

JANG BAHADUR

IN EUROPE



JOHN WHELPTON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY RISHIKESH SHAHA

JANG BAHADUR IN EUROPE

THE FIRST NEPALESE MISSION TO THE WEST

by

JOHN WHELPTON

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PREFACE

The idea of translating *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra* into English was suggested to me towards the end of 1978 by Abhi Subedi, Lecturer in English at Tribhuvan University and a friend since my first visit to Nepal in 1972-4. He had recently re-read the Nepali text while preparing his own *Nepali Literature: Background and History*,¹ and believed it was worth bringing before a wider audience. Now, almost five years later, the final result is being offered to the general public and it is my pleasant duty to acknowledge the assistance and encouragement received from many quarters.

In the first place I wish to thank Abhi Subedi himself, not only for originating the whole project but also for extensive help subsequently, including twice going over drafts of the translation with me, and, most recently, taking photographs to illustrate it.

I am most grateful also to Mr. Rishikesh Shaha, who, despite his many other commitments, both political and academic, generously agreed to contribute a substantial introduction, including material he had prepared for his own forthcoming general history of Nepal. He has also taken considerable pains going through the remainder of the book and has made valuable corrections and improvements.

My own work would obviously have been impossible without Kamal Mani Dixit, who discovered and published the original text. I am further indebted to him for clearing up many points which had hitherto been obscure to me, and for permission to reproduce a facsimile of a letter in Jang Bahadur's own handwriting.

1. Abhi Subedi, *Nepali Literature: Background and History*, Kathmandu, Sajha Prakashan, 1978.

I have also received valuable help and advice from Chaitanya Upadhyaya, Professor Kenneth Ballhatchet, Madhusudan Thakur, Bal Krishna Pokhrel, Fr. Ludwig Stiller, Dr. Krishna Kant Adhikari, Dinesh Raj Pant, Marc Gaborieau, Mme. Lucette Boulnois, Dr. David Matthews, Dr. Richard Burghart, Mohan Prasad Khanal, Mrs. Mayura Brown, Padma Prakash Shrestha, Vanessa Harvey-Samuels, Jean-Claude Marize, Ram Kumar Pande and Marilyn Shackell.

The staff of the various libraries and institutions whose facilities I used were of great assistance. I should like particularly to mention the help I received from Pashupati Kumar Dwivedi, until recently Chief of the Nepal National Museum, and Bala Ram Dangol, Director of the National Archives of Nepal.

I am also indebted to Michael Hutt and John Rogers for obtaining some of the illustrations from nineteenth century British sources, to Parmeshwar Lal Shrestha of Patan Dhoka for drawing the maps, and to Maharajkumar Mussorie Shamsheer Jang Bahadur Rana and Colonel Shambhu Shamsheer Jang Bahadur Rana for permission to include photographs of paintings in their possession.

Last, but not least, I am grateful to my mother and to Hilary Kassman for reading through the typescript and making suggestions to improve its intelligibility.

Needless to say, the responsibility for the errors remaining in the translation, notes and background discussion belongs to me alone and not to any of those mentioned above. I should be glad to hear from any readers who identify such errors, since this will be of help to me in my continuing research work on Jang and will also allow faults to be corrected should a second edition be called for. Letters can be sent to me at *South Asia Research*, Room 253, School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet Street, London, WCI.

Kathmandu, July 1983

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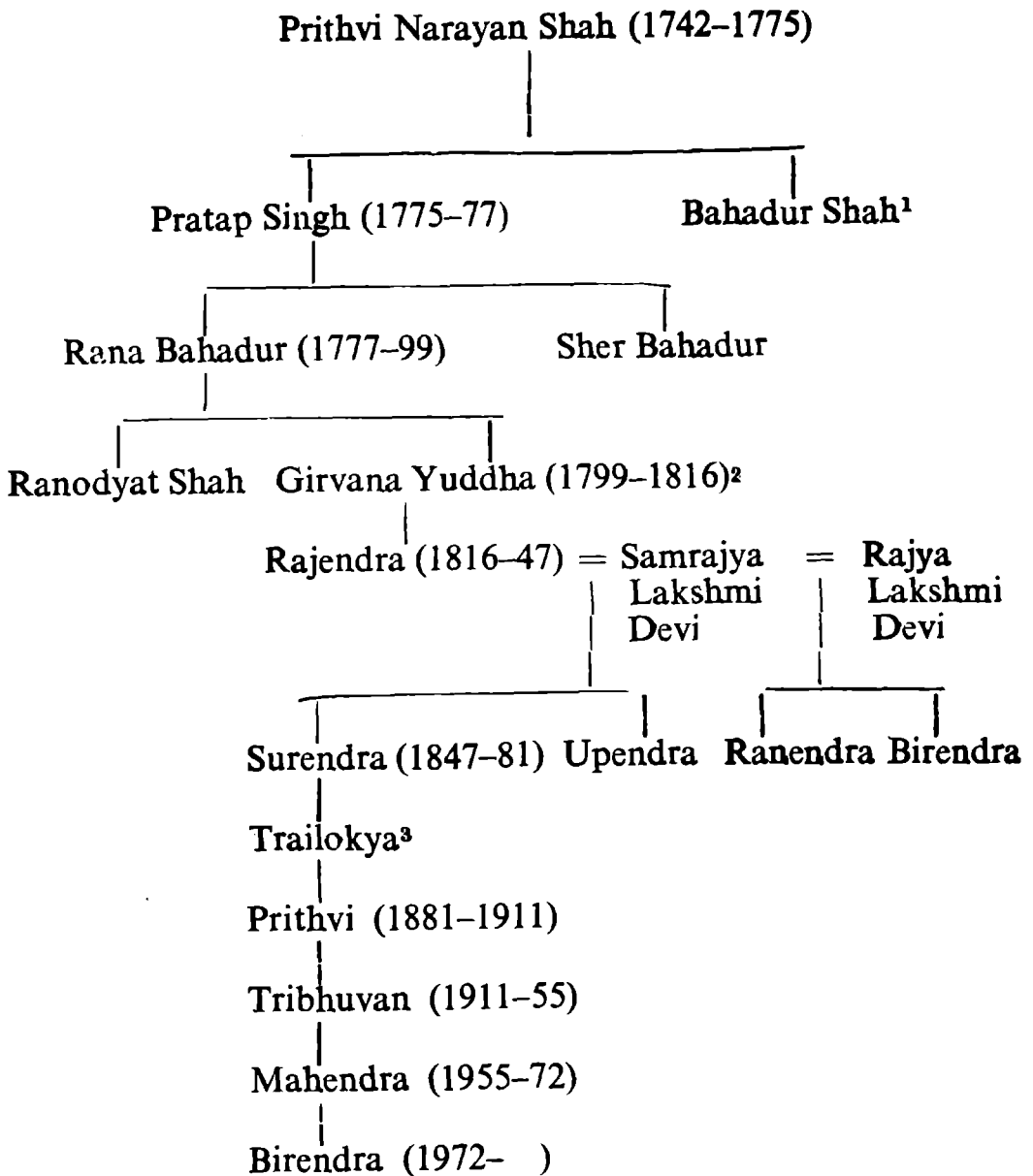
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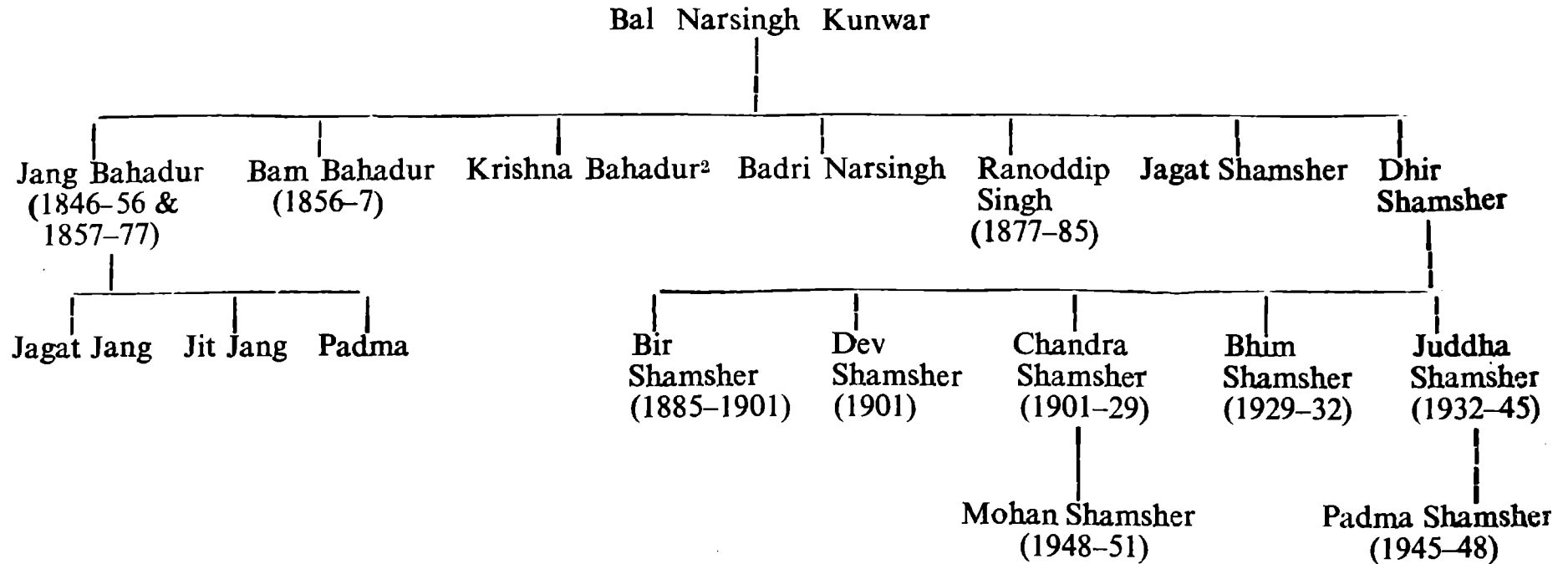
The Dharahara

THE SHAH DYNASTY (Names of kings are followed by their regnal years)



1. Regent for his nephew, Rana Bahadur, from the death of the King's mother in 1785 until 1795.
2. Throughout Girvana's reign his step-mother, Lalit Tripura Sundari, acted as Queen Regent, continuing in this capacity after Rajendra's accession until her death in 1832.
3. Married three of Jang Bahadur's daughters, one of whom became the mother of Prithvi. All subsequent Shah kings have married members of the Rana family.

THE RANA FAMILY (Names of prime ministers are followed by their years in office)¹



1. Omits Jang's illegitimate sons and twelve of Dhir's seventeen sons.
2. Acting Prime Minister for a month after Bam Bahadur's death in May 1857. He had not been confirmed in office before Jang Bahadur resumed the premiership during the crisis over the Indian Mutiny. Since his resignation the previous year Jang had been created 'Maharaja of Kaski and Lamjung', which position was held concurrently with the premiership by all prime ministers from June 1857 to the end of the Rana regime.

ABBREVIATIONS

FPC	Foreign Political Consultation
FSC	Foreign Secret Consultation
IOL	India Office Library and Records

INTRODUCTION

RISHIKESH SHAHA

It is commendable that Mr. John Whelpton has found time to translate into English with copious footnotes the contemporary Nepali account of Jang Bahadur's journey to Europe called *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra*. He has also attached a comprehensive introduction to it, setting forth the general historical background to the event and also covering other important aspects of the subject matter contained in the Nepali text.

The Nepali Text

Despite the uncertainty about the authorship and the exact date of composition of the Nepali account of Jang Bahadur's journey and despite the availability of several versions of it with minor textual variations, there seems to be a consensus on the fact that the text in question was written at the time of Jang Bahadur's visit to Europe by one of the members of his official entourage.

According to a noted Nepali historian, the late Baburam Acharya, the likely author of the aforementioned account of Jang Bahadur's journey to Europe is Subba Shivanarsingh. Another guess is that either Subba Siddhi Man Rajbhandari or Lieutenant Lal Singh Khatri might have written the account. Mr. Whelpton's own choice falls on Kharidar Prithvidhar Padhyaya as the author of the *Belait-Yatra* because he happened to be Jang's travelling secretary on the occasion.

The first version of the Belait-Yatra to appear in print was the one included in *Shri Tin Maharaj Jang Bahadur Ranajiko*

Jivan Charitra (Biography of Shri Three Maharaj Jang Bahadur Ranaji) by Pratiman Thapa. This book was published by a Nepali Doctor, Babu Hari Singh Thapa, in Calcutta, in 1908.

Another version of the text, with differences of phraseology throughout and in actual content in some places, was discovered in the handwritten *vamshavali* or chronicle compiled over a long period of time by Buddhi Man Singh of Manjeshvari Tol, Kathmandu, and finally completed on the first of Bhadra 1935 Vikram Sambat (August 1878 A. D.). According to Baburam Acharya, Buddhi Man Singh was a kharidar during Mathabar Singh's prime ministership (1843–1845) and died after he was promoted to the rank of naib subba at the time of Maharaj-cum-Prime Minister Bir Shamsheer Jang Bahadur Rana (1885–1901). Apart from the one in the Acharya collection, copies of Buddhi Man Singh's chronicle are known to be in the possession of at least three other persons or institutions. A fourth version of the *Belait-Yatra* has been found amongst the papers of another member of the Rana family, and a fifth in a *vamshavali* presenting an account of Nepali history upto 1890 and formerly in the collection of Hemraj Pande, who himself belonged to the family of royal preceptors.

Mr. Whelpton has examined the possibility of *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra* being based wholly on Jang Bahadur's own 'lost' diary, which Padma Jang Bahadur Rana cites as his source in the sixth chapter of his biography of his father. However, as this source, which deals solely with Jang's visit to Europe, omits some of the most important material found in the Nepali versions of the *Belait-Yatra*, Mr. Whelpton has concluded that the latter are based on an account prepared by someone who merely 'combined parts of Jang's diary with material of his own.'

Mr. Whelpton's translation of *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra* readily brings to mind the English translation of *Shri*

Panch Bada Maharaj Prithvinarayan Shahko Divya Upadesh (Divine Message of His Majesty Great King Prithvinarayan Shah) brought out in print for the first time by the Prithvi Jayanti Samaroha Samiti under the editorship of Yogi Narahari Nath and Baburam Acharya in 2008 V. S. (1951/2 A. D.) The English translation of *Divine Message* appeared for the first time as the third chapter of the book entitled *Prithvinarayan Shah in the Light of Divya Upadesh* by Father Ludwig Stiller, which was published by the Catholic Press at Ranchi in Bihar, India in 1968. This printed version of Father Stiller's dissertation for the Master's degree of Tribhuvan University contains Prithvinarayan's *Divine Message* as its centrepiece, preceded by two chapters on the general historical background and the life and career of Prithvinarayan Shah and followed by two concluding chapters on his foreign and internal policy. Thus has Father Stiller admirably succeeded in setting King Prithvinarayan's *Divine Message* in historical perspective. Mr. Whelpton has also sought to place Jang Bahadur's journey to Europe in the context of the history of Nepal, though not as elaborately as Father Stiller, yet in a manner which has proved to be quite effective in its own way.

There is of course a remarkable difference in the spirit in which the two authors approach their subject matter. Although Father Stiller has since acquired Nepali nationality and begun to identify himself very closely with the Nepali nationalist spirit in an obvious and open manner, yet at the time when he first wrote and published his book on Prithvinarayan Shah he found it difficult to get over the feeling that he was after all a foreigner writing on a great historical figure of Nepal. The very first sentence in the preface to his book on Prithvinarayan Shah reads as follows: "Writing a book of this sort on the Father of Nepal is indeed a bold move for a foreigner in Nepal." Mr. Whelpton does not seem to suffer from inhibition of any kind, and has shown remar-

kable restraint and objectivity in dealing even with such a highly controversial figure in the history of Nepal as Jang Bahadur.

