser extent to the southern areas of the State of Bhutan, where immigration started later. Inter-marriage with local inhabitants is fairly common in the Darjeeling District, particularly in and around the towns, but is less common in Sikkim and Bhutan. The labourers in the tea gardens of these districts, though almost entirely Nepali, are, many of them, of mixed descent, and few of the Darjeeling Gurkhas can now speak their own particular tribal language.

Many Gurkhas from Eastern Nepal come to Darjeeling District and Sikkim in the winter months for the orange picking, returning to their homes in March, at the end of the season. A number also come for the winter, working as sawyers in the forests.

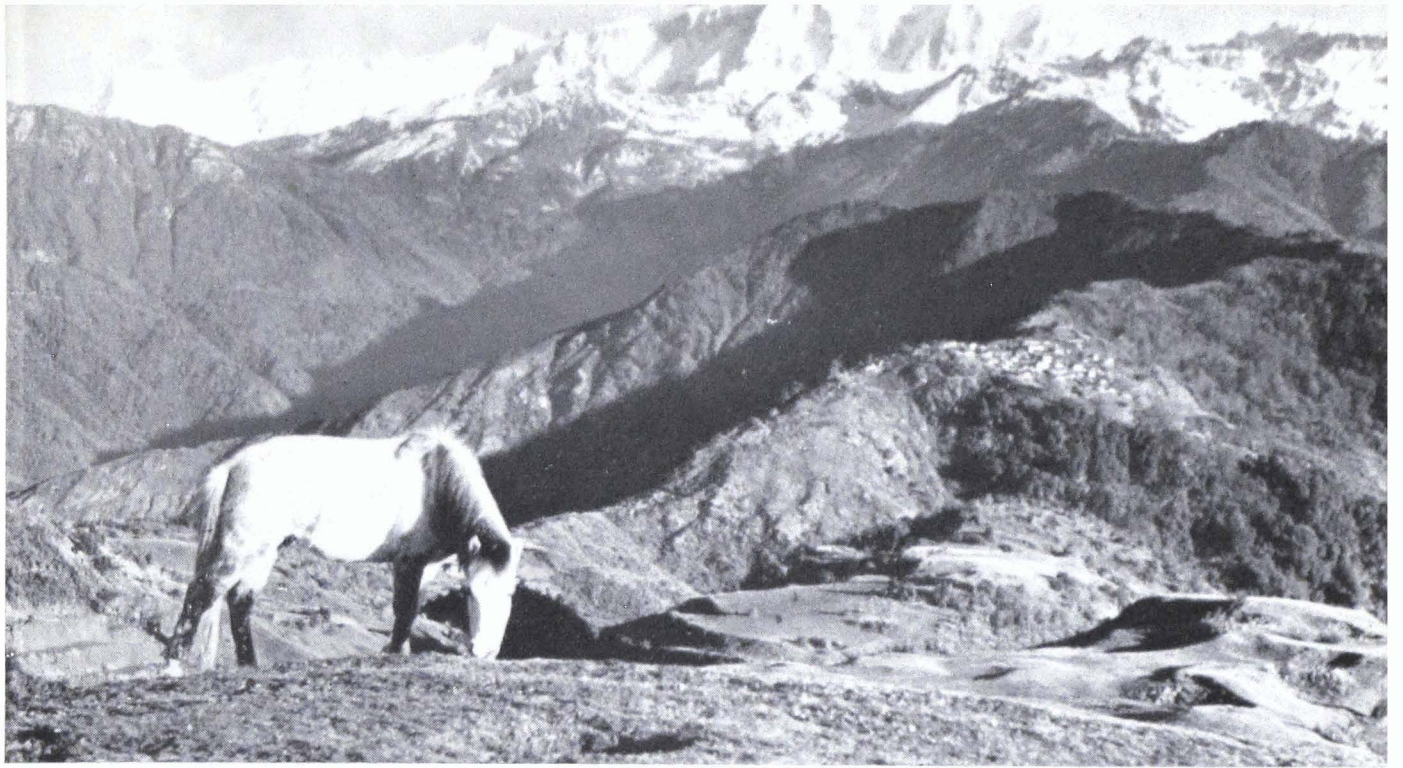


Plate 1. Looking
towards Ghanpokhara
from Ghalegaon,
Lamjung (*Langlands*)

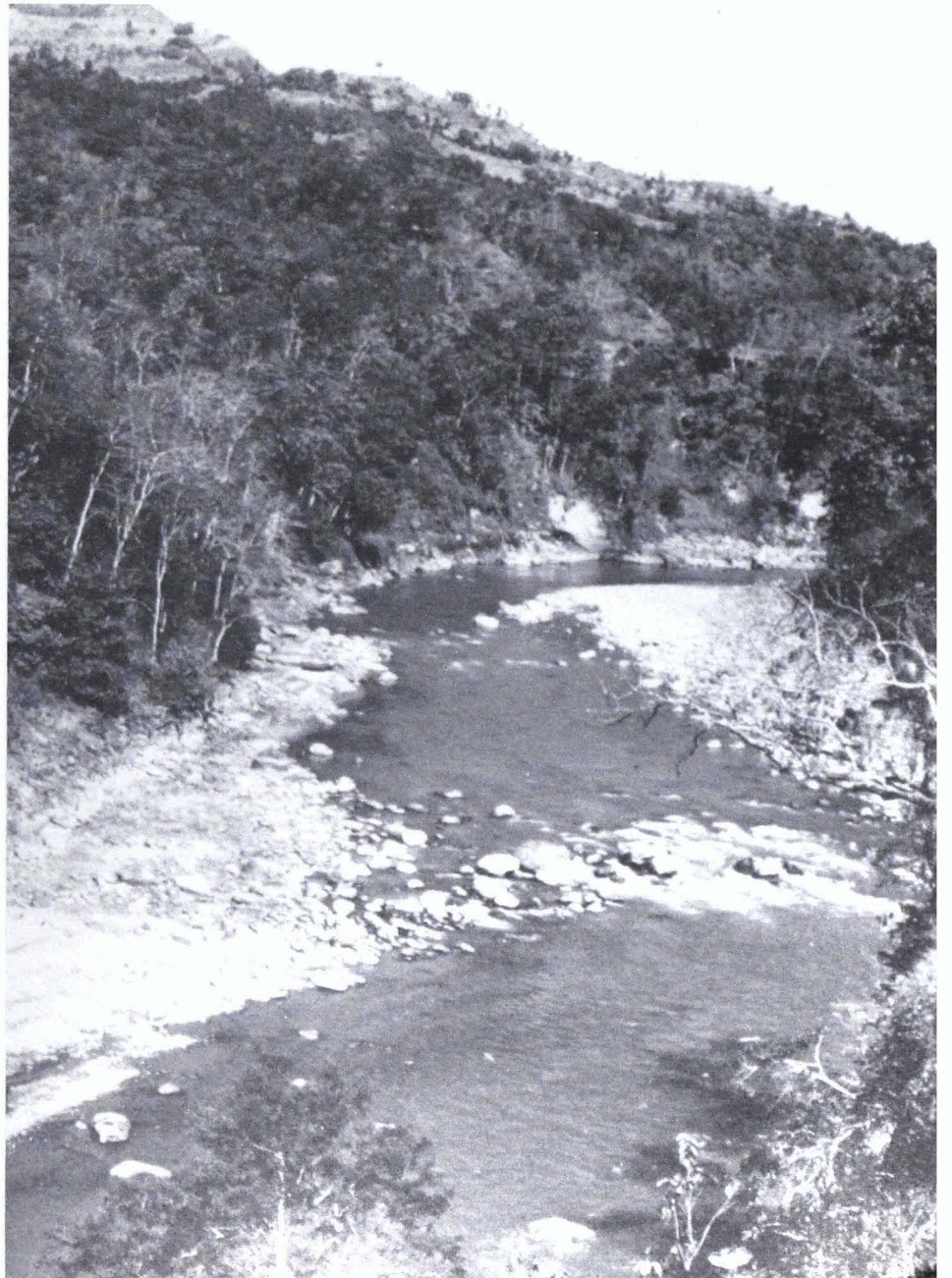


Plate 2. Andhi Khola,
Western Nepal
(*Langlands*)

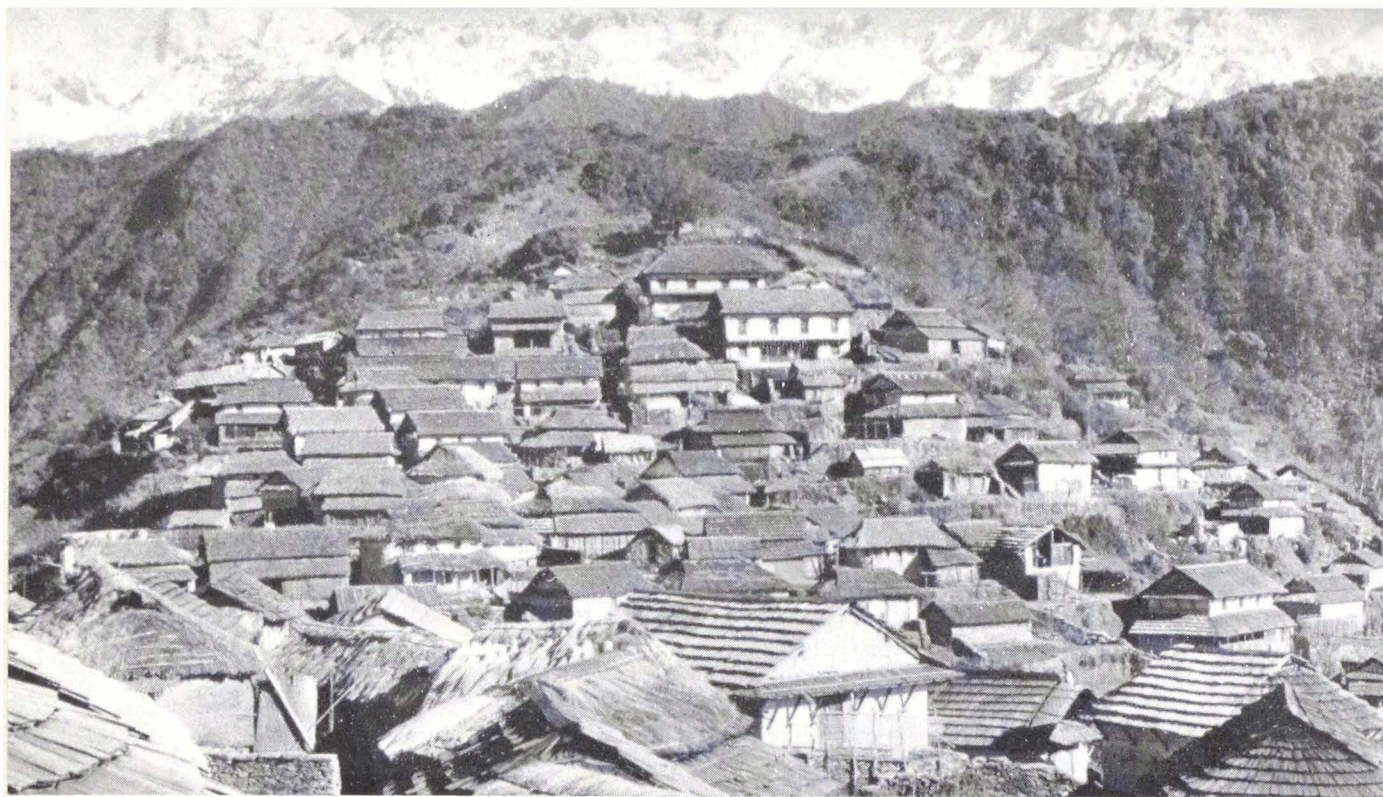


Plate 3. Village of Ghanpokhara, Western Nepal (*Langlands*)

Plate 4. Bhojpur, Eastern Nepal (*Myers*)



Plate 5. Crossing the
Tamur Khola,
Eastern Nepal
(*Pike*)

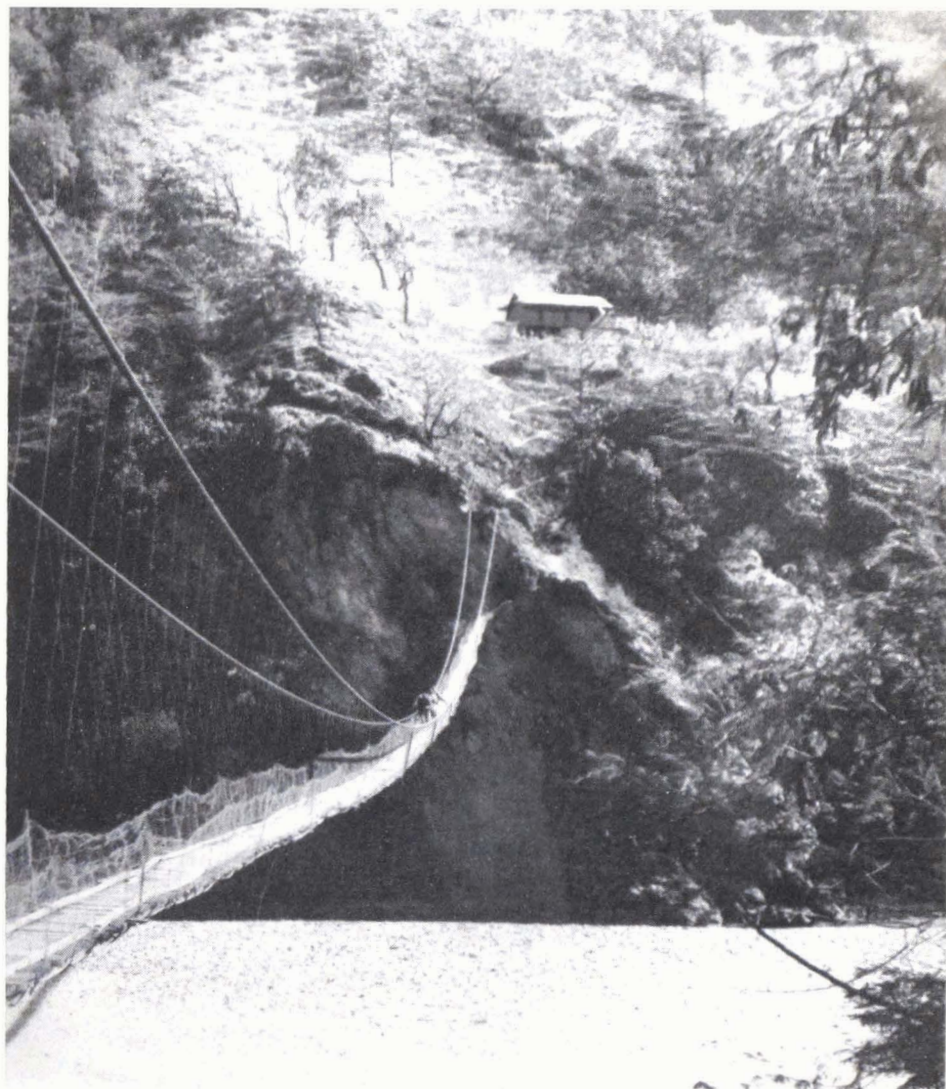


Plate 6. Lake scene
at Pokhara, showing
the King's Summer
Residence (*Myers*)



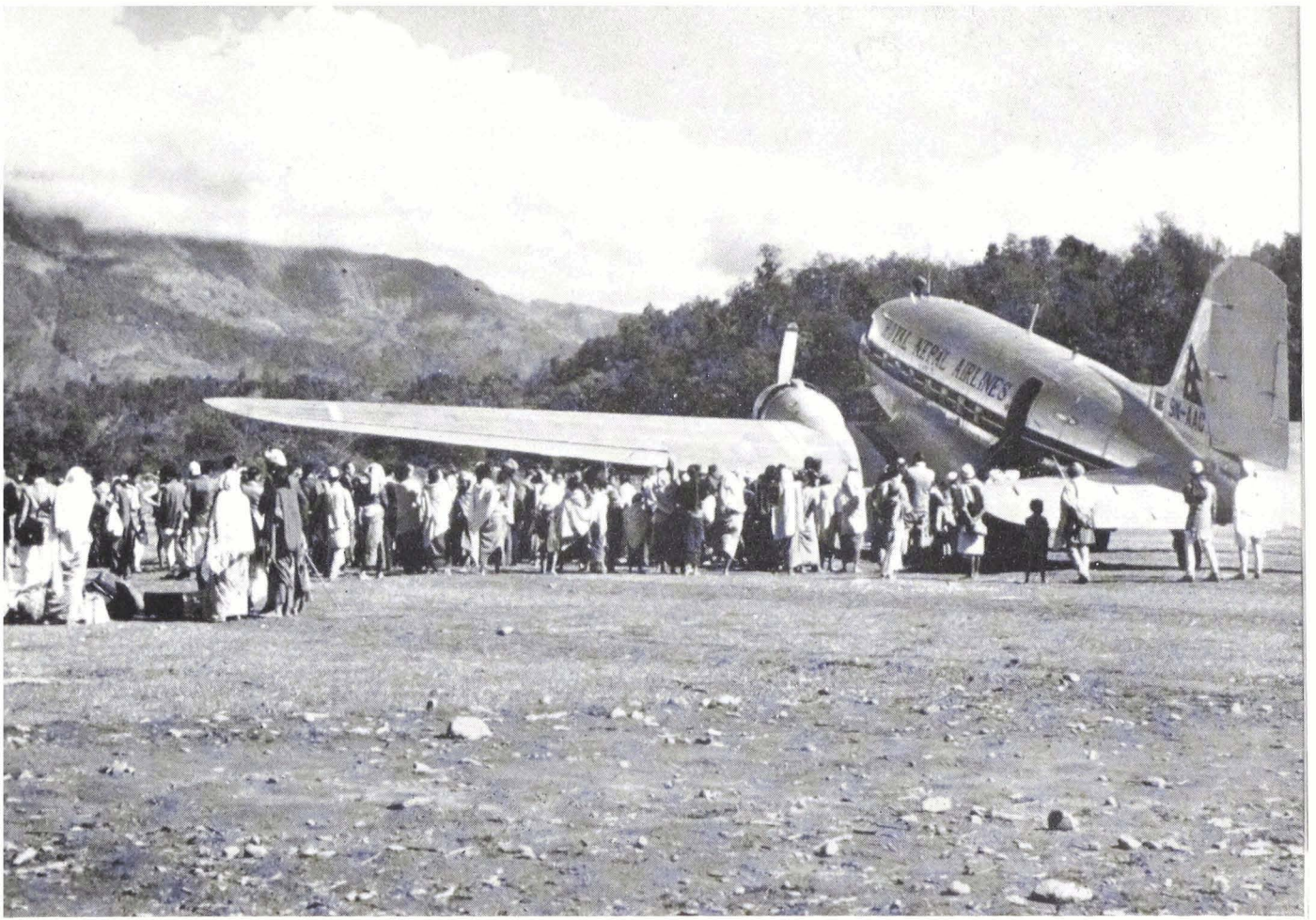


Plate 7. Gorkha Airfield, Western Nepal (*Langlands*)

Plate 8. Thalunga on the Marsyandi Khola, Western Nepal (*Langlands*)

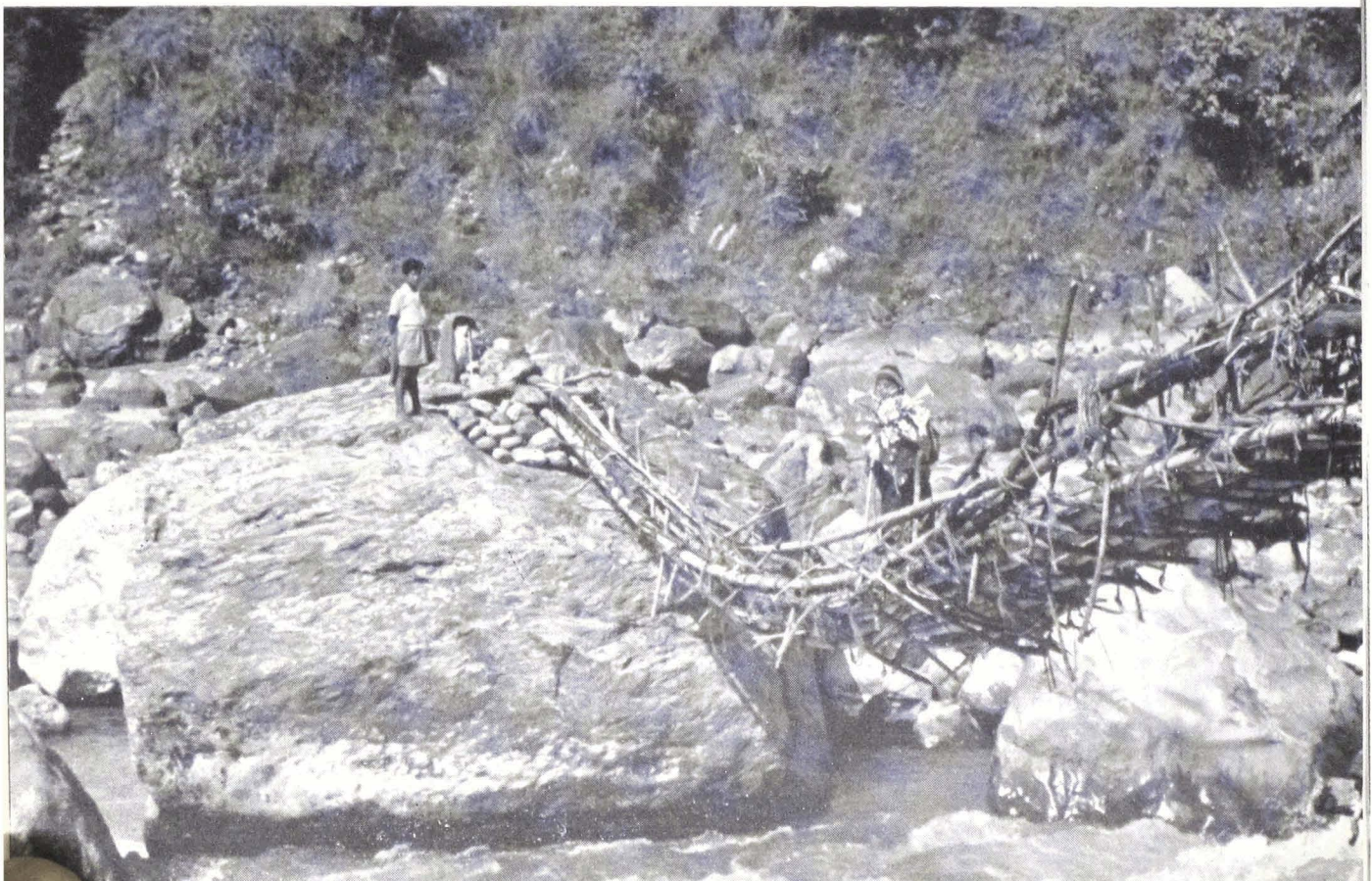




Plate 9. At home in Garhung, Western Nepal (*Langlands*)

Plate 10. Street in Bhojpur, Eastern Nepal (*Myers*)



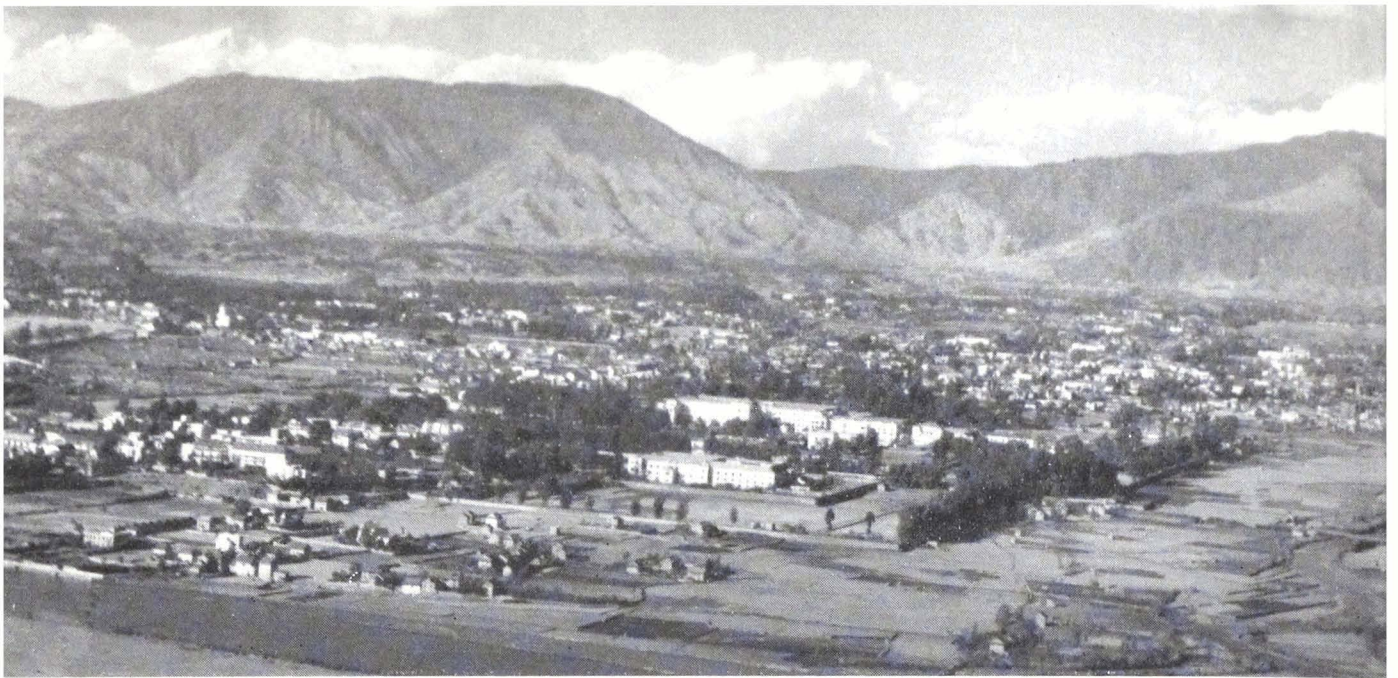
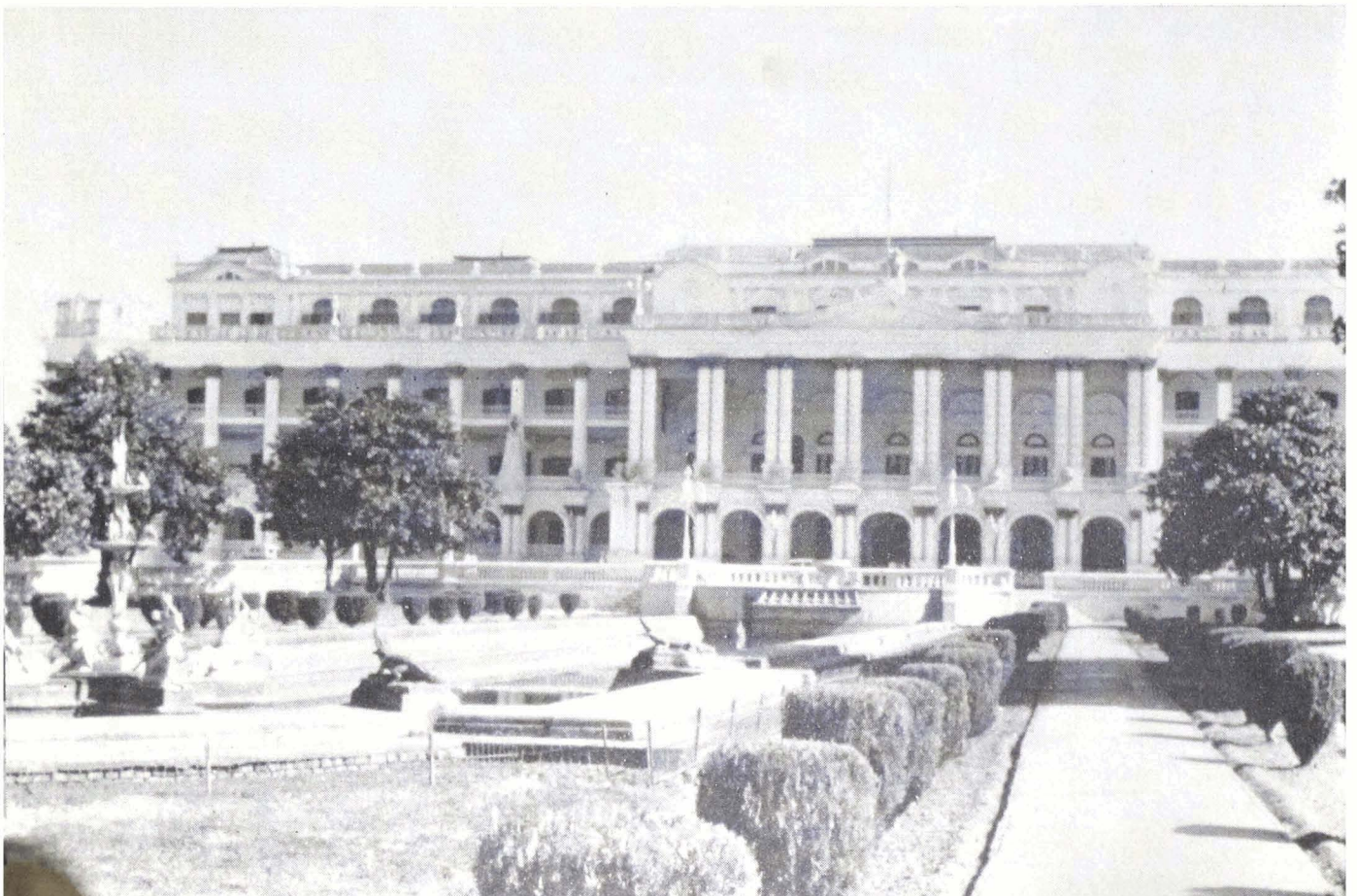


Plate 11. (*Above*) Aerial View of the Valley of Katmandu (*British Embassy, Katmandu*)

Plate 13. (*Top right*) Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness Prince Philip during their visit to Nepal in 1961, entering the historic 'Kot' at Katmandu (*Central Office of Information, London*)

Plate 14. (*Bottom right*) The Temple of Pashupati Nath (*Gregory*)

Plate 12. (*Below*) The Singha Durbar or Principal Government Building (*Myers*)



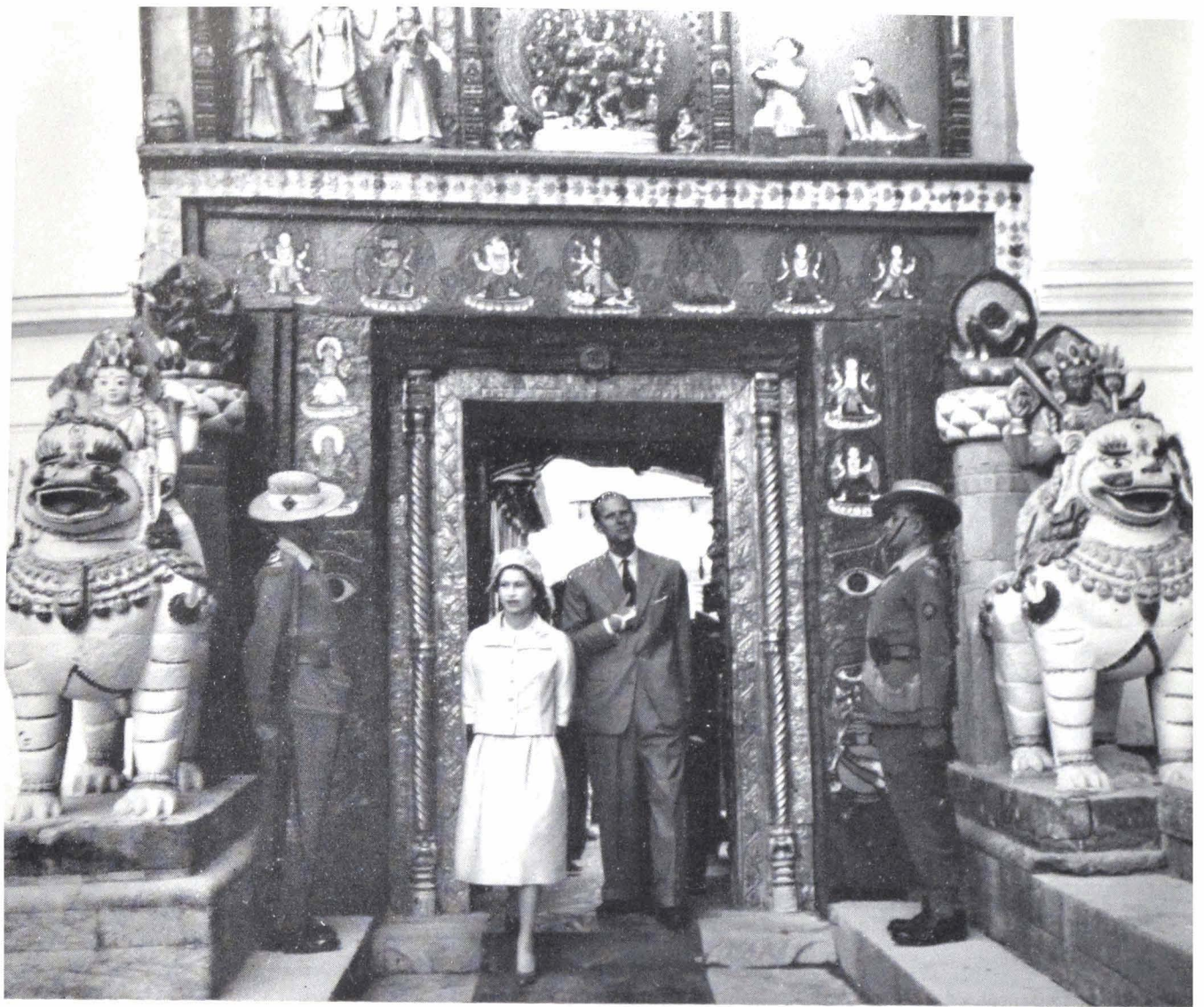




Plate 15. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is greeted by King Mahendra and Queen Ratna of Nepal on arrival at a State Banquet during her visit to Nepal, March 1961. (*Central Office of Information, London*)

Plate 16. State drive through Katmandu, following the Civic Reception given on Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's arrival in Nepal, March 1961. (*Central Office of Information, London*)



4

Religious and other customs

This chapter is mainly concerned with the important topic of religious customs and festivals but included in it will also be found a section on witchcraft and, towards the end, a few paragraphs touching on the fascinating subject of folklore. Although the religious ceremonies and customs have been described in as much detail as possible there are, of course, many variations and not all the customs described are practised universally or uniformly in the hills of Nepal. The information given in this chapter is also supplemented by further details to be found in succeeding chapters.

RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

Birth

Immediately a child is born a hen is sacrificed and the father makes a note of the time so that the Brahman may work out the horoscope. In villages where there is no watch or clock, the time is noted by the *panigari* or water clock.

On the birth of the child, the *soreni* (midwife) severs the *nal* and is given some money. She then washes herself and receives a drink of liquor. From now until the eleventh day after the child's birth the mother is ceremonially unclean and must remain in a corner of the house. In Magar and Gurung villages, where the household work would suffer, the mother does at least some of it, but on no account may she husk rice or cut grass for cows. Thread wearers observe the eleven days most strictly. In the army the father of any child born in the lines is given eleven days line leave.

The day after the birth, the father informs the Brahman of the time it occurred and the latter then casts a horoscope to determine the name of the child. On the sixth day (chhainti), the Brahman binds a thread on the father's wrist and relations and friends are invited to celebrate. On the tenth day, *gaunt*, or urine of the cow, is prepared and is carefully kept in another house for the night.

On the eleventh day (*gaunte*), the Brahman arrives in the morning and at once says prayers and sprinkles the *gaunt*, diluted with milk from the heads of seven stalks of dubo grass, round the inside of the house and over the mother, in order to purify them. Until this is done, no food touched by the mother may be eaten. Should anyone inadvertently enter the house before this ceremony has taken place, he must drink *gaunt* himself. Close relatives are invited to the *gaunte* and are feasted. The priest, attended by the father, now starts his prayers outside in the courtyard, whilst the child is kept within the house. The Brahman is paid his fee, after which he makes a round cake of cowdung and pours milk into a depression in the centre of it. This is then blessed and the child, having been brought out of the house, has its big toes dipped in this milk. This is the *nauran*, or christening, ceremony and it is considered a good omen if at this point the child cries. The Brahman first gives the child its *rasi nam*, which is the name he has determined by his horoscope. This is the child's religious and official name and is entered as such on the *Janam Patra*, or birth certificate, and it is by this name that the child, when older, is married. The child may then, in turn, be given a name by its mother and father, by its relations attending the ceremony, and also by the *soreni*. The names given by the parents are entered in the *Janam Patra*, which is preserved with very great care.

The *soreni* remains in the house throughout the eleven days. She washes and anoints the child and massages the mother. On the eleventh day, after the naming ceremony, she is presented with her fee and takes her departure. All those present then drink a little *gaunt* and milk, including the mother, who is, at this point, brought out of the corner

by the priest and is now considered to be ceremonially clean again. The night is spent in feasting and celebration.

Names

Parents who have previously lost children in infancy sometimes believe that this is due to an 'evil eye'. Accordingly, to protect the newborn child, they may try to convince the 'evil eye' that the child belongs, in fact, to a menial class and is not, therefore, worth harming. They do this by calling in a member of one of these classes and getting him to make, for the child, a metal or leather belt and by then giving to the child the name of the menial class concerned—Sarki, Chamar or Kami. An alternative safeguard is to feed the child on ceremonially unclean food and then to give it the name 'Juthe'.

Gurkha parents do not call their children by their names but, as is the usual practice in eastern countries, by the title of their seniority, e.g. *Jetho* (eldest), *Mainlo* (2nd eldest), *Sainlo* (3rd eldest) and so on. But amongst friends and acquaintances nicknames are common and these often come to be the only names used.

The sources of names are very varied. They may be drawn from any of the following; religion: Maniram—Ram's Giant; names of gods: Bishnu, Durga, Rudra, Kishan; military: Rhandhoj—champion of war; legend: Bhimbahadur, Pandhara—hero; manly virtues: Asbahadur—brave and reliant; astrology: Tula—scales, Kumbhasing—water-carrier; astronomy: Surja—Sun, Budh—Mercury; birthdays: Tike—born on Tika day; weekdays: Aitabir—born on Sunday, Sombahadur—born on Monday; or holy plants: Til—the sesame flower.

Most Gurkha names have two parts to them e.g.: Motibahadur rather than Moti, but this is not always the case. Certain endings, such as 'Man' and 'Bir', are common, and these endings can themselves be used to form names e.g. Manbir, Birman. Names compounded from both Hindi and Persian can also be used e.g. Jangbir, Bakhatbahadur. In Army documentation it is incorrect to split a compound name into two, though this practice is common in Katmandu.

For documentary and military purposes a Gurkha adds his tribe to his name. Thakurs, Chhetris and Magars, call themselves by their clan names—e.g. Jange Sahi (Thakur), Puransing Karki (Chhetri), Bhimbahadur Ale (Magar); other hill tribes do not. The custom of using titles, such as Subba, or kindred names such as Moktan, originated in Darjeeling schools.

Weaning

The next ceremony takes place, in the case of boys, after six months, and in the case of girls, after five months, and is the *bhat khulai*, or weaning, ceremony.

About a week before the ceremony is due, the father goes to the Brahman, who settles the exact day on which it is to be held. The day before the selected date, the father again visits the priest who tells him what articles he is to have ready and at what time the ceremony will begin. Those guests who were present on the eleventh day after birth, are again summoned. A meal is prepared for the child consisting of a little of all kinds of foodstuffs and including, if possible, some flesh, for preference the head of the *bhadrai chara*, a species of lark. The child is first fed by young, unmarried children, the priest stating the number, invariably odd, required for this purpose. The guests then each put a *tika* on the child's forehead, feed it with a minute quantity of the prepared food, and make a present of money. A child may not wear shoes until this ceremony has been performed.

Cheor

In the case of boys the next ceremony usually takes place when he has reached the age of five, though it may be delayed. This ceremony, known as *cheor*, is held when the boy has his hair cut for the first time. The cutting is done by the boy's maternal uncle (mama) and if he has not got one, arrangements must be made for another person to assume a 'god'-uncleship. The mama first binds the lad's hair into five knots, one above each temple and one above and behind each ear, with the fifth in the centre where a man wears his tupi (topknot). The uncle then binds a piece of gold to the scissors, lights a small cowdung lamp, and cuts

off the four corner knots. The centre knot is left and the rest of the head is then clipped, after which the child is washed by the parents. The uncle presents his nephew with a complete suit of white clothes and a pair of ear rings, and the guests, again putting a tika on the child's forehead, present money. At the conclusion of the ceremony a Brahman may be called in to say prayers. The guests are then feasted, and, if the parents' means permit, a nach (dance) is held.

Marriage

A Gurkha may have as many wives as he likes, but he may only go through the long, formal marriage ceremony once. A wife so married is a *bihaita*, while all others are *lihaita*. A generation or so ago, it was customary for a boy to be formally betrothed by his parents. Eventually he completed the marriage with all pomp and ceremony, after which, if he chose, he was at liberty to take a second wife. Child marriages are uncommon, although betrothal may be made at an early age. Nowadays, although the girl should still be begged from her parents, the betrothal ceremony is becoming less formal and is not always regarded as essential. Elopements are becoming more common and, to preserve family respect, the marriage itself must often be hastened.

Betrothal

Known by Indian domiciled Gurkhas as *mangni*, the betrothal is known in the hills as *dahi theki lagaune*. Before it can take place both horoscopes must be compared and the Janam Patra (birth certificates) must also be produced. It is normal for betrothal to take place just before a girl reaches the age of puberty and when the boy is just a little older. Both boy and girl are represented by elders and those of the boy, having given due warning, approach those of the girl in her parent's home. The boy's representatives swear on his behalf that he will be faithful, will refrain from ill-treating her, and will be a good and true husband to her. On agreement being reached, the boy gives the girl a complete suit of clothing and a gold ring, which she puts on while her father makes a statement that she is the promised bride and that he is responsible for producing her at the time of the wedding.

Should she marry another, the father must refund any expenses incurred and is also liable to punishment for 'breach of promise'.

If one of the couple dies, the other is then free to marry someone else but if it is the boy who dies, it is customary, as a matter of courtesy, for the girl's father to ask the boy's parents if they have any objections.

If a man has had several daughters who have died young, he may, to avert the evil eye, promise his daughter in marriage to a friend already married. Later the father may ask this man if he still wants the daughter and, if the reply is in the negative, she may be betrothed and married to another man.

Wedding

The most popular time for weddings is during the period from mid-January to mid-May. After consulting the horoscopes, the Brahman selects a day and the wedding procession, *janti*, sets out from the bridegroom's house, carrying him in a dooly. About 200 yards from the bride's house, the road is found to be barred by two guns placed muzzle to muzzle across it. The priest of the bride's party then arrives and sprinkles the procession with curds and rice, whilst the bride's guests bombard the procession with balls of ground rice, bananas and pieces of vegetable marrow. The priest of the procession now intervenes and asks for quarter, pointing out that they are attacking one who will soon be their own relation. The throwing thereupon ceases.

Each party has in it a *kalas bokne*, that is a man carrying a metal vessel, the kalas, on his head, and these vessels the priests now exchange. The dooly containing the bridegroom is then brought forward and slightly lowered, whilst the bride's parents take up positions either side of it and pass an 'arati' (a tray containing, amongst other articles, a small lamp) over and under it. The bride's eldest brother now carries the groom into the house, where all sit down to a meal. The groom remains slightly apart, accompanied by his 'best man', known as the bridegroom's brother or *delaha ko bhai*, and is supplied with two helpings on separate dishes. Having eaten his own share, the groom sends the second plate to his bride.

After the meal the couple are seated together on a dais, seconded by the best man, and the *gorha-dhoie*, or footwashing ceremony, takes place. The bride's guests wash the couples feet, place tika marks on their foreheads, and present the bride with money or jewellery.

By now it is late at night and the two Brahmans again combine to decide the time for the *jagiya*. This is prepared in the courtyard and consists of a piece of cloth around which are set four small poles and on which are placed various articles. For this part of the ceremony the bride's guests must remain out of sight in the house, but the bride and bridegroom, accompanied by the best man and bridesmaids, and by the bride's sisters and girl friends, gather near the *jagiya*, and at this time the younger people frequently indulge in a little horse play. While the priests are chanting prayers and singing hymns, the groom places red sindur along the hair parting of his bride, to show that she is a married woman, after which one of the priests covers her head with a white handkerchief over which the groom pours more sindur. The best man now steps forward and, drawing a sword, or *kukri*, cuts the four small poles of the *jagiya*, an act which symbolises the fate of anyone who dares to try to seduce the bride.

During the night the bridegroom's house is the scene of a *ratoli nach*, in which only women take part, and which takes the form of suggestive songs and posturings.

The following morning the groom is served with a double helping of rice and, having eaten his own share, he sends the dish to the bride. This she refuses to eat until her bridesmaids receive some forty or fifty rupees. After the meal the procession is made ready to move off. The bride's parents give her the dowry and the presents received the previous day, after which her eldest brother carries her out and places her in the dooly in which the bridegroom arrived, whilst he mounts a horse and takes up his position on her right. Having been blessed by the priest, the procession then moves off to the husband's parental home. On arrival there the groom's sister, who has been barring the door, is given a present, and the bride is carried into the house by his

mother. All present now enter the house and are entertained to a meal, followed by celebrations lasting late into the night.

On the third day the husband, accompanied only by his near relatives, takes his bride back to her parents, where she remains for that night.

Very considerable expense is incurred on normal wedding ceremonies, and a family's reputation can be greatly enhanced, or considerably damaged, by the amount of food and drink supplied to the guests. Much gunpowder is also expended in firing salutes and one party, if not both, will have hired a Damai band.

Runaway marriages are not uncommon, except amongst Brahmans, Chhetris and artisan castes. After such a marriage the husband must wait until his father-in-law sends for him and gives him his blessing, when, the boy having made obeisance, the wedding ceremony is often carried out with full ritual. In other cases, a couple who want to marry but have no money, may choose this easy way out of their difficulty.

Gurungs are generally married by Gyabrings but Magars often employ Brahmans. Most Gurkhas can marry the widow of an elder brother as a 'lihaite' wife, but Gurkhas may not touch, even in passing, the clothes of the wife of a younger brother. This is a sin and involves purification ceremonies for both parties.

Divorce

Divorce is known as *sinka pangra* or *singo dago* and is permissible by either party. The grounds for the divorce are put up to a committee of elders, who also fix the compensation to be paid. Where proof is produced that the wife has been unfaithful, no fine is levied. On grounds of incompatibility a husband is fined Rs. 40 and a wife Rs. 80.

The actual ceremony consists of the husband and wife, each in turn, breaking a twig. A thread is then tied to the little finger of both parties and when this thread is cut by a third person the divorce is complete.

In the case of seduction, a divorce is automatically given. Until some years ago it was common for the husband to cut

down the seducer of his wife with his kukri, and, though this practice is no longer permitted by law, reports of it occurring are still occasionally received. In such cases, however, pleas put forward in mitigation of punishment are often successful.

Widows and Widowers

There is nothing to stop a widower from remarrying, but a widow is not permitted to do so, though it is quite proper for her to become a member of another man's household. A man who has lost several wives through death is regarded as a *swasni-khane*, or wife-eater, and will have difficulty in obtaining further wives.

Death

Many tribes do not call in a Brahman to perform death ceremonies and the ceremonies in these cases include an animist element. Magars, however, do frequently call in a Brahman and the ceremony is then as follows.

When it is obvious that a person is dying, *sun pani* is prepared and kept ready. This should consist of sea water, though ordinary water may be substituted, in which gold has been dipped and in which a leaf of the *tulsi* plant has been placed. If it is possible to avoid it, a man is not allowed to die on his bed. The ground close by is plastered over and on this the dying man is placed. In his last moments the sun pani is placed to his lips in the name of each of his relations in turn, and the son immediately discards his headgear and everyone takes off his shoes. All those attending the funeral sit up all night.

On the following morning the corpse is washed in sun pani, dressed in clean clothes, and covered with a white shroud. The procession, or *malami*, is then formed up, led by a man carrying in one hand a forked twig, tied with a white rag, and in the other a cloth containing barley, sesam seeds and copper coins. This man must never look back. Every ten or twelve paces he drops a few of the grains on the ground, whilst the rest of the procession follows exactly in his path. On arrival at the burning ghat, more barley and sesam are cast on the ground, and there the corpse is first laid, but the

son himself moves it to the funeral pyre as soon as this has been half completed. An earthen vessel, containing milk and water, is placed nearby. The son then puts a small cake of camphor in the mouth of the corpse and lights it, but immediately extinguishes the flame with the milk and water. The pyre is then completed, being built up from the feet, and a piece of sandalwood is placed on top of it. After the priest has offered a prayer, everyone spinkles a little earth on the wood and takes up a torch. The son then lights the pyre at each corner after which all present also apply their torches, and ghee and camphor are added. The deceased's clothes, too, are burnt, and a ghee lamp is lit which, together with the earthen vessel, is left at the funeral site.

The procession now starts on its return journey which must be via a crossroads. Here one man goes ahead and with his kukri cuts a thorn of any type, which he places under a stone in the centre of the cross-roads. The remainder must now pass this spot, stepping on the stone with their left foot. They then proceed to a river where all wash and the son has the hair of his head and face shaved off. The procession now continues its return journey to the house, at a little distance from which they are met by the women, who have brought *gaunt* with them and have lit a fire. Ghee is poured over the fire and each man in the procession puts his hands into the smoke and flames and passes them over his face. Close by, the women have the *gaunt* ready and each man sips a little, sprinkles some over himself, and then leaves for his own home.

The ghost of the dead man is supposed to haunt the house and its surroundings for the following thirteen days. A friend of the son remains with him for this period, keeping close to him at all times. This friend also prevents any other living creature from coming into touch with him. The son, on rising each morning, first bathes and then cooks for himself the one meal a day he is permitted and which he must eat at midday. This food must contain no salt. Each day he divides the meal into two portions, one of which is wrapped in a leaf. Before partaking of his own meal, he places this leaf, together with some water, in the courtyard of the house or on the pathway outside.

On the eleventh day the priest is paid his fee and given a meal by the son. If the ashes of the corpse have not already been thrown into a river, a bone is removed on this day and is kept for disposal in this way at some later date.

The thirteenth, and final, day of mourning is known as *terui*. All those who attended the funeral are summoned to a meal and portions are set aside for absentees, one portion being placed at the burning ghat. His sisters prepare the son's meal, which is well salted and usually includes a fowl. He, on his part, presents them with money and clothes.

If there is a suitable river near at hand, the pyre may be built on its banks and the ashes cast into the water. If the relatives are rich enough, the corpse may be carried for some days to a particular river for this purpose. During the journey the corpse is watched over each night and the bearers eat only crushed rice.

If a son is absent from his parent's funeral, he may observe his thirteen days mourning either where he is or on his return home, and for this reason, in the Army special leave is normally given only where a death takes place in the lines.

If a childless son dies, the father performs the mourning rites. In the case of a wife, the husband does it, unless his father is still alive, in which case his father mourns. When there is no son, the rites may be performed by nephews or cousins. A child which dies before being weaned is only mourned for three days and is buried and not burnt. Only a son in mourning for his parent has his head shaved. Normal mourning lasts for six months and during this time women must wear white clothes and may not use any ornaments.

Gurungs employ Gyabrings and Lamas for funeral rites and often bury their dead. At the time of death a goat is sacrificed, and a small portion of the meat, as well as a small ball of rice, are eaten by each brother. They also cut a small piece of wood and place it at a bowshot's distance from the house.

An additional ceremony, known as *arghun*, is performed by Gurungs and Tamangs. This should be carried out between the third and thirteenth day after death but, if sufficient money is not available at the time, it may be postponed for

several years. In this ceremony a ram is selected to represent a dead man and an ewe a dead woman. This sheep is dressed up and lengthy rites are carried out. The animal is said to show the habits of the deceased: if he was a hard drinker, for instance, the sheep would appear to be drunk. The animal is seated, and offered food and spirits, and when the mourners weep, it, too, is supposed to weep. The Gyabring places two branches in the ground, tied together at the top in the shape of a hoop. A crossbar is placed in position and from this a broody hen is suspended, head downwards. Samples of all the favourite foods of the deceased are then placed round it and the relatives sit in a circle. During this time the hen will have been hanging motionless, but when the Gyabring casts rice at it, it will fly out and crash on the ground at the spot where the deceased's spirit has arrived.

The practice of using a ram or sheep to represent the deceased is now dying out and it is more usual to make an effigy of straw and plaster and dress it in the deceased's clothing. The present day ceremony is described in outline in Chapter 5.

Inheritance

The making of wills is unknown and, owing to the recognised law of inheritance, unnecessary. In the unusual event of a man wishing to leave part of his property to some person other than his direct heirs, he will inform his heirs and the village elders, officially, of such a desire, and the matter is then considered to have been legally settled.

Should a Gurkha have no son and his chances of having one be remote, he will adopt one. It is usual for the choice to fall upon a son of the brother with the most sons. The adoption is first brought to the notice of the Mukhiya and village headmen, and then officially registered at the Adda. Such an adopted son, *dharmo chhoro*, is then entitled to inherit his adopted father's possessions and, more important, is the correct person to carry out the father's obsequies.

When a man dies, his house, fields, and other property, are divided equally between all his sons. His wife has the right to remain in the house unless she goes off with another man,

and his unmarried daughters are the responsibility of the brothers.