Historical Importance of Jang Bahadur's Visit to Europe

From the viewpoint of the apparently never-ending discussion on how free Nepal was in the different periods of its history or on whether at this or that time Nepal was regarded as more independent or less independent by the great powers of the day, Jang Bahadur's visit to Europe has an importance of its own. Neither General Mathbar Singh Thapa before Jang nor Maharaja-cum-Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher after him were able to visit Great Britain in the official capacity of the ambassador of their king and country as Jang did. General Mathbar Singh Thapa had actually cancelled his proposed visit to England in 1835 precisely because the British government was unwilling to treat him as the ambassador of his country. Again, when Maharaja-cum-Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher visited England in 1908, the British government avoided the situation of having to recognize him as an ambassador of an independent country by extending to him the same kind of welcome as Britain would offer one of the ruling princes or Maharajas of the 'A' class Indian native states, Chandra's only special treatment was to be received with a 19 rather than a 17-gun salute.

For yet another reason Jang Bahadur's journey to Europe also proved to be of special interest not only to the European countries but also to Nepal's own immediate neighbours. No other prince or potentate from this part of the world had, before Jang Bahadur, ventured to acquire the stigma of crossing the ocean even for the very good reason of finding out the real nature and strength of the European power which had already ended the independent political existence of most states in the South Asian region. It was true that Raja Rama Mohun Roy and Dwaraka Nath Tagore from Bengal in India had visited Europe previously

but neither of them had enjoyed recognition as an official ambassador in the host country. Thus Jang Bahadur's visit to Britain and France provided for the first time an opportunity and occasion for face-to-face contact in the midst of a European atmosphere and surroundings between the governing elites of the two European countries and those of Nepal. Mr. Whelpton's annotations clearing up references to persons and events in the original Nepali narrative and, particularly, the inclusion in his book of the excerpts from English and French news coverage on Jang Bahadur's visit to Europe cast an interesting sidelight on various aspects of the direct encounter both at the official and unofficial levels between two sets of governing elites with different cultural traditions and backgrounds.

Again, Jang Bahadur's journey to Britain and France, even if we are to ignore its immediate impact on contemporary public opinion in both Europe and South Asia, proved to be an event of immense historical significance for Nepal itself with enduring consequences for policy initiatives and decisions in future on both internal and external issues critically important to the state. Friendship with Britain, or rather the British power in India, henceforth became the cornerstone of Nepal's foreign policy, while Nepal at the same time persisted in continuing its traditional policy of isolation and exclusion of foreigners and of maintaining minimal contact with them and that also only at the official level. Jang Bahadur's visit to Europe set the pattern for this policy which was rigidly and conscientiously followed by Jang and his successors for a century with real success in achieving the desired object. The object had been of course the maintenance of the independence and territorial integrity of Nepal in the face of the fierce wind of change that was blowing strongly across the entire region and had brought the Indian subcontinent as a whole under foreign domination.

It was the selfsame policy that made Nepal aid the British

in the 1857 Indian Mutiny and the 1903 Younghusband expedition to Tibet and also fight on the British side in the first and the second world wars. These concrete steps and measures of policy adopted by Nepal in the past may not be in consonance with the presentday spirit of Nepali nationalism but the fact remains that if Nepal had not resorted to such a course of action at the time, it might not have been possible for it to retain intact its independence and territorial integrity. In essence, it was their unqualified support of Britain in its foreign policy that had ensured a relatively wide measure of freedom for Nepal's governing elite in the management of the internal affairs of the country.

Jang's visit to Europe also had its effect on Nepal's domestic policy. The visit must certainly have inspired Jang Bahadur to propound the legal code called *Mulki Ain* in January 1854, with the help of a body of counsellors known as *Kaushal* (the Nepali word is presumably a corruption of the English 'council.') He was also impressed by the concept of the rule of law he had become familiar with in Europe. The preamble to the 1854 Legal Code contains the king's categorical statement: 'We have given the *hukum* (peremptory command) that all—from us to our subjects—shall abide by this law.' At least in theory, the code was regarded as equally binding on the king, members of the royal family, the prime minister and the rest of the people — a standard which Nepal is still endeavouring to approximate in practice. After Jang Bahadur's return from Europe mutilation was abolished and so was capital punishment except for a certain category of offences. Jang also partially abolished *sati*, the practice of widows burning themselves with the bodies of their dead husbands.

Significant as were these legal and social consequences of the visit, the exposure of Jang and his party to modern science and technology was of even greater importance. The strength of the impact made can be gauged from many passages of the

Belait-Yatra, and it was decisive in convincing Jang that European power could not be opposed.

Jang's Life and Career

It will help us to understand and analyse Jang's attitude and actions on different occasions in Europe much better if we take a quick look at the earlier development of his character. Jang Bahadur's father, Balnarsingh Kunwar, who had married into the Thapa family, served as a district governor during the administration of Mukhtiyar (Prime Minister) General Bhimsen Thapa (1806–1837). As Balnarsingh took his son along wherever he was posted, Jang had had a chance to see, as a growing boy, people in different kinds of circumstances and environments. Jang eventually became a subaltern in the army under the command of his father, who was the governor of Jumla, a north-western hill district, during Bhimsen's last years in power,

Jang's father had already found it difficult to control his brash young son even as a subordinate officer under his own military command. Intolerant and contemptuous of the authority of his superiors, Jang Bahadur paid little or no heed to discipline in military duties, but he had shown a knack of ingratiating himself with the rank and file of the army by being ever ready to voice their grievances.

Jang Bahadur gave up his position in the army after his father had been dismissed when Bhimsen Thapa lost power in 1837. After that, finding nothing better to keep himself occupied with, Jang turned to gambling at the early age of 20 and remained an inveterate gambler all his life, prone to take high risks in all his undertakings. As a young man, he had at one time seriously thought of catching wild elephants in the tarai forests to pay off his gambling debts. This plan of his actually came to nothing, but was revealing in the sense that it gave an idea of the kind of man Jang Bahadur was. He was resolute at heart and

full of daring and courage. Although he might have failed in his project of catching elephants singlehanded, yet with his single-minded purpose and determination he subsequently won far greater successes in the more serious enterprises of life.

It was in pursuit of his plan to catch elephants that Jang ended up staying for sometime in the Tharu villages on the outskirts of the forests. He lived there, like any Tharu villager, sharing their everyday joys and sorrows and taking part in their fun and frolics, pastimes and adventures, especially those of the hunt and the chase. Jang figures prominently in Tharu folklore which fondly enshrines in memory many incidents and experiences of that time in Jang's life. The most familiar episode is one of a king cobra standing half erect and spreading its hood over Jang's head as a protective umbrella when Jang himself, tired and exhausted after hard work involving excessive physical strain, was one day lying fast asleep on the open village ground adjoining a forest. No wonder that after he came into power, Jang appointed many Tharus to official positions and also gifted land to them.

The first-hand information he had gathered about the ways and behaviour of big game and wild elephants, and particularly the skill and experience he had acquired in tackling them in the wild, stood him in good stead ever afterwards. In 1830 Jang Bahadur was said to have rehabilitated himself in military service as a captain of the artillery by impressing King Rajendra Bikram with his feat in lassoing a wild elephant in the course of a royal hunt. Fighting the wild tuskers with trained elephants, with himself maneuvering them in the fight, remained one of Jang Bahadur's favourite pastimes till the end of his life.

Hunting was Jang's one great interest outside his political life. He was a first-rate shot and had a record of shooting one thousand tigers in his life. His western friends were also very much impressed by his marksmanship. He was second to none

at archery and horsemanship. Besides being a fine wrestler himself he enjoyed fights between animals.

Jang Bahadur Already a Legend among his People

Many stories were already in circulation about Jang's personal courage and skill in facing difficult situations and dangers even before he went to Europe. Some of these, such as the tales of his leap on horse-back into the Trisuli river and his jumping down a well, have been re-told by Mr. Whelpton. He has, however, omitted the story which ascribes to Jang the feat of jumping with the aid of a pair of parasols from the top of Dharahara, the tower which stands at the SW corner of the Tundhikhel and which was then the tallest structure in Kathmandu. One wonders to this day how far the tales were true and how far they were deliberately spread to raise Jang Bahadur to the status of a superman or hero in the eyes of the common folk. Mr. Whelpton believes that there is a 'core of truth to the anecdotes', but he admits that Jang himself reportedly once told British Resident George Ramsay that some of those stories he had told Cavenagh were entirely fabricated. Whatever might have been the truth, the tales of his feats actually served the purpose of making Jang a legendary figure among the common people of Nepal for a long time even after his death.

Habits and Temperament

Jang Bahadur did not keep regular hours and would get up in the morning at any time between five and ten o'clock. He always lost his temper easily and became more and more irritable as he advanced in age. But he was always ready to hear the other side of a case even when it was presented by a poor unknown person, and admit it if the other side was right. Despite his sporadic efforts, he found it impossible to learn English but had Indian and English newspapers read and explained to him.

Jang Bahadur remained intractable even to those who were

close to him. He was forced by circumstances to betray and kill not only his adversaries but also at times near and dear ones; such was the world of Nepali politics, which was habitually characterised by betrayal, vengeance and bloodshed. As a result of this he had completely lost his faith in men's integrity. He realised that some people would never forgive him nor forget the manner in which he rose to power. Therefore he was extremely wary and took no chances. Whenever he went out, be it on a hunting expedition or his morning ride across the Tundikhel, the parade ground in the heart of Kathmandu, he was accompanied by a strong armed escort. Even when he was in the the house he had his bodyguard either with him or within instant call. Nobody knew in what room he was spending the night. It was perhaps because his early experiences had taught him not to trust any man, and also because some of the women in his life had selflessly and at great risk to themselves helped him in his political career, that Jang trustingly turned to the female sex for companionship, comfort and solace in life. He was known to have a sharp eye for women and a great fondness for amorous exploits.

Just thirty-two years old when he visited Europe, Jang was a young man who had already acquired a lot of hard and bitter experience while rising to the most powerful executive position in Nepal by sheer self-confidence, courage and determination accompanied by a rare shrewdness and gift for political opportunism. Although lonely and taciturn, irritable and quick-tempered, he also had a warm and human side to his personality, which manifested itself mostly in his dealings with women and with all those who were deprived and in distress.

Bhimsen's Fall and its Aftermath

As I could not say no to Mr. Whelpton's suggestion that I should write a fairly long introduction to his book, I thought that I might as well undertake a close and detailed enquiry into the circumstances that moved Nepal towards the most criti-

cal and controversial event in its history, the Kot Massacre, which resulted in the rise of Jang Bahadur as the strongman of Nepal.

The logical starting point for the investigation is the downfall in 1837 of *mukhtiyar* (premier) Bhimsen Thapa. The young King Rajendra Bikram Shah may be said to have shown initially a fair measure of skill and self-confidence in cutting down to size a minister who had, in Hodgson's words, 'grown so great by virtue of two minorities (with but a short interval between them) and 30 years of almost un-interrupted sovereign sway'* But once Bhimsen was removed from the scene, the king failed to rise to the occasion and missed for ever the opportunity he had had to consolidate royal power once again in his own hands and exercise it to the advantage of his dynasty and the nation and also to his own. It was unfortunate that at the most crucial period of its history Nepal had a weak, intriguing, suspicious and vacillating person as a king, who was neither capable of using power himself nor of trusting others to exercise it on his behalf.

Rajendra's emergence on the political scene served to aggravate rather than ease the divisive tendencies prevailing in the court. Following the removal of Bhimsen competition for power among the leading families was revived in full vigour.

Among the foremost contenders were the original Gorkha-based Pande family to which Nepal's outstanding military commanders and administrators such as Kazi Kalu Pande, Kazi Vamsadhar Pande and Kazi Damodar Pande belonged. During the rule of King Prithvinarayan Shah and his immediate successors they had played a vital role in forging the state of Nepal, but ever since the rise of Bhimsen Thapa to power, leading members of this family had suffered ruthless persecution at the hands of the newly-emerged Thapa family. Members of the particular

* Secret Consultation, 5 March 1833, No. 24.

branch of the old Pande family descended from Kazi Kalu Pande, sometimes referred to also as 'Kala (Black) Pandes', are to be distinguished from 'Gora (White) Pandes', who were members of another branch of the same family headed by Kalu Pande's brother, Kazi Tula Ram Pande, and who did not undergo suffering and humiliation at the hands of Mukhtiyar General Bhimsen Thapa (1806–1837) and Prime Minister and General Mathbar Singh Thapa (1843–1845). Mathbar himself is credited with making this distinction between members of the same family as 'Gora' and 'Kala' Pandes from the point of view of the newly emerged Thapa family. The Thapa family found the so called 'Black' (Kala) Pandes to be their formidable foes whereas they were able to conciliate the 'Gora' (White) Pandes by matrimonial alliances or by other means.

Throughout Bhimsen Thapa's ascendancy the "Kala Pandes" had been only biding their time and waiting for an opportunity to take revenge on the Thapas. To the surviving members of the family of Kalu Pande, apart from considerations of personal and interfamily rivalry and jealousy, it was simply unbearable that Bhimsen, without any outstanding record of service to the state and even without so much as taking part in a single battle, had risen to the position of mukhtiyar and given himself the title of General. The 'Kala Pandes' had all along held Bhimsen Thapa responsible for the loss of one-third of Nepal's previously existing territory in the 1814–16 war.

The prevailing view was that Bhimsen Thapa's precipitate action with regard to the recovery of Butaul and Syuraj, gave the British a ready-made excuse to start a war against Nepal. The Kala Pandes further accused Bhimsen Thapa of acting in utter disregard of the advice and warning of outstanding military commanders in the field. Kazi Amar Singh Thapa Bada (to whose name the epithet 'Bada' is added in order to distinguish him and his branch of the Thapa family from that of Bhimsen

Thapa's father who was also of the same name), Chautara Bam Shah, Sardar Hasti Dal Shah and others had petitioned the king that under no circumstances should His Majesty allow the country to be dragged into war as the odds were heavily stacked against Nepal at the time. The caustic reference to Bhimsen Thapa in Kazi Amar Singh Thapa Bada's letter to the king on the eve of the war is worth recollecting. The veteran commander, Amar Singh Thapa Bada, had warned King Girvan Yuddha Bikram against acting on the advice of the man who would boast of bringing death and destruction to the British empire in India, without so much as having ever seen the face of a battlefield in his life.*

The ever-present controversy about responsibility for the defeat in war was brought up once again by the Kala Pandes with renewed zeal and vigour because they thought that the repeated airing of the subject might give an edge to them in their factional struggle against the Thapas for internal supremacy. Besides blaming Bhimsen Thapa for the disaster of 1814–16 they also found fault with the tactics he subsequently adopted. Bhimsen Thapa after the war had become identified with a cautious, though not an entirely subservient policy, in relation to British India, whereas the Kala Pandes, who were vociferously anti-British, advocated a policy of war, with Chinese assistance if possible, to recover territory lost to the British. Rather than the strength of their arguments, however, the most important factor that helped the Kala Pandes to temporarily regain their ascendancy in Darbar politics was the complete dominance of public affairs from 1839 through 1841 by the formidable personality of the senior queen of King Rajendra Bikram Shah (1816–47), Queen Samrajya Lakshmi Devi. Even before Bhimsen Thapa's first

* Henry T. Prinsep, *History of the Political and Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquis of Hastings, 1813–1823*, London, 1825, pp. 459–61; Surya Bikram Gewali, (translated by Lalji Shahay), *Amarsingh Thapa* (Hindi), Darjeeling: Himachal Hindi Bhawan, 1951, pp. 78–79.

fall, her backing for his Pande opponents had already succeeded in regaining them a foothold in Darbar politics.