Should there be no sons, and as women have no right of inheritance, the estate goes to the nearest male heir, normally a brother or nephew. Doubtful cases are settled by the village panchayat, from whose judgment appeal can be made only to the Central Government.

FESTIVALS

Magh Sankranti

This marks the end of winter, and occurs on the 1st of Magh (about mid-January). Near relations are summoned to a meal, which must include *khicheri*—spiced rice cooked in ghee. In the Army, one day's holiday is given.

Basant Panchami

This festival, held in honour of spring, falls in the months of January or February, and in the Army a day's holiday is given.

Shivaratri

Is held in February or March and, as its name implies, is a festival in honour of Shiva. It commemorates the occasion when he opened his eyes after long meditation and is celebrated by fasting during the day and by a feast at night. In many places, too, fairs are held on this day. One day's holiday is allowed for this festival.

Holi

Holi, a two-day holiday, has very much less significance in Nepal than in India, and in some parts of the country there are no celebrations. It takes place on the full moon of the month of Phagun (February to March), and is in honour of Krishna. Legends accounting for Holi are many, but the one most commonly accepted by Gurkhas is that there was an evil Raja, by name Hiranyakashipu, who had a sister, Holika, and a young son, Parlad. To the annoyance of the father, Parlad was continually calling upon the name of Vishnu and, in spite of threats and punishments, continued to do so. The father ordered an iron pole to be made red

hot, and Parlad to be bound to it. The boy, on approaching the pole, saw an ant walking on it, and taking this to be a sign from Vishnu, he clasped the pole to him without harm. As Parlad still invoked the name of the god, his father ordered a large fire to be built and commanded his sister to sit in the fire holding the boy. Although the girl was burnt to death, the boy again escaped unhurt, but to protect him against further ordeals Vishnu assumed the form of Marsing and killed the wicked Raja.

To mark the occasion, a fruit tree with a straight trunk and branches and which, when dressed, is round in shape, is selected. In the evening, after puja has been made, the tree is cut down and on the following morning is moved to a selected site where, after the branches have been dressed with innumerable small pieces of coloured cloth, it is planted in a hole. A much smaller tree, said to represent Parlad, is then bound to it. On the fourth day coloured powder is sprinkled on the tree and on the following day it is sprinkled on all and sundry. In the Army, however, it is normally an offence to throw powder on anyone wearing uniform. On the seventh day the priest sets fire to the larger tree, snatching out the smaller one, which he dips in water. As the tree falls in flames, spectators rush to grab the pieces of cloth, which are then worn as talismans to ward off evil. The ashes of the tree are collected and thrown into houses.

Chait Dasain

This one-day festival, for which no holiday is permitted in the Army, occurs in the month of Chait and is a day of great celebrations in the hills, particularly for the younger folk, who dance throughout the night.

Ram Nawami

Chait Dasain is followed immediately by Ram Nawami, which celebrates the birthday of Ram. In the Army one day's holiday is granted.

Nag Panchami

This is a festival for which a holiday is not given in the Army. It occurs in late July, before the outbreak of the real monsoon,

and marks a period when, unless the need is very great, new projects should not be launched nor journeys undertaken. People hang up pictures of cobras, which have been blessed, and the day is dedicated to Vishnu. All debts must be paid up before Nag Panchami, a custom similar to that of Chinese New Year's Day, and normally considerable efforts are made to do so, because, if the debt is not paid before Nag Panchami, the creditor will not accept payment until after the following Mangsir, by which time interest will have considerably increased the size of the debt.

Sansari Mai Puja

A holiday is given for this festival, which takes place in April–May. Money, rice and firewood, are offered to the Goddess Kali for protection from smallpox. These offerings are not, however, collected from any house in which a pregnant woman is living.

Sawan Sankranti

This festival occurs at the end of July and is celebrated by a feast to which near relations are summoned and at which khir (sweetened rice boiled in milk) must be eaten. The feast is a last gathering before the monsoon really starts and travel becomes virtually impossible.

Rikhi Tarpan

Coming in August, this festival is also known as 'Janai Purne'. It is the day on which the holy cord, worn by thread-wearers, must be replaced and is therefore more particularly observed by Brahmans, Thakurs and Chhetris. The thread is first blessed by an Upaddhe Brahman, after which it may be presented by any Brahman. Non thread-wearers have the cord tied round their right wrists and make a monetary return to the priest. The cord is retained until Dewali. Thread-wearers take sufficient threads to last them throughout the year, so that they can be replaced when worn out or when they become ceremonially unclean, such as after attending a funeral.

Janam Astami

This day is in celebration of the birth of Krishna and occurs on the eighth day after the full moon of Bhadau (August to

September). Images of Krishna are made and worshipped, and priests perform the birth ceremonies. The day is observed as a fast, although *phalar*, food that does not require the washing of hands for its preparation, may be eaten. The night is passed in dancing and celebration.

Tij

This festival is a continuation of Janam Astami and, coming eleven days after it, represents the ceremonial cleansing of Krishna's mother after his birth. It is therefore a women's festival, which they observe by fasting during the day and, in the evening, and after puja, by holding a dance to which men are not invited.

Sora Sarad

This period begins eleven days after Tij and lasts for sixteen days. Ancestor worship takes place and oblations are offered to deceased parents.

Dashera

Dashera, the most important festival of the Gurkhas' year, and called, by them, Dasain, is a soldiers' festival in honour of Durga, Goddess of War. It takes place at the new moon of Asoj (September to October) and lasts for ten days. In Western Nepal most Thums or parishes have a 'kot' where the major functions of Dashera are observed. In Eastern Nepal, however, where the houses of a village are far more scattered, these functions are usually carried out at some suitable place, often the mukhiya's house in the village, since the kot as such does not exist.

On the first day, known as *Jamare Aunsi* or *Naurata Aunsi*, the priest sows barley or rice in the temple, in a dark place to encourage its growth, and close by prepares a shrine at which are collected kukris, konras and other weapons, which he ceremonially blesses.

The next day of importance is *Phulpati*, when the whole community marches in procession to fetch the *phulpati*, which consists of leaves, vegetables, fruit and flowers. The cavalcade is led by a band, followed by a 'kalas-bokne' escorted by the men bearing the sacrificial kukris (*konras*) and swords.

Attendants also carry yaks' tails, kindling material for the holy fire, curds and other necessary articles. Behind this comes a guard, equipped with an assortment of fire-arms which they fire frequently in salute. The Guard is followed by a choir, singing seasonal hymns, and by the nach (dance) party, behind whom come the entire population of the area. On arrival at the chosen spot, a mound of earth about 2½ feet high, gently tapering from a base of some 2 feet in diameter, is erected. The officiating priest and his assistants, chatting the while, and with acolytes in attendance, prepare an altar, tracing symbols on the ground with curds, flour, rice and flowers. A sacred fire is lit and prayers are offered. In the meantime, close at hand, the nach party dances and sings, the choir chants and the band plays. On the appearance of a party which had previously been despatched to collect the phulpati, a goat is sacrificed and the phulpati is blessed. The procession then reforms, each member carrying small green branches, and the phulpati is escorted to the kot.

The eighth day is *Kalratri*, and in the early evening the whole population gather at the *kot* for celebrations lasting throughout the night. While the priest and his assistants perform the necessary puja, the nach party entertains the crowd. At about midnight a goat is sacrificed, and then, as the half moon disappears, a buffalo is decapitated and the rest of the night is spent in merrymaking.

The ninth day is known as *Balidan*, *Mar*, or *Naumi*, and is the day of sacrifice. After the necessary prayers have been said, buffaloes are sacrificed in numbers according to the custom and affluence of the village. Special goats, presented by individuals, are decapitated at the pile of arms in the kot, and others, bought out of common funds and numbering possibly forty or fifty, are let loose in an area and are cut down by any man or boy who wishes to show his dexterity with a kukri or sickle. Anyone who fails to strike the head cleanly off with one blow is greeted with jeers and catcalls and quickly has his face and body smeared with the blood of his unfortunate victim. The men who slay the buffaloes are specially selected for the task and are rewarded by the senior man present, normally the mukhiya, with gifts of money

and a white pagri. Their success ensures a prosperous and propitious year for the assembly, and is acclaimed by cheering, clapping, salutes from every fire-arm available, and with much noise from the band. On their return home, many sacrifice goats with which to feast their friends and, with the blood, make an impression of a hand over their doorways.

The tenth, and last, day is *Tika* and is considered of great importance. The priest cuts the barley sown on the first day, and presents small tufts to individuals, on whom he also places the *maula ko tika* or special caste mark of the occasion. The rest of the day is spent in visiting relatives and in giving, and receiving, tikas and presents. In the evening the phulpati, together with various other articles, such as the baskets in which the barley has been grown, are ceremonially escorted from the kot to a nearby stream into which, after another goat has been sacrificed, they are cast.

In the Army only the following days of Dashera are celebrated as holidays:

Jamare Aunsi
Phulpati
Kalratri
Mar
Tika

Tewar

The last of the annual festivals to be described is Tewar, known in India as Dewali, which takes place in Kartik (October to November). It lasts for five days and each day has a special name and a special object for worship. These are the crow (Kag Tewar), the dog (Kukur Tewar), the cow (Gai Tewar), the ox (Goru Tewar), and the brother (Bhai Tewar).

On the first day, and before the morning meal is eaten, rice is thrown to the crows and in the evening a lamp is burnt at the spot where the dirty dishes are washed and the crows gather. On the second day, dogs are given a special meal in the morning and are garlanded and marked with a tika. In the evening a lamp is placed at each side of the entrance to the house. On the third day, cows receive

special favours, whilst the holy cords tied round the wrist on Rikhi Tarpan are cut off and tied to the cows' tails. In the evening special prayers are offered to Lachhmi, goddess of wealth, and parties of children visit houses chanting 'bhai lo, bhai lo', and receive alms. On the fourth day, special favours are paid to oxen and in the evening parties go from house to house chanting 'deosire, deosire', and receive gifts of food and drink.

Bhai Tewar is the most important day of the Festival and on this day every man must visit his sister. If he has no blood sister he must find an adopted or god-sister, for it is she who performs the Bhai Tika ceremony. A carpet, on which are plates containing various fruits, sweets and nuts, and also vases of flowers and other articles, including a tray containing small bowls of coloured powders, is placed in front of the seated brother. His sister, sitting in front of him, lights the incense, scatters flowers over his knees, shoulders and head, chants the necessary prayers, and passes the incense round him. Having anointed his head with oil, she breaks a walnut invoking a special magic against his enemies. The nut, sweets and currants, are placed in his hand and, after he has eaten them, he is presented with a coconut. His sister puts a little water into the bowls of coloured powder and mixes each into a separate paste. She places some of each colour, in turn, on her right thumb and, starting in the centre between his eyebrows, and finishing at the hairline, she affixes tikas to her brother's forehead. Her blessing ends the ceremony. That night every house is decorated, from courtyard to rooftop, with many small lights—a pleasing and beautiful spectacle.

Gambling, which is strictly prohibited at all other times, takes place openly during Tewar, both in the villages and in the Army.

Sat Narain Puja

This is not an official holiday but is a thanksgiving service which can be performed at any time. Some religiously minded people carry it out monthly; some after the granting of a prayer; some after a safe return from a journey; and so on.

The ceremony lasts for one day during which the principal worshipper and the officiating priest must fast. An altar is constructed in the courtyard, at which prayers are offered up and religious passages are read out.

Pani Patiya

This ceremony of absolution, or purification from defilement caused by going overseas, can only be sanctioned by the Raj Guru and is limited to those who have not exposed themselves to unnecessary defilement. It lasts for five days, the first of which is a day of complete fasting. Thereafter the quantity of rice which may be eaten is increased daily until it reaches a normal ration.

Bhor Patiya

This is somewhat similar to the above and is necessitated by unintentional contact with low caste individuals.

WITCHCRAFT

The Gurkha has a strong belief in the witches, wizards and spirits, which are so numerous in his mythology. The ordinary wizard is known as *bokso* and a witch as *boksi*. It is no longer permitted to beat to death those suspected of witchcraft, but the exorcising of evil spirits is still practised.

A man who has been bewitched will fall to the ground insensible and can be saved only with difficulty. He must be held by five others, four of them grasping his thumbs and big toes and the fifth the tupi on his head. Ground chillis are put in his mouth and nose, and a heated piece of metal is placed against his skin. This, it is said, will produce burns not on him but on the witch. Witches often cast their spells on young children and the parents must then carry out a special ceremony which varies according to the advice of the exorcist at the time. It may be necessary to go to a particular place at night and there, after scattering rice on the ground, to liberate a young hen. This hen will immediately be carried off by the evil spirit, which will appear in the form of a jackal. A more common form is to sacrifice, after dark and after

appropriate ceremonies, a black and white cock, the head and blood of which are left for the spirit. At night some spirits uproot clumps of bamboo and lay them across footpaths as a trap for the unwary, but these clumps are always replanted before dawn. Because of the danger from spirits it is considered advisable, at night, to travel in parties, carrying torches and singing.

Nearly all sorcerers have a familiar which may take the form of a cat or a porcupine. These familiars, known as *chaura*, raid fields at night to find food for their master. Should a *chaura* be wounded, or captured and tied up, its protector will suffer a similar fate; if it is killed, its master will also die.

Wizards are of various kinds. Some, like the *gurau*, can turn themselves into animals at will; the *ulte* or *sankutte* has his feet turned backwards and is completely covered with hair; the *banjhankri* lives in dense jungle and carries his victims to his lair, occasionally releasing them later. Other wizards are fond of casting a spell on someone and then challenging a priest to exorcise it. A wizard will not, however, normally interfere with someone who knows them for what they are and a practised priest, with the aid of a bamboo divining rod, is generally able to detect them.

After a death, when a house is being ceremonially purified, the celebrant, and the occupants and their friends, using plates and dishes, scoop all the air from inside the house, out through the main door. Burning paper, or jets of kerosene, are also sometimes used to burn the air inside the house, and gongs or tin cans are beaten, conches blown, and much shouting goes on. This frightens the dead man's spirit and drives it outside. Often a bamboo framework structure is made, around which is wound a complicated maze of strings, forming symmetrical patterns. Into this is placed an effigy, made of dough, money, flowers, coloured paper and rags, which represents the evil spirit. A small offering of food is also put in the cage which is then taken some distance from the house and placed near a cross roads. Confused by the maze of strings and by the roads, the spirit is unable to find its way back to the house and so is removed for ever. The

cage may, however, also be disposed of by being burnt or thrown into a river.

To cure the sick, the exorcist, who is usually a man and who is paid for his services, goes into a trance, shivering and intoning incantations in a falsetto voice. Sometimes during the trance, he will whittle a piece of bamboo, a wooden stick, or a large feather, and ask questions of the spirit. The shavings fall to the ground and according to their disposition the questions are answered in the affirmative or negative. A male kid, chick, duckling or squab, is sacrificed. It is killed by a blow on the head with a stick, with no loss of blood, or a tap on the head with a finger, or its head is cut off with a kukri. Sometimes a vein is opened so that the offering bleeds to death. The animal is not killed until it has given its assent by nodding and if it is slow in doing so a few drops of water poured on its head normally accelerate matters. The sick person may be connected to the sacrificial animal by a cord so that, when magic incantations have driven the evil spirit out of the patient, it will enter the body of the animal. This is said to cause its death.

Those claiming to be able to exorcise evil spirits, keep their powers secret and only pass them on to those of their children who seem especially receptive. There are, however, some people in whom this special ability is believed to be innate.

The principal kinds of exorcists are:

Bijuwa—employed mainly by Rais and Limbus. The exorcist can be of either tribe, but is usually from the former. It is said that Bijuwa and Jhankri are the same.

Phedangma—chiefly employed by Limbus and is almost invariably a Limbu. But may occasionally be employed by Rais.

Jhankri—employed by Gurungs and Magars, but sometimes by Tamangs, Thamis, Sunwars, Limbus and Rais. Can be from any of the above tribes, but is seldom a Limbu. The Jhankri performs a dance step which, to look at, is not unlike a form of hop-scotch.

Dhami—normally employed by the higher castes, such as Brahman and Chhetri, but may also be used by other tribes and may be a Tamang or a Rai. The Dhami normally beats out a rhythm on a tambourine-like drum (dengro) and mutters night-long prayers and incantations.

Gyabring—not a true exorcist, but is employed by Gurungs and is himself a Gurung.

Lama—also in a different category from those mentioned above; but is included here as many of his ceremonies are similar to theirs, in particular those of a post-mortem nature and those connected with illness. In driving an evil spirit from a sick person he uses the metempsychotic method. He is a Buddhist, and is employed by Gurungs, Tamangs, and Sherpas.

Mun—employed by Lepchas, and may be a Lepcha of either sex. The methods used differ from those of all other types noted above.

The dress adopted by exorcists for ceremonies varies, but is sometimes a full length flared smock, a one-fold pagri with long feathers, and a mask. If a mask is not worn the face may be concealed by being blackened. Sometimes, too, a long iron trident, or *trisul*, is carried.

FOLKLORE

Snakes

To see a snake eating its prey is a sign that a relative is about to die. If it is seen before midday the relationship is close. During the month of Kartik (October to November) a snake must not be referred to as 'Sarp' or 'Sanp' but only as 'Ghisarne'—the crawler, or as 'Lamkira'—the long one. Illness at home is presaged by a snake crossing the path when coming from the house.

Common beliefs are that a snake's bite does not have a poisonous effect until the tail has been erected; that after a snake has been killed the poison will keep the tail alive for some time; and that a decapitated snake can aim its head to inflict a bite.

Astrological

The moon once came to the earth, bought seventeen pairs of shoes from a sarki, and ran away without paying. The sarki is still chasing her and an eclipse shows that he has caught hold of her. When this occurs the whole village turns out to watch, the sarkis shouting 'bal ghar bhai'—'make an effort, brother'—in encouragement and the rest banging trays, twisting dogs ears and making all sorts of noises, to frighten him.

In the month of Sawan (July to August) it is inauspicious to carry out marriage ceremonies.

Animals

If a gun-dog dies or is shot on account of old age or disease, it must be buried at the meeting point of three paths. Puja must be made and a white cloth and a pellet bow must be provided. Failure to observe this ritual will lead to sickness in the household, either amongst the people or the cattle.

The keeping of three cows or three bullocks is unlucky. Should one of four die, another must be got rid of or a fourth obtained. Plague will result if a deer is chased into a village and killed there. Donkeys always bray at quarter hours. No beast of prey will eat a corpse lying towards the north. To be startled by a cat may well prove fatal.

Human Beings

In a dream a man in white clothes means a death. Dreams of beatings mean sickness, while dreams of sickness mean health and happiness. The left eye twitching is a sign of bad dreams to come.

When discussing the non-appearance of an expected person, it is most auspicious for him if he appears just as it has been decided not to discuss the matter further.

Hair must not be cut on the day of the week of one's birth nor on a Saturday.

Fleas are drawn to certain people more than to others because some skins have a particular quality which is attractive to these bugs.

If a man or animal has been hit in the throat and is about to die, life can be saved by the striker blowing on his fingers, and it is believed that blowing on the fingers averts evil.

It is inauspicious to leave home for a journey on a Saturday or to arrive home on a Tuesday. If the matter is really urgent, a short journey must be made on Friday and some necessary article must be left at a friend's house in the direction of the proposed journey. The article may then be collected on Saturday morning and the journey started from that point.

Each person has one poisonous finger nail, which varies with individuals, and this accounts for only some scratches becoming septic. The bruised sole of a foot is cured by stamping seven times on an immovable stone.

Clothes bought on a Monday will be burnt. When it is necessary to circumvent this, a piece of fluff should be pulled out and cast on the fire.

To go out shooting with *tin nali banduk* (i.e. three single-barrel guns or one single and one double-barrel) will result in no bag. If necessary two parties should set off out of sight of each other and join up later.

A pencil mark on the skin will prove fatal should an earthquake occur.

Three kinds of meat must not be cooked together.

A man cannot be bewitched while he is suffering from prickly heat.

Eight is an unlucky number for a party.

Offering khorsani (chilli) by hand is to ask for a quarrel.

5

Gurungs

The Gurung is of Mongolian descent but his precise origin, like that of the other Gurkha tribes, remains unknown. Except in Eastern Nepal, he speaks his own tribal language, Gurungkura, which he calls Tamakiu. This is of the Tibeto-Burmese group and is more closely connected with Tibetan than any other Himalayan dialect. In form and vocabulary, however, it differs from place to place.

The life of the Gurung is agricultural and pastoral. He comes from the highlands in the eastern and northern parts of Central Nepal: from No. 1 West, from Gorkha in No. 2 West, from Tanhu, Kaski and Lamjung in No. 3 West, from No. 4 West and in particular from the well-known Andhi Khola area. There are also some large Gurung settlements in Eastern Nepal.

The ancient kings of the Gurung had their strongholds in Ghandrung, Kaski and Lamjung, but as in the case of the other hill tribes of Nepal, there is no written record of Gurung history and what is known is based largely on myth. One story refers to an old Gurung settlement in Ghandrung, under the suzerainty of the Raja of Kaski, who allowed them to continue with their own customs, much as they do to this day. Although now officially a Hindu, the Gurung at home still makes little use of the services of a Brahman but calls in a Lama or Gyabring for all priestly functions and may also employ a Jhankri.

The Gurung tribe is divided into two distinct divisions, known respectively as the *Char Jat* and the *Sora Jat*. The Char Jat, as its name implies, is divided into four clans—

Ghale (Klemai in Gurungkura), *Ghotane* (Konwai), *Lamchhane* (Leme) and *Lama* (Lammai), the latter not to be confused with the Tibetan term for a priest or the alternative name of the Tamang tribe. Each of these clans is divided into a large number of kindreds. The Sora Jat is divided into kindreds only and there is now no trace of the group of sixteen clans from which the Division takes its name.

There were once great social differences between the two main divisions and between the clans and kindreds, the Ghale being considered superior to the other Char Jats and the Char Jats superior to the Sora Jats. These differences are, however, fast disappearing and, though a Char Jat may not marry within his clan nor a Sora Jat within his kindred, and though certain other rules are still observed, marriages between Char Jats and Sora Jats are now commonplace. Not so long ago the Gurung form of cross-cousin marriage, that is between a man and the daughter of his father's sister or mother's brother, was considered most desirable, if not essential, but nowadays a much wider choice is allowed.

The Ghales are said to be descended from an old royal family that held sway in the district of Lamjung. A Thakur king once asked the king of Lamjung for his daughter's hand in marriage. The Ghale king accepted the proposal and sent a young and beautiful maiden to the Thakur king, who married her. Some years later it transpired that this young maiden was no king's daughter but merely a slave attendant. The Thakur thereupon sent an angry message threatening war unless the real daughter was sent. The king of Lamjung this time complied, and the Thakur king had three sons by her. From these sons are said to be descended the Ghotane, Lamchhane and Lama clans. It was then ruled that these three clans should rank equal to the Ghale and that together they should be known as the Char Jat. The descendants of the slave mother were called Sora Jat and were forever to be the servants of the others. It would appear from this story that the Ghale is the oldest and purest of all Gurungs.

Most Gurungs make very little fuss about what they eat. Ghales, however, will not touch goat or eggs and there are

restrictions concerning mutton. Buffalo flesh is a great favourite in the hills and is essential on certain ceremonial occasions there, but away from the hills few Gurungs will touch it. No Gurung will eat domestic pig. Contact with a pig defiles him and necessitates a purifying ceremony. On the other hand wild pig, which is considered to have no relationship to the domestic animal, and has an entirely different name, is relished.

Since the Ghale must select his wife from another clan, Ghale blood is now well mixed with that of other Gurungs. The Ghale strongholds, in eastern Lamjung and northern Gorkha, are shared with the Tamangs, and Ghales have much intermarried with this tribe.

The Gyabring is a kindred of the Sora Jat (sub-divided into Koke, Ku, Mojai, Mobjai, Pru, Sil, Siuri and Tu). Untrained, the Gyabring is the same as any other Gurung; trained, he provides the priests of the Sora Jat, is employed for ceremonial purposes by the Char Jat, and claims medical skill. The training of a Gyabring priest takes some two years which he spends apprenticed to a Guru or teacher. He passes some of his nights in graveyards, communing with ghosts and witches, and eventually takes a final test in which supernatural spirits play a large part.

Despite much research into Gurung kindreds, a great deal remains to be done. The two main difficulties are the duplication caused by having Gurungkura and Gurkhali names for the same kindreds, e.g. Darlami and Plen, Chenwari and Pachron, and by the wide variety of pronunciations to be found. In the past, too, Tamangs enlisting as Gurungs have used their own kindred names, thus incorrectly adding Tamang names, like Moktan and Tidung, to the list of Gurung kindreds.

The sources of kindred names vary. The Tute, for instance, are said to take their name from a small boy, the only survivor of a landslip, who was found and adopted by a Lamchhane and given this name to signify 'broken and rugged'; the Plohne believe they are the descendants of another boy, found abandoned in some reeds; and the Taikron are said to have originated in the village of Taik, '-ron' being an

ending meaning 'come down from'. Significantly some Char Jat and Sora Jat kindreds have very similar names, e.g. Pachron, Michiron, Pochron (Char Jat) and Pachu, Mighi and Poju (Sora Jat), which throws some doubt on the traditional origin of these two sub-divisions.

Gurung dress has many local variations, but is in general similar to the normal dress of Central Nepal. One peculiarity of the Gurung is the 'rup', a yellow cord worn round the neck. In the case of men it has nine strands and nine knots and in the case of women it has seven. It is used to ward off evil spirits and misfortune, and is placed around the neck by the mother. It is discarded when leaving for service outside Nepal.

The age of a Gurung can be assessed more accurately than is the case with other Gurkha tribes. This is because he has adopted, from Tibet, a time cycle of twelve years known as 'barkha' or 'bargha'. Each bargha is given the name of an animal or bird, and a Gurung will usually know the name of the bargha in which he was born. The Chinese have a similar twelve-year time cycle and use the names of the same animals and birds. The table is as under:

<i>English</i>	<i>Gurkhali</i>	<i>Gurung</i>	<i>Years of birth</i>				
Deer	Mirga	Pho-lo	1911	1923	1935	1947	1959
Rat	Musa	Chu-lo	1912	1924	1936	1948	1960
Cow	Gai	Lon-lo	1913	1925	1937	1949	1961
Tiger	Bagh	Tho-lo	1914	1926	1938	1950	1962
Cat	Biralo	Hen-lo	1915	1927	1939	1951	1963
Vulture	Garud	Mupri-lo	1916	1928	1940	1952	1964
Snake	Sarpa	Sapri-lo	1917	1929	1941	1953	1965
Horse	Ghora	Ta-lo	1918	1930	1942	1954	1966
Sheep	Bhenra	Lu-lo	1919	1931	1943	1955	1967
Monkey	Bhandar	Pra-lo	1920	1932	1944	1956	1968
Bird	Chara	Chia-lo	1921	1933	1945	1957	1969
Dog	Kukur	Khi-lo	1922	1934	1946	1958	1970

Gurung death ceremonies differ from those of other tribes and the corpse may be buried or cremated dependant on local custom or on omens at the time. After members of the mother's clan have made ritual gifts of cloth to members of the family, the officiating Lama dedicates gifts from absentees and those which have been provided by someone else in their

name. A procession then forms up, led by the *anla* bearer. The *anla* is a long pole, or piece of bamboo, to the top of which flowers are attached by a piece of white cloth. The bearer is followed by the chief mourners, all holding on to another long strip of white cloth. When the body is cremated there is little variation from the ritual practised throughout Nepal and described earlier. When it is to be buried, and before the grave is dug and the body interred, the procession must circle the area of ground considered auspicious by the Lama. In the evening baked meats and special drinks are consumed and the mourners are suitably entertained.