Rise of Rana Jang Pande

Rana Jang Pande played an important part in Nepali court politics with Queen Samrajya Lakshmi's active support, from July 1837 through November 1840, notwithstanding frequent changes in the mukhtiyarship which was almost equivalent to prime ministership. Guru Ranga Nath Pandit, who belonged to the family of royal preceptors, became mukhtiyar for about nine months from December 1837 till August 1838 and during his administration Bhimsen was temporarily acquitted only to be tried again in 1839 and condemned to imprisonment. The Brahmin mukhtiyar in spite of his well-meaning efforts failed to hold the balance between the two antagonistic forces at work in the politics of the Nepal Darbar at the time and served merely as a stop-gap to prevent the emerging forces represented by Senior Queen Samrajya Lakshimi and the Pandes from overwhelming their opponents in the Darbar all at once. After Ranga Nath Pandit voluntarily quitted the office of mukhtiyar, a joint ministry or a diumvirate of Pushkar Shah and Rana Jang Pande shouldered the burden of administration from October 1838 to the end of 1839. By April 1839 Pushkar Shah had become subordinate to Rana Jang Pande and on 6 February 1840, Rana Jang was appointed mukhtiyar and held that position till he was removed from office in November under pressure from the British government.

Following the rise of Rana Jang Pande to power the hostility of Nepal towards the British government assumed a more open form, and preparations for war were stepped up after the news of the British setback in Afghanistan in 1840 reached Nepal. As a precaution against Nepal's designs, the British had, however, in the winter of 1838-39 strengthened their forces all along the frontier extending from the Gandaki River to the Kosi River, and laid plans for their rapid forward deployment under General

Oglander should this prove necessary.

Developments in Afghanistan

It may not be out of place here to refer briefly to the developments in Afghanistan and China at the time. Herat, which was regarded by the British as the key to India had been put under siege by Mohammed Shah of Persia in November 1837 with the support of the Russians. This led the British to think that Persia was fast coming under complete domination by the Russian government. The British sought to counter the growing Russian influence by concluding alliances with the rulers of Herat, Kabul and Kandahar. In 1837 Dost Mohammed, the ruler of Kabul, initially welcomed the British mission under Captain (later Sir) Alexander Burnes in the hope that the British might help Kabul recover Peshawar. However, Burnes would not give the assurance Dost Mohammed had sought from him. Meanwhile, after a Russian agent arrived in Kabul, the British mission abruptly ended talks and left the city.

In the wake of the failure of Burnes' mission, the governor general of India, Lord Auckland, launched an invasion of Afghanistan with a view to restoring Shah Shoja to the throne. In April 1839, after experiencing immense hardships and guerrilla attacks on the way, a British force finally made its way to Kandahar and Shah Shoja was crowned king in the mosque situated next to the mausoleum of Ahmad Shah. Ghazni and Kabul also fell into British hands by July 1839 and thereupon Shah Shoja was again crowned in Kabul. Dost Mohammed had made good his escape first to Balkh, then to Bukhara only to be finally arrested and imprisoned by the British there.

However, Dost Mohammed eventually escaped from prison and returned to Kabul to lead his supporters who had already started the fight against the British. On 2 November 1840 Dost Mohammed had the better of the British in a battle at Parwan-

darah but he surrendered to them in Kabul the very next day. He was well treated by the British, but they took him to India with most of his family. After his deportation insurrections became widespread in the country and the advent of winter rendered the British position in Kabul all the more untenable. The dilatory tactics adopted by Sir William Hay Macnaghten as a bargaining counter in negotiating terms of withdrawal with Akbar Khan, Dost Mohammed's son, had disastrous consequences. Macnaghten himself died at the hands of Akbar Khan. On 6 March 1842 about 4,500 British and Indian troops with 12,000 camp followers were forced by circumstances to pull out of Kabul. Scattered bands of Afghan guerrillas had a field day and the retreat turned into a total holocaust leaving behind only a few survivors.

British Involvement in the 'Opium War'

Let us now briefly enquire into the cause and circumstances of the 'Opium War' in China. The cause of the war may be traced back to a late 18th century British attempt to meet the unfavourable balance of trade with China by exporting Indian opium to it. In 1779 the East India Company acquired the monopoly of the opium trade, and by 1819 the Company had commenced shipping large quantities of opium to China. This caused a ceaseless drain of Chinese silver creating serious economic and social problems for the country. The imperial court of China banned the import of opium, but the ban never came into effect because of rampant corruption among the officials and soldiers responsible for its enforcement .

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the illicit opium trade was mainly in the hands of private Indian traders who were authorized to handle the inter-Asian trade only under the Company's licence. These private businessmen created the opium market in China in defiance of the opium ban and, as time passed by, grew callous towards Chinese law and order in general.

In 1834 the British parliament finally revoked the East India Company's monopoly. In 1834, William John Napier, who was appointed Chief Superintendent of British trade in China, failed in his attempt to negotiate a settlement with the Canton authorities.

In Beijing itself a proposal to relax restraints on the opium trade, after having received support from several quarters, came to naught when the Qing emperor, Hsuan-tsung, appointed a patriotic officer, Lin Tse-hau, as Imperial Commissioner for the anti-opium campaign. Lin recovered 20,000 chests of illegal opium and destroyed them in March 1839, and by September that year sporadic armed clashes between the British and the Chinese had already commenced.

In February 1840 the British government decided on launching a full scale military expedition. Sixteen British warships, having assembled in Hong Kong by June, proceeded northward to the mouth of the Pei Ho to force China to yield to British demands. But the Chinese authorities remained adamant. In May 1841 the walled city of Canton itself was, without warning, subjected to heavy shelling by long range guns, and a ransom of U. S. \$ 6,000,000 was extorted from the Cantonese. This marked the beginning of a continuing conflict between the British and the Cantonese.

The Qing emperor had no effective defence against the powerful British navy guns. The British also took advantage of the prevailing distance between the government and the people in China by professing that they were not against the Chinese people but against the Chinese government officials and soldiers who oppressed them. This also mitigated the chances of popular resistance against the British.

A new British Commissioner, Henry Pottinger, arrived at Macau in August 1841 and led a northward expedition. With

reinforcements from India, Pottinger resumed action in May 1842. As a result, Nanking surrendered in August 1842 and hostilities came to an end with the conclusion of the Treaty of Nanking.

Effect of Developments in Afghanistan and China on the Policy of the Nepal Darbar

The reports of the success and failure of the British military adventures in Afghanistan and China during the 1830-42 period, as received and interpreted by the Kathmandu Darbar, always affected the efforts and activities of the anti-British section of the court consisting of the senior queen of King Rajendra Bikram, Samrajya Lakshmi Devi, her son, Crown Prince Surendra Bikram Shah and the Kala Pandes such as Mukhtiyar Rana Jang Pande, Royal Preceptor Mishra Guru, Kul Bir Pande, Kul Bahadur Pande and others. As Resident B. H. Hodgson (1832-43) described it, "The barometer of the Nepalese hostility against us rises and falls with each rumour of our being in trouble with other states." Until 1841 the Nepali government, albeit in a haphazard manner, persisted in its attempt to forge an anti-British multi-national bloc in order to stem the tide of the East India Company's government's aggressiveness. With that end in view it not only sought contacts with a number of Indian princes, such as those of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Gwalior, Hyderabad, and the Mahratta and the Sikh rulers, but also opened communications with China, Afghanistan, Persia and the Court of Ava (Burma). The missions sent out to the different states in the Indian subcontinent, even in the face of British opposition, on the pretext of looking for a suitable bride for the crown prince were, in fact, intended to explore the possibility of concerted diplomatic and military action against the Company's government in India.

Armed Incursion into Ramnagar

The news of difficulties and hardships encountered by the

British in the initial stage of the Afghan campaign and the British involvement in the 'Opium War' may have tempted Rana Jang Pande to launch an armed incursion into Ramnagar on 13 April 1840. An armed force of about 100 men led by Fauzdar Jas Bir Rana crossed the Someshwar range on its southern side and forced its way to Ramnagar which was situated in the Betiah district of northern Bihar, 8 miles south of the above range which formed the boundary between Nepal and British India. The Nepali troops captured 21 villages on a rather tendentious plea that they had in the past been given away in dowry to a Nepali princess who was married to a local chief and should now be returned to Nepal because the Nepali princess's husband had died without leaving any heirs. Upon investigation, the Company's government discovered that not only Ramnagar but the southern flank of the Someshwar ridge also belonged to it and the ridge was of considerable strategic value in any plan for military action against Nepal.

Hodgson remonstrated with the Nepali government for committing aggression and demanded immediate withdrawal of Gorkha soldiers to the northern side of the Someshwar range and the immediate return of forcibly occupied Indian territory. Despite the Resident's threatening attitude, Nepal played for time by giving verbal assurances at first, and then, only after repeated protests, pretending to issue written orders for the arrest of Fauzdar Jas Bir Rana and the withdrawal of troops. No formal explanation was however offered for the act nor was the territory itself actually vacated until after sometime. The British also were not in a position to do anything more about it at the time because of their military preoccupations in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile a mutiny of 6,000 soldiers was orchestrated in Kathmandu on 21 June 1840 airing their grievances such as reduced pay and uncertainty of employment. Rana Jang Pande and Senior Queen Samrajya Lakshmi deliberately and wilfully made

themselves unavailable for immediate consultation by King Rajendra. The senior queen left for Thankot and Rana Jang Pande absented himself from work on that day on the plea of illness. The rebellious soldiers gathered in front of the British Residency voicing their demands as if the Residency itself had been responsible for reduction in their salary. The sentiments and grievances of the mutineers are summed up in what is reported as their slogans in Hodgson's despatch of 3 July 1840 to his government:

“Woe to those who live in luxury themselves while they advise the starving and poor soldiers; Down with the chiefs; Down with the Firingies! We will be chiefs ourselves. We will have back our old territories. We will conquer the Ganges !”*

The following entry in Hodgson's private notebook about the happenings on the night of 21 June 1841 may be of interest to the readers insofar as it reveals a deeply laid conspiracy to which the senior queen and the Kala Pandes were themselves party:

“I was called to the Darbar ostensibly for a more formal visit. I went as usual with the gentlemen of the Residency at 7 p. m. At 10 o'clock I rose to go but the Raja begged me to stay a while and so again at 11 o'clock and again at mid-night. Still something was always urged by the court to keep us, and though no adequate cause was assigned, I assented in order, if possible, to discover the real cause of our detention. I felt there was some cause and possibly a serious one, as I whispered to Dr. Campbell (The Residency Surgeon and Honorary Assistant Resident).

“Soon after mid-night, at a sign from one of the Raja's

* Secret Consultation, 20 July 1840, No. 59, published (in edited form) in L. Stiller, *The Kot Manacre*, Kathmandu, CENAS, 1981.

attendants, His Highness asked me to go to the Queen's apartment. I went, Her Highness received me with scant civility, and presently grew angry and offensive, with reference to business. I replied at first seriously and then passed to compliments ending in a jest. This made her laugh and under the cover of momentary good humour the Raja carried me off, apparently only too happy to have thus easily got me through an interview demanded by his virago wife, who was the prime mover in all mischief then brewing. It was daylight when I and the gentlemen left the palace and shortly after came rumours of an uproar in the Nepal Cantonments. It was reported to me that the troops at the capital were in a mutinous state, and were threatening mischief to the Residency, they having been told that the Resident had been all night insisting on a reduction of the Gorkha army by instruction from his government."*

Having withdrawn themselves from the precincts of the Residency without causing any material damage, the troops, on 21 and 22 June, apparently in a state of mutiny, looted the houses of Ranga Nath Pandit, Pushkar Shah, Kulraj Pande and Karbir Pande. The British Residency was left unprotected on 22 June in violation of the established code of international behaviour. King Rajendra, accompanied by the entire body of troops, proceeded to Thankot to fetch the senior queen. By the evening the senior queen was persuaded to return to Kathmandu and the demands of the mutineers were apparently also conceded.

But on the morning of 24 June the soldiers were mischievously informed that as the king needed money badly to fight the British, the soldiers should continue to accept lower pay for a few years, and the soldiers understandably refused to agree to

* Quoted in Hunter, W. W., *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson*, London, 1896, pp 184-5.

this proposal. The soldiers replied to King Rajendra's pleas with them for restraint and moderation in the following terms as given in Hodgson's dispatch to his government: "True the English Government is great, but care the wild dogs of Nepal how large is the herd they attack? They are sure to get their bellies filled. We want no money for making war; for war shall support itself. We will plunder Lucknow and Patna. But we must get rid of the Resident who sees and forestalls all. ... Give the word, we shall destroy the Resident and we shall soon make the Ganges your boundary or if the English, as they say, are your friends and want peace, why do they keep possession of half your dominions? Let them restore Kumaon and Sikkim. Those are yours, demand them both. If they refuse drive out the Resident and let us have war."*

The mutiny was obviously engineered to harass the king and the Resident with a view to securing, if possible, plenipotentiary powers for the senior queen. But the purpose of the so-called mutiny was not achieved.

On the other hand, both the Ramnagar incursion and the mutiny of 21-22 June 1840 led the British government to demand explanation from King Rajendra who vacillated under the influence of the senior queen and the Kala Pandes and kept on giving evasive replies until faced with the British ultimatum. On 27 August 1840, Lord Auckland, the governor general of India, addressed a very strong letter to King Rajendra, listing his demands and also at the same time asked the commander-in-chief of India to prepare for military action against Nepal in case the British demands were not conceded. The British Indian governor general's demands were as follows: (1) The immediate withdrawal of the Gorkhas from Ramnagar, (2) the redress of grievances of Indian traders regarding the inordinate delay in the disposal of their cases, and the censure of Mishra Guru for the denial of justice to them, (3) the cessation of the Nepal Darbar's intrigues with In-

* Secret Consultation, 20 July 1840, No. 59.

Indian states including the Panjab,(4) explanation for leaving the Residency unprotected during the soldiers' mutiny on 21 and 22 June 1840 and the formal disavowal by the king of the anti-British sentiments and slogans aired on the occasion.

On 1 September 1840, Hodgson put forward the British demands with a clear note of warning that "if compliance (was) not yielded within 10 days from this date, His Lordship (the governor general) will be compelled at the expiration of the period at once to add to the amount of pecuniary reparation now required, the whole cost of such military preparation."*

This move on the part of the government of India produced the desired effect on the king. On 3 September 1840, a sum of five thousand rupees was deposited with the British Residency as compensation in advance for the damage that may have been done as a result of the Ramnagar incursion. By 20 September 1840, the Gorkha troops had been withdrawn from Ramnagar and a confession obtained from the Misra Guru about the deliberate denial of justice by him to Indian traders. The officers said to be responsible for the Ramnagar incursion were punished, and two out of the four cases involving Indian traders were settled. The Residency was convinced by October 1840 that the non-complicity of the British in the move to reduce the soldiers' salary had been made known to the soldiers through their officers. Even an unexpected gesture of surrendering Indian dacoits to the British was made and cooperation in the matter of extradition in future was also promised.

In a communication addressed to King Rajendra on 26 October 1840, Lord Auckland, the governor general of India, stated that mere verbal compliance by the King with the British demands was no longer going to satisfy the Company's government. While insisting that all the demands put forward by the

* Secret Consultation, Sept. 21, 1840, No. 151, cited in Ramakant, *Indo-Nepalese Relations, 1816-1877* (Delhi: S. Chand and Co., 1968), p. 179.

Company's government be fulfilled without delay, the governor general categorically called for immediate dismissal of all such Nepali officers as had been responsible for anti-British action in the past on the pain of Nepal's suffering the consequences of military action contemplated by the British.

Referring to the apprehension in Varanasi of a secret Nepali mission under Captain Karbir Khatri on its way to the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Lahore and the discovery of certain incriminating documents in its possession, Lord Auckland sent another communication to the king even after the dismissal of Mukhtiyar Rana Jang Pande, who had proved unacceptable to the British. The actual words are reproduced below to acquaint the readers with a classic example of the circumlocutory manner of expression so typical of British diplomacy in the heyday of imperialism.

"I now send the letters and papers attended to through Mr. Hodgson to you — you will not be surprised that, after the detection of such malpractices at a time when Your Highness has been professing new repentance and making engagements to refrain from all intrigue, *the British Government must wholly withdraw its confidence from the Darbar of Nepal, while it shall be guided by its present evil counsellors, and must look to the employment of force, and to no further hollow negotiations, wherever its rights may appear to be in the least degree exposed to injury (Italics supplied).* Your Highness can in no other way show your abhorrence of these proceeding, the tendency of which must be ruinous to the good name of Nepal amongst all states, than by instantly removing from power and favour the parties who have so signally abused the confidence you have reposed in them."*

* Secret Consultation, 2 November 1840, published in Stiller, op. cit, p. 47.

The appointment as minister of Nepal on 1 November 1840 of pro-British Chautaria Fateh Jang Shah in place of Mukhtiyar Rana Jang Pande was not enough to satisfy the British. Hodgson felt that this was no proof of real change in the character and colour of the government and its policies. Hodgson on behalf of the British government persisted in putting pressure on King Rajendra Bikram Shah as if no change at all had taken place in the government. He went to the extent of subtly insinuating that if the King did not change the entire personnel of his government and his policy with regard to British India, Nepal might even have to be deprived of the tarai which, according to Hodgson was given Nepal only on the promise of and as an earnest of its good behaviour in future. This was not, in fact, true as the tarai had been returned to Nepal unconditionally once for ever in December 1816 and the boundary surveyed and demarcated in 1817. But Hodgson's insinuation had its effect insofar as it seriously perturbed the King and his advisors and made them listen to him.

However, following a meeting with Mishra Guru Senior Queen Samrajya Lakshmi Devi Shah left suddenly for Nuwakot along with the crown prince on 28 December 1840 and thus created a last minute hitch in the King's plan for the removal of all her Kala Pande and Brahmin (Guru) supporters from the government. On the following day, the King proceeded to Nuwakot against the advice of Prime Minister Fateh Jang Shah and his colleagues. Inflammatory placards inciting the soldier to rise against Fateh Jang and the British went up on the city walls shortly afterwards. Wherever the king took any conciliatory step to appease or mollify the British, the senior queen sought to block it by refusing to see anyone or by threatening to quit the palace. Her frowns and intimidating gestures would at once throw the King off his balance and paralyse the court. This time the Pandes also resorted to the novel tactic of displaying anti-

Fateh Jang and anti-Resident placards and spreading rumours that they were negotiating the country's sell-out to the East India Company's government.

The newly appointed prime minister, Chautara Fateh Jang Shah, and Guru Krishna Ram Pandit (Paudyal) pleaded with Resident Hodgson that he also should proceed to Nuwakot to help the king make up his mind about concluding the final deal with the British government notwithstanding the queen's opposition. Hodgson arrived at Nuwakot on 31 December 1840. On 2 January 1841, Hodgson met Prime Minister Fateh Jang Shah and Guru Krishna Ram Pandit who informed him officially that four other supporters of the Kala Pandes, whose inclusion in the new government was opposed by Hodgson, had been dropped and four more signatures were obtained for the joint declaration of good faith in a policy of friendship towards the British, signed by 92 officers of the court in all. This seemed to satisfy Hodgson and the Company's government at least for the time being.

The British action had substantially undermined the control of the administration of Nepal which Senior Queen Samrajya Lakshmi and a section of the Pande family had been steadily acquiring throughout a greater part of 1840. With the full backing of Governor General Auckland, Hodgson had, as we have seen, succeeded in replacing Rana Jang Pande by Fateh Jang Shah as mukhtiyar. But the senior queen and the Pandes still retained considerable control over the king and would not let him transfer full authority to the new premier. Hodgson had, consequently, gone ahead with the tacit if not the express consent of Lord Auckland to cultivate a number of Nepali courtiers and encourage them to form a 'party' of their own to counteract the pressure of the senior queen and the Pandes with the result that the East India Company's government had become directly involved in the politics of the Nepal Darbar.

The 'Peace Party' thus created consisted of the junior

queen, Rajya Lakshmi, the chautaras under Fateh Jang Shah and his brother, Guru Prasad Shah, and a section of the royal priests and preceptors under Guru Ranga Nath Pandit (Paudyal) and Guru Krishna Ram Pandit (Paudyal). Ranged against them in the so-called 'War Party' were, in addition to the senior queen and members of the Kala Pande family under Rana Jang Pande and Karbir Pande, another section of the royal priests and preceptors under Mishra Guru (Krishna Ram Mishra). The 'Peace Party', which was under the overall leadership of Chautara Fateh Jang Shah, was fortified by the belief that it could rely on the protection of the East India Company's government, and the retention of an 'observation force' on the frontier under Colonel Oliver, was in fact partly intended to sustain Fateh's new ministry.

But the senior queen in one way or another continued to create difficulties for the smooth implementation of the pro-British policy till the very end of her life. In compliance with the king's earlier promise to the Company's government Misra Guru (Guru Krishna Ram Misra), the royal preceptor, was asked to leave for Varanasi. Senior queen Samarajya Lakshmi could not easily reconcile herself to this move to expel the guru, who was a pillar of the anti-British faction in the court. On 20 February 1841, accompanied by King Rajendra, Crown Prince Surendra and three ministers including the prime minister and his brother, she left for Hetauda. Her departure perturbed the Residency as it was declared that she would also proceed to Varanasi (Banares) with a view to performing the marriage ceremony of her second son somewhere in the Indian plains. Hodgson sent his assistant G.W. William to Hetauda to remain in attendance on the royal party and especially to be on hand to observe and, if possible, check the anti-British moves and designs of the queen.

At 11 a. m. on 27 February 1841 the king, followed by the crown prince, suddenly started back for Kathmandu, on the

plea of having to perform some religious ceremony there. He asked the assistant resident to accompany him but the latter expressed his inability to do so as long as the queen was at Hetauda. The senior queen actually did not return to Kathmandu till 14 March 1841. Leading members of the Kala Pande family and their supporters, altogether five in number, some of whom were only recently dismissed from government service, also joined the royal entourage in Hetauda and were in constant touch with the senior queen. They were Kulraj Pande, Jagat Bam Pande, the sons of Karbir and Rana Jang Pande and their supporter, Kul Chand Shah.

During her stay at Hetauda the senior queen threatened to go to Makwanpur but could not do so because of the opposition of the ministers and the assistant British Resident. Finally, on 6 March 1841, the royal party left for Kathmandu, but when they reached Chisapani the senior queen refused to proceed further and, instead, thought of going directly to Makwanpur. Hodgson had already taken the necessary steps to dissuade the senior queen from crossing the frontier. Had she decided to do so without proper authorisation, the queen would have been allowed to cross into India only on condition of travelling alone without her entourage. In the end she returned to Kathmandu quietly on 14 March 1841 and made her presence known by angry denunciations of the ministers and of a large number of courtiers and also by summoning ex-minister Rana Jang to attend on her.

As long as she lived, Queen Samarajya Lakshmi persisted in following her anti-British policy with the same vigour even after Hodgson had succeeded in arraigning against her all political elements including the king himself and excepting only members of the Kala Pande and the Misra Guru families. The translation of a poster displayed on the Tundikhel (the Parade Ground) on 22 July 1841 is reproduced below in full to serve as a sample of the kind of propaganda carried on by the interested parties

among the people and the soldiers in particular against the policy of the pro-British government of Nepal and that of the Company's government.

Translation of a paper posted up on the Tundikhel Parade
22nd July 1841:

'Rangnath Pandit, Dalbhanjan Pandey, Singh Bir Pandey, Fatted Jung Shah, Guru Prasad Shah, Ranjore Thapa, Rangambir Pandey, Bir Kishore Pandey, Dal Kesar Pandey, Prasad Singh Basnyat, Bal Narsingh Kunwar, Kazi Kalu Shahi, Badri Bam Shahi, Kirti Bir Karki, Captain Gagan Singh, Kazi Abhiman Rana, Dalmardan Thapa, in all 17 persons have agreed to surrender the Tarai to the *Feringhis* and presently to pay them 9 lakhs of rupees with other smaller gratuities, on condition that the *Feringhis* confirm them in their power for 5 years and to that end prevent the Raja and Rani from coming together, or Ranjung Pandey from approaching either of them. All nominations to office in the past year were made at the will of the *Feringhis* (Resident) who were then assured of the absolute control of the Kingdom in all the reign of the present Raja.

'Those who did so last year to obtain office are now humbling themselves to the *Feringhis* again to obtain office for the coming year. They have enlisted Jyapus, Bhotias, Par Gharties, in the *Kampu*, in order that such vile wretches may be the instruments of their will. The traitors who act thus must be speedily decapitated, or the Kingdom is lost, for by enchantment and spells they have gained over and subdued the Raja. We will again sack the house of Rangnath Pandit. If anyone presume to destroy or remove this paper before the Raja and Maharani have seen it, may Pashupati, Guhyeswari, Bhat Bhateni, the Bhim Sen of Dolakha, the Devi of Nuwakot, Mankamana and Kala Bhairav make him a leper and may the sin of killing 7 cows and 7 Brahmins be his. Let this *arzi* be taken directly to the Raja and senior Rani and let the Raja and Rani be assured that if they destroy not the

17 traitors named above without delay, all is lost, for was not Rangnath's wife lately sent to the Maharani to practice with spells on her affections and health, so that they (the present Ministers) might then obtain office for the coming year. We 8,000 men of the *Kampu* (or Cantonment) desire that Ranjung Pandey should be Premier, and the Kingdom in general desires the same thing. Let this be, and the rascally *Feringhi* (Resident) will be glad to be off of his own accord. Let your Highnesses (Raja and Rani) bestir yourselves. Deep frauds are designed. Your treasures are going to the English. Let Rangnath Pandit be shaved and expatriated and let all the rest (of the Ministers) be decapitated. The kingdom is Your Highnesses'. What we (the soldiery) have seen and heard and know to be true, we have spoken. To consider its tenor is your business and duty. Whatever thereafter you may command us to do, we are prepared to accomplish for you. Be not afraid or perplexed. When the 17 traitors we have denounced are disposed of, you will be yourself again. Be bold and rely on us, but beware of delay.'*

(True translation)

B. H. Hodgson

By August 1841, Nepal under King Rajendra Bikram seemed to be returning to the anti-British policy advocated by the senior queen and members of the Kala Pande family. Besides the continued British entanglement in China and Afghanistan, the conquest of some parts of Tibet by the Sikh General Zorawar Singh had made the boundaries of Nepal and the Panjab contiguous to each other. This might have aroused hope and expectation of a new alliance between the Panjab and Nepal. The Governor of Jumla was ordered to meet Zorawar Singh in person and explore the possibility of an alliance with him to make a joint incursion into Tibet in order to seize a gold mine which was

* Secret Consultations, 16 August 1841, No. 115, as published in Stiller, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-4.

said to be located near the Nepal border. But the news of the crushing defeat of Zorawar Singh by the Tibetans in the second half of September dashed to the ground Nepal's hopes for military ventures in this quarter.

The senior queen had already been ill and far from physically fit for quite some time when she vented her rage and dissatisfaction in a violent manner on 20 September 1841 following a heated discussion with the king and the notables on the policy to be followed towards the Company's government. Thereafter her condition worsened and by October she was showing signs of extreme fatigue and exhaustion. She perhaps realised that her days were numbered and therefore made a frantic attempt to frighten the king into placing her son, Crown Prince Surendra, on the throne. With this end in view she held another stormy discussion with the king and the nobility before she died on 6 October 1841.

Even the passing away of Samrajya Lakshmi Devi, who had dominated the proceedings of the court of Nepal ever since the downfall of Bhimsen Thapa in 1837 and was regarded as the main inspiration behind, if not the main architect of, the anti-British policy, did not produce any change in the vacillating attitude of her weak, suspicious, timid and irresolute husband, King Rajendra Bikram Shah. The king now tended to lean more and more on Crown Prince Surendra Bikram Shah for the exercise of power and the conduct of the government, pulling strings from behind and using him as a cover to evade responsibility, just as he had previously used his senior queen, Samrajya Lakshmi, and the Panjals by making them take the blame for the anti-British policies to which he himself was as much of a party as they were. King Rajendra Bikram was ambitious but was afraid of facing the consequence of his actions. His duplicity and cunning did not enable him to hide the fact that he was henpecked, weak and irresolute of purpose.

Soon after Samrajya Lakshmi's death, King Rajendra sought to play his old game with the ministers by putting Crown Prince Surendra Bikram in the deceased queen's role. He started spoiling the prince by letting him satisfy his wildest fancies and indulge in excesses as he liked. He would fondly call Surendra Bikram even 'Maharajadhiraj' (a title exclusively reserved for the king) and bid others do the same. The king even tried to persuade the Resident to treat the crown prince as the king's equal.

For a while the king proved cooperative and the ministers were confirmed in their position on 9 November 1841, but within a week of their reappointment, the king and the crown prince went off to Hetauda with 2,500 troops for no apparent reason, returning to Kathmandu five days later. He then sent a communication to Lord Auckland through Hodgson asking the governor general to withdraw the observation corps of troops stationed at the frontiers. The Resident refused to accept the communication until the king accounted for his contacts with the Sikhs and his recent visit to Hetauda. The king explained that the contact with the Sikhs was necessitated by the fact that their conquest of Ladakh had made the boundaries of their land contiguous to those of Nepal, and sought to attribute his journey to Hetauda to the 'sudden caprice of a child', thereby putting the blame for it on the crown prince.

When news of the British disaster in Afghanistan reached Nepal in early 1842 she did not at first show any sign of hostility towards the Company's government, and accordingly Hodgson asked in February for the 'observation force' to be moved back from the frontier. Thereafter Rajendra's attitude rapidly changed again as the following example shows.

Furor Over a Newspaper Report

Shortly after the removal of the British forces the king was airing sentiments not quite consistent with his earlier professions

of peace. The publication in an English language Indian newspaper of a report that the senior queen, Samrajya Lakshmi Devi Shah, had died by poison had greatly upset the king, who at once sent for the Resident. Hardly had Resident Hodgson reached the Residency gate on the way to the palace when he saw the king and the crown prince standing in the road, along with several leading officers of the court. The king asked the Resident whether he had informed the governor general of the queen's death. The Resident answered him in the affirmative and also conveyed to the king the governor general's assurance that everything possible would be done to apprehend the miscreant who had been responsible for the poisoning allegation. Upon hearing this King Rajendra Bikram flew into a tantrum and exploded in anger: 'Tell the Governor General he must and shall give him up. I will have him and flay him alive, and rub him with salt and lemon until he dies. Further tell the Governor-General that if this infamous calumniator is not delivered up there shall be war between us.' The crown prince then started abusing his father whom he struck repeatedly. The scene was enacted once again in a guru's garden where the king and the crown prince with their entourage, including Hodgson, had gone from the street. However a full apology was subsequently made to the British government for the undignified and highly offensive expressions used by the king on that occasion.*

The Kasinath Incident

On 23 April 1842, king Rajendra once again publicly indulged in a fit of violent and erratic behaviour in connection with the law suit in which an Indian trader named Kasinath was involved. This gave rise to an incident which had far-reaching repercussions on the domestic and external affairs of Nepal. It is all the more strange because the case was not particularly important and the sum of money involved was not substantial.

* Narrative of Political Events in Nepal, 1840-1851 (Political Consultation, 11 November 1853, Nos. 22-24.)

Eventually the issue was settled in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of 1839 in the courts of Varanasi (Benares) where it was first brought up.

Kasinath Mull and Gosain Sheobux Puri were both British Indian subjects. Their families had long been engaged in trade both in India and Nepal. There was a law suit relating to the settlement of mutual debts pending in the court in Varanasi.