The final ceremony, on the death of a male Gurung, is the 'Arghun'. Whilst peculiar to the Gurung, it has some similarity to the ceremonies of the Tamangs and to those of Sikkim and Bhutan. The background is thus Tibetan Buddhism. The ceremony, which varies from place to place, is not, as was once thought, a secret one, and detailed descriptions of it are now becoming available. It is, chiefly by reason of the quantity of refreshments which have to be provided for the guests, a very expensive undertaking, and, in order to accumulate money for it, it may have to be postponed for several years, though it must eventually be done. One Arghun may, however, suffice for more than one dead person. The ceremony is conducted by a Lama, with assistant Jhankris, and lasts for three days. The first is spent mainly in preparations, and it is the second day which is of the greatest importance. A *pla*, or effigy of the deceased, is made, which may be either a purely symbolical construction of white cloth and leaves, or a life size plaster figure, not resembling the deceased but dressed in his best clothes and wearing any decorations that he may have had. Buffaloes, goats and sheep, are sacrificially slaughtered to provide food for all and the night is spent in drinking and dancing. On the third day, the clothing having first been removed, the *pla* is broken up and thrown over a cliff.

6

Magars

Magars inhabit, in general, that part of Central Nepal which is to the south of the Gurung country, but, west of the River Kali, in the tahsil of Gulmi, the Gurung disappears, and the Magars extend their territory north to the flanks of the Himalayan range. Like the Gurung, colonies of them are to be found all over Nepal. They total nearly one-third of the population of the whole country and a half of that of Central and Western Nepal, and are one-and-a-half times as numerous as the Gurung. Of their early history little is known, but it appears probable that they have lived near Palpa from very early times. They first came into prominence about the year A.D. 1100 when Makunda Sen, the Magar king of Palpa and Batoli, invaded and conquered the Nepal Valley, committing terrible atrocities there during the reign of Hari Deva, the King of the Valley.

Owing to the geographical position of their country, the Magars were among the first of the Nepalese tribes to receive immigrants from the plains of India. Their customs, particularly their religious ceremonies and observances, therefore conform more closely to those of orthodox Hindus than do those of other tribes. They use Brahmans in many priestly duties while still requiring their own Magar Jhankris for others. In appearance it is seldom possible to distinguish a well-bred Magar from a Gurung, but small differences, peculiar to certain Magar tribes, are sometimes discernible. Inter-marriage between Magars and Gurungs is rare. The tribal language, Magarkura, coming from the Tibeto-Burmese group, is spoken by the people of Palpa and Nos. 2,

3 and 4 West; but is not so common in Gulmi and further west, and is never spoken by the real Puns. Unlike Gurungkura, it does not vary in form from one area to another.

Magars do not, on the whole, have many prejudices about what they may or may not eat, but, unlike the Gurung, they will not touch buffalo meat. On the other hand, they breed and eat the domestic pig.

The great proportion of the original Chhetris were probably the progeny of Brahmans or Rajputs, and Magar women. Amongst the Magar kindreds we find high born names such as Surjabansi and Rajbansi, names unknown amongst Gurungs. At the time of the Moslem invasions of India the immigrant Brahmans gave to those hill people who were converted to their faith, the right to wear the sacred thread. Some clans, as for instance the Gharti, the Rana and the Thapa, are thus found in both the Magar and Chhetri tribes.

Before the arrival of the Rajputs the Magar nation probably consisted of twelve 'Thams', the members of each supposedly being of common extraction in the male line. Each Tham was governed by a chief, considered to be the head of this common family. The country in which these people lived was known as the Bara Magranth and they came, in due course, to be known as Bara Magranth Magars, a description which has now nearly disappeared. It was used to denote a Magar from these districts and not any particular set of clans. Some records show these twelve areas as being Argha, Gulmi, Isma, Musikot, Khanchi, Ghiring, Rising, Bhirkot, Payung, Garhung, Dhor and Satung, but it is probable that some of the latter places should have been excluded in favour of Palpa, Galkot, Dhurkot, Char Hajar Parbat and even Piuthan and Sallyan.

There are seven clans of the Magar tribe and all are officially of equal social standing. They are the *Ale*, *Bura* or *Burathoki*, *Gharti*, *Pun*, *Rana*, *Roka* and *Thapa*. The clans will intermarry but a daughter cannot marry into her parents' kindred. The cross-cousin marriage opposite to the Gurung, that is with the daughter of the maternal aunt or paternal

uncle, once considered most desirable, is now losing its popularity.

The Ale clan is small and comes mostly from Bhirkot and Palpa, but may also be found in Tanhu, Gorkha and Rising. Its members are normally very fair skinned and of good physique.

The Bura are pastoral and live in Sallyan, Piuthan and north-west Gulmi. Including those in the north of Western Nepal, this clan is probably slightly larger than the Ale.

The Gharti come from the same areas as the Bura. Before the general abolition of slavery in 1927, freed slaves who were then without caste were allowed to call themselves Gharti and to intermarry with that clan. This practice continued after 1927, the newly emancipated slaves being given the caste name of Shiva Bhakti. There is, then, a considerable amount of mixed blood within the Gharti clan, and for this reason, they are not in great demand as recruits. The Bhujel Gharti, who come from the Bhuji Kholra area of north-west Char Hajar Parbat, consider themselves the elite of the clan.

The Pun, who makes up about one-fifth of the whole Magar tribe, are the second largest of the Magar clans. There is, however, some evidence pointing to the probability of there being two separate types of Pun. One type is to be found living in Gulmi and the West, in the same areas as the Bura and the Gharti; the other inhabits the mountainous country on either side of the upper reaches of the Kali River, in the Char Hajar Parbats of Gulmi and No. 4 West, that is the country just below that of the Thakali, whom they in some respects resemble. The first type of Pun are of shorter stature than the average Gurkha and normally below average intelligence, though they are tough fighting men. They speak Gurkhali and a language of their own known as Kamkura. The second type are slimmer and taller, and have the fairest skins of any of the Magar clans. Like all other Puns, they do not speak Magarkura.

Pun youths used to grow their hair long and curling but this custom is fast dying out. Owing to the difficulty of producing rice in the high country, their staple diet is barley and,

unlike other Magar clans, the Pun will eat buffalo meat but not the domesticated pig, which he considers unclean. Their tribal priests are Lamas and are trained in Buddhist Lamaism.

To the north of Char Hajar Parbat in Gulmi, live a tribe called Chantel who were originally communities of quarry workers and their village names therefore often end in '-khani' (quarry). Men from this tribe frequently enlist as Puns but they are, on the whole, physically below the standard of the true Pun.

Although the Rana clan is recruited in almost as large numbers as the Pun, it is numerically smaller. Coming mostly from Bhirkot, Palpa and Gulmi, its members are often of comparatively dark complexion though the average Rana has fine features. Traditionally any Magar who had ancestors of three generations killed in battle, could become a Rana.

The Roka is the smallest of all the Magar clans and is to be found only in Piuthan and eastern Gulmi. The Magar Roka is often a larger and fairer skinned man than his neighbours, the Buras and Ghartis, and is normally more intelligent.

The Thapa is the largest clan of the Magar tribe and whilst most numerous in Palpa, is to be found all over the country, particularly in Bhirkot, Tanhu and Gulmi. Not only does this large clan vary greatly in type but its name has been taken by many not entitled to use it. The purest type of Thapa is probably to be found in Palpa and Bhirkot.

7

Limbus

The tribes of Eastern Nepal have become so intermixed, and have so many similar customs, that it will be convenient at first to consider them as a whole.

The Eastern tribes are known collectively as *Kiranti*. Included in this group are the Limbus, or Yakthumbas, and the Rais, also known as Khambus or Yakkas. Properly speaking the term Kiranti should be applied only to the Khambus, because the Yakkas at one time claimed to be, and the Limbus still are, a separate tribe. Inter-marriage, however, is frequent between the tribes, though it is interesting to note that, unlike many other inter-tribal marriages, the woman remains a member of the tribe into which she was born and it is this unusual practice which explains the apparent anomaly of a Raini drawing the pension of a deceased Limbu. At one time Khambus, Yakkas and Yakthumbas, could be adopted into each other's tribes after the performance of certain ceremonies. This has now ceased except in the case of orphan children, who may be adopted, when very young, by members of another tribe.

When the Khambus and Limbus were conquered by the Gurkhas, the Gurkha king, to conciliate them, conferred upon the more influential men among them, commissions sealed with *lal mohor*, granting them power to rule certain districts. With these commissions were given the title of Rai to the Khambus and of Subba to the Limbus. Except in the Darjeeling District, it is still rare for a Limbu, who is not entitled by his position to do so, to call himself Subba, since this term is used throughout Nepal to denote a civil

official. In their own homes Khambus generally call themselves Jimdar or Jimi, and Yakkas call themselves Yakka Rai or Dewan, but there appears nowadays to be no difference between Khambus and Yakkas. Whatever their former status may have been, the latter now definitely form a part of the Rai tribe.

The Limbus, or Yakthumbas, have a tradition that they came originally from Benares but although they are possibly mentioned in the early Hindu writings, no history of the Kiranti exists on which any dependence can be placed. The Limbus and Rais are rather more Mongolian in appearance than the Gurungs and Magars, and any attempt to place their origin in the South is probably due to the desire to show a Rajput origin, a sentiment not unknown amongst other Himalayan tribes.

Prior to 1887, most Gurkha regiments enlisted a number of Rais and Limbus, but with the raising of the 7th and 10th Gurkha Rifles their recruitment was confined, with very few exceptions, to these two regiments. Large numbers were, however, enlisted for the Burma Military Police and the Assam Rifles. During the second world war considerable numbers were enlisted for service in all western regiments except the 9th, which received many Eastern Chhetris instead.

The Eastern tribes speak a series of dialects of a much more complex nature than either Gurungkura or Magarkura. These dialects are known collectively as the Tibeto-Burman Eastern Sub-group of complex prenominalized languages. Limbukura is included in this group and so forms another link in the chain connecting Tibetan and Himalayan dialects with the Tibeto-Burman languages of Assam and Burma. There are, in particular, many Rai dialects and this has given rise to the saying '*Jati Rai—uti kura*', meaning there are as many Rai dialects as there are Rais.

'The name Limbu', writes Sir Herbert Risley, 'is used only by outsiders, Tibetans have no special name for the Limbus; they call all the tribes of the Indian side of the Himalayas by the general name of Monpa, or dwellers in the ravines. The Bhotas, or Tibetans, settled in Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal, speak of the Limbus as Tsong, because the five thums, or

sub-tribes, included in the class known as Lhasagotra, emigrated to Eastern Nepal from the District of Tsong in Tibet. Lepchas call them Chang, which may be a corruption of Tsong. They are addressed by the honorific title of "Subba" by other members of the Kiranti group.'

One early writer placed the boundary of Limbu country as far west as the Dudh Kosi and gave the eastern boundary as the Kanki of Ilam. It is more accurate to describe Limbuan as consisting of Dhankuta and Ilam between the Arun and the Mechi, an area embracing the whole basin of the Tamur and the ridges on either side. Emigration eastwards only took place at a comparatively recent date and even then there was little movement across the Teesta and into Bhutan. A quotation from earlier handbooks states: 'The Limbus themselves claim to have held from time immemorial the Tamba Khola (Tamur) valley on the upper waters of the Tamba Kosi, and the fact that one of their sub-tribes bears the name of Tamba Khola suggests that this valley may have been one of their early settlements. They also have a tradition that five out of their thirteen sub-tribes came from Lhasa, while five others came from Benares. The former group is called the *Lhasagotra* and the latter the *Kanshigotra*, though the term *gotra* in this case has no bearing on marriage. All that can safely be said is that the Limbus are the oldest recorded population of the country between the Tamba Kosi and the Mechi and their flat features, slightly oblique eyes, yellow complexions and beardlessness may perhaps afford ground for believing them to be the descendants of early Tibetan settlers in Nepal. They appear to have mixed little with the Hindus, but much with Lepchas, who, of late years, have migrated in large numbers from Sikkim to the West.'

The following excerpt of Limbu history is a translation of a portion of the Limbu Vamshavali. 'God is called Mojingna Khiwagna. He made the world and all the creatures in it. Limbus were first known by the name of Yakthumba and they are descended from ten brothers whose names are as follows:

Thosoying Kanglaying Hang, Thindango Sawaro Hang, Thosading Hamleba Sawargo Hang, Thoding Tangsak Sawargo Hang, Yophoding Sawaro Hang, Moguplungma Langsoding

Sawaro Hang, Moguplungma Khambeh Sawaro Hang, Yokphoding Sawaro Hang, Yokphodingighang Laingo Hang, Totoli Toengbo Hang.

With these ten brothers, also came three spiritual advisers (bijuwa):

Phjeri Phedangma, Sambahang Eblihang Samba, Samundum Yepundum.

These thirteen people did not know how to read or write, but they knew some prayers and traditions. These were handed down by word of mouth and by them they were ruled. The ten brothers and three priests were all residents of Benares and they agreed to make themselves homes in the mountains of Nepal. Five of the brothers marched straight from Benares to Nepal, but the other five went to Tibet, and from Tibet through Lhasadinga until they met their five brothers in the mountains. The first five brothers and their descendants are called Kashigotra and the second five Lhasagotra, because they journeyed respectively from Benares to Nepal and from Lhasadinga to Nepal. Correctly, all the ten brothers should be called Kashigotra, for it was from Benares that they all came.

These ten brothers settled in a place called Ambepojoma Kamketlangma Sumhalangma. The kings of the country where the ten brothers lived were called:

Honden Hang, Yeketed Hang, Chasbi Hang, Larasopangbo, Khesiwa Hang, Ekangso Hang, Khadi Hang, Ime Hang.

The ten brothers had many children and their descendants multiplied very quickly till they became the nation of the Limbus. They were however subject to the kings of the country and were much oppressed. The kings ruled them so harshly that eventually the Limbus, having consulted together in the place called Ambepojoma Kamketlangma Sumhalangma, determined to fight the local kings and drive them out of the country.

Every Limbu swore upon the holy place that he would conquer in the fight or die. There followed a great war between the Limbus and the kings, in which the Limbus were victorious. They then seized the country as their own

and fixed its boundaries: on the north Tibet, on the south the Plains, on the west the Arun river, and on the east the Mechi.

The Limbus elected a chief, or *Hang*, from each of the ten tribes. Each chief marked the boundaries of his country and named it:

1. Samlupley Samba Hang: called his country Tamba Khola and his fort Yiokma.
2. Tampeso Perung Hang: called his country Tehra Thar and his fort Thala Yiokma.
3. Thoktokso Angbo Hang: called his country Athrai and his fort Poma Jong.
4. Sengsengum Phedap Hang: called his country Phedap and his fort Paklabang Yiokma.
5. Tindolung Koya Hang: called his country Yangrup and his fort Hastapur.
6. Sesiane Sering Hang: called his country Mewa Khola and his fort Meringdem.
7. Yenangso Papo Hang: called his country Panchthar and his fort Yasok Phedan Yiokma.
8. Thaklung Kajum Hang: called his country Chhathar and his fort Chamling Chimling.
9. Soiyak Laho Hang: called his country Chaubise and his fort Sangori Yiokma.
10. Ime Hang: called his country Charkhola and his fort Angdang Ilam Yiokma.

After this division the Limbus remained rulers of the country until the Gurkhas waged war against them towards the close of the eighteenth century. The Das Limbus fought for twelve years with the Gurkhas, at the end of which they were defeated. The Gurkhas then killed all the Limbus whom they could catch, and the Limbus had to take refuge in the mountains. After some time, the Gurkha king called the Limbus together and exacting a promise that they would look upon him as their ruler, he granted the chief men commissions with ruling powers for the chief of each district. Each holder was granted full powers to try all cases in his district and give judgment as he deemed fit, but he was not

allowed to try cases of murder or cow-killing and had no jurisdiction with regard to taxes and finance, which had to be settled by the Gurkha king. The Limbus then became friendly with the Gurkhas.'

The countries of the ten chiefs are all easily traceable: Charkhola is another name for Ilam; Phedap and Tehra Thar are the thum of Phedap-Tehrathum; and the remainder are thums in Dhankuta. Vansittart omits Tehra Thar and substitutes Maiwakhola. Thus the greater part of Limbuan is covered.

In the List of Kindreds, now published separately, Limbu kindreds number between fifty and sixty and many have noted against them the name of one of the original homes given above. It seems very doubtful, however, if the Limbus have now any real clan organisation. It was Risley who originally pointed out the immense number of kindreds into which the Limbu tribe is divided and the same peculiarity is to be noted amongst the Rais. He notes that, within the Chaubisi area, there once existed a man of the Yongya Hang clan who had two sons; one of these was very fond of wearing the red rhododendron flower, *topetlagu*, whilst the other particularly enjoyed a fruit called *yambhota*, hence the Topetlagu and Yambhota kindreds. Again, nicknames have undoubtedly been the origin of many kindred names for we find *Thegim*, the wickerworker, *Menyangbo*, the unsuccessful one, and *Libong*, the archer. It is unfortunate that, though scholars of the School of Oriental Studies in London have started to study it, so little is yet known of the Limbu language; for until it has been studied in much greater detail, it is hardly possible to make an accurate survey of the organisation of the tribe and its kindreds or to carry out the revision of kindred lists which is such a necessity.

A Limbu may not marry any girl who is related to him by birth. It follows therefore that the cross-cousin marriages of the Gurungs and Magars cannot be contracted by Limbus. The practice of taking a wife from another tribe, which appears to be fairly common, has undoubtedly had much to do with the gradual breaking down of whatever clan organisation the Limbus may once have possessed.

The Eastern tribes would seem to have much more liberty in the choice of a marriage partner than is the case in other parts of Nepal; even the practice of consulting astrologers is declining. One method of courtship is said to be for boys and girls to meet together in some public place and compete in singing impromptu couplets. Each succeeding couplet should improve on the one before it, both in wit and humour. The contest goes on until one or other is unable, for lack of further ideas, to continue. In theory, in order to win a bride a man must produce a couplet that the girl is quite unable to cap. If he is defeated in the contest, he withdraws, leaving the field free for some other competitor with a readier wit, or one perhaps with less sense of modesty.

As Limbu marriages are often contracted without the consent of the parents, they seem to take place at a rather later age than is the custom in Western Nepal. It is not unusual for the bride's parents to know nothing at all about the marriage of their daughter until she returns from the wedding ceremony a married woman. A formal courtship is begun by the suitor presenting a pig's carcase to the household of the girl's parents.

When the parents have not been informed of their child's intention to wed, the parties meet, attended by a few of their more intimate friends, who are required to bring their own refreshments for the feast which precedes the ceremony. During this feast singing and dancing takes place and the bridegroom beats a drum to which his bride may dance. The ceremony begins with the Phedangma reciting prayers over the bridal pair, who sit cross-legged on the floor holding one another's hands. He then beheads a cock and a hen, and allows the blood to run into a plantain leaf. In the blood thus collected he looks for omens and then explains their meaning to the assembled company. The Phedangma next places a little sindhur, or red lead, on another leaf, and this the bridegroom applies to the girl's face, from the nose, along the parting of the hair to the crown of the head. This completes the ceremony, after which the Phedangma is presented with a new white pagri and a few rupees. On the following morning he visits the newly-married couple and

enjoins them to live happily, to which they are required to reply: 'We will do as you command'.

The bride now returns to her parents who are for the first time made aware of what has happened. An intermediary calls and intercedes on behalf of the couple. He brings with him the carcase of a pig, a bottle of spirits and a silver coin, and with these he is supposed to calm the simulated anger of the girl's parents. Upon consent being given, the intermediary pays the price of the bride, which varies between 80 and 200 rupees according to the means of the bridegroom.

If the consent of the parents has first been obtained, the procedure is somewhat different. When setting off from his parent's home the boy, who is dressed completely in white, must first make obeisance to his parents, who place a caste mark upon his forehead. Before he is allowed to take his seat in the waiting dhooly, the unmarried girls of the party, each bearing a brass tray on which there is some rice and curds and a bowl of water, walk round it six times, sprinkling water from the bowls as they go. Before getting into it, the bridegroom must bow four times to the dhooly, and as he is carried to the place where the bride has been previously hidden, he must sit in it cross-legged and holding onto a handkerchief suspended from the top of the dhooly. As soon as the bride comes out of her hiding place, the bridegroom gets out of the dhooly and she makes obeisance to him three times and places another caste mark upon his forehead. The bride's unmarried attendants walk three times round the dhooly, after which she takes her seat in it and, accompanied by her groom, who is usually on horseback, proceeds to the house of her future father-in-law. On arrival at the house the bride enters, passing on her way two large earthenware vessels filled with water, which have been placed one on either side of the door. She is welcomed by her future parents-in-law, who place a caste mark on her forehead and receive her as their daughter-in-law. The application of Tika is the most important part of the ceremony and after this the bride and bridegroom are not supposed ever again to mention each other's names. Nowadays, however, a wife, if pressed to do so, will normally give her husband's name;

but it is better, if possible, to obtain it from someone else. In the army the wife may give her husband's army number instead of his name.

The bride's parents do not attend the actual marriage, only her aunts being present at the ceremony, which does not differ from that already described.

Pachpan ritti, which sometimes follows the wedding, is the signing of a certificate by the parents to confirm that the fifty-five customs have been fully completed. The bridegroom also obtains a receipt from the bride's parents, showing the cost of the marriage in detail. In the case of his wife running away, he can then get back the amount expended. Without it he can only recover what is known as *singhur jari*, a sum of sixty rupees.

When a Limbu dies, his body is sometimes kept for one night before burial. The body is laid out at full length and then carried to the spot chosen as a grave. The officiating Phedangma is given one rupee with which he is supposed to purchase the grave from the spirits of the place. After the body has been buried, the Phedangma may either keep the money or throw it away, crying out as he does so: 'This is the money with which we purchased this land'. The grave is dug deep and long and the body is laid full length in it, the toes pointing to the sky, the hands upon the breast, with the fingers of one hand clasping the fingers of the other. This done, leaves are scattered over the body. The very rich bury their dead in a coffin, in which they also place a little of each kind of grain. Earth is piled over the body, on top of which a monument of stone is erected, usually bearing on it the name of the deceased and the date of death. If the grave is near a road, it is normally so designed as to make a convenient resting place for passing travellers and a tree is planted with which to give them shade. A man is mourned for four days, a woman for three. At the conclusion of the period of mourning, a feast is held which is attended by the Phedangma and by the mourners and friends. The feast ends with the priest calling out: 'Go now where your forefathers and foremothers have gone before'.

Nowadays some Limbus cremate their dead and, following the Hindu custom, consign the ashes to the nearest river.

The Limbu has few religious scruples about what he eats and, though exceptions are to be found, most will eat meat of any kind.

8

Rais

Rais and Limbus have much in common and inter-marriage is tending to draw them closer. It is extremely difficult to point to any particular custom and say that it is essentially Rai or Limbu. Like the Limbus, the Rais do not permit marriage between relations, and though marriage between cousins is said to be allowed after three generations, no specific cases are known.

The people of Eastern Nepal are less orthodox in regard to religion than the tribes of the West. In 1891 Risley wrote: 'By religion the Khambus are Hindu; but they have no Brahmans, and men of their own tribe, called Home, corresponding closely to the Bijuwas employed by the Tibetans, serve as priests. Their special god is the ancestral deity, Parabhang, who is worshipped in the months of March and November with the sacrifice of a pig and offerings of incense and murwa beer. Him they regard as a "ghar deota", or household deity, and he is held in greater honour than the unmistakable Hindu divinity Devi, to whom buffaloes, goats, fowls and pigeons are occasionally sacrificed. Another of their minor gods, Sidha, is honoured with offerings of dubo grass and milk. His origin is uncertain, but it seems to me possible that the name may be a survival of the stage of Buddhism through which the Khambus, like many other Nepalese castes, have probably passed.'

The position has changed somewhat since Risley's time, for both Limbus and Rais do nowadays recognise the Brahman, even if not very enthusiastically, and Brahmans are sometimes employed for casting horoscopes to determine

the choice of such things as children's names or an auspicious date for a marriage. They are not, however, as yet used for ordinary religious and domestic ceremonies, which are still in the hands of Phedangmas or Bijuwas.

Risley writes: 'The Limbus (equally the Rais) are compassed about by a multitude of nameless evil spirits who require peculiar management in warding off their caprices. To appease and propitiate these is the special function of the Bijuwas, a class of wandering mendicants peculiar to Sikkim and the Eastern parts of Nepal. Bijuwas are wholly illiterate and travel about the country muttering prayers and incantations, dancing, singing, prescribing for the sick and casting out devils. They wear a purple robe and broad-brimmed hat and are regarded with great awe by the people into whom they have instilled the convenient belief that their curses and blessing will surely be fulfilled and that ill-luck will attend anyone who allows a Bijuwa to leave his door dissatisfied. Anyone may become a Bijuwa who feels himself to be possessed of a deota or spirit. The deota is believed to take complete charge of the man's body, and to be entirely responsible for the instructions and incantations spoken by the Bijuwa, who is regarded merely as the human vehicle through which the spirit works. The Bijuwa presumably goes into a cataleptic trance, a state into which many Tibetan Lamas are said to be able to throw themselves at will, but there has been no opportunity to study this subject at first hand. It is said that on the death of a Bijuwa, the deota transfers himself into the body of his son if he has one.'

The Rai marriage customs do not differ greatly from those of other Eastern tribes. Risley notes: 'The Khambus marry their daughters as adults and tolerate sexual license before marriage on the understanding, rarely set at defiance, that a man shall honourably marry a girl who is pregnant by him. Men usually marry between the ages of 15 and 20, and girls between 12 and 15, but marriage is often deferred in the case of the former to 25, and of the latter to 20. The preliminary negotiations are entered upon by the bridegroom's family, who send an emissary with two bamboo vessels of murwa beer and a piece of pork to the bride's

house to ask for her hand. If her parents agree, the bridegroom follows on an auspicious day, about a fortnight later, and pays the standard bride-price of Rs. 80. (The payment of bride-price seems to have been discontinued nowadays, but the boy's parents usually provide the girl with gold ornaments.) The wedding takes place at night. Its essential and binding portion is the payment of one rupee by the bridegroom as earnest money to the bride's father, the smearing of vermilion on the bride's forehead and putting a scarf round her neck.'