Sheobux had been in service as a subba in the Nepal tarai and was commissioned to collect and retain land taxes for himself upon payment of a predetermined amount to the Nepal government on a yearly basis. He was arrested by the Nepal government because there had been arrears in payment due to it from him. Sheobux, after having paid the Nepal government whatever he could afford himself, wanted it to realise its due also from money Kasinath allegedly owed him. The existence of this debt was disputed by Kasinath and was the subject of judicial enquiry in Varanasi.

While in Kathmandu on some other business Kasinath was seized by the government of Nepal and brought to court in connection with his alleged debt to Sheobux Puri. He was made to deposit with the Nepali court the full amount claimed by Sheobux, 36,400 rupees, out of which he eventually had to forfeit 16,800 rupees (representing the sum owed by Sheobux to Nepal's exchequer) as well as paying a fine. Kasinath's appeal to the Resident in this matter bore fruit and upon Hodgson's protests the council of chiefs, or Bharadari, set aside the decision on the ground that the judge's taking a deposit from one side only had been unlawful and that as Sheobux had left Nepal no further investigation could now take place.*

However, late in February 1842, Sheobux returned to Kathmandu and the case was reopened. On 6 and 8 April 1842, the

* The Darbar never accepted the British argument that the case was outside their jurisdiction. L. Stiller, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-39.

Darbar's munshi came to fetch Kasinath, who had for sometime been living in the Residency both for medical treatment and for protection. Hodgson refused to hand him over to the munshi and requested an interview with the king, but instead of granting this request King Rajendra himself, accompanied by a large number of chiefs and about 2,000 troops, came to the Residency on 23 April 1842. He demanded the surrender of Kasinath and wanted to know if the Resident had any reasons for non-compliance. Hodgson explained that Kasinath was a British subject and that 'his case was not one of disputed jurisdiction but of strong-handed interference with all legal proceedings.' Hodgson further added that the merchant was in the Residency for medical treatment and was being held up, as he had not yet been given back his cash deposit without which he could not go to the plains. Meanwhile Kasinath himself came out and pleaded that he had no intention of opposing or embarrassing the king, and merely solicited justice from him. Despite Kasinath's humble pleas, the king ordered that he should be seized. Upon this Hodgson told the king that if he insisted on arresting Kasinath he would lay himself open to the charge of using force or coercion against the envoy and 'his duties as an ambassador would come to an end.' Then the crown prince came forward and urged his father to have Kasinath dragged away. The king himself rushed on the merchant in an attempt to 'bear him off.' The sequel is described by Hodgson as follows:

'I threw my arms around the merchant and said sternly to the Raja "You take both of us or neither." This was more than the Raja could screw up his resolution for. . . Seizing the moment I made an appeal to his better feelings. . . and thus at length cast the balance against the mischief makers.'*

Once again the king and the prince attempted to seize Kasinath, but the Resident frustrated their moves with caution and resolu-

*Secret Consultation, 3 August 1842, No. 66, cited in Ramakant, *Indo-Nepalese Relations, op cit.*, p. 203.

teness. At last the king retired and sent his principal officers to negotiate with the Resident. On their request Hodgson allowed Kasinath to go the Darbar, on the express guarantee from the ministers that his life and property would be safe.

Meanwhile a far-reaching change had already taken place in the British Indian administration. Lord Auckland's term of office had been unceremoniously terminated by the British government on 28 February 1842, at the height of the Afghan crisis. Lord Ellenborough, who took over as governor general in March, gave the impression in his conversation that 'he believed his mission to be a reversal of his predecessor's measures and supersession of his predecessor's men.'*

The new governor general thoroughly disapproved of Hodgson's move to influence the trends of court politics by supporting one section of courtiers. On 5 June 1842, Hodgson was warned against getting himself and the British government mixed up in the politics of a foreign country and instructed to take immediate steps to disengage himself from the political process in Nepal. Lord Ellenborough also failed to understand the real nature of the dispute between the Resident and the king over Kasinath, telling Hodgson that he should have shown more caution and respect in dealing with the head of state and should not have allowed himself to be drawn into taking sides with Kasinath. Above all the new governor general was angered by Hodgson's suppressing his letter of reprimand of 8 May 1842 to the Nepali minister and substituting for it his own version on the plea that the communication of the governor general's instructions in the original form would have harmed the interest of the Company's government by making the minister lose face in the Darbar. In his letter of 8 July to the East India Company's Secret Committee Lord Ellenborough states that, had it not been for Hodgson's indifferent health, he would have immediately removed him from

* Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

Nepal because it would be difficult for Hodgson, having been involved so deeply with particular individuals and with internal political developments in Nepal,' to follow a new policy of disengagement.

The governor general had actually sent Hodgson a letter of recall on 21 June 1842 but he relented immediately and, even before Hodgson had a chance to put in his pleas in defence of his actions, wrote again on 22 June cancelling the dismissal*. After receiving from Hodgson a detailed account of the policy so far pursued vis-a-vis Nepal, Ellenborough's attitude towards him softened further, though he still stuck to his original view that a new policy should better be carried out by a new man rather than by Hodgson who was 'so mixed up with a party in Nepal.'** But later it was Hodgson himself who was asked to initiate the policy of disengagement and to implement it till his departure from Kathmandu on 5 December 1843.

The governor general's change of heart was seen in the despatch of 8 August 1842 which struck an even more conciliatory tone vis-a-vis the Resident. While still insisting on the necessity to end as early as possible the existing relationship between the Resident and the ministers, which was clearly of a protective and-paternalistic nature, the governor general left it to Hodgson's discretion to decide in what manner he should conduct himself so as to withdraw the Indian government gradually from the position of involvement in the court politics 'without injury to persons who may rely upon its protection.' ***

The worsening of the internal situation in Nepal toward

* Secretary to the Indian Government with the Governor General to the Resident in Nepal, dated June 22, 1842, cited in Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

** Government to Hodgson, dated July 6, 1842, cited in Hunter, *loc. cit.*

*** Secret Consultation, 19 October 1842, No. 64, cited in Ramakant, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

the end of 1842 is sometimes regarded as a result of the disengagement of the British government from Nepali politics. Hodgson's critics tend to view the crisis as a culmination of Hodgson's past actions and policies, while some of them even go so far as to contend that the critical situation was deliberately brought about by Hodgson to put his men in power before he finally withdrew himself from Nepal. Whatever the reason tension ran high in the court of Nepal throughout the better part of 1842.

The policy advocated by Ellenborough was certainly more becoming of the dignity of a great power and was in the long run apt to evoke enduring admiration and respect for his government from the host country itself. But in defence of Hodgson's policy it may be pleaded that what might have been possible during the period from the second half of 1842 till 1844 might have proved disastrous earlier. However, Hodgson endeavoured hard to implement the new policy of non-interference as conscientiously as possible. He told the ministers that in the past the East India Company's government supported them to keep the hostile faction at bay, but now that the times had changed, he would neither openly support them nor remonstrate with the Pandes or the crown prince. Hodgson did not want to make a complete break with his past policy until the developments in Afghanistan and China had grown favourable to the British. In Hodgson's own words, he followed a policy 'rather to let change of ministry come if it must than to precipitate it; while watching and prepared to avail (himself) yet further of the course of events.'*

The change in the attitude of the Resident was reflected in an increase in outrageous behaviour by the crown prince and the related cases of evasion of responsibility by the king. The king continued to pester the Company's governor general with petty matters even after the British victories in Afghanistan

* Secret Consultation 5 October 1842, No. 148, cited in Ramakant, *op. cit.* p. 214

and China. For example, the king would insist on a reply to his letter requesting the governor general to discover the mischief monger responsible for the publication of the news item in the Anglo-Indian newspaper about the poisoning of the senior queen. The king kept on asking the Resident to address the crown prince as Maharajadhiraj, but the Resident firmly refused to do so until the king abdicated in favour of his son. The Pandes were also still active and goading the crown prince to assert his authority in every possible way.

The crown prince, under the influence of the Pandes went to the extent of demanding the throne from his father. In September 1842, the crown prince went to Hetauda with a large body of soldiers, letting it be known publicly that if the king did not abdicate in his favour, he would proceed to Gaya without the Resident's permission. The king also followed the prince to Hetauda but did nothing else, as he was also interested in keeping the situation confused. The trumpcard of the Resident's power to grant or withhold passports for India always came in handy for the purpose of restraining the undesired activities of the royal actors on Nepal's political stage. The Indian government asked the Resident not to allow anyone in the prince's party to enter Indian territory without due authorisation and also warned the king that if the crown prince crossed the frontier with more than 300 soldiers it would be regarded as an act of hostility. The crown prince, to the relief of all concerned, returned to Kathmandu on 9 November 1842, but the son's struggle with the father for the throne continued.

The Pande family had until now managed to retain a degree of influence, with their tactics including playing on the ambition of the crown prince by spreading the idea that he was an incarnation born to extirpate the Feringhees (meaning the English). They used to stage mock battles in which this theme was enacted. Developments abroad and at home, however, weakened their

position: by October 1842 the British had won decisive victories both in Afghanistan and in China and as a result King Rajendra's attitude towards the East India Company also suffered a change.

Again, ever since the death of the senior queen, the junior queen, Rajya Lakshmi, had been doing her best to free the king from Pande influence so as to increase her own power in the Darbar. Then in November 1842 some important members of the Kala Pande family were found guilty of defaming the king. A handout was found in which the Pandes had falsely and maliciously alleged that the late senior queen had died of poisoning. This was enough to turn the king against the family. Prominent members such as Kulraj Pande, Rana Jang Pande and Karbir Pande were put on trial. Kulraj was found guilty of incriminating the king. His right hand was cut off, he was expelled from the country and his property was confiscated.

Petition of Rights of 7 December 1842 and Delegation of Hukum

Crown Prince Surendra Bikram Shah took a sadistic pleasure in subjecting innocent people to inhuman cruelties and King Rajendra instead of restraining him, seemed to encourage his spoilt son in perpetrating all kinds of excesses. The frequent recurrence of these incidents of barbaric cruelty created a general feeling of discontent among the people and even the ministers found it impossible to carry on the day-to-day administration of the country because of the unrestrained attitude and actions of the crown prince. Fateh Jang Shah actually laid down the burden of office, professing that it was not possible for him to serve two masters, and would not resume his duties until the king controlled the crown prince.

The king not only evaded responsibility for all the murders and mayhem, beatings and indignities committed at the behest of the crown prince, but was also at times helpless against his son punishing people for obeying the father's own commands.

The general discontent took the form of a popular movement,

and a petition for due protection of the legitimate rights of the people was presented to the king on 7 December 1842. In a move to defuse the tense situation, King Rajendra Bikram Shah granted this petition which among other things demanded the immediate end to the state of uncertainty created by the dual rule of the king and the crown prince, and the establishment of a stable administration strong enough to secure the rights and privileges of both the nobles or notables and the people at large. The petition was drawn up at a meeting of 675 responsible civil and military officials, which was presided over by Prime Minister Fateh Jang Shah and had the apparent backing of 8,000 troops. This petition resulted in the formal delegation of 'hukum' (the sovereign power to rule by peremptory command) to Junior Queen Rajya-Lakshmi Devi on 1 January 1843.

However, the state of uncertainty in the country continued as before because neither King Rajendra Bikram Shah nor Crown Prince Surendra Bikram Shah was prepared to accept, even temporarily, any real concentration of power in the hands of Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi. A new arrangement was improvised according to which the government was to be run by the king in consultation with the junior queen and the crown prince. This was in actual practice no real abdication or delegation of power in any sense, but, all the same, it still made the junior queen also a force to be reckoned with henceforth in the Darbar politics of Nepal.

Crown Prince Surendra continued to grow more and more wayward and it became increasingly difficult to manage him. The policy of the British government was to neglect the crown prince and to restrict itself to dealings with the king alone. Ever since June 1842 Crown Prince Surendra had started visiting the Residency and even at times requested the Resident to bring his pressure to bear on the king to resign. The Resident had standing instructions not to have anything to do with him without the open approval of the king.

The withdrawal of the British support from the chautaras and the ascendancy of Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi in Darbar affairs had set off new trends of development in Nepali politics. Just as Senior Queen Samrajya Lakshmi had been anxious to see her son, Crown Prince Surendra, on the throne before she died, so also Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi had long cherished the desire to have her own son, Prince Ranendra, replace Crown Prince Surendra as heir apparent and eventually succeed King Rajendra on the throne. While Samrajya was alive the two queens were thus from the beginning in competition with each other not only for acquiring the status of being the king's favourite wife but also for the realisation of their mutually exclusive political ends. The rivalry between the two queens engendered by their respective concern for the future of their sons had always been at the root of their manoeuvres in Darbar politics. After the removal of the senior queen from the scene, Crown Prince Surendra and the junior queen, each in their own way, sought to manipulate political developments while the weak and vacillating king sided sometimes with one and sometimes with the other.

After the Kasinath case, the chautaras had completely forfeited the goodwill of the king who had begun to look elsewhere for someone to assist him in running the administration. The Pandes had also fallen into the king's disfavour after the discovery of incriminating evidence against them, which led to their trial culminating with the mutilation and expulsion of one of them from the country. The junior queen, Rajya Lakshmi Devi, also felt that the chautaras and the Pandes would have never served as tools of her purpose in having her son replace the crown prince. Under the circumstances, she was inclined to look to the Thapas for support.

The Return of Mathbar Singh Thapa and the Departure of Brian Hodgson

King Rajendra in consultation with the junior queen invited

Mathbar Singh Thapa to come back to the country and help him in running the government. Mathbar was the leading member of the Thapa family, who had escaped punishment at the hands of the Kala Pandes by slipping out of the country in 1838 in the nick of time before he was caught up in the next round of adverse events leading to the reopening of the case against Bhimsen Thapa and his suicide in prison. Mathbar had been living on a British pension of one thousand rupees a month ever since his return from the Panjab to British territory. Fully aware of the fact that the king was fickle-minded and unreliable, Mathbar took his own time to return to Kathmandu. He spent sometime on the frontier collecting information about the latest developments in Nepal. Before Mathbar reached Kathmandu on 17 April 1843, he had made sure that Hodgson was not wholly for the chautaras.

Resident B. H. Hodgson, who was, in the words of Cecil Bendall, a pioneer in research on Nepal and 'the greatest and least thanked' of all British Residents in the country, left Nepal on 5 December 1843 after more than twenty years' service, first, as acting Resident from 1820 till 1832 and then from January 1833 onward as Resident. Despite his own repeated entreaties to the governor general to have his tenure of office in Nepal extended by at least another year, which were subsequently backed up by an unprecedented request from the sovereign head of Nepal himself for the extension of his term, Governor General Ellenborough remained adamant in his stand on the ground of principle that Hodgson could not be allowed to serve in the same post for an inordinately long period of time and must, therefore, be transferred from it. It may be pointed out here that Ellenborough having once recalled Hodgson in a huff in July 1842 for suppressing the contents of the governor general's letter to the minister and substituting his own version for them, had afterwards cancelled his order for recall and even had it removed from the file. In addition, Ellenborough had also allowed Hodgson, upon his request on the grounds of health, to extend his stay by a year till

the winter of 1843. Under the circumstances, Ellenborough, did not find it proper to give in to pressure for the further extension of Hodgson's tour of duty in Nepal.

But Hodgson had a most touching farewell, which any envoy who had been active for such a long time on a highly controversial and sensitive mission on foreign soil would have reasons to envy. A formal public Darbar or reception attended by all important Nepali notables was held to say good-bye to Hodgson. The king of Nepal, Rajendra Bikram Shah, with whom Hodgson had been involved in many an ugly and unpleasant incident in the past, 'burst into tears, and referring to the exertions by which Hodgson had so often averted a war, called him "the saviour of Nepal" ' *

Hodgson's concern for the growth of trans-Himalayan trade through Nepal and for employment of the Gorkhas as soldiers for use by the British government at the time of its need showed his foresight and grasp of the real problems of Nepal. His scholarly contributions on various aspects of Nepali life, and also on the botany and zoology along with the literature, religion and culture of Nepal, deserve special mention. His writings cover a wide range of subjects such as the flora and fauna of the country, the ethnological, anthropological and linguistic backgrounds of a number of Nepal's diverse tribes and ethnic groups and also the mystical intricacies and subtleties of the Vajrayana, the cult of the thunderbolt or the so-called Tibetan Buddhism with its emphasis on metaphysical dialectics and psycho-experimental methods of meditation. He made generous gifts of innumerable valuable manuscripts, works of art and artifacts he had collected in Nepal, to institutes of higher learning and research, libraries and museums all over Europe.

Hodgson's critics and detractors among his own countrymen and others, tend to blame him for what they call his interference in the internal affairs of Nepal, which prevented the situation

* Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

there from reaching its own logical point of culmination and arriving at its own solution to the problem. His supporters and admirers, of whom there is no dearth, among both Nepalis and Europeans, are of the opinion that by preventing war with Nepal at an inopportune time through diplomacy and even through questionable methods of promising protection and help to the officials of the host country in his attempt to cultivate and manipulate them, Hodgson served not only his own government but also the host country and its government. War might have spelt the end of Nepal's independence. By postponing the explosion of the internal crisis which was fast building up in Nepal until such time as the country found itself better prepared to cope with it, he also served Nepal's interests.

All told, the last paragraph of the document King Rajendra presented to Hodgson with the Red Seal (Lal Mohar), dated 1 December 1843, is a human and touching expression of sincere appreciation of the outgoing Resident's qualities and services, that had endeared him to all concerned, notwithstanding his active involvement in the most taxing and vexatious public engagements:

'But you from being many years here and entirely owing to your kindness, wisdom and forbearance, you caused the Governor-General's anger to be abated and instilled wisdom into me, and by God's blessing and your kindness, friendship was once more established between the two governments— and for your kindness I shall ever be grateful and wherever you may go and whatever you do, may God bless and prosper it, and to hear of such will give me pleasure.'*

Assumption of Office by Mathbar

Mathbar had already been eight months in Kathmandu before he finally took over the administration as prime minister on 26 December 1843. Before he formally assumed the office of

* Serect Consultation, 27 January 1844, No. 49, published in L. Stiller, *The Kot Massacre*, Kathmandu, CENAS, 1981.

mukhtiyar, Mathbar had requested King Rajendra and Queen Rajya Lakshmi to vindicate the honour of his family, whose members had been, without any valid reason or evidence, maligned and persecuted in the past. The king and the queen took the necessary steps to arraign the Kala Pandes for convicting Bhimsen Thapa on the basis of trumped-up charges and forcing him to commit suicide in utter despair. The Pandes were eventually declared guilty of wilfully framing Bhimsen Thapa. As punishment for their involvement in the denial of justice to Bhimsen Thapa and his family, Karbir Pande and Kulbir Pande were promptly executed. As the former Mukhtiyar Rana Jang Pande was seriously ill and already on his death bed, he was not actually executed but he died almost immediately upon his return to his house after having been subjected to public humiliation and indignity. The property of all of them was confiscated. Dittha Kanak Singh Mahat, who had acted as a prosecutor in the trial of Bhimsen Thapa and was said to have drawn up charges against Bhimsen Thapa under King Rajendra's own instructions, was also decapitated. Even two members of the Thapa family itself — Ram Bir Thapa and Indra Bir Thapa — were executed as accomplices of the Kala Pandes. Buddhiman Karki had his nose and lips cut off, and Bamsharaj Basnyat was deprived of his nose.

Before Mathbar took over the premiership formally, Hodgson had already retired and Major H. Lawrence had taken over the charge of the residency. The politics of the Nepal Darbar were in complete disarray at the time. The royal authority was in practice shared by King Rajendra Bikram Shah, Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi and Crown Prince Surendra Bikram Shah who were at cross purposes with each other. Crown Prince Surendra wanted the king to abdicate in his favour. Junior Queen Raiya Lakshmi Devi desired the throne for her son, Ranendra Bikram Shah. King Rajendra Bikram wanted to continue as the king himself and retain ultimate authority, while at the same time keeping both the junior queen and the crown

prince in good humour by pretending to give them also an effective say in the administration of the country.

As pointed out sarcastically by Resident Lawrence, the royal authority in Nepal at the time was shared by 'Mr. Nepal, Master Nepal and Mrs. Nepal.' The new prime minister and commander-in-chief, Mathbar Singh Thapa, initially experienced difficulties because of the division of royal authority between the king and the crown prince. The king himself had appeared anxious to secure the crown prince a status equal to his own. Mathbar on the face of it should have had no difficulty on account of this. The king had granted the crown prince the right to be addressed as Maharajadhiraj on all occasions with a view to enabling him to exercise authority over the ministers, notables and civil and army personnel and take precedence over the king himself. King Rajendra had even asked Lawrence to make a copy of his official statement on arrival at Kathmandu available to the crown prince.

Hence Mathbar, while pressing for the King's abdication in favour of the crown prince, felt that he was but asking Rajendra to follow his action to its logical conclusion. Mathbar was also inclined to seek Resident Lawrence's assistance in obtaining the king's abdication, but Lawrence altogether refused to give him any advice in the matter pleading that it would be against the policy of his government to do so. Lawrence was asked by Calcutta to turn a deaf ear if Mathbar ever threatened to take action against the reigning monarch or dynasty. Under the circumstances, the exchanges and relationship between the Darbar and the new Resident became cold and formal. Lawrence was even afraid that this might be wrongly interpreted by the Nepalis as the decline or erosion of British influence in the court. But Ellenborough asked him to maintain a correct posture of *decorum vis-a-vis* the Darbar, whatever the result might be.

Mathbar could not function effectively because of the constant tussle for power between the king and the crown prince.

The king would neither abdicate in favour of the crown prince nor was he able to prevent the crown prince's unwarranted interference in the administration. Mathbar even orchestrated a mutiny of soldiers in order to bring pressure on the king to abdicate the throne. On 22 January 1844, the palace was surrounded by mutineers who demanded that there should be only one ruler in the country. King Rajendra was able to pacify them only by offering to abdicate the throne on the following day. On 23 January 1844, a meeting of notables or Bhardari was held but Mathbar did not attend it on the plea that the troops would not let him out of the house until the king had resigned from office. The king was once again reluctant to abdicate. He prevaricated as usual and several alternative methods of regulating authority in future were discussed. Finding it difficult to carry on the administration, Mathbar dramatically resigned from the prime ministership in summer 1844 in order to reassess his strength and support among the soldiers.

After Mathbar Singh's resignation, the situation deteriorated all the more, as the crown prince's excesses increased in their frequency and brutality. The crown prince took sadistic pleasure in inflicting pain and punishment on human beings and animals. Even the Brahmins and the cows were not spared physical torture. It was commonly believed that the crown prince's apparent tantrums and intemperate action and behaviour were designed to bring pressure on his feeble minded and doting father to abdicate the throne in his favour once and for all.

On 18 October 1844 Mathbar resumed the prime ministership after the king declared that there would be only one ruler in future. But this declaration could not come into force because the crown prince reacted to it very sharply this time and reduced the king to the state of 'virtually a prisoner' by 'driving away anyone who came near his father.'* In November 1844 a large

* Secret Consultation, 23 November 1844, 'No. 113, cited by Ramakant, *op. cit.*, p 225.

number of members of the Pande family who had been languishing in prison ever since Mathbar's return were expelled from the country.

On 4 December 1844, events once again took a dramatic turn when the crown prince accompanied by the king, Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi, Prime Minister Mathbar Singh Thapa and other notables went to Hetauda apparently on a hattikhedah (elephant-catching or chasing expedition) in the inner tarai. Actually the excursion was part of a well-contrived plan to compel the king to abdicate in favour of the crown prince. It was public knowledge that the crown prince had ordered the officers and soldiers to follow the royal party and had also strongly warned the king that he would go to Varanasi (Benares) if the king hesitated to abdicate the throne in his favour. The king, however, did not seem to realise the gravity of the situation.

As usual the Resident protested on behalf of the Company's government that there would be serious consequences if the crown prince approached the frontiers at the head of the army. The party stayed at Hetauda for two days and thereafter the crown prince with General Mathbar Singh Thapa at the head of a large body of troops advanced up to Dhukuwabas at the Chure Pass and threatened to proceed to Varanasi if the king did not resign his office forthwith. This was a clever move by the interested parties to involve the British Residency in their design to compel the king's abdication by creating a situation in which the residency had to remonstrate with the king to prevent the crown prince from approaching the Indian frontiers. The crown prince succeeded in his design this time, albeit temporarily, as the troops were ordered by King Rajendra to accept the prince as king on 10 December 1844. Crown Prince Surendra in an extremely cruel and vulgar demonstration of his newly acquired authority commanded that sixteen minor officers be decapitated and three others be deprived of their caste and expelled from the country for their alleged disobedience to General Mathbar Singh Thapa.

On 13 December 1844, Mathbar returned to Kathmandu to organise a royal reception for the crown prince. Crown Prince Surendra himself returned to Kathmandu on 14 December 1844. The king, on his own, in response to his son's wish and demand, had earlier authorised the son 'to issue all orders and share the *gaddi* (throne) with him.' On 18 December 1844, the arrangement was given a formal shape by stating in clear terms that 'except *gaddi*, the mint, the direction of Chinese and foreign affairs,' which the king had reserved for himself, all other authority was transferred to the crown prince.* Within a few days of his return to the capital, the king probably realised that the new arrangement would give the crown prince and Mathbar almost supreme powers and annulled it on 23 December 1844. The king sought to modify the above arrangement by declaring that there had been reconciliation between father and son, and '(King Rajendra Bikram) was to remain as before and he would issue orders through the crown prince.'** But the son put his own construction on this and claimed that he was to issue orders in nominal consultation with the king, his father.

The Resident, in his turn, had nothing to do with all these attempts to tamper with royal authority as it had hitherto existed. He refused to join the triumphal procession held to celebrate the crown prince's return as 'Maharajadhiraj.' Although, he found the crown prince sitting on the throne when he called on the king on 18 December 1844 by appointment, both Resident Lawrence and the Company's government refused to accept the new arrangement.

As pointed out in the contemporary British records, Prime Minister Mathbar Singh Thapa (1843-45) considered he was 'impelled in four different directions by the Raja (Rajendra

* Secret Consultation, 25 January 1845, No. 116, Ramakant, *op cit*, p. 226.

** Secret Consultation, 25 January 1845, No. 118, cited in Ramakant *op. cit.* p. 226

Bikram Shah), Prince (Heir Apparent Surendra Bikram Shah) and Ranee (Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi) and the British government, that if he acted against the Maharaja (King Rajendra), it would be called ingratitude, and if against the Prince, it would draw his wrath, from which the Raja would not protect him, that the Ranee was anxious for herself, and children and that he (Mathbar) did not know what the British government might say at the revolution.’*

Political Conditions on the Eve of the Emergence of Jang Bahadur

Before describing the assassination of Prime Minister Mathbar Singh and the rise of Jang Bahadur to pre-eminence it may not be out of place to review the political situation in Nepal which had been brought about by King Rajendra's failure to fill the vacuum created by the fall of Bhimsen Thapa. Weak and ineffective, yet also extremely suspicious and jealous of others' usurping his power, the king leaned heavily on members of his immediate family (Senior Queen Samrajya Lakshmi until her death, then Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi and Crown Prince Surendra Bikram Shah) but at the same time he continuously tried to play them off against each other. It was not surprising that the various factions among the nobility sought to exploit the antagonisms within the royal family by joining, abandoning or rejoining one side or another on considerations of sheer expediency.

Throughout the period 1837-1838 the chief identifiable interest groups at the court were the chautaras (royal collaterals), the gurus or priestly class and, last but not least, the three leading families of the time, the Thapas, the Pandes and the Basnyats. Despite the frequently shifting allegiances there was an element of continuity in the line followed by certain of the factions. The Kala Pandes, until their elimination as an effective political force, had supported Senior Queen Samrajya Lakshmi, through

* Resident Lawrence to Government, 24 October 1844, published in Stiller, *op. cit.*, p. 243-244

whom they had regained their influence at court, and after her death they were on the side of her son, Crown Prince Surendra. The chautaras and the gurus were, on the whole, for the king and also for the crown prince out of their respect for the principle of primogeniture, if for nothing else. But King Rajendra Bikram Shah himself made it difficult for them to support him at all times, by remaining utterly helpless initially against the wild and thoughtless actions of the senior queen and, later on, against the excesses of the crown prince.

Although politics in Nepal had a pronounced familial basis, this did not mean that the leading families always remained united. It is well known that Bhimsen Thapa was betrayed by his own brother, Rana Bir Singh Thapa, and among those who were dismissed along with the Kala Pandes as their associates in January 1841 were Indra Bir Thapa and Rana Bam Thapa. The Pande family was divided between the Kala Pandes and the Gora Pandes, the latter escaping the persecutiion which the former had to suffer in the hands of Ex-King Rana Bahadur as regent and Bhimsen Thapa as mukhtiyar. The priestly class of the gurus was also divided with the descendants of Braja Nath Pandit viz. Ranga Nath Pandit, Krishna Ram Pandit and others on one side, and the royal preceptor or the raj guru, Mishra Guru (Krishna Ram Mishra), the brother of the famous Gajaraj Mishra who had acted as a mediator between the British and the Nepal governments at critical moments in the past, on the opposite side. Further, intermarriages among members of the three leading families, the Pandes, the Basnyats and the Thapas, also affected alignment and realignment of the forces at work in court politics. Therefore the theory of exclusive group rivalry between the leading families is an oversimplification.

However, the result of all this intrafamilial and interfamilial feuding was a state of utter chaos in the upper echelons of the government with an ever growing sense of fear, suspicion and

insecurity among the people in general. The atmosphere of the court was thick with conspiracy. Intrigues had become the order of the day, as manoeuvres and counter-manoevres proceeded apace and prime minister succeeded prime minister in quick succession. In the nine years that intervened between the dismissal of Bhimsen Thapa in 1837 and the rise of Jang Bahadur in 1846, there were as many as eight major changes in the government, and none of the prime ministers, with the exception of the Brahmin Ranga Nath Pandit, died a natural death. The danger of total disintegration stared the country in the face, and the situation was further aggravated by the fact that the British, having accomplished their object in the Indian subcontinent, were in no mood to tolerate for ever long a volatile and unstable situation on their north-eastern frontier.

Jang's Entry into Court Politics

Jang Bahadur had re-established himself in the palace as early as 1840 by pleasing King Rajendra with his exploits during an elephant hunt, but he only began to play a prominent role in court politics when Mathbar returned from India in 1843. Although the maternal uncle and nephew fell foul of each other soon enough, yet Jang Bahadur had at the beginning looked upon Mathbar as his protector and guide. As a matter of fact, Jang's own attitude toward Mathbar was based on sort of a love-hate relationship. Jang admired and envied not only Mathbar's rank and position but also his physical valour, fitness and stamina, and above all his personal charm and dynamism. Jang also had reasons to be fond and proud of his maternal uncle, who had initially taken such a great fancy to him as to give him the name of Jang Bahadur (literally 'brave in war) after he had been named Bir Narsingh as a baby. But Jang had also begun to hate Mathbar for the manner in which he had of late started throwing his weight around and imposing himself on everyone including his own nephew. Jang was shrewder and no less ambitious than his maternal

uncle and quickly sensed that he had to be always on the winning side in the game of court politics in order to get to the top. He also realised soon enough that in the prevailing circumstances in the court, it was not possible for him to fulfil his high ambition through Mathbar, whose arrogance had created powerful enemies in high places who were bound to destroy him. Jang therefore started cultivating General Gagan Singh as a temporary ally to gain the confidence of the junior queen, Rajya Lakshmi Devi, and to promote his own position in the court. General Gagan Singh Bhandari Khawas* was a comely and courtly person with a plump and imposing figure and enjoyed the reputation of being a lady's man, as he had risen to his present high ranking position in the court primarily as Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi's favourite.