Divorce is permitted for adultery; the adulteress must pay her husband the full amount that she originally cost and he can then marry again. In actual fact the marriage bond is rarely broken among the Khambus or among any other of the Nepalese tribes.

After the marriage ceremony has been completed, the bride spends a few days at her husband's home, and then returns to her mother for a year or so. During this period she may be visited by her husband but the actual arrangements for her to go and live permanently with him must be conducted with some ceremony and are carried out by an intermediary. On this occasion the girl's parents usually provide her with clothing and such cooking pots and other household utensils as may be considered necessary for the setting up of her own house.

Risley wrote: 'The practice of the Khambus in respect to the disposal of the dead varies greatly and appears to depend mainly on the discretion of the "Home" called in to supervise the operation. Both burial and cremation are resorted to on occasions and the mourners sometimes content themselves with throwing the body into the nearest river. A *sradh* ceremony of a somewhat simple character is performed both for the benefit of the deceased in the next world and to prevent him from coming back to trouble the living.'

Nowadays most Rais bury their dead and often a man will say what, after his death, he wishes done with his body. Some are buried in a field near their house, the grave being marked by the deceased's *dhoko*, or carrying basket, and a

few other odds and ends, which soon disappear; some are buried in elaborate graveyards with large flat stones marking the site. A man's kukri, and a few personal possessions, are buried with him and a woman's sickle is often placed in the grave with her. During the burial considerable efforts are made to ensure that the deceased's ghost does not return. To keep the ghost away during the transport of the body to the grave, as much noise as possible is made, and, to prevent the spirit from getting out of the body; thorn branches are often placed on top of it. Sometimes, too, on the way home after the burial, the track is blocked with thorn bushes to prevent the ghost, if it has escaped from the grave, from returning to the house.

Many Rais will not eat goat. There is a legend that on one occasion a goat on a hillside bleated and a man who happened to be near looked up and saw a landslide beginning. The goat was killed in the landslide, but the man escaped. The man, in gratitude, swore that he and his descendants would never eat goat flesh.

There is evidence that there were, in the past, many different tribes which became Rais, and the large number of Rai dialects, some of which are really separate languages, tend to confirm this.

9

Tamangs

Known in the Army in the past as Lamas, the correct name for this clan is Tamang. They themselves only use the word Lama to describe their priests who are similar, both in dress and ritual, to the Lama priests of the Gurungs. Tamangs are also sometimes known as 'murmi' but, although this name is met with in both East and West Nepal, it appears to be gradually dying out and many people, including some Tamangs, have never heard of it.

According to their own history, the Tamangs originated from four families living at a place called Wuijhang. The four families were Bal, Yonjon, Moktan and Ghising, which are, it should be noted, now four of the biggest Tamang kindreds. On leaving their home, the Bal family are reputed to have gone south to Temal while the remaining three went east to Dolakha. Dolakha is in Ramechap, No. 2 East, and this reference to 'moving' east is of interest, for a great many Tamangs do now live in Nos. 1 and 2 East, though they are also found in all parts of Eastern Nepal, and in Darjeeling and Sikkim.

Tamang tradition records that one day three brothers, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesur, went out shooting. All day long they wandered in the jungle but saw no game of any kind, until they suddenly came across the cow bison Kama Dhenu. Vishnu killed the bison with an arrow and all three brothers, being tired and hungry, immediately started to prepare the carcass. Having skinned the animal and taken out the bowels, Mahesur, being the youngest, was sent to wash them in a stream which ran close by. Whilst he was

doing this, Brahma and Vishnu cooked some of the meat and divided it into three portions, one for each of the brothers. When the meat was ready, the two elder brothers, realising that it was cow's flesh and therefore not to be eaten, hid their shares. On Mahesur's return they told him that they had already eaten and bade him eat his own share. When he had finished, the brothers showed the meat that they had concealed and abused him for having eaten cow's flesh. Mahesur became much enraged and struck his brothers with the intestines, some of which clung round their shoulders and accounts for the wearing of the holy thread. Having eaten the forbidden meat, Mahesur was socially degraded. The Tamangs, who still eat beef, are his descendants, and he, as their chief deity, intercedes with God on their behalf.

The Tamangs probably entered Nepal by the valleys of the Buri Gandak and Trisuli rivers and settled in what is now No. 1 West, from which they overlapped into No. 2 West and migrated to the East. They are now to be found in large homogeneous villages in No. 1 West and in the northern parts of Gorkha and eastern parts of Lamjung, where they live side by side with the Ghale.

'The physical characteristics', notes Risley, 'and the fact that their exogamous divisions bear Tibetan names seem to lend support to the opinion that they are descended from a Tibetan stock, modified more or less by admixture with Nepalese.'

There are two main divisions of Tamangs—*Bara Tamang* and *Atharajat*. The former are socially superior and are pure Tamangs, claiming descent from Mahesur. The figures twelve and eighteen in the names of the divisions seem to have no connection with the number of the kindreds. The Atharajat consists of three kindreds—*Sangri*, said to be thus named because their ancestors married incestuously within their kindred, and *Gothar* and *Narba*. The Narba, who may have come from Bhomloh, are divided into *Purano* and *Naya*, Old and New. Should a Tamang marry outside his tribe, his children become Naya Narba and may only again become a true Tamang after seven generations of pure marriage. A Purano Narba may marry into the Bara Tamang.

Perhaps the most interesting fact concerning the Tamangs is their great similarity to the Gurungs. Their language differs very little from Gurungkura, which is more closely connected with Tibetan than is any other Himalayan dialect. The Tamangs also perform the Arghun, the characteristic Gurung death ceremony. This rite is also carried out by the Bhotes living in the highest inhabited parts of Nepal and is undoubtedly of Tibetan origin. The Tamang priest, the Lama, wears the same dress, and performs very much the same ritual, as does the Lama of the Gurungs. The Tamang prefers to burn his dead, but some, especially young children, are buried.

The Tamang makes no pretence of being a Hindu and owns to an animistic, Lamaistic, Buddhism. A Tamang village can be easily recognised by the display of prayer flags and by 'mane' walls and 'chortens' at the roadside.

Though he is not permitted to kill cows in Nepal, the Tamang will willingly eat the flesh of a cow killed by accident. It is for this reason that the more orthodox Gurkha Officer is prejudiced against the enlistment of Tamangs. There is no doubt, however, that the Tamang makes an excellent soldier.

10

Sunwars

The Sunwars are an agricultural tribe. According to Sir Herbert Risley they claim to have come originally from Simulgarh, near Bara Chatri in Western Nepal. On wandering east, they came to Chaplu, on the Likhu Khola in No. 2 East, and took possession of it. Of the many Sunwars spoken to in recent years, none have been able to give any story of an early migration from Western Nepal and it is not known upon what evidence Risley advances this theory.

Originally they are said to have been divided into three clans, the descendants of three brothers—*Jetha*, *Maila* and *Kancha*. The Jetha clan crossed the Sun Kosi and proceeded north to the Jiri and Suri rivers, where they settled down, becoming the Jiriyel and Surel kindreds. The descendants of the Jetha clan are now divided into ten kindreds and are known as the *Das-Thare* Sunwar; they are not normally enlisted. The descendants of the Maila clan remained on the eastern bank of the Sun Kosi and became known as the *Bara Thare*, or twelve kindred, Sunwars. The Kancha branch is said to have set off to the south-east and there to have so assimilated itself with the Rais that there is no longer any difference between them.

Risley, writing in 1891, noted that Sunwars intermarried with Gurungs and Magars, but this is no longer so. If Sunwars did intermarry with Gurungs and Magars, there may be some truth in their claim to have come originally from the west. Nowadays the Bara Thare Sunwars, who claim higher social status than either the Limbus or Rais, are only found in a very small area of Nos. 2 and 3 East, their east

and west boundaries being the Likhu and Khainti Kholas respectively, and the northern and southern limits being Thae and Kangba, the latter a place approximately fifteen miles north of Ramechhap. As this area is only fifteen miles by fifteen, it will be seen that they are a very small tribe and, although they make good soldiers, they do not enlist in large numbers. They were first recruited in 1909 but a thorough combing of the area between 1940 and 1945 produced only 1,450 men available and suitable for Army service.

The Das Thare Sunwars are found in the areas of the Jiri Kholas and Suri Kholas and also further south on the Tamba Kosi. They are not only a very much smaller tribe than the Bara Thare, but are inferior to them in social status, so much so that many Bara Thare claim that the Jiriyel kindred are not Sunwars at all.

In a few cases both Bara Thare and Das Thare may be found in the same village, but this is unusual and normally they do not mix. Nor do Bara Thare and Das Thare intermarry, and the former are not permitted to eat food prepared by the latter. The Bara Thare are Hindus, whereas the Das Thare, although nominally of this faith, appear in those areas in which they live in close proximity to Tamangs and Sherpas, to have assimilated a certain amount of Buddhism.

The Das Thare do not speak Sunwarkura and are very different in physical appearance to the Bara Thare, who are very fair and sometimes have the red cheeks of the Rai from No. 3 East. Sunwarkura is akin to Gurungkura and Magarkura, another fact which lends colour to the story of migration from the west.

Apart from the areas mentioned above, a few Bara Thare Sunwars have migrated to Limbuan, where they still keep their own customs and language, and there are also some five thousand living in Darjeeling district, many of them calling themselves Mukhiya.

Sunwar customs conform very closely to those of the Magars and, in the same way as Magars, they employ Brahmans only in certain of their religious ceremonies.

Three days after the birth of a Sunwar, the ceremony of *Nauran* takes place. At this the Brahman gives the child

the name which he has previously selected with the help of the horoscope. A few months later the *Bhat Khulai* is held.

Marriage may take place at any time after the age of five, the actual date being nominated by a Brahman after he has consulted the two horoscopes, but as in the case of Tamangs marriage between cousins is not permitted.

Upon the death of a near relation, eyebrows, hair and moustache are shaved, a hat may not be worn, and only one thickness of white clothing is permitted. The period of mourning lasts for ten days in the case of parents, wife and married brothers, and for five days in the case of unmarried brothers and sisters.

Married women are mourned only by their husband's family and never by their own parents, brothers or sisters. Bodies may be burnt on the banks of the nearest river but, in the case of death from disease, the corpse is buried.

Thakurs

With the exception of the Brahman, the Thakur has the highest social standing of all Gurkhas, and of the Thakurs, the Shah, of which the King of Nepal is himself a member, is the clan with the highest status.

A Thakur, though entitled to wear the thread, need not do so until marriage. His caste prejudices are not great nor does he allow them to obtrude.

The Shah, Khan, Sen and Mall clans intermarry, but marriage into any of the other clans, which include Bam, Bansi, Chand, Hamel, Kalyan, Man, Nawakotya, Pokhrali, Raika, Ruchal, Sahi, Sing, Surjabansi and Uchai, does not normally take place.

All Thakurs claim to be equal, apart from the royal status of the Shah, but the claim of the Uchai and Hamel, except for the Singala kindred of the Uchai clan, who are of Shah descent, is not always accepted. The Hamel clan was formed originally as a result of unions between Upaddhya Brahmans and Thakur women. At one time considered socially inferior, they have only recently been permitted to intermarry with other Thakurs. Thakur tradition has it that one of their kings, in the course of his conquests, came to a very high hill called Singala, which he captured and on the top of which he established a Shah garrison. These, in time, came to be spoken of as the Uchai Thakurs because they lived at a high elevation. Uchai, as a kindred name, is also found in other tribes and it is probable that it was given for some similar reason.

The offspring of a slave mother and a Thakur is known as Khwas, which is also the name given to the illegitimate

children of the royal family. The Khwas adopt as their kindred that of their Thakur father, but their descendants always remain Khwas, and can only marry Khwas of kindreds other than their own.

The social organisation of the Thakurs is very simple compared with that of most other Gurkha tribes, and division into kindreds is found in only a few of the clans, many of whose names are, in fact, really place names, e.g. Nawkotya and Pokhrali.

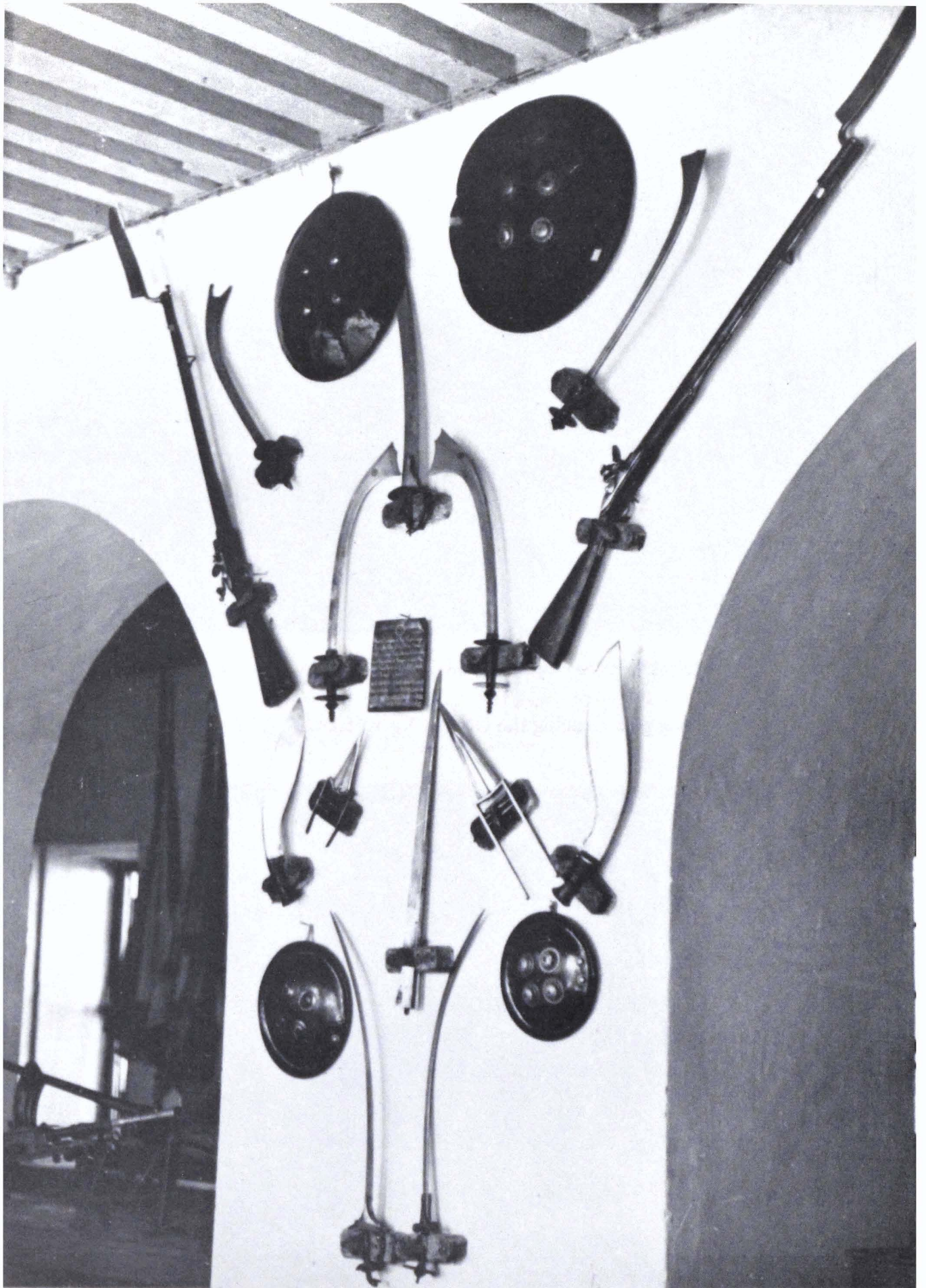


Plate 17. Some weapons of the period of Bhim Sen Thapa as displayed in the National Museum at Katmandu, said to have been the residence of Bhim Sen Thapa (Gregory)



Plate 18. Rai family at Deopuji village, Okhaldunga, Eastern Nepal (*Roberts*)

Plate 19. Gurung girls dancing the Ghants Nach (Lamjung, Western Nepal)
(*Langlands*)





Plate 20. Limbu pensioner and his wife, Eastern Nepal (*Pike*)

Plate 21. Harvest Time in the Hills (*Not Known*)



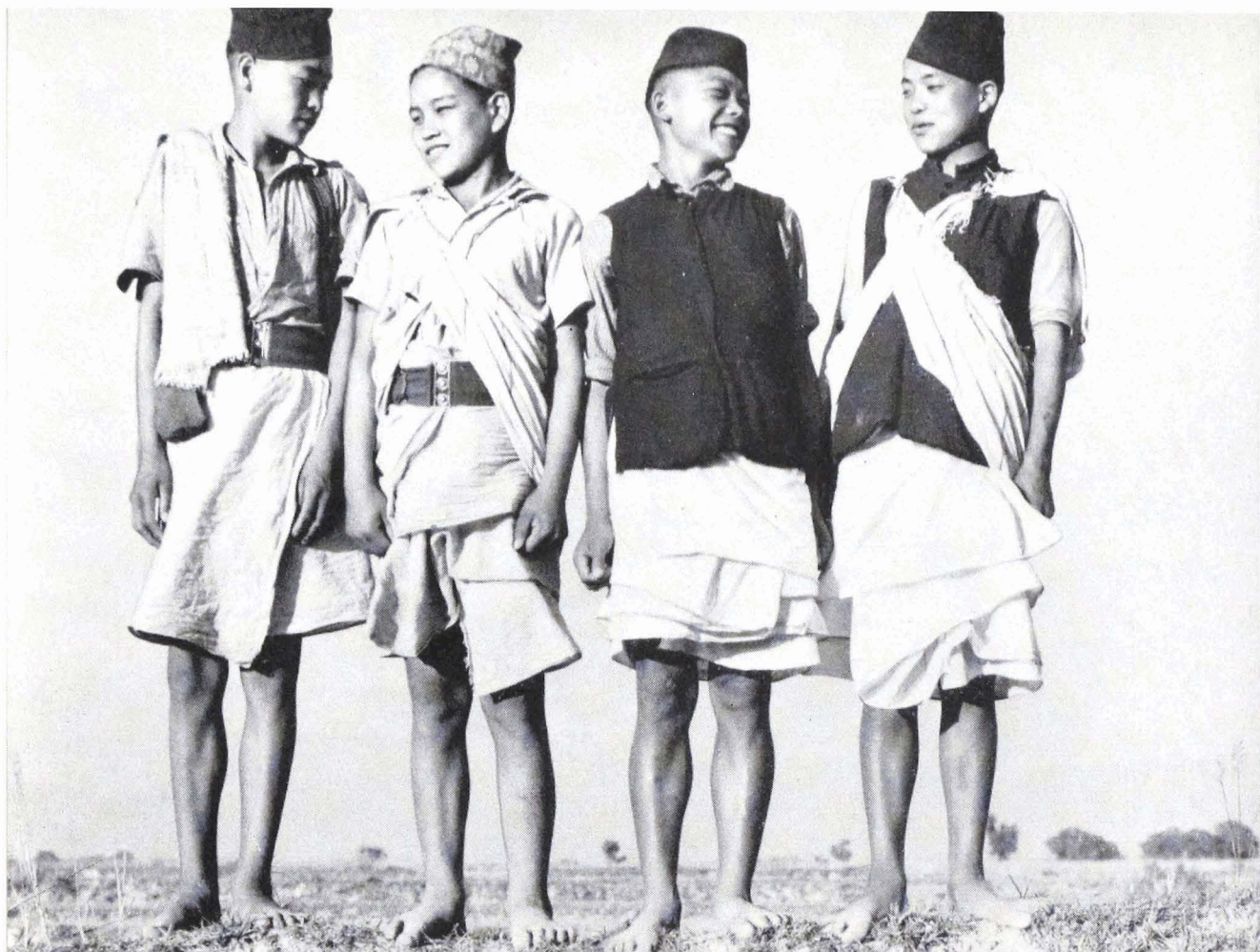


Plate 22. Recruits in 'Western' style dress (*Roberts*)

Plate 23. Recruits in 'Eastern' style dress (*Roberts*)



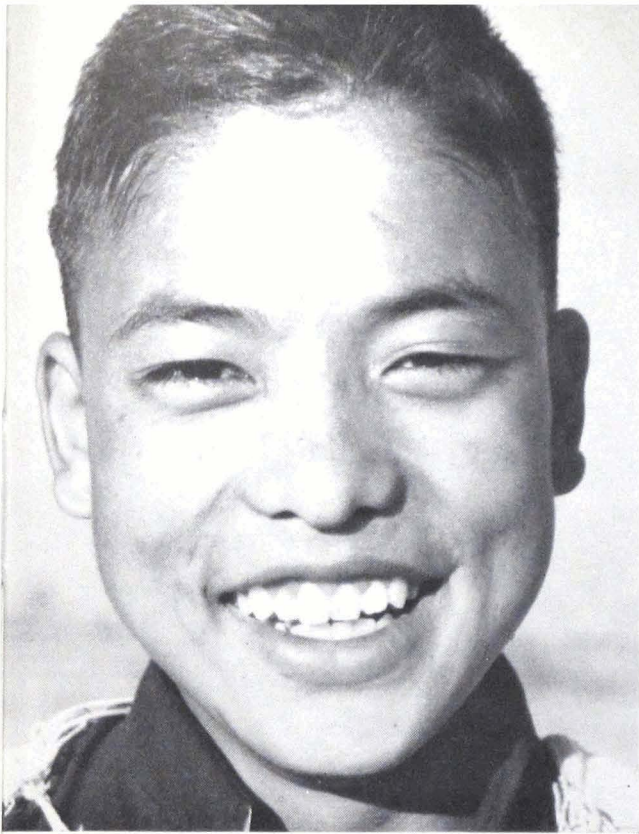


Plate 24. (*Above*) Gurung Recruit from Satung No 4 West

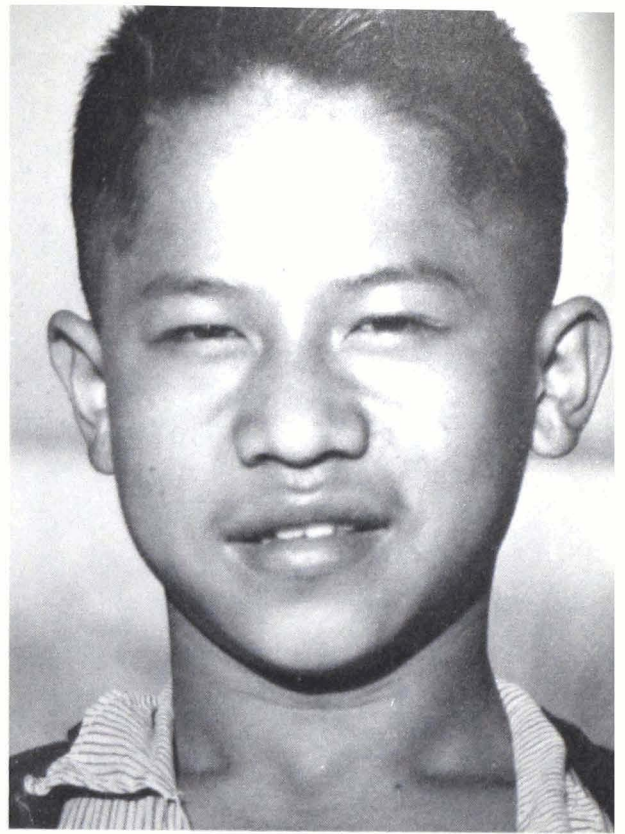
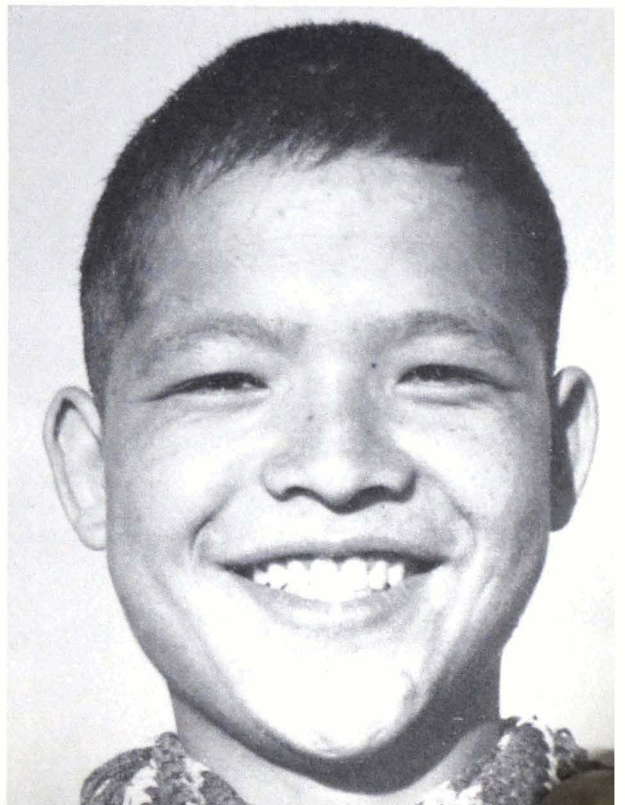
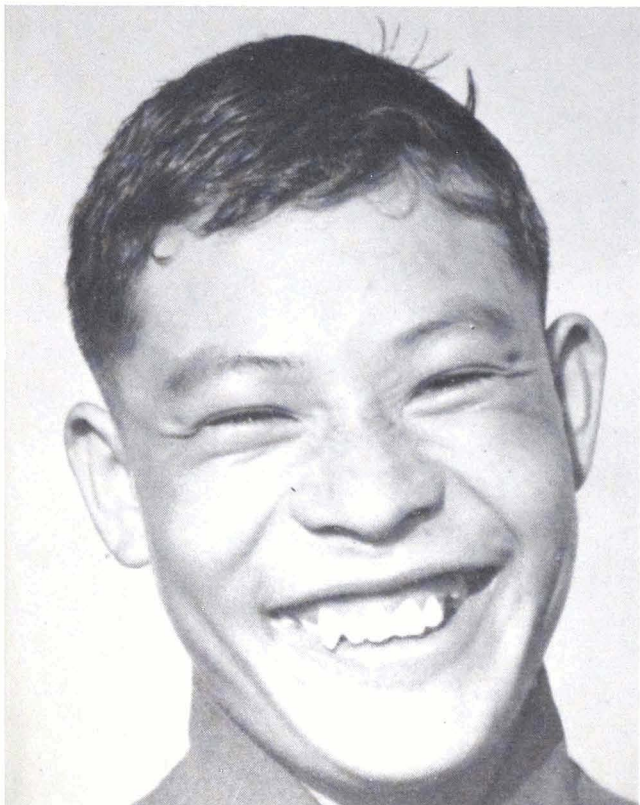


Plate 25. (*Top Right*) Magar Recruit (Rana) from Satung No 4 West

Plate 27. (*Bottom right*) Magar Recruit (Pun) from Ghandruk, 4000 Parbat No 4 West

Plate 26. (*Below*) Gurung Recruit (Ghale) from Ghandruk, 4000 Parbat No 4 West



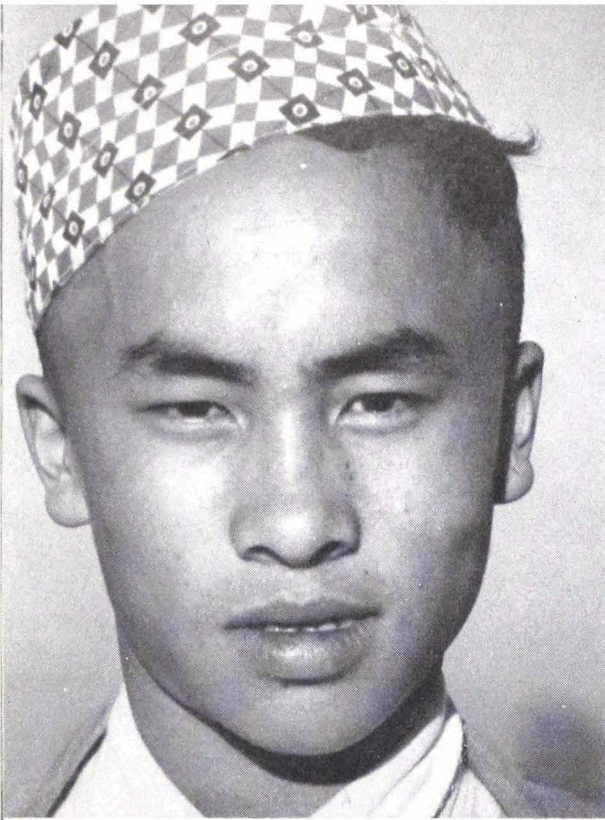


Plate 28. (*Above*) Magar Recruit (Thapa) from Satung No 4 West

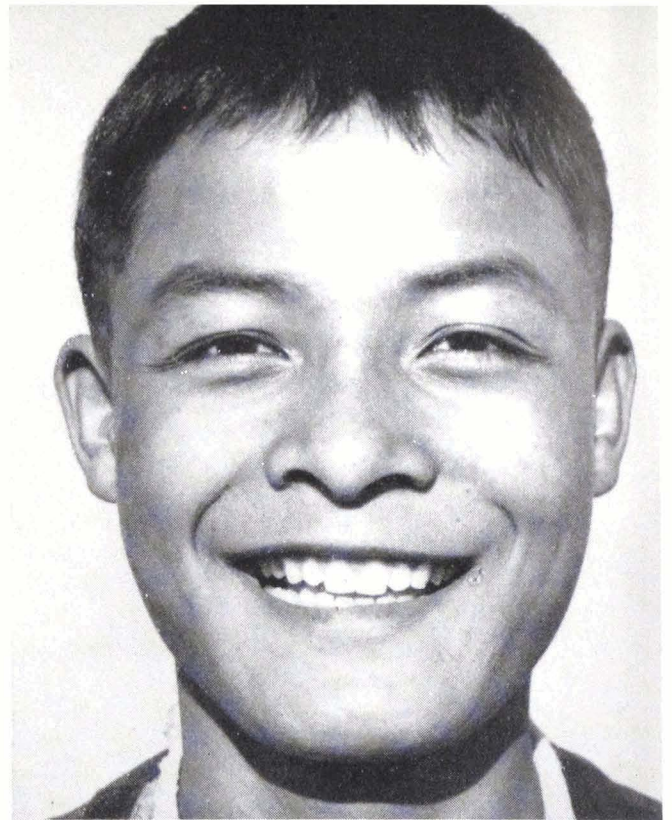


Plate 29. (*Top right*) Tamang Recruit from Eastern Nepal (*Athrai Dhankuta*)

Plate 31. (*Bottom right*) Rai Recruit from No 4 East (Bhojpur)

Plate 30. (*Below*) Limbu Recruit (Panchthar Dhankutu) (*Roberts*)

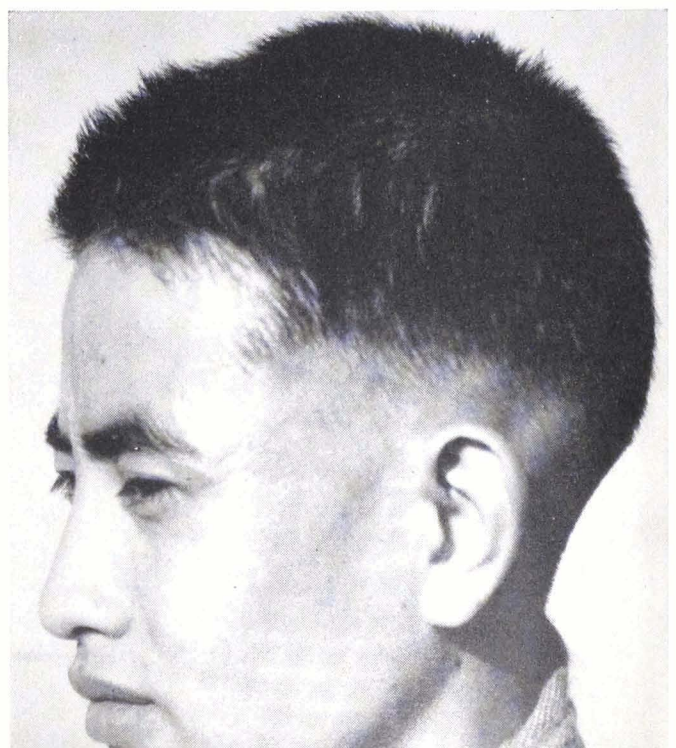
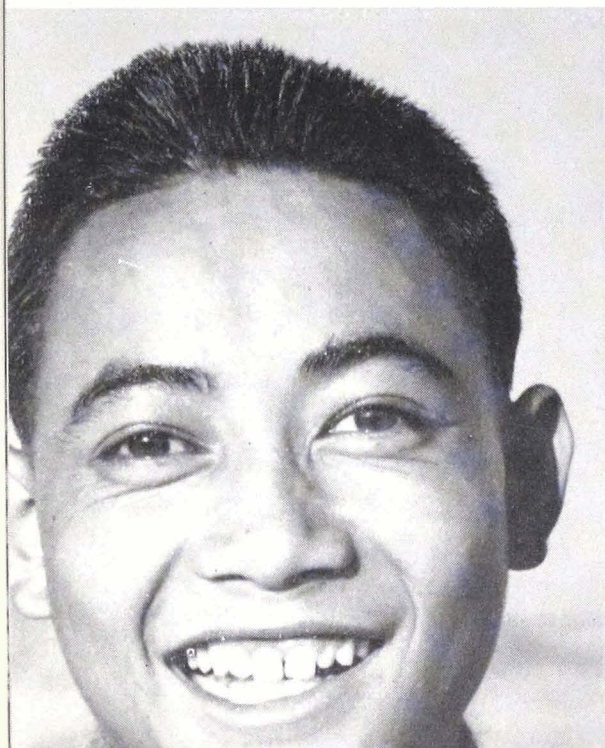




Plate 32. RSM Tulbahadur Pun VC, late 6th Queen Elizabeth's Own Gurkha Rifles (*Not Known*)

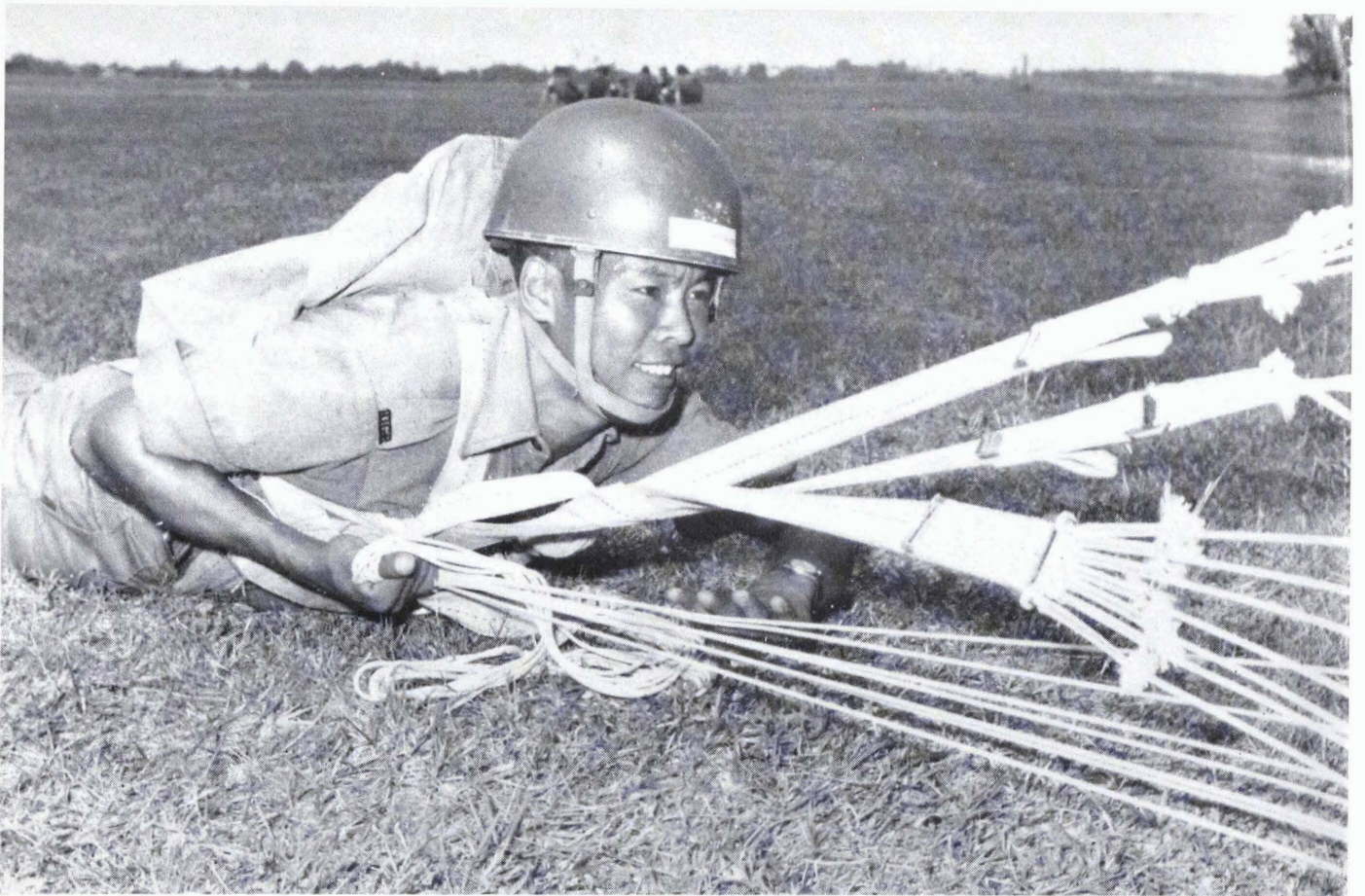
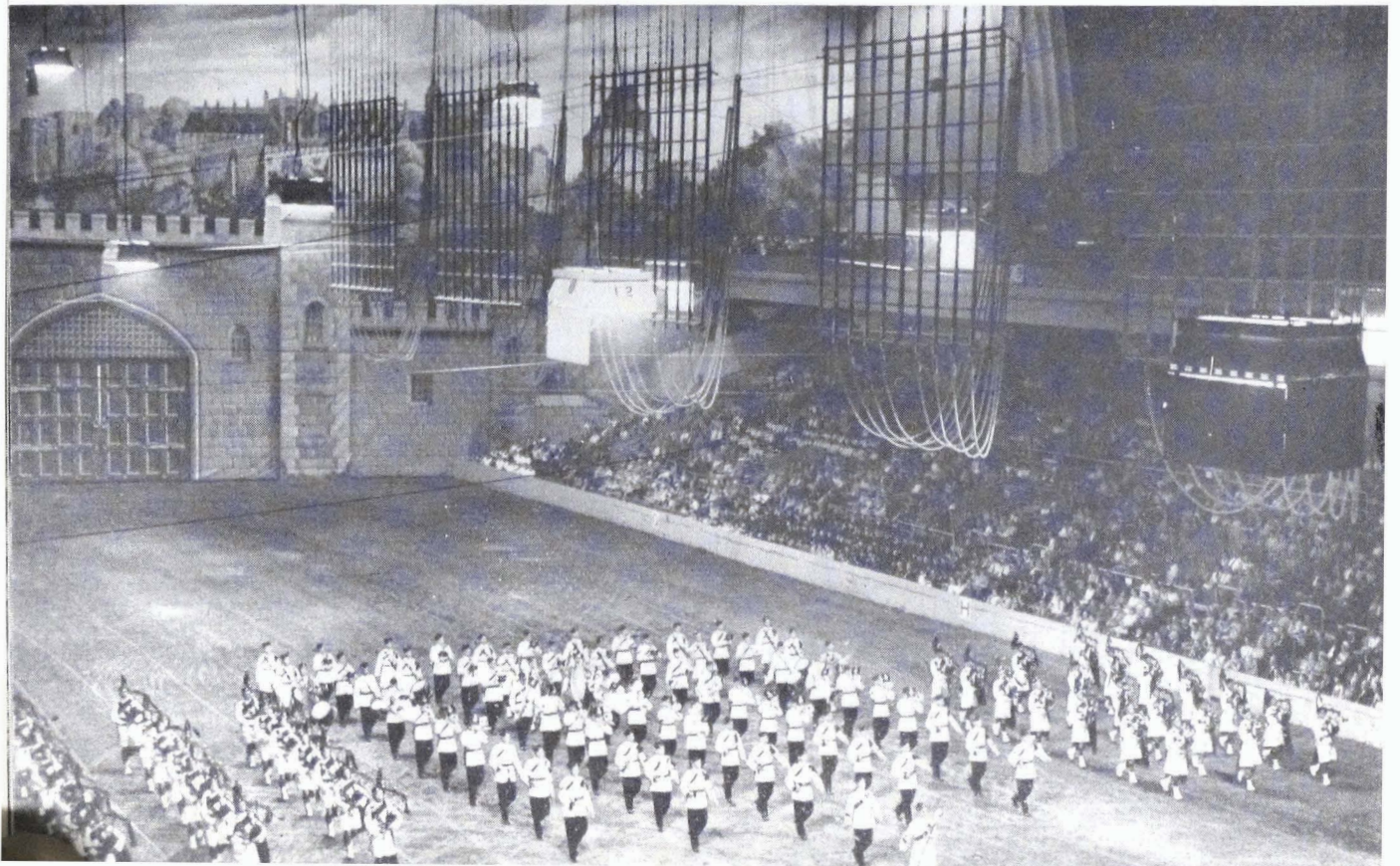


Plate 33. Mustn't get carried away—Rifleman Birkhadhoj Rai pulling in on the lower rigging lines to collapse his canopy (*Public Relations Service FARELF*)

Plate 34. Royal Tournament 1960—Combined Military Band and Pipes and Drums of The Brigade of Gurkhas led by Drum-Major Kishansing Thapa (*The Central Press Photos Ltd, Fleet St, London*)



12

Chhetris

During the twelfth century many high caste Indians, fleeing before the Moslem invasion, sought sanctuary in the hills of Nepal. On account of their caste and intelligence, they were soon accepted at their own worth by the people in whose country they had settled. To the earliest and more distinguished of their converts they gave the rank of the Chhetri, a status also given to the offspring of Brahmans and the local women. It is from this mixture of the two peoples that the present strong tribe of Chhetris, at one time known as Khas, has sprung.

It has been asserted that the origin of the word Khas, with its implied derivation from khasnu—to fall (i.e. the fallen ones)—is probably an invention on the part of the Brahmans, because the Khas are known to have existed as a separate people long before Brahmans ever penetrated into Nepal. This point is not always made clear in the writings of some of the older authorities, but must be remembered if a false impression of the origin of the Chhetri is not to be perpetuated.

The word Chhetri is a corruption of the Sanskrit word 'ksatriya', meaning one of the fighting caste. Some authorities say it is of Gurkha origin because there were Chhetris in the army of Prithwi Narayan, but it is probable that they were domiciled in most of the southern portions of Central Nepal and even in the south-west of Eastern Nepal. Today, though they are found over the whole of Nepal, they are more numerous in the south than in the mountainous districts of the north. The 9th Gurkhas, who enlist many Chhetris,

have preferred, in peace time, to recruit them in Gulmi rather than in Eastern Nepal, although excellent men are to be found in the latter area, many of whom join the Nepalese army.

Hamilton, in his 'Account of the Kingdom of Nepal', 1819, writes: 'It is generally admitted that most of the chiefs who, coming from the low country, sought refuge in the Nepal hills, entered into the service of the various hill chiefs and, having gained their confidence by a superior knowledge and polish of manners, contrived to put them to death and to seize the country. Many of these permitted the mountain tribes to remain and practise their abominations, and have themselves relaxed in many essential points from the rules of caste and have debased their blood by frequent intermixture with that of the mountaineers; whilst such of these as chose to embrace the slender degree of purity required in these parts, have been admitted to the high dignities of the military order—kshatriya.'

In the light of more modern knowledge, however, it would seem much more likely that, having converted the chiefs of the mountain tribes, they gave them high-born lineage, invented for the occasion, which in time came to be looked upon as their real origin, and this gave rise to the belief that their ancestors had been pure Rajputs and Brahmans. Similar happenings are common in parts of India and there is no reason to believe that the circumstances were any different in Nepal.

Accepting the existence of Chhetris before the Moslem invasion of India, Oldfield, in his 'Sketches from Nepal', 1852, writes: 'The progress of Mohammadanism daily drove fresh refugees to the Nepalese mountains. The Khas tribes availed themselves of the superior knowledge of the strangers to subdue the neighbouring aboriginal tribes. They were uniformly successful; and, in such a career continued for ages, they gradually merged the greater part of their own ideas, habits and language (but not physiognomy) in those of the Hindus. The Khas language became, and still is, a corrupt dialect of Hindi retaining not many traces of primitive barbarism.'

The descendants, more or less pure, of Rajputs and other Kshatriyas of the plains, who either sought refuge in Nepal or voluntarily served there as military adventurers, are known as Ektharias. Not having the same inducements as the Brahmans to degrade their proud race by union with the local women, they mixed much less with the Chhetris than the Brahmans had done. They claimed a vague superiority over the Chhetris, but the two tribes have long since become completely fused. Those among the Kshatriyas of the plains who were more lax in their alliances with the local women, were permitted to give their children the patronymic title, but not the rank, of Kshatriya, but their children, if they married for two generations into the Chhetri tribe, became pure Chhetris, and, at the same time, acquired all the privileges attached to Kshatriya birth in India.

The Brahmans, in order to reconcile their most important converts, worked out marvellous pedigrees for the local people and gave them the right to claim descent from various famous origins such as Surjabansi, born of the sun, Chandrabansi, born of the moon, and so on. Brian Hodgson writes: 'The Brahmans found the natives illiterate and without faith and fierce and proud. They saw that the barbarians had vacant minds ready to receive their doctrine but spirits not apt to stoop to degradation and they acted accordingly. On the earliest and most distinguished of their converts they conferred, in defiance of the creed they taught, the lofty rank and honour of the Kshatriya order. But the Brahmans had sensual passions to gratify as well as ambition. They found the native females—even the most distinguished—nothing loth, but still of a temper like that of the males, prompt to resent indignities. These females would indeed welcome the polished Brahmans to their embraces, but their offspring must not be stigmatized as the infamous progeny of a Brahman and Mlechchhs (non-Hindu barbarian). To this progeny also, the Brahmans, in still greater defiance of their creed, communicated the rank of the second order of the Hinduism, and from these two roots (converts and illegitimate progeny) mainly spring the now numerous, predominant and extensively ramified tribe of Khas (i.e.

Chhetri), originally the name of a small clan of creedless barbarians, now bearing the proud title of Kshatriya, or the military order of the Kingdom of Nepal. The offspring of the original Khas females and of the Brahmans, with the honours and rank of the second order of Hinduism got the patronymic titles of the first order, and hence the key to the anomalous nomenclature of so many branches of the military tribes of Nepal is to be sought in the nomenclature of the sacred order.'

The Chhetris are therefore derived from three sources:

1. Progeny of Brahmans or Chhetris and women of the hill tribes, e.g. Gurungs, Magars, etc.
2. Converts from the hill tribes.
3. Ektharias.

In appearance the Chhetris differ greatly from the purely Mongoloid tribes of Nepal. They are generally slighter, taller, darker complexioned and much more hirsute. They are very definitely Hindus, wear the thread, and are more liable to Brahmanical prejudices than any of the other tribes; that they make good soldiers there is no doubt as the fine record of the 9th Gurkhas gives ample proof. They intermarry only amongst themselves and have a high social standing in Nepal. Their customs approximate more nearly to the practices of orthodox Hinduism than do those of any other Nepalese tribes, and in all matters they are guided by Brahman dominance.

Many famous officers of the Nepalese Army have been Chhetris. Colonel Bahadur Gambirsing Chhetri, who died some twenty years ago, served as a private under Jang Bahadur during the Mutiny, and greatly distinguished himself by capturing, single-handed, three guns and killing seven mutineers. He received an acknowledgement from the British Government for his bravery and the then Prince of Wales presented him, in 1875, with a suitably inscribed claymore. In this fight Colonel Gambirsing, who afterwards commanded the Rifles for many years, had no other weapon than his kukri. He received twenty-three wounds, some of which were very dangerous, and to the day of his death his face was scarred with huge sword cuts. He also lost some

fingers, and one of his hands was nearly severed. Maharaja Jang Bahadur had a special medal struck for him which the gallant old gentleman used to wear on all great parades.

The offspring of an Upaddhya Brahman and a Brahman's widow, is known as a Brahman, and that of a Jaisi, and certain other Brahmans, and a Chhetri girl, as a Khatri. The Khatri, who now form a definite clan of the Chhetris, also wear the thread. The children of the marriage of a Chhetri with a Magar or Gurung woman are generally known as *Matwala Chhetris*, but, if the woman belongs to the Rana clan of the Magar tribe, they are known, instead, as Bhat Ranas. Matwala Chhetris do not wear the sacred thread and strict ceremonial laws forbids any pure-bred Chhetri, including the father himself, from eating with them. Many Matwalas pass themselves off as ordinary Magars, and identification is made more difficult by the fact that they have the Mongoloid appearance of, and because, not wearing the thread, they eat and drink freely with, the true Magars. Easiest to identify are those calling themselves Bohra, Roka, Chohan and Jhankri, but cases have occurred of Matwalas, who often make excellent soldiers, serving for years without their true identity becoming known.

Matwalas are to be found in most areas of Western Nepal, particularly in Sallyan, but it is believed that they do not live east of the Kali River.

Chhetri clans include *Adhikari, Baniya, Basnet, Bhandari, Bhist, Bohra, Bura* or *Burathoki, Gharti, Karki, Khanrka, Khatri, Kanwar, Manjhi, Mahat, Rana, Rawat, Roka* and *Thapa*.

*Lepchas, Newars and other
tribes not normally enlisted*

Lepchas

The Lepcha is not a Gurkha, but comes from Sikkim. Large numbers, however, have now lived in Ilam and Dhankuta for as long a period as the Limbus, and many have also migrated to the Darjeeling and Kalimpong areas and for this reason they have been included amongst the tribes of Nepal.

The Lepchas are primarily animists, but some features of Tibetan Lamaism have superimposed themselves on their basic beliefs and in the Darjeeling area many have now become Christians.

Although they have their own language, which they claim to be the oldest of all the hill dialects, most of them speak Gurkhali as well. Very superstitious, they spend much of their time appeasing evil spirits, and are also reputed to deal in witchcraft and in the casting of spells. Their professional exorcists, who may be male or female, are known as *mun*. They also have an extensive knowledge of the jungle, of its wild life and vegetation, and especially of its poisons and herbs.

In appearance Lepchas are very like Gurkhas. At home they are apt to be lazy and somewhat carefree and gain but a precarious living by agriculture. They are, however, quick to learn and normally make very good house servants and reliable clerks.

Newars

In the fourteenth century the Valley of Katmandu was mainly inhabited by the Newars, but the origin of the tribe is as yet unknown. Seeking an orthodox and respectable pedigree, they sometimes claim to have sprung from the Nairs of Southern India, but their language, which is of the Tibeto-Burman group, and their customs and physical development, indicate an origin to the north of the Himalayas. Their original culture was profoundly influenced by two different groups of people. The first were the Buddhists and the second, and later, group were the Hindu refugees fleeing from India before the Moslem invaders. The early history of this group, who made themselves rulers of the country, is touched upon in Chapter 2.

The very distinctive style of building and ornament in the Nepal Valley is often attributed to Tibet or China. Sylvain Levi and other authorities, however, think it not improbable that the pagoda style of architecture was in existence in Nepal long before it made its appearance further East. Newar craftsmen were to be found throughout the Far East and their influence on Chinese art was considerable.

To day they form the bulk of the population of the Valley, but are also found, in small numbers, and usually as shopkeepers, in many areas. They provide the skilled craftsmen of Nepal in metal work, sculpture, architecture, painting and literature.

‘A corrupt form of Buddhism’, notes Sir Charles Eliot in his ‘Hinduism and Buddhism’, ‘still exists in Nepal. This country, when first heard of, was in the hands of the Newars [*sic*] who have preserved some traditions of a migration from the north and are akin to the Tibetans in race and language, though like many non-Aryan tribes, they have endeavoured to invent for themselves a Hindu pedigree. Buddhism was introduced under Asoka. As Indian influence was strong, and communication with Tirhut and Bengal easy, it is probable that Buddhism in Nepal reflected the phases which it underwent in Bengal. A Nepalese inscription of the seventh century gives a list of shrines of which seven are Sivaite, six Buddhist and four Vishnuite. After that date it

was more successful in maintaining itself, for it did not suffer from the Mohammedan attacks and was less exposed to the assimilative influences of Brahmanism. That influence, however, though operating in a foreign country and on people not bred among Brahmanic traditions, was nevertheless strong. In 1324 the King of Tirhut, being expelled thence by Mohammedans, seized the throne of Nepal and brought with him many learned Brahmans. His dynasty was not permanent; but later in the fourteenth century a subsequent ruler, Jayasthiti, organised society and religion in consultation with the Brahman immigrants. The followers of the two religions were arranged in parallel divisions, a group of Buddhists, classified according to occupations, corresponding to each Hindu caste, and appropriate rules and ceremonies were prescribed for the different sections. The code then established is still in force in all essentials and Nepal, being intellectually the pupil of India, has continued to receive such new ideas as appeared in the plains of Bengal. When these ascended to the mountain valleys, they were adopted with free modification of old and new material alike, by both Buddhists and Hindus, but as both sects were geographically isolated, each tended to resemble the other more than either resembled normal Buddhism or Hinduism.'