Assassination of Prime Minister Mathbar

What had happened at Hetauda in December 1844 and Mathbar's role in those events had aroused the suspicion of King Rajendra against the prime minister. But Mathbar's dynamic personality and hold on a large section of the army combined with the support of the crown prince made him a formidable foe whom the king and the junior queen did not dare to challenge openly. The king sought to hoodwink Mathbar about his real intentions by appointing him prime minister for life on 20 January 1845. Then King Rajendra Bikram Shah, in collusion with Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi, who had also by then turned against Mathbar, laid a plot to take Mathbar's life with Gagan Singh and Jang Bahadur as their instruments.

The junior queen had come to the conclusion that Mathbar had completely gone over to the side of the crown prince and would be a formidable obstacle rather than a help to the fulfil-

* General Gagan Singh was not a Khawas by caste but a Bhandari Chhetri. The word 'Khawas' at the end of the name was sometimes used to imply that the person was a confidant of the king or the queen.

ment of her design to put her own eldest son on the throne. The future prime minister and maharaja of Nepal may have viewed co-operation with her in this matter as the first necessary step to realising his ultimate ambition.

Jang's liaison with one of Queen Rajya Lakshmi's trusted maids of honour, who was also flirting with Gagan Singh at the same time, initially helped him to gain the confidence of the court. The following quotation from General Pudma Jung Bahadur Rana's biography of Maharaja Jang Bahadur throws a flood of light on the political role and influence of innumerable maids of honour who were attached to the queen's household:

"The queen's court had become a hotbed of vice and villainy. Every form of wickedness, from a stolen kiss to the foulest murder, was daily practised as a very necessity of existence. Every inmate of the court, from the Queen-Regent down to the humblest maid, was inextricably involved in love intrigues of one description or another. In fact, chastity seemed to be an unknown entity both among the men and the women connected with the court... The court dames were all young and good-looking, and there were nearly one thousand of them, who attended for fifteen days in the month by turns. The fortnight leisure that each of them enjoyed in the month was spent in the company of lovers and paramours, in the choice of whom no restriction was recognised as to number, as these girls were not only powerful engines of immorality, but the mighty engines of political preferment; so that the amount of influence a maid possessed over the Regent was generally the measure of her capacity to elicit the love and admiration of her paramours; and their number was also in proportion to their influence."*

* General Pudma Jung Bahadur Rana, *Life of Maharaja Sir Jung Bahadur, G. C. B., G. C. S. I. Etc., Etc., of Nepal*, Allahabad: Pioneer Press, 1909, pp. 46-47.

On 17 May 1845, Prime Minister Mathbar Singh Thapa was summoned to the palace through Kulman Singh Thapa on the pretext that Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi had suddenly fallen ill. Mathbar's son, Ranojjal Singh Thapa, suspected a trap and asked his father to take a few body guards along. But Mathbar did not listen to him, saying in jest that he could account for seven men singlehanded if the need arose. When Mathbar reached the palace, he was made to wait in the courtyard for sometime before he was accosted by a maid servant with a broad grin and led upstairs to the room where King Rajenda was lying on a bedstead with Queen Rajya Lakshmi seated at his feet. No sooner had Mathbar entered the room than the king and queen made the prearranged signal to Mathabar's own sister's son, Jang Bahadur Kunwar, who was waiting behind the door with a loaded gun in the ready position while General Gagan Singh stood by his side to back him up with a second shot, if necessary.

Mathbar was struck by a bullet in his head and by "two or more small balls and some small shot" in other parts of the body. Before he breathed his last he staggered forward in the agony of death only to invoke the king's mercy on his mother and children. Meanwhile he was struck from behind, and when he fell down to the ground with his hands stretched out as though in supplication to the king, one of the armed guards nearly severed his wrists from his arms with a sword.

King Rajendra was so angry with Mathbar that after making sure that he was dead, the king started kicking his head and abusing him. By King Rajendra's command Mathbar's mangled body was bundled up in a sheet of cloth and let down into the street from a window of the royal palace by a rope. And before daylight it was carried by a party of soldiers to the river by the Pashupatinath temple to be burnt. Religious minded passers-by on their way to the temple before daybreak were said to have noticed bloodstains caused by the dripping of blood from the

fresh wounds on Mathbar's body all along the 3 kilometer-road to Pashupatinath.*

Who Killed Mathbar ?

On 18 May 1845, the king informed the Resident that he had himself shot Mathbar to death, but nobody seemed to believe his story. Only a few days after the incident, Crown Prince Surendra is reported to have challenged the king's above statement in open court, saying to his father: 'You killed Mathbar Singh, indeed. You could not kill a rat.'**

Again immediately after Mathbar's death King Rajendra also informed the governor general of India that he had found him guilty of treason and insubordination and "therefore I put the traitor Thappa to death with my own hands, killing him with gun and sword."*** Resident Henry Lawrence's reaction to the the role claimed by the king for himself in killing Mathbar and the Resident's own version of the tragic incident are recorded in the following excerpt from his dispatch to his government:

'Gagan Singh and four and five others killed the Minister. The Maharaja may have mangled the corpse; but I must doubt His Highness having courage to fire a gun, much more to face his late Minister.'****

But King Rajendra after, he was deposed, wrote to the governor general of India, Lord Hardinge (1844-47), on 15 August 1847:

'On General Marthbar (sic) Singh's misbehaving himself I sent for Jang Bahadur, and ordered him to kill Marthbar Singh threatening him with death if he refused

* H. Ambrose Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal*, Vol. 1, London: W. H. Allen and Co., 1880, p. 346.

** Quoted by Edwards and Merivale in *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, London: Smith, Elder & co., 1872, Vol. I, p. 336.

*** Secret Consultation, 13 June 1845, No. 15

**** Quoted by Edwards and Merivale, *op. cit.*, Vol 1, p. 336.

to obey.’*

Jang Bahadur himself had owed to Mathbar his position in the army and much else in life. Jang, therefore, could never overcome his sense of remorse for having killed his maternal uncle. Years after the event, while showing one of his European guests around his Thapathali residence, Jang is said to have drawn his visitor’s attention to the picture of the man with the piercing eyes and a prominent forehead and to have said fondly:

‘That is my poor uncle, Mathbar Singh, whom I shot; it is is very like him.’**

After the death of Mathbar Singh Thapa the pace of events seemed to have slowed down for a while, but for some time nobody was found willing to shoulder the responsibility for running the administration. King Rajendra and Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi were temporarily reconciled and Crown Prince Surendra also quieted down considerably. They carried on the government as a triumvirate for about six months, issuing orders in military matters through Jang Bahadur and in all affairs of civil administration through Gagan Singh. Gagan Singh had become the most influential man in the court as a strong partisan of the interests of Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi, to whom King Rajendra had delegated plenipotentiary powers in January 1843.

Coalition Government

Upon Mathbar’s return to Nepal, Fateh Jang Shah who had headed the pro-British cabinet from November 1840 to March 1843 as mukhtiyar and was also to become head of the coalition government again, had, for fear of being victimised by the new

* King Rajendra’s Khareeta to Governor General dated 30 Sravan 1904 Vikram Samvat (15 August 1847), Secret Consultation, 25 September 1847, No. 173.

** Laurence Oliphant, *A Journey to Nepal with the Camp of Jung Bahadur* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1852), p. 166.

prime minister, abruptly left the country for Gaya in company with Abhiman Singh Rana. Mathbar, in his turn, had his property confiscated for absenting himself from the country without the prior knowledge and consent of the prime minister. Mathbar also apprehended trouble from the chautara acting in league with the members of the Kala Pande family who had gone into exile in India. It was only in response to a royal summons after the assassination of Mathbar Singh Thapa that Chautara Fateh Jang Shah returned to Kathmandu on 14 August 1845.

King Rajendra Bikram Shah had considerable difficulty in persuading Fateh Jang Shah to accept on 25 September 1845 the nominal leadership of a kind of coalition government of which the other members were to be Gagan Singh, Abhiman Singh Rana and Kazi Dalabhanjan Gora Pande. Fateh Jang Shah was given command of only three regiments, while Gagan Singh was given charge of seven regiments with the rank of general, and Abhiman Singh Rana that of two regiments with a similar title. Fateh Jang Shah's family was put in charge of administration of all territory west of, and including Palpa, and he himself, as mukhtiyar, was entrusted with the responsibility of conducting relations with Great Britain and China. Abhiman Singh Rana was in charge of the administration of all territory east of Palpa, while Gagan Singh looked after all the Darbar affairs and the magazines and army supplies. The regiments under his command were deployed in protection of the palace and its surroundings. Kazi Dalabhanjan Gora Pande, who was extremely old and had been a contemporary and minor colleague of Bhimsen Thapa, was also included in the cabinet just for cosmetic purposes. He was given charge of only one regiment and was supposed to advise the other three ministers as and when necessary.

It was apparent that Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi Devi had a major say in the shaping of this coalition ministry and in effecting the division of work and authority among its members.

Gagan Singh held all real power in his hands and 'was the actual premier in all except name.' Jang Bahadur was not included in the cabinet at first except as a 'military member' because it was suspected that Jang Bahadur, like his uncle, Mathbar, supported the interests of the crown prince. Both the king and the junior queen, however, were anxious not to incur the enmity of a man of Jang Bahadur's 'energy, talent and daring' and he was therefore allowed to retain the rank of general with the command of the three regiments already entrusted to him.

The quality of military officers and the standard of morals and conduct in the court and life of Nepal had immensely deteriorated by the time of the assassination of Mathbar. The following excerpt from Resident Henry Lawrence's letter of 25 May 1845, to Governor General Hardinge (1844-47), bears testimony to the above fact:

'There is not a soldier in Nepal; scarcely a single man that has seen a shot fired, and not one that could lead the army. The chiefs are a very poor set, effeminate, debauched creatures, wanting in all respectable qualities.'*

There is yet another letter which throws light on the contemporary state of affairs in Nepal. In January 1846, Honoria Lawrence, wife of Henry Lawrence, sent a letter from Sugauli, a village to the south of the Indo-Nepal frontier, to George Clerk, her husband's early friend and advisor and a member of the Council of India in London. The letter was intended to convey her husband's views about developments in Nepal since the appointment of Chautara Fateh Jang Shah as prime minister following the assassination of Mathbar Singh Thapa. As it gives a picture of the state of affairs in the court on the eve of the most critical event in modern Nepali history and furnishes valuable clues to the understanding of the motivations of the principal

* H. B. Edwards and H. Merivale, *Life of Henry Lawrence* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1872), Vol. II, pp. 8-9.

participants involved in it, it deserves special attention. The relevant extracts from the letter are reproduced below:

‘Mrs. Lawrence to George Clerk, Esq.

Segowlee, January 1846.

My dear Mr. Clerk,

I would not venture to obtrude my feminine politics on any public man but yourself, but I think you will do me the justice to believe that I only wish to transmit to you my husband’s views..... to say for him, what he now has no leisure to say for himself.

‘...I forget when my husband last wrote to you, not I think, since the appointment of Futteh Jang Chountra (sic) as minister. He is a timid, nervous creature, who seems to live with a drawn sword, in every point a contrast to poor Matabur (sic).

‘The Chountra affects great simplicity and even poverty in his dress, &c; has a small sawarea, and very few soldiers and hangers-on about his gates. He always gets *a pain in his stomach* when he is summoned to Durbar and feels afraid to go.

‘The man with real influence is Guggur Sing (sic), now a general, originally a slave.* He is, in appearance, like Matabur, and seems to have some of his *pluck*. According to report, he and the Maharanee carry everything their own way, the Chountra being afraid to act, and the young *Absalom* of a prince being very quiet for some months past, occasionally telling his papa that if he is not placed on the Guddee he will go and turn Fakeer at Kasee (sic), and now and then putting an officer, who had been too obsequious to Guggur Sing, to stand all day in a pond.

‘Jung Bahadoor (sic), Mathbur’s nephew, is likewise a general and called commander-in-chief. He takes no very prominent part just now, and seems to spend his energies in devising new

* Gagan Singh was in fact a Bhandari Chhetri by caste and thus cannot have been a slave.

uniforms. But he is active and intelligent, and if (perhaps it would be more correct to say, *when*) there is another slaughter in the Durbar, the struggle will probably be between Jung Bahadur and Guggur Sing.

'The Maharajah goes on the same inexplicable way, apparently afraid of his son, yet putting him forward, and at the same time seeming to allow the Maharanee and Guggur Sing to be the virtual rulers of the country. Possibly he has heard of the Kilkenny cats. The Rajah never was so civil to Lawrence as for the last two or three months, when they met on the road, getting out of his palkee and walking with him — almost apologizing for Matabur's murder, saying he had warned the general and expostulated in vain, and that it was plain *both* could not live. When we left Nepaul last month we were allowed to come down Phirfung (sic) road, which no European ever before traversed, and is mentioned, I think, even by Kirkpatrick, as jealously guarded. For travellers it is a much better road than our old one by Chitlong (sic), being admirably laid out, and as good as the road from Sabathoo to Simla. But it is full ten miles longer than the Chitlong road, by which, Lawrence says he would prefer leading a force.'*

Assassination of Gagan Singh

General Gagan Singh, favourite of Plenipotentiary Queen Rajya Lakshmi, fell to an assassin's bullet on 14 September 1846, and the queen herself, who was of a fiery temperament, exploded in uncontrollable rage on hearing the news. King Rajendra Bikram Shah had vested full powers in her in 1843 and she chose to assert these broadly to seek out and punish whoever might have been responsible for the assassination.

To this day it is not known for certain who the real culprit was. Gagan Singh had attracted general hostility because he had risen to the post of commander-in-chief from that of a mere

* *Ibid*, pp. 39–41.

mace bearer by virtue of being the queen's favourite, and many people would thus have had a potential motive for the crime. King Rajendra himself and Crown Prince Surendra, however, had a particular reason to be displeased with Gagan because of the near-public scandal about Junior Queen Rajya Lakshmi's liaison with him. It was therefore probable that the king and the crown prince themselves might have had something to do with the assassination.

Some sources state that a Maithili Brahmin by the name of Lal Jha was hired for the purpose and confessed his guilt when he was later on arrested in Kathmandu, where he had been sent by Jagat Bam Pande from Bettiah on a mission to murder Jang Bahadur. According to Dr. H. Ambrose Oldfield, British Residency surgeon at the time, Fateh Jang Shah, General Abhiman Singh Rana, Kazi Dalabhanjan Pande and Bir Kishor Gora Pande, as well as the king and his two sons by his senior queen, were aware of the plot to murder Gagan Singh.* However these sources seem to rely merely on rumours spread by the perpetrators of the deed to cover up their own part in it. According to the last words of a dying man, General Abhiman Singh Rana, who was one of the ministers of the court, Jang Bahadur himself murdered General Gagan Singh.** But on the basis of reliable information handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation in the family of the seven Jang Bahadur brothers, the author is inclined to believe that it was Jang Bahadur's brother, Badri Nar Singh who, under his elder brother's instructions, actually shot Gagan Singh. As Badri Nar Singh was engaged in a love affair with Gagan Singh's daughter he had easy access to the General's

* H. Ambrose Oldfield. *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 121.

** General Pudma Jung Bahadur Rana, *op cit.*, p. 72; P. Landon, *Nepal*, London, Constable & Co., 1928, Vol. 1, p. 123; Prati-man Thapa, *Maharaja Jang Bahadur Ko Jivan Charitra*, Calcutta 1908.

house.*

Whoever may have murdered Gagan Singh, his assassination triggered off the infamous event known in the history of Nepal as the Kot Massacre. It paved the way for a strongman as demanded by the chaos and uncertainty in the country. Further, it sealed the fate of the monarchy for more than a hundred years, as the strongman who emerged subsequently established the Rana system of hereditary prime ministers, who ruled Nepal up to 1951 under a succession of kings who were mere figureheads.