This parallel organisation still exists, the followers of Buddha being known as *Buddha margi*, and those of Siva as *Siva margi*. The organisation of the latter is similar to that of the orthodox Hindus of the plains of India and, as with them, the highest caste is the Brahman. There is also a warrior caste known as *Srest* and from this clan many good soldiers have, in the past, been obtained. Siva margi ceremonies are performed by Brahmans and no man of this caste is normally enlisted. According to tradition, the Newar Brahmans were immigrants from Kanya Kugja, or Kanouj.

The Buddha margis are divided into three grades, of which the highest is the *Bandya* or *Banra*. These are said to be the descendants of Buddhist monks who broke their vows of celibacy. They still live chiefly in Bihars, or monasteries, in the cities of the Valley, and are now permitted to marry. Some of the Banras are priests but many also follow secular

occupations as craftsmen, while their hereditary calling as workers in gold and silver provides them with employment in the Nepal Government Mint. The second group of the Buddha margi is that of the *Udas*. They are traders and merchants and are found all over the country. The third group comprises all the remainder, amongst whom is the large class known as *Jyapo*, or cultivators, as well as various Newar clans who are employed in domestic service.

Every Newar girl, while still a child, is married to a 'bel' fruit which, after the ceremony, is thrown into some sacred river. When she reaches the age of puberty a husband is selected for her. Marriage amongst the Newars is said not to be so binding as amongst other Gurkhas and adultery is but lightly punished. Newar widows who, because of their original marriage to a 'bel' fruit, which is held always to be in existence, are never considered as true widows, may remarry if they so wish.

In the past Newars were enlisted in small numbers and some rose to high rank and achieved distinction. They are not now enlisted except occasionally as clerks, and it is most unlikely that they would ever be available in any numbers.

Nagarkotis

The *Nagarkoti* is said to be the progeny of a Newar father and Gurung or Magar woman. There are many of them in the Valley and surrounding areas. A number of them are of fine physique and some may be found serving in the Nepalese Army.

Bhotes

Bhote is the word used by a Gurkha to describe any of the nondescript Tibetan tribes to be found settled within the borders of Nepal, as well as pure Tibetans, Sikkimese, Bhutanese, Tamangs and Sherpas. The largest settlements of Nepalese Tibetans are in the areas of Mastangbhot and Manangbhot to the north of Central Nepal, where the main axis of the Himalayas is well within Nepalese territory.

Kagate Bhote, described by Turner as a caste of paper-makers, is a term used in the areas of Gorkha and Lamjung to indicate the Tamang.

Yolmos

Are a Tibetan tribe living north of the Nepal Valley. They are Buddhists of the Red Hat sect and their Lamas may therefore marry. Sometimes called Kagate, they speak a dialect of their own.

Saisapas

A tribe very similar to the Yolmo, but speaking a different Tibetan dialect.

Dukpas

The Bhutanese are called *Dupja* or *Dukpa* and are Buddhists of both the Red Hat and Yellow Hat sects. They speak a dialect of Tibetan.

Sikkimis

Are Buddhists of the Red Hat sect, who speak another Tibetan dialect.

Thamis

This is a small tribe living in Nos. 1 and 2 East. They have their own language and, except that they contain both Hindus and Buddhists and are considered of lower caste, are very similar to the Tamangs.

Khampas

A Tibetan tribe who are frequently met with in Eastern Nepal in the winter months, when they come down for trade.

Members of the above mentioned tribes may also be found in the Darjeeling area.

Chepangs

The Chepang is a nomadic forest tribe living near the junction of the Kali, Seti and Trisuli rivers, who build themselves temporary huts in the forest before moving on. They are animists by religion and a few, calling themselves Magars, have from time to time been enlisted.

Dotiyals

The Dotiyal is a tribe, not truly of Gurkha origin, living in the province of Doti in Far West Nepal, but the term is also applied loosely to all tribes in that area. Showing few if any

mongolian features, they closely resemble their Indian neighbours across the border in Kumaon. In time of war the Dotiyals, who are not, strictly, a martial race, have provided many excellent stretcher-bearers and porters.

Bajhangis

This tribe, which is very similar to the Dotiyal, comes from an area lying some miles to the north of Doti bazaar. They are not a martial race.

Tharus

The Tharu is thought to be the aboriginal inhabitant of the malarial Terai, in which region he alone can remain with impunity throughout the year. Something of a recluse, stunted, wizened and black-skinned, he farms this warm, damp region and, in addition, provides a large number of 'mahouts' for the elephants which work in the forest areas. Landon calls him the poor relation of the Newar, and Northey assesses him to be the descendant of the children who were born of liaisons between the Rajput women of Chitor and the aborigines.

Thakalis

The Thakali is a Nepalese tribe which, it is said, originated in, and took its name from, the village of Thak. They are, apparently, distantly related to the Puns, in whose territory, the steep valley of the Upper Kali between Dana and Mukinath, they now live. Not normally found in other areas their women folk do, however, run many of the *Bhattis* (inns) which are found on the main routes of Central Nepal.

In appearance they are similar to Tibetans, but speak their own language, Thakalikura, which is vaguely akin to the Kamkura of the Puns. Their religion, too, is somewhat like that of the Puns, and their priests are Lamas. So far four clans of the Thakali have been identified—*Buttchan*, *Gochan*, *Sherchan*, and *Tulachan*.

Not normally enlisted into the Army, though a few, calling themselves Puns, have in fact been enrolled in the past, their chief occupations are the borax and salt trades, for which their main beasts of burden are the sheep which they breed themselves.

Punyels

Little is known of this very small tribe, which inhabits the same area, speaks the same language, and lives in much the same way, as the Thakalis.

Sherpas

The Sherpa is more affiliated to the Tibetans than to the other tribes of Eastern Nepal; he is a Buddhist and his language is Tibetan in origin. His Lamas are of the Red Hat sect and are allowed to marry. They do not celebrate the normal Gurkha festivals, but in their homes celebrate the spring and early summer festivals of *Dumja* and *Lorsa*, the highlight of the latter being the *Sange*, or Mask, dances.

The tribe is comparatively small, and although they may be found throughout the uplands of Eastern Nepal and although large numbers have settled in the Darjeeling district, their true home is in the Solu Khumbu area of No. 3 East, in the upper reaches of the Dudh Kosi. Owing to the altitude at which they live they can only grow barley, maize and potatoes, and the sale of seed potatoes is one of their main sources of income. They are extremely strong and are able to carry very heavy loads for long distances. Recently the Sherpa has made a name for himself as a high altitude porter with Himalayan expeditions. Tenzing Norkay, to give him his proper name, achieved world fame when, in 1953, in company with Sir Edmund Hillary, he reached the summit of Mount Everest.

To date Sherpas have only been enlisted in very small numbers and then mainly as Mess servants. However, being extremely intelligent and hardy, there seems no reason why they should not make excellent soldiers. If they are to be enlisted, the districts of Khumbu and Solu would appear to be the best recruiting ground.

Shiva Bhaktas

The *Kamara* was the original slave caste and a freed slave became a *Pare Gharti*. However, on emancipation in 1927, the new caste name of *Shiva Bhakta* was given to them, and they now intermarry with Ghartis.

Bhujels

Bhujels are also freed slaves and are to be found in East Nepal and the Darjeeling District.

The Inhabitants of Darjeeling District

Some 90 per cent of the population of the hill district of Darjeeling is Nepali and is composed of emigrants from all over Nepal. The figures given in the last Gazetteer were:

Rai . . . 56,794	Magar . . . 17,262	Brahman . . . 8,999
Tamang . . . 43,114	Kami . . . 16,272	Damai . . . 8,162
Chhetri . . . 25,941	Gurung . . . 15,455	Sherpa . . . 6,929
Limbu . . . 17,803	Newar . . . 12,242	Sunwar . . . 4,822
Bhujel . . . 5,815	Lepcha . . . 12,470	Others . . . 10,000

The only Gurkha tribe not mentioned in the report is the Thakur.

Line Boys

The term line-boy was originally applied to Gurkha children brought up in the married lines of battalions in India. It was also applied to boys from Gurkha settlements near permanent regimental stations such as Dharmsala, Bakloh, Dehra Dun, Almora and Shillong, but comparatively few of this latter class were accepted for enlistment.

For a very long time it has been the policy to encourage Gurkhas leaving the Army to return to their homes in the hills. It is for this reason that final payments are made at the recruiting depots in, or close to the border of, Nepal. Nevertheless, large numbers of Gurkhas, released in 1946-47, made only short visits to their homes before coming back to India for civil employment. The biggest colony is in Calcutta where, even before the war, the number of Nepalis was estimated at 30,000, but others are to be found in every city in India, largely employed in the Police and other Government services, or as watchmen in banks and institutions, and many of them now live permanently in India.

Nepali Tradesmen

Four types of tradesmen are normally enlisted into the Army or are to be found in other places outside Nepal. They are *Sarki*, *Kami*, *Damai* and *Sunar*, and they carry on the trades which are forbidden to the higher caste Gurkha.

Sarkis are leather-workers and cobblers, and are enlisted as shoemakers, saddlers or equipment repairers.

Kamis are blacksmiths and are enlisted as armourers.

Damais may be musicians or tailors. In the hills they provide the personnel for village bands but are employed in the Army only as tailors.

Sunars are the goldsmiths and silversmiths and are to be found in every bazaar.

Of slightly higher standing are the *Manjhi*, who is the professional boatman and ferryman, and the *Kumal* or potter. In the Burma campaign many Gurkha units asked for *Manjhi* recruits.

Other tradesmen are: *Agri* (miner, mason and carpenter); *Chunara* (carpenter and maker of bamboo vessels, who often lives in small colonies of rough huts on the edge of the jungle); *Drai* (potter), *Kasai* (butcher); *Pore* (scavenger); *Gaine* (travelling bard).

14

Recruiting and the recruiting depots

Historical

Prior to 1886, when only five Regiments (of one battalion each) had the title of Gurkha, there was no centralized system of recruiting and Regiments made their own arrangements. Parties were sent direct to the Hills and the recruits thus obtained were brought into Regimental Headquarters. This system was common throughout the Indian Army.

With the expansion of Gurkha Regiments in 1886, sanction was accorded for the establishment of a Gurkha Recruiting Depot at Gorakhpur in the United Provinces. This Depot was the first of its kind to be established in India, and its success eventually led to similar organisations being formed for the recruitment of other classes in the Indian Army.

Until 1886 no agreement with regard to recruiting appears to have been made with the Nepalese Government, and recruiters were obliged to smuggle their recruits across the border as best they could. However, after the accession to power of Maharaja Sir Bir Shamsheer and the appointment of his brother, General Chandra Shamsheer, as Commander-in-Chief, relations with Nepal took a much happier turn, and since then assistance has been readily given by the Nepalese Government in all matters of recruiting and welfare.

Owing to its favourable geographical position and to its railway junction, Gorakhpur was the base for all recruiting parties working in the Central and Western areas of Nepal—that is in all areas west of the Valley. In 1903 an outbreak

of plague forced the authorities to move the Depot to Pharenda, where it remained until 1906. A new site was decided upon in 1907, when the old lines were handed over to the Police and an area of fifteen acres was obtained at Kunraghat, three miles to the east of Gorakhpur. The new Depot was finally occupied in 1910 and in the following years many improvements were made.

Prior to 1890 the Police battalions of Assam and Burma recruited in Eastern Nepal from a base in Darjeeling and, although there is nothing definite on record, it appears that it was in this year that the Recruiting Officer for Gurkhas established an office there. This supposition is supported by the fact that it was in 1890 that the 10th (Burma) Regiment (now the 1/10th P.M.O. Gurkha Rifles) was formed, its men coming from the Kubo Valley Military Police which was composed largely of Gurkhas from Eastern Nepal. In 1893 recruiting for the Burma Police was placed under the Recruiting Officer for Gurkhas, and in 1934 recruiting for the Assam Rifles similarly came under his control.

The Darjeeling Depot was first situated in the bazaar and consisted of a small room in the Kacheri, which was lent, for an hour or two each morning, by the Deputy Commissioner. There appears to have been no clerical staff or system of accounts, and recruits and recruiters were lodged where accommodation could be found in the bazaar. In 1901, however, the British Mountain Battery lines at Ghoom were vacated, and in the following year some of the buildings were taken over as accommodation for the Depot.

Because poor communications permitted the Darjeeling Depot to recruit only from Dhankuta and Ilam, it was decided to open a part-time Depot from which the districts of Nos. 2, 3 and 4 East could be easily reached. From 1891 to 1909 there was a Depot at Purnea and a barrack, to accommodate 60 men, was built in 1892. It was then realised that this site was still too much to the east, and in 1909 the depot was moved to the Darbhanga Road at Sakri, and it was here that Sunwars were enlisted for the first time. From 1912 to 1929, with a break of only a few years, the Depot was at Laheria Sarai. In 1929 it was found possible to

recruit the eastern areas from Kunraghat as well as from Ghoom, and Laheria Sarai was therefore closed. It was again opened for recruiting in 1941 and remained open for the duration of the war.

When the British-run Indian Army came to an end in 1947, the Recruiting Depots for Gurkhas were located at Ghoom (Darjeeling) and Kunraghat (Gorakhpur). Soon after partition, in 1947, the British Gurkha recruiting staffs moved into depots at Jalapahar, near Darjeeling, and Lehra, about 40 miles north of Gorakhpur. It was then the intention to retain and develop both these Depots, but in 1953 the Indian Government objected, on political grounds, to the retention of these sites, and agreement was reached with the Nepalese Government for the building of a Depot, or Depots, inside Nepal. Meanwhile, the Indians asked that the actual act of enlistment and attestation should, with immediate effect, be carried out on Nepalese soil. From 1953, therefore, recruiting took place at camps at Simana, near Jalapahar, and Pakhlihawa, near Lehra, the recruits then being sent to the Depots in India for holding and documentation. Later, in 1956, Simana was closed and all recruiting was done at Pakhlihawa.

During the winter of 1953/54, a reconnaissance was carried out to examine sites for a possible Depot inside Nepal, and one was eventually selected at Dharan in East Nepal.

The Dharan project suffered many setbacks and it was found impossible to achieve the target date, March 1959, for its completion and occupation. However, as our agreement with India committed us to giving up Jalapahar and Lehra by that date, the Jalapahar Depot was closed in September 1958, its functions, except for recruiting, being taken over by the Transit Camp at Barrackpore, and in March 1959 the Lehra Depot moved to Pakhlihawa, which then took on the duties of both a recruiting and a holding camp.

From the time that Dharan was fully occupied, in October 1960, Pakhlihawa became a 'Recruiting Centre', taking over all the work originally carried out at the Lehra Depot except for recruiting from Eastern Nepal which was now taken over entirely by Dharan.

Recruiting is only one of the functions of the Depot and Centre in Nepal. Other major commitments include control of leave parties entering and leaving Nepal, paying of pensions and voluntary allotments, record office work, and the functions of a post office between serving soldiers and their homes and relations in Nepal.

Recruiting Procedure

The present system for recruiting for the British Army, which stems from the days when British Officers were not permitted to enter Nepal, is well tried and, working as satisfactorily as it does, is unlikely to be radically changed in the near future.

Basically it is the same system as that employed by every Army in the world, with the difference that, instead of having permanent Recruiting Offices, mobile Recruiting Exhibitions and periodical Recruiting Drives, such as are to be found in some other countries, these duties, in the case of the Brigade of Gurkhas, are combined by specially selected 'Paid Recruiters', who are sent into the hills to obtain recruits.

These men, the number of which varies from year to year, dependent on manpower requirements, are chosen from pensioners whose record in the Army has been really good and who are living in retirement in their villages.

Since no permanent Recruiting Offices exist in the hills, and in order to give men from as many areas as possible the chance to enlist, care is taken to ensure that recruiters come from as many different areas as numbers will allow.

Lacking the experience which the more permanent recruiting staffs in the United Kingdom have acquired and because of the inaccessibility of many of the areas they visit, Gurkha recruiters are given a short course before going off into the hills, usually at the end of March, to enable them to spot physical weaknesses in potential recruits and so save time and money in bringing into the Recruiting Depots in the plains, men who are unlikely to be accepted into the Army.

The collecting of the recruiters for this course in itself presents something of a problem. It is normally undertaken,

in February and early March, by former Gurkha Officers who, as Extra Assistant Recruiting Officers, are employed throughout the year in various duties at the Recruiting Depots, but who, at this time, themselves visit the hills informing the recruiters of the date by which they are required to report to the Depots.

Apart from instruction in how to spot a man with a possible physical weakness, each recruiter is told the maximum number of recruits he may bring with him on his return and the exact day on which he should report to his Recruiting Depot.

The recruiting dates may vary from year to year but are normally confined to the months of October, November and, possibly, early December.

On arrival at the Recruiting Depot, which may be after an arduous march of anything up to ten days, the potential recruit is given a meal, an Army haircut, and a temporary issue of items for eating and sleeping. As with recruits anywhere, he is then documented and seen by the officers, both Gurkha and British, of the recruiting staff.

Competition for the limited number of vacancies available annually is very keen, and careful selection has perforce to be made. Those provisionally chosen are then given a very thorough and detailed medical examination before final acceptance, after which they receive an issue of clothing, further documentation takes place, and an Attestation Parade is held.

Recruits failing to obtain a vacancy are paid a daily allowance for the journey home. The recruiter is also paid the money owing to him for the cost of feeding his party on the way down from the hills and is given a variable bonus for satisfactory performance of his duties.

After arrival at the Depot, the whole process of enlistment for any one batch of recruits lasts normally about six days, which includes one day of leisure.

Recruiting Areas

It is convenient to consider Western and Central Nepal, inhabited largely by Gurungs and Magars, as one main area, and Eastern Nepal as another. From the Far West, Dotiyals

have in the past been obtained as porters and stretcher-bearers but that region is not regarded as a proper recruiting area.

Central and Western Nepal

Thakurs are to be found in most areas of Central Nepal, but the best come from No. 4 West, particularly from the jillas of Bhirkot, Garhung and Payung.

Chhetris are to be found in all jillas of the area, but those from the Jilla of Lamjung and the Tahsil of Gulmi probably make the best soldiers.

Tamangs of a very good type are found in North Gorkha and No. 1 West, but must be carefully selected for enlistment.

Gurungs and Magars are chiefly found as shown in the following table:

Tahsils	Jillas in which found	
	Gurungs	Magars
No. 2 West	In large numbers and of good type but careful selection is necessary.	In small numbers.
No. 3 West	In Dhor in small numbers and of a good type. In Tanhu fairly good types with careful selection. Kaski and Lamjung in large numbers and of a good type.	In Rising and Dhor in good numbers of a fairly good type. In Tanhu fair numbers of a good type.
No. 4 West	From the Ghandrung area of Char Hajar Parbat, in good numbers and of an excellent type. In Bhirkot also in good numbers and of a good type. In other Jillas good material can be obtained by selection, particularly from Nawakot and Payung.	In Garhung and Bhirkot in good numbers and of a good type. In Char Hajar Parbat, Puns in good numbers and of an excellent type.
Palpa	None.	In great numbers including excellent Thapas, but careful selection is necessary and the foothills must be avoided.

Tahsils	Jillas in which found	
	Gurungs	Magars
Gulmi .	In small numbers and not of the best type.	In Char Hajar Parbat very good Puns, particularly in the east, and Buras and Rokas in small numbers. In all areas good Magars of all types but careful selection is required.
Piuthan .	None.	In good numbers but careful selection is necessary. Some good Buras and Rokas are available.
Sallyan .	None.	In fairly good numbers but careful selection is necessary.
Dailekh .	Both Gurungs and Magars in fair numbers but mostly migrants from further east and very careful selection is necessary.	

Eastern Nepal

Thakurs are to be found in very small numbers in most areas but because it is not their natural habitat careful selection is necessary.

Chhetris are to be found in fair numbers throughout the area and good recruits can be obtained.

Sunwars are very largely confined to the area between the Kimti Khola and the Likhu Khola, on the border between Nos. 2 and 3 East.

Tamangs are found in large numbers in Nos. 1 and 2 East, with some in No. 3 East.

Colonies of the Gurung and Magar tribes are found scattered over the whole of Eastern Nepal and produce some excellent recruits.

Rai Country

No. 2 East—few, if any, available.

No. 3 East—in large numbers and in good types, especially from Chisankhu, Rawadumre, Sokhu, Halesi, Sotang, Khamtel, Sugnam, Solo, Rawakhola and Ragni.

No. 4 East—in very large numbers. Attention should be paid to the upper reaches of the River Arun.

Dhankuta—in small numbers except for Chainpur, where large numbers of excellent men are available.

Ilam—a few good men available.

Limbu Country

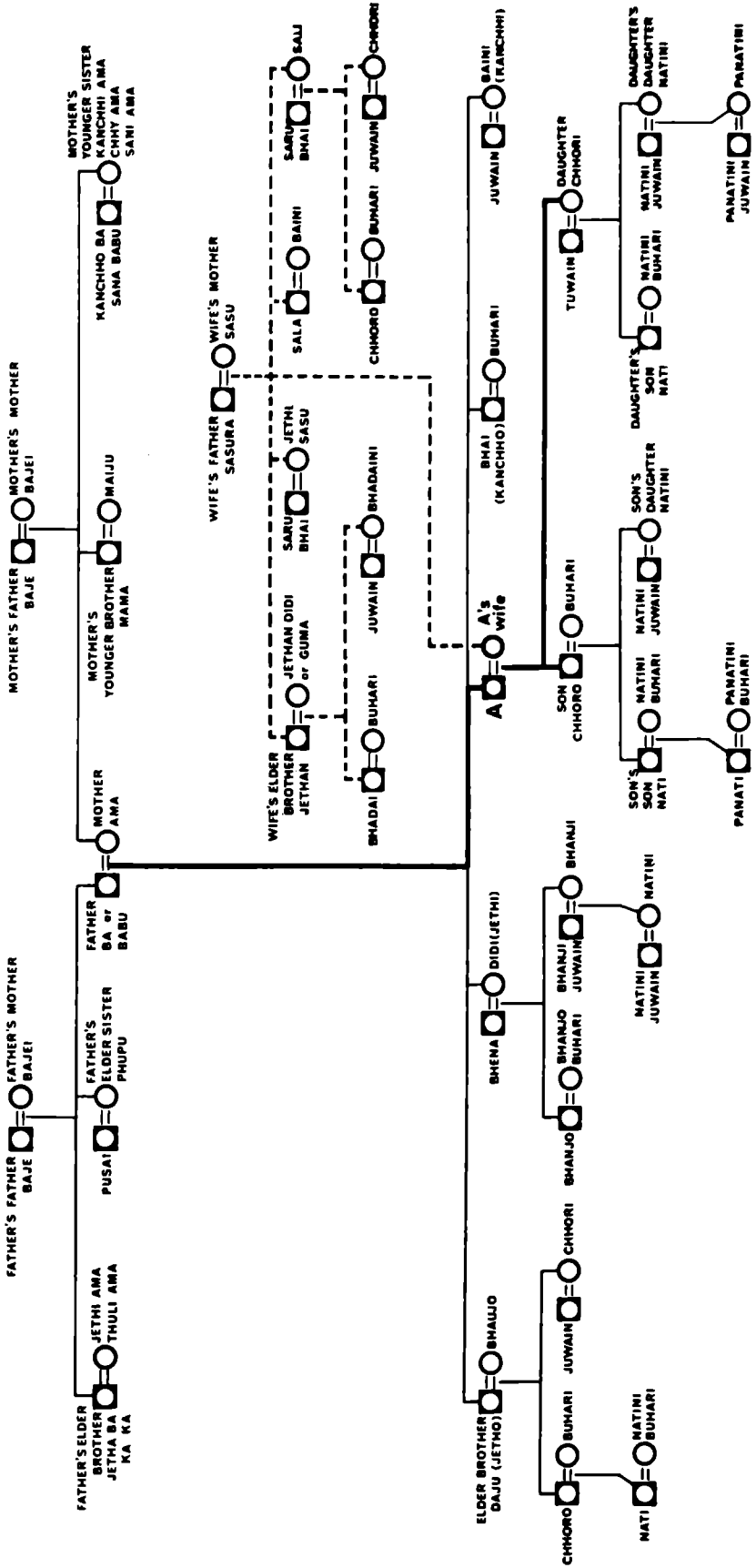
There are no Limbus west of the Arun River.

Dhankuta—in large numbers throughout the Tahsil, except in the extreme south and in the Chainpur area.

Other tribes, i.e. those providing shoemakers, musicians, blacksmiths, etc., are to be found throughout Nepal but very careful selection in recruiting them is required. It is advisable that the Gurkha Officers are consulted and that any recruits needed from these tribes be obtained from villages specially selected in accordance with their recommendations.

APPENDIX A

CHART SHOWING GURKHA FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
(See also Explanatory Notes)



Appendix A (*continued*)

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO CHART ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS



**Denotes
Males**



**Denotes
Females**

1. When the sign is joined to the line above, it denotes a son or daughter, as the case may be; when not so joined, husband or wife of son or daughter.

2. The elder or eldest son in a family (used by brothers and sisters and by parents) is known as Jetho. From eldest to youngest the sons are called: 1 Jetho, 2 Mainlo, 3 Sainlo, 4 Kainlo, 5 Thainlo, 6 Rainlo, 7 Antare, 8 Jantare, 9 Khantare, 10 Mantare, 11 Khanchho. The same words with a feminine termination are used for daughters.

Bearing these terms in mind, the necessary additions must be made to denote any further member of the hypothetical family shown on the chart. Thus, supposing A's father had more than one brother, they would be known as Jetho Ba, Mainlo Ba, Sainlo Ba, and so on. Similarly, if A's mother had other brothers or sisters, they would be known as Jetho Mama, Mainlo Mama, etc., or Jethi Ama, Mainli Ama and so on down to Kanchhi Ama.

3. If A's father had more than one wife, A would call them Jethi Ama and Kanchhi Ama.

4. The term 'Sakkhai' is used to denote full blood relationship as understood in the European sense. Thus, 'Yo mero sakkhai bhai ho' means 'this is my proper brother'. A Gurkha will loosely term many persons 'bhai'.

5. The terms shown on the chart are those which A would use in describing the relationship to the various persons shown: It is assumed that his wife is not related to him before marriage.

6. All Gurkhas may contract what is known as a Mit relationship with any friend of any caste high or low. In Eastern Nepal the Mit must belong to a different caste or tribe. This is a form of blood brotherhood and marriage is forbidden between the two families, but in time of trouble they will help each other. There is a ceremony in connection with Mit-ship, which consists of exchange of presents, often rings, and the taking of an oath of friendship for life.

7. A complication may be introduced by the occurrence of step-mothers or step-fathers and their brothers and sisters, any of whom may be referred to by any of the normal family names deemed appropriate.

8. It should be pointed out that this chart is not exhaustive and it is complicated by local variations in the class or relative for whom each epithet may be used, obvious examples being 'chhoru' and 'solti', so

Appendix A (*continued*)

that a term which in one area may be most comprehensive, may in another be precisely indicative.

9. The following list of Nepali relationships, not all of which appear on the chart, should help in its use. The importance of these relationships lies in the fact that in a Gurkha family these terms, rather than proper names, are used when referring to anyone, and it is common for a Gurkha not to know the name of even a near relative.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

I. *Older Generations*

(a) Jiju	Great-grandfather (Jiju-baje haru... forefathers)
Jiju ama (Jyama)	Great-grandmother; ancestress
Baje	Grandfather (pat. Ghara ko baje; mat. Maula ko baje)
Bajai (Bajyai)	Grandmother (pat. Ghara ki bajai; mat. Maula ki bajai)
Babu (Ba)	Father (loosely—uncle)
Ama	Mother (loosely—aunt; Ama babu ... parents; Dudh ama... foster mother)
Sasura	Father-in-law (loosely—sister's husband's father)
Sasu	Mother-in-law (loosely, her sister; also loosely...sister's husband's mother and wife's elder sister; or locally...wife of brother's son; also, Sasu bajai...mother-in-law)
Jethaba/Kaka	Uncle (father's elder / younger brother; loosely...mother's sister's husband)
Mama (X)	Uncle (Mother's elder <i>or</i> younger brother)
Phupu (Y)	Aunt (Father's elder <i>or</i> younger sister)
Chhyama	Aunt (Mother's elder <i>or</i> younger sister)
Phupajyo (Pusai)	Uncle (husband of Phupu)
Kaki	Aunt (wife of Kaka; locally—mother's elder <i>or</i> younger sister)
Maiju	Aunt (wife of Mama; loosely—mother-in-law)

Appendix A (*continued*)

1. *Older Generations* (continued)

Mused Mother's sister's family (Mused
bhai—mother's sister's son)

(X) Amongst Gurungs and Tamangs only . . . wife's father

(Y) Amongst Gurungs and Tamangs only . . . wife's mother

A Gurung's, or Tamang's, wife's parents are known by the same term as that used for father's sister and mother's brother because the son or daughter, i.e. Solti or Soltini, of either of these relatives is the correct and usual marriage partner.

(b) The undermentioned four pairs of synonymous terms vary from family to family in their particular application:

(i) Jethababu (Jethaba) Thulobabu (Bara babu)	}	Uncle	{	Father's elder brother Husband of mother's elder sister (locally—Mother's elder brother)
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(ii) Jethi ama Thuli ama (Bari ama)	}	Aunt	{	Mother's elder sister Wife of father's elder brother. Father's first wife (locally—father's elder sister)
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N.B.—Bara ama—Grandmother, sometimes.

(iii) Kanchho ba (babu) Sana babu	}	Uncle	{	Father's younger brother Husband of mother's younger sister. Mother's second husband (locally— Mother's younger brother)
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(iv) Kanchhi ama Sani ama	}	Aunt	{	Mother's younger sister Wife of father's younger brother Father's co-wife Step-mother (locally— father's younger sister)
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2. *Own Generation*

Daju (Dai)	Elder brother (loosely—cousin)
Bhai	Younger brother (loosely—cousin)
Didi	Elder sister (loosely—cousin; also elder brother-in-law's wife)
Baini	Younger sister (loosely—cousin; also younger brother-in-law's wife)
Bhauyu	Sister-in-law (wife of Daju)
Bhena (Bhinajyu)	Brother-in-law (husband of Didi)
Jethajyu	Brother-in-law (husband's elder brother)
Jethan	Brother-in-law (wife's elder brother)

Appendix A (*continued*)

2. *Own Generation* (continued)

Dewar	Brother-in-law (husband's younger brother)
Sala	Brother-in-law (wife's younger brother; also a term of abuse for anyone else; Magars only—son of mother's sister)
Sali	Sister-in-law (wife's younger sister; Magars only—daughter of mother's sister)
Amaju	Sister-in-law (husband's elder sister)
Nanda	Sister-in-law (husband's younger sister)
Amaju daju	Brother-in-law (husband of Amaju)
Nanda daju	Brother-in-law (husband of Nanda)
Jethan didi	Sister-in-law (wife of Jethan; also wife's elder sister)
Dewarani (Dewarani bhaini)	Sister-in-law (wife of Dewar; also husband's younger sister)
Solti	Brother-in-law or sister-in-law (brother or sister of brother's wife or sister's husband; also cousin; also boy friend; Gurungs and Tamangs only—Mother's brother's child)
Soltini	Sometimes used for female Solti (also girl friend)
Saru bhai, Saru daju	Brother-in-law (wife's sister's husband)
Logne (Poi)	Husband (wife may call him Swami)
Swasni (Joi)	Wife (her parents' home is 'Mait')
Sauta	Co-wife

3. *Younger Generation*

Chhoro	Son (locally—specially among Gurungs, brother's son; loosely—nephew, or wife's sister's son)
Chhori	Daughter (locally—specially among Gurungs, brother's daughter; loosely—niece or co-wife's sister's daughter)
Nati	Grandson (also great-nephew, sister's son's child)
Natini	Granddaughter (also great-niece, sister's son's child)
Panati	Great-grandson
Panatini	Great-granddaughter

Appendix A (*continued*)

3. *Younger Generation* (continued)

Bhatijo	Nephew (elder or young brother's son)
Bhanjo (Bhanij)	Nephew (elder or younger sister's son; or locally—son of female cousin)
Bhatiji	Niece (elder or younger brother's daughter)
Bhanji	Niece (elder or younger sister's daughter; also wife of Bhanjo)
Bhado (Bhadaha)	Nephew (a woman's brother's or sister's son)
Bhadai	Niece (a woman's brother's or sister's daughter)
Juwain	Son-in-law (also brother-in-law, husband of Baini; loosely—niece's (Bhanji's husband))
Buhari	Daughter-in-law (loosely—also wife of grandson; also sister-in-law (wife of Bhai), or loosely—nephew's wife)
Bhatije Juwain	Nephew-in-law (husband of brother's daughter)
Bhatije buhari	Niece-in-law (wife of brother's son)
Bhanje juwain	Niece-in-law (wife of sister's son)
Bhanje buhari	Niece-in-law (wife of sister's son)

4. *Relations other than Blood*

Mit ama	}	The mother or father of a Mit
Mit babu		
Mitni		Female Mit
Dharm Putra		Adopted son
Dharm Putri		Adopted daughter
Ranra		Widower
Ranri		Widow
Samdi	}	This is the relationship between the parents of a man and his wife. Thus if A marries B, their respective parents are Samdi and Samdini to each other
Samdini		
Jhadkelo		Prefix added to step-children
Jamlyaha (Jaumle)		Twins

APPENDIX B

JUDICIARY

The first universal system of any form of law in Nepal was founded when King Prithwi Narayan formed the Kingdom. It was based on the ancient Hindu law code as expounded by Manu, the Manusmriti, but gave full force to prevailing custom. There were no courts as such and the law was administered for the King by his four Ministers or Kajis. With the advent of Jang Bahadur in 1847, the Prime Minister took over all the executive and judicial powers and a first attempt was made at codification. Successive Prime Ministers, with the help of their Council of Bharadars (Nobles of State), enlarged and amplified the code until, in the middle 1930s, the Prime Minister's Niksari Adda gave place to the Pradhan Nayalaya or High Court. Appeal from this could only be made to the Maharaja himself.

After the 1950 Revolution, the Government of Nepal completely separated the judiciary from the executive, and the Pradhan Nayalaya became the combined Supreme and High Court. Under it are the District Courts and under them the Elaka Courts. Appeals against decisions made by the Elaka Court may be made to the District Court and then to the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice is appointed by the King in consultation with the Raj Sabha (Council of State), and the judges of the Supreme Court in consultation with the Chief Justice. Certain judicial powers have also been given to the Village Panchayats: they can try cases arising out of encroachment of land, and such things as wage and labour disputes, and have limited powers of punishment.

In addition to modernising the judiciary, the Nepal Government have been modernising the law itself. Some important changes are those designed to prevent discrimination on grounds of religion, race or caste, and the abolition of the zamindari system by limiting the amount of land held by landowners.

List of District and Elaka Courts

District Courts

Katmandu District Court
Dharan District Court
Saptari District Court
Mahotari District Court
Palpa District Court
Sallyan District Court
Doti District Court

Myang Lado District Court
Bhojpur District Court
Pokhara District Court
Birganj District Court
Taulihawa District Court
Nepalganj District Court

Appendix B (*continued*)

Elaka Courts

Ilam Elaka Court
Tapleganj Elaka Court
Phidim Elaka Court
Biratnagar Elaka Court
Bhojpur Elaka Court
Ousalu Khark Elaka Court
Hanumanagar Elaka Court
Udaypur Elaka Court
Sindhuli Elaka Court
Sindhupalchok Elaka Court
Lalitpur Elaka Court
Dhading Elaka Court
Katmandu Elaka Court
Gorkha Elaka Court
Pokhara Elaka Court
Syangja Elaka Court
Thak Elaka Court
Sarlahi Elaka Court
Kalai Elaka Court
Chitwan Elaka Court
Gulmi Elaka Court
Sibraj Elaka Court
Parasi Elaka Court
Sallyan Elaka Court
Jajarkot Elaka Court
Surkhet Elaka Court
Bardia Elaka Court
Kanchanpur Elaka Court
Darchula Elaka Court
Doti Elaka Court
Acham Elaka Court
Jumla Elaka Court

Jhapa Elaka Court
Chainpur Elaka Court
Myang Lado Elaka Court
Dhankuta Elaka Court
Khatang Elaka Court
Okhaldhunga Elaka Court
Siraha Elaka Court
Charikat Elaka Court
Kavre Palanchok Elaka Court
Bhaktapur Elaka Court
Chisapani Elaka Court
Nuwakote Elaka Court
Katmandu Criminal Court
Bandipur Elaka Court
Kuncha Elaka Court
Baglung Elaka Court
Jaleswar Elaka Court
Birganj Elaka Court
Katarban Elaka Court
Palpa Elaka Court
Taulihawa Elaka Court
Baithari Elaka Court
Dang Deokhuri Elaka Court
Piuthan Elaka Court
Dailekh Elaka Court
Banke Elaka Court
Kailali Elaka Court
Baitadi Elaka Court
Dandeldhura Elaka Court
Bajhang Elaka Court
Humla Elaka Court

APPENDIX C

SOME UNITS OF THE ROYAL NEPALESE ARMY

The *Sri Nath* Battalion, raised in 1763, is the senior unit of the Nepalese Army. Its first campaign was under King Prithwi Narayan against the Western Nepal Princes and Barons. Later campaigns included those against the British invasion of 1768, Tibet in 1789 and 1855, the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, and the First and Second World Wars in India.

The *Purano Gorakh* Battalion was also raised in 1763 (as the First Gorakh Company) to subjugate Western Nepal. It fought against the British in 1768, in Garhwal and Kangra in 1807, in the British War of 1814, in the Mutiny of 1857, and in both World Wars. It enlists mainly Magars.

The *Sher* Battalion, raised in 1807, fought in the Second Tibet War, in the Mutiny, and in both World Wars, including Assam in 1944.

The *Kali Bahadur* Battalion was raised in 1831. It fought in the Mutiny and in both World Wars. It enlists mainly Gurungs. It was the first Nepalese battalion to fight 'overseas' in Burma during World War II.

The *Mahindra Dal* Battalion was raised in 1845 and first saw service during the Mutiny. Fighting in Waziristan in World War I, it campaigned through Burma to reach Rangoon during World War II. This was formerly an artillery unit.

The *Shamsher Dal* Battalion was also raised in 1845 and fought in Tibet, in the Mutiny, and in both World Wars.

Other Battalions of the Nepalese Army still in existence are: The First Rifles, the Devi Dutt and the Gorakh Bahadur.

Two regular Pioneer Battalions served in Assam and on the Ledo Road. These were the First Jangi Battalion and the Janga Nath Battalion.

Battalions which came to India in the First World War included The First Rifles, Pashupati Prasad and Sabju.

The Nepalese Army have in the past included the following battalions: Bhairabhath, Gorakh Nath, Singha Nath, Kali Parsad, Jabar Jang, Kali Bakas, Surje Dal, Narsing Dal, Raj Dal, Ram Dal, Kali Dal, Jaga Dal, Naya Gorakh and The Second Rifles.

APPENDIX D

THE ROLLS OF SUCCESSION OF THE KINGS AND PRIME MINISTERS OF NEPAL

<i>Kings</i>		<i>Prime Ministers</i>
Prithwi Narayan Shah	1742	
	1774	
Singha Pratap Shah	1774	
(son of Prithwi Narayan)	1777	
Rana Bahadur Shah	1777	
(son of Singha Pratap)	1799	
Girvana Judha Bikram Shah	1799	1811
(son of Rana Bahadur)	1816	}
	1816	Bhim Sen Thapa
	1839	
Rajendra Bir Bikram Shah	1843	}
(son of Girvana Judha)	1845	Matbarsing Thapa
	1846	
	1847	
	1847	}
Surendra Bir Bikram Shah	1877	Jang Bahadur Rana
(son of Rajendra)	1877	
	1881	
	1881	}
	1885	Rana Udip
	1885	(brother of Jang Bahadur)
Prithwi Bir Bikram Shah	1901	}
(grandson of Surendra)	1901	Bir Shamsher
	1901	(nephew of Jang Bahadur)
	1901	Dev Shamsher
	1901	(brother of Bir Shamsher)
	1911	}
	1911	Chandra Shamsher
	1929	(brother of Bir and Dev Shamsher)
	1929	}
	1932	Bhim Shamsher
	1932	(brother of Bir, Dev and Chandra Shamsher)
Tribhubana Bir Bikram Shah	1945	}
(son of Prithwi)	1945	Judha Shamsher
	1948	(brother of Bir, Dev, Chandra and Bhim Shamsher)
	1948	Padma Shamsher
	1948	(son of Bhim Shamsher)
	1951	Mohun Shamsher
	1951	(son of Chandra Shamsher)
	1955	
Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah	1955	
(son of Tribhubana)		

APPENDIX E

CALENDAR, CURRENCY AND WEIGHTS

Nepalese Era

The year by which Nepalese manuscripts and official documents are dated is that known as the Nepal Sambat. This is used throughout Nepal, both in speech and in writing. It began in 57 B.C. and the new year starts from a date roughly corresponding to the 15th of April.

Months of the Year

The Nepalese month begins about the middle of the corresponding month of the Christian calendar. The Gurkhali names of the months are as follows:

Mid April to Mid May	Baisak
Mid May to Mid June	Jeth
Mid June to Mid July	Asar
Mid July to Mid August	Sawan
Mid August to Mid September	Bhadau
Mid September to Mid October	Asoj
Mid October to Mid November	Kartik
Mid November to Mid December	Mangsir
Mid December to Mid January	Pus
Mid January to Mid February	Magh
Mid February to Mid March	Phagun
Mid March to Mid April	Chait

Days of the Week

Monday	Sombar
Tuesday	Mangalbar
Wednesday	Budhbar
Thursday	Bihibar
Friday	Sukabar
Saturday	Sancharbar
Sunday	Aitabar

Nepalese Coinage

- 1 Paisa
- 2 Paisa
- 4 Paisa = 1 Anna
- 10 Paisa
- 20 Paisa
- 25 Paisa = 1 Suka
- 50 Paisa = 1 Mohar
- 100 Paisa = 1 Rupaiya

Nepalese currency is known as Mahendramalli in Western Nepal and as Deghi paisa in Eastern Nepal. Indian currency is known as Kampani, from the currency originally issued by the East India Company. The rate of exchange varies considerably, dropping as low as Rs. 80 (Nepal) for Rs. 100 (India) and going as high as Rs. 190 (Nepal) for Rs. 100

Appendix E (*continued*)

(India). The rate is inclined to drop during the pension paying season, when traders can obtain plenty of Indian currency. Indian money is current in big towns east of the Arun river and in most of Western Nepal and the Terai. Most traders and shopkeepers are ready to acquire Indian currency in exchange for Nepalese. The inter-Government official rate of exchange is Rs. 160 (Nepali) to Rs. 100 (Indian), a rate laid down in 1960.

Weight Table

10 Muthi = 1 Mana

8 Mana = 1 Pathi

20 Pathi = 1 Muri

1 Muthi is a handful.

1 Mana is approximately equal to 1 lb. The Mana is the commonest measure used in Nepal. It consists of a brass vessel shaped like a cup, the bottom being bulbous and wider than the mouth. On the side is a stamped seal showing that it is a certified measure.

APPENDIX F

LETTER WRITING

A Gurkha letter may be written in a set form. The opening paragraph in such a case is:

Swasti shri sarbopoma yogyet yadi sakala gunagarishta raj bhar samartha Shri (a)(b) kai malum hos ki yata ma (c)(d) ko taraph bati sewa (e) chha.

At (a) is entered the number of *sris* the recipient is entitled to according to the social scale, three normally, six for a father. At (b) is entered the name and title of the recipient and at (d) of the writer, whose relationship is given at (c). Lastly at (e), is entered *asik* for an inferior or *dhok* for a superior or *salam* as generalisation.

The opening paragraph is then followed by *so banchi malum garnu hola ji*, which could be somewhat abruptly translated as a full-stop. After this come wishes for the good health of the recipient and the news that the writer is at that time also in good health. Another 'full-stop' then divides the above from any news that might follow. Punctuation as such is conspicuous by its total absence, although it is usual to preface new subjects with the word *upranta* (thereafter). It can be seen that a fairly lengthy letter does not necessarily contain a great deal of news, especially when *asiks* and *dhoks* are included for all one's relations and it is remembered that certain set phrases such as 'what more is there to write', 'you are the clever, understanding one', 'the slips of the pen are many, may they be forgiven' are inserted before the letter is concluded with the word *subham*.

There are many variations on the above formula, depending on the individuality of the writer and the category of person addressed. Nowadays the formal letter is considered old-fashioned and is not so much used, a simple direct form being employed.

The wording of the envelope is also laid down. The first line reads 'this letter goes to such-and-such a person' and the second 'this letter to be received by such-and-such a person' and the third 'sent by so-and-so'. Should the flap of the envelope be superscribed by the Nagri figures for $74\frac{1}{2}$, no one will open it except the addressee, as this imputes on such an unauthorised opener the curse of the $74\frac{1}{2}$ maunds (5,960 lbs) weight of holy threads removed from the bodies of the Rajputs after the sack of Chitor.

Since Nepal joined the Postal Union after the Second World War, the more normal form of address has become simply: Name, father's name, village, thum, jilla, tahsil.

APPENDIX G

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NEPAL

A. Books dealing with the Country and the People

- Bell, Sir Charles . . . *Tibet, Past and Present*. Oxford, 1924.
Reprint 1927.
A useful book setting forth the relations between Tibet and Nepal very clearly.
- The People of Tibet*. Oxford, 1928.
Contains many references to Nepal and Gurkhas.
- The Religion of Tibet*. Oxford, 1931.
A book which throws much light on the religious beliefs of the Gurungs and other Nepalese tribes.
- Bendall, C. A. . . . *Journey of Literary and Archaeological Research in Nepal and North India*. Cambridge, 1886.
- Brown, Percy *Picturesque Nepal*. London, 1912.
Mostly descriptive of the art treasures of the Valley.
- Browning, Captain H. S. . *Routes in Central Asia, Section 6*. Calcutta, 1878.
Comprises routes in Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet.
- Bruce, Major (later Brigadier-General) The Hon. C. G. *Twenty' years in the Himalayas*. London, 1910.
- Cavanagh, General Sir O. *Rough Notes on the State of Nepal*. Calcutta.
- *Das, Sarat Chandra . . . *Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet*. London, 1901.
A most interesting book, particularly those portions dealing with Eastern Nepal through which the author travelled.
- *Eliot, Sir Charles . . . *Hinduism and Buddhism*. 3 Vols. London, 1921.
Contains many references to Nepal and explains the development of Buddhism in that country very clearly.

* The most useful books.

Appendix G (continued)

- Encyclopaedia Britannica All editions. Article on Nepal.
- *Gibbs, Major H. R. K. . *The Gurkha Soldier*. Calcutta, 1944.
- *Hamilton, B. *An account of the Kingdom of Nepal*.
London, 1819.
- Hodgson, B. H. *On the aborigines of India*. Calcutta, 1847.
Himalayan Ethnology. Calcutta, 1859.
*Essays on the languages, etc., of Nepal and
Tibet*. London, 1874.
Contains the following collected papers:
On the languages, literature and religion
of Nepal and Tibet.
On the Chepang and Kusunda tribes of
Nepal. Sketch of Buddhism.
On the geography of the Himalaya.
The origin and classification of the
military tribes of Nepal.
Miscellaneous Essays. London, 1880.
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and Dhima Tribes. On the Law and
Legal Practice of Nepal.
- *Hooker, J. D. *Himalayan Journals*. London, 1854.
Contains a delightfully written account of
the author's searches after flowers in
Eastern Nepal. Hooker here writes of a
part of the country then seen by no other
European, which makes his journal of
added interest.
- Huc, E. R. *Travels in Tartary*. London, 1927 (reprint).
- *Hunter, Sir W. A. *Life of Brian Hodgson*. London, 1896.
Contains many letters from Hodgson
describing life at Katmandu in early days.
Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts collected
in Nepal and presented to various
libraries and learned societies by B. H.
Hodgson. London, 1880.
- *Kirkpatrick, W. *An account of the Kingdom of Nepal*. London,
1811.
- * The most useful books.

Appendix G (continued)

- *Landon, Percival *Nepal*, 2 Vols. London, 1928.
Mostly historical. Contains many fine illustrations and a good account of the architecture of the Valley.
- Levi, Sylvain *Le Nepal*, 3 Vols. Paris, 1905.
The standard work on the early history and archaeology of Nepal.
- Nepal, H.H. Sir Chandra Shamsher, Maharaja of
Speech on the Liberation of Slaves. Nepal, 1925.
- *Northey, Major W. Brook *The Land of the Gurkhas*. London, 1938.
- Northey, Major W. Brook
and Morris, Captain C. J. *The Gurkhas, their Manners, Customs and Country*. London, 1928.
- *Oldfield, H. A. . . . *Sketches from Nepal*. London, 1880.
A very graphic account of life at the Nepalese court in the time of Jangbahadur, of whom the author was a personal friend. This is quite the best of the older books and repays close study.
- Oliphant, L. A. . . . *A journey to Katmandu*. London, 1852.
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Contains much information about the people of Eastern Nepal.
- Smith, Thomas *Narrative of a Five Years' Residence at Nepal, 1841-5*. London, 1852.
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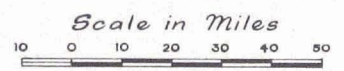
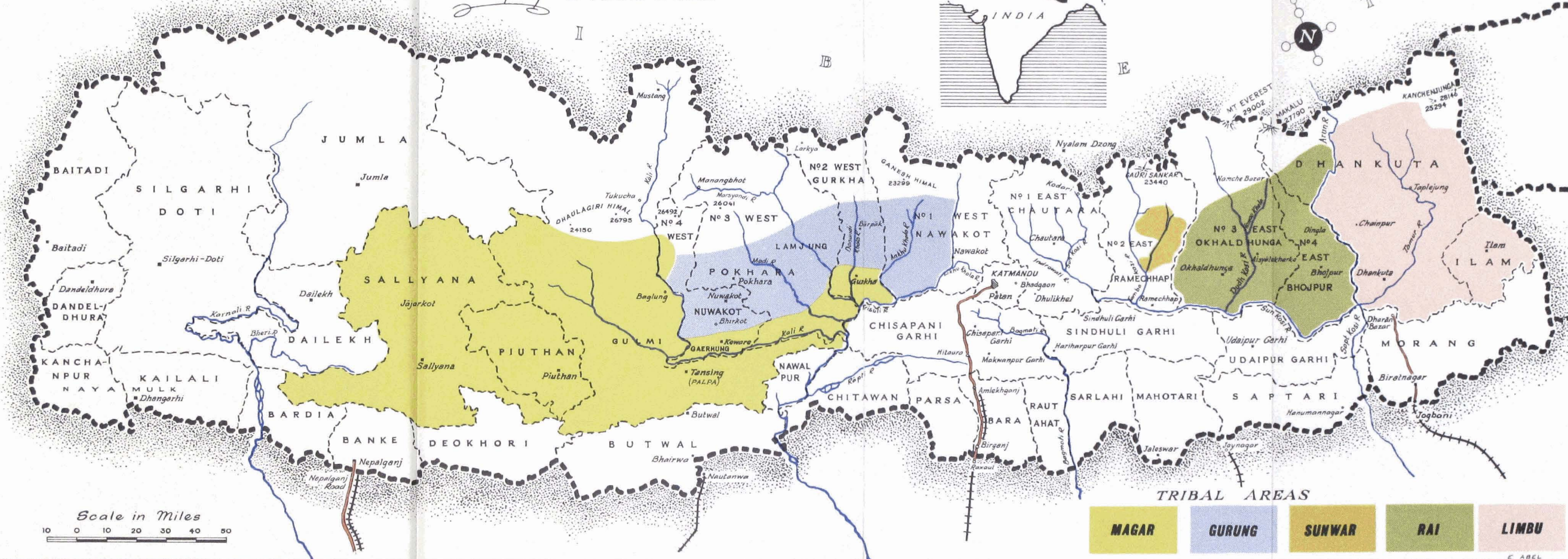
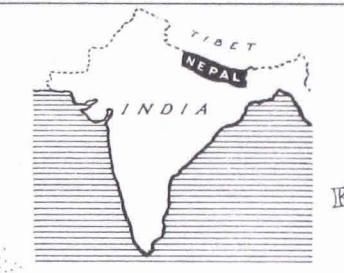
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B. Books on the languages of Nepal, Grammars, etc.

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Vol. 3, Part 1, Tibeto-Burman Family. Calcutta, 1909.
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Vol. 9, Part 4. Specimens of the Pahari Languages. Calcutta, 1927.
Contains a full grammar of Nepali and detailed vocabularies.
- Kilgour, R. and Duncan, H. C. *English-Nepali Dictionary.* Darjeeling, 1923.
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- *Turnbull, A. . . *Nepali Grammar and Vocabulary.*
Darjeeling, 1887. 2nd Edition.
Darjeeling, 1904. 3rd Edition.
London and Calcutta, 1923.
The first scientific grammar of the Nepali language ever published.
- *Turner, R. L. . . *Nepali Dictionary.* Comparative and etymological. London, 1931.
The first and only comprehensive dictionary of the language. Indispensable to all serious students.

* The most useful books.

Sketch map of **NEPAL**



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|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| MAGAR | GURUNG | SUNWAR | RAI | LIMBU |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------|--------------|