As the Kot Massacre has been critically dealt with at considerable length in the main body of Mr. Whelpton's work itself, I may as well conclude at this point my own analysis of the conditions and circumstances leading to the rise of Jang Bahadur.

* Baburam Acharya, *Baburam Acharya Ra Uhanka Kriti* (Kathmandu; Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, 1973), p. 35, Baburam Acharya agreed with the interviewer that Badri Narsingh shot Gagan, but denied he was involved with Gagan's daughter.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BACKGROUND TO THE 1850 MISSION AND TO THE *BELAIT-YATRA*

The visit of the Nepalese Prime Minister, Jang Bahadur Rana, to Britain and France in 1850 caused a great sensation in both countries. Although there had been visitors from the Indian sub-continent before, fear of losing caste by crossing the 'dark water' had hitherto prevented any Hindu political leader from himself journeying to Europe. Jang and his party were therefore inevitably regarded as personifying the 'mysterious East' and the comparisons with the *Arabian Nights* made by journalists in both London and Paris accurately reflected public reaction. Since the visit was also of considerable political importance as it inaugurated the close co-operation with British India which was to characterize the foreign policy of Jang and his successors, the episode is of great interest in the context of Nepalese history as well as of the encounter between the cultures of Europe and South Asia.

The experience naturally had at least as great an impact on Jang and the other members of his party as it did on his hosts. Jang himself kept a diary of his journey which has been lost but which was used by his son Padma in writing his father's biography.¹ Earlier it was apparently drawn on by one of Jang's travelling companions in writing an account of his own. This, too, has not survived in its original form, but a number of documents derived from it have been discovered and one of these was published in Kathmandu in 1957 by Kamal Dixit, under the title *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra* (Jang Bahadur's Journey to Euro-

1. Padma Jung Bahadur Rana, *Life of Maharaja Sir Jung Bahadur Rana of Nepal*, Allahabad, Pioneer Press, 1909. Reprint edition, Kathmandu, Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1974.

pe). It is this narrative, translated into English for the first time, which forms the centre-piece of the present work. To the translation have been added contemporary British and French newspaper reports, as was done by Dixit in his second and third (1964 and 1972) editions, though the selection presented here is somewhat different from his, particularly in the British section. The translated Nepali narrative and, to a lesser extent, the newspaper extracts, contain much that may be obscure to the modern reader. The notes and the remainder of this chapter are intended to clear up as many of these difficulties as possible (though, inevitably, some remain), and also to place the visit in its historical context. The information presented has been drawn largely from published works, supplemented by some early results of archival research on which the translator is now engaged in as part of a more elaborate study of Jang and the Nepal of his time.

The Kingdom of Nepal

With the exception of the relatively small area which was to be ceded to her in 1860 (in circumstances described below) Nepal's borders in 1850 were as they remain today. Stretching for some five hundred and twenty miles along the southern flank of the Himalayas the kingdom descends in uneven steps from the snow-covered peaks to the Gangetic plain. The northern border in its eastern section actually follows the crest line, while further west it runs slightly to the north of the main Himalayan range, taking in the southern fringe of the arid Tibetan plateau. South of the mountains are 'the hills', the confusion of interrupted ridges and spurs which make up the Mahabharat range and which are the cultural and political as well as the geographic heart of the country. Finally, to the south of the low line of the Siwalik or Chure hills, Nepalese territory generally extends into the plains to a depth of between ten and thirty miles. Until twenty years ago the prevalence of a particularly virulent form of malaria rendered the Tarai, as this strip of land is known,

uninhabitable through much of the year to all but the local tribesmen, who had acquired some degree of immunity. However, where the jungle had been cleared the land was worked during the cold season, generally by peasants brought in from India, and the fertile soil made the region vital to the Nepalese economy, as it still is today.

Virtually the whole of Nepal falls within the catchment areas of three great river systems—the Karnali in the west, the the Gandaki in the centre and the Kosi in the east, each with its many different branches and tributaries. From their sources in Tibet they flow through deep gorges across the line of the Himalayas, then traverse the hills and plain to merge eventually with the Ganges. Within the hills they shape the the agricultural pattern, the valley floors providing good rice growing land whilst the slopes above must be used for 'dry' crops such as maize. The river valleys also facilitate the movement of people and goods in a north-south direction.

Until the British managed to open an alternative route through Sikkim at the beginning of this century, the passes through the Himalayas formed by the Trisuli (a branch of the Gandaki) and the Sunkosi rivers were major routes for trade between India and Tibet. Situated in the hills between the Gandaki and Kosi basins, the Nepal Valley, which gave its name to the whole country and which contains the capital, Kathmandu, was a natural halting point for traders travelling between the plains and one or other of the passes. This commercial importance, together with the Valley's great fertility, enabled its Newar inhabitants to develop a complex urban civilisation. Outside the Valley, however, the area under their political control was limited, both because the difficulties of communication in the hills naturally favoured local autonomy and because from the 15th century onwards the Newars were themselves divided, Kathmandu and the neighbouring towns of Patan and Bhaktapur each forming

the capital of its own little kingdom.

It was the people of Gorkha, a principality some sixty miles west of Kathamandu, under their great ruler Prithvi Narayan Shah, who created the modern state of Nepal by their conquest of both the Nepal Valley and other states in the hills. In 1850, as the *Times* stressed in its editorial on Jang's visit, this unification was still a comparatively recent development. However behind the Gorkha conquest of the Valley in 1769 lay a centuries old process through which a people whose religion and language were akin to those of the North Indian plains had expanded eastwards along the Himalayan foot-hills, gradually bringing under their control the earlier inhabitants, whose languages generally belong to the Tibeto-Burman family. Classical Indian sources, including the *Mahabharata*, contain references to a people or tribe called 'Khas' inhabiting the western end of the Himalayan chain and apparently speaking a language that was distinct from, though closely related to, that of the Vedic Aryans, from which the modern languages of North India have developed. However contact with members of the latter group, who had either penetrated into the mountains before them or did so later, seems to have resulted in cultural assimilation and the Khas came to see themselves as caste Hindus and to speak a recognisably Indian language.³ Inscriptions found in the Jumla region of N. W. Nepal and written in a mixture of Sanskrit and archaic Nepali show that by the fourteenth century a Khas dynasty had for some time been ruling an empire covering not only the Karnali basin but also part of western Tibet and of the Himalayas west of the

2 The *Times*, 21 June 1850. The editorial is reprinted in chapter 3.

3 For an extensive, though now partly out-dated discussion of the early history of the Khas see Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol 9, Pt. 4, Calcutta, Superintendent of Government Printing, 1916, pp. 2-8 and 14-17. His view of *khas kura* as an off-shoot of Rajasthani is no longer accepted, the similarity

present Indo-Nepal border.⁴ When the empire fell apart at the end of the century, its place in the Karnali region was taken by the *baisi* (twenty-two) kingdoms, amongst whom the king of Jumla, in whose territory lay the former imperial capital, retained a degree of predominance. Further eastward Khas migration led to the establishing of the *caubisi* (twenty-four) statelets of the Gandaki basin, among which was the kingdom of Gorkha. Peaceful penetration preceded further conquest and a century before Prithvi Narayan Shah's entry into Kathmandu *khas kura* (Khas language), or Nepali as it was later to be termed, was already widely understood in the Valley.⁵

Although prepared to grant a degree of internal autonomy to a specific community or region, the Gorkha conquerors main-

of the two being explained rather by their independent retention of features of the parent language (see Sir Ralph L. Turner, *A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1931, p. xiii.) Although the later development of the language may have been influenced by refugee migration from the plains into the hills after the Muslim invasion of India, the 'Indianisation' of the Khas in Kumaon and Garhwal, from where they moved east into Nepal, was probably well advanced before 1000 A. D. (see Ram Shrivastava, 'Tribe-Caste Mobility in India' in C von Furer Haimendorff (ed.), *Caste and Kin in Nepal, India and Ceylon*, London, Asia Publishing House, 1966, p. 188) Nepali was in use as a written language in the Karnali basin by the mid-thirteenth century and possibly from much earlier: an inscription recently found at Dullu, and yet to be fully authenticated, is claimed to date from 981 A. D. (see Purna Prakash Nepal 'Yatri', *Raja Yaganirajko Yatra*, Kathmandu, National Research Associates, 2039 V. S. (1982/3), pp 122-3.)

4 The discovery of the Khas empire is described in G. Tucci, *Preliminary Report of Two Scientific Expeditions in Nepal*, Rome, ISMEO, 1956. For a concise account see Marc Gaborieau, *Le Népal et ses Populations*, Brussels, Editions, Complexes, 1978, pp 40-41 and 46-48.

5. T. W. Clark, 'The Rani Pokhri Inscription, Kathmandu' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 1957, XX, pp. 167-187.

tained a monopoly over the central control of the new Nepalese state. Entrance to the political elite was sometimes possible for influential families from the former independent kingdoms of the Karnali and Gandaki regions, whose language, culture and social structure were of course similar to those of Gorkha.⁶ However the Newars and the various hill tribes, such as the Magars, Gurungs and Tamangs of west and central Nepal, and the Rais and Limbus in the east, were very much in a subordinate position.⁷ This situation was explicitly sanctioned in the Legal Code Jang promulgated in 1854, which assigned each section of the population to a specific position in the caste hierarchy. That hierarchy was, however, a reality before 1854, just as its influence is still felt in present-day Nepal, despite the legal abolition of the caste system and the theoretical equality before the law of all Nepalese citizens.

The *khas kura* speakers, or, to use the name by which they now normally refer to themselves, the *Parbates*, (mountaineers)⁸ were not all of equal status. The title of 'Khas' had been retained by only one particular caste, although this did contain the largest proportion of the population. Above them in the caste hierarchy were the Brahmins and the Thakuris or 'Rajputs', who included the royal family itself and the former ruling families of the *baisi* and *caubisi* states. Both these groups claimed to have come originally from Rajasthan and in some cases this may well have been true. However the elaborate genealogies linking the Thakuris to genuine Rajput families in India, such as the one tracing the Gorkha dynasty's ancestry to the fourteenth century rulers of Chittaur, will usually have been pure fabrications, devised by

6. Leo E., Rose, and John T., Scholz, *Nepal: Profile of a Himalayan Kingdom*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1980, p. 21.

7. The tribal peoples did however rank above the 'untouchable' castes among the Nepali speaking community.

8. Western anthropologists now often use the designation 'Indo-Nepalese', v. Gaborieau, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

court bards to flatter rulers of simple Khas extraction.

Those who retained the Khas name were a group of varied origin, few of whom can have been descended solely from the original Khas tribesmen. At one time individual members of the Tibeto-Burman tribes seem to have been accepted as Khas on conversion to Hinduism. As caste divisions in the hills became more rigid this possibility disappeared but the child of a Brahmin father and a Khas mother was reckoned a Khas, as also was a Brahmin's child by a Magar or Gurung mother. If a Khas man took a wife of inferior status their offspring, too, were Khas and although they were regarded as of slightly lower status than their caste fellows, this stigma could be lost within a few generations. In contrast, then, to the situation over most of South Asia, where inter-caste marriage generally resulted in a proliferation of new sub-castes, the process in Nepal helped to swell Khas numbers and to provide a degree of social mobility.

The Khas were allowed to wear the sacred thread, investiture with which distinguished the three 'twice-born' orders (*varnas*) of Hindu society, that is the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, from the fourth order (the Sudras) and from the impure castes who were outside the varna system. This right had been granted them, on a piece-meal basis, by the *baisi* and *caubisi* rulers, the process having been completed in most parts of the hills before unification, though to this day there remain in the far west a number of '*matvali* (alcohol drinking) Khas,' who do not wear the thread and are regarded as a separate caste.⁹ Although inferior to the Thakuris the 'twice-born' Khas were, like them, counted as Kshatriyas and in order to emphasise this status Jang Bahadur, a Khas by birth himself, stipulated in the Legal Code

9. The taking of alcohol was forbidden for 'twice-born' castes and the term '*matvali*' consequently came to be used as a label for groups which, although not impure (i. e. whose touch did not contaminate water intended to be drunk by members of higher castes), were not entitled to wear the sacred thread. Most hill tribes were included in this category.

that 'Kshatriya' could be added to all Khas names. The Nepali form of the Sanskrit 'Kshatriya' is 'Chetri', and this is the name by which the caste is now universally known, 'Khas' being felt as pejorative.¹⁰

In unified Nepal, as previously in Gorkha, ultimate political authority rested with the monarchy. Royal supremacy depended in the first place on traditional Hindu concepts of kingship as a divinely ordained institution and of the sacredness of the King's own person. In fact Prithvi Narayan Shah and his successors, like the Newar rulers of Kathmandu before them, were regarded by the bulk of their subjects as incarnations of the god Vishnu. To religious awe was added the prestige which Prithvi Narayan's military success had conferred on him and on his descendants. This firmly based royal authority could be exercised in many spheres. The King was able, as has already been seen, to alter the caste status of his subjects. Of even greater importance in an agrarian society was his control of the land: he was the ultimate owner of the soil and his subjects derived their tenure rights from him.¹¹

The King could not, of course, administer the country single-handed and the extent of Nepalese territory and the slowness of communications in the hills heightened the need to delegate considerable responsibility to, for instance, military commanders and district revenue collectors. However the system was such as

10. For a full account of the Chetris see C. von Fuhrer Haimendorf, 'Unity and Diversity in the Chetri Caste of Nepal', in *Caste and Kin in Nepal, India and Ceylon, op. cit.*, pp. 11-67. Further details in Prayag Raj Sharma, 'Caste, Social Mobility and Sanskritisation: A Study of Nepal's Old Legal Code' in *Kailash*, Vol. V, No. 4, 1977, pp. 277-299.

11. For a detailed account of the land tenure system see M. C. Regmi, *Land Tenure and Taxation in Nepal*, 4 Vols., Berkeley, Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1963-68. Also his *Land Ownership in Nepal*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1976.

to make it very difficult for any individual to set himself up against the royal authority. All appointments were subject to an annual review, the *pajani*, which all military and civil officials usually had to attend in person. In lieu of cash salaries officials were assigned *jagirs*, that is tracts of land where they were entitled to the revenue, and often had to make their own arrangements to collect it from the peasants. The danger of their thus acquiring a territorial basis for revolt was minimised since the location of the *jagir* could be changed frequently and it seldom coincided with their place of duty. Private fiefdoms were nevertheless tolerated in the shape of several of the former independent hill states, where the old ruling families had been allowed to retain their position, making a block payment each year in lieu of land and other revenues. These individuals, however, lacked the resources to challenge the King, who could always of course rely on Gorkha solidarity against them.

Whilst secure against outright rebellion the monarchy's power faced a restraint in the collective influence of the *bharadars* or 'burden bearers', a somewhat ill-defined body of high officials and heads of leading families.¹² The Brahmin *rajguru* (state preceptor), who functioned as the king's spiritual advisor and was the judge in cases of violation of caste rules, was a member of this body for some purposes, as were one or more other gurus, but they, and the Brahmins generally, normally played an advisory rather than a leading role in politics. The *bharadars* were thus essentially a combination of the king's own Thakuri relatives and of Khas notables. There was a convention that their advice on a major issue should not be ignored and they could therefore set certain limits to the King's conduct. When a King flouted this convention direct oppositon to him would emerge, though this was always focussed around another member of the royal family: the standing of the Shah dynasty was such that a

12. Rose and Scholz, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

struggle against its current head had always to be waged, at least nominally, on behalf of one of his wives or sons.

Because of the inherent strengths of the King's position a reasonably competent ruler would not have found the *bharadars* unmanageable and, as his humbler subjects' obedience was never in doubt, he would have had little difficulty retaining control of the government. However the accession to the throne between 1777 and 1816 of three successive kings while still infants, and the personal incapacity shown by the two who survived to come of age, resulted in real power draining away from the monarchy. In Prithvi Narayan's time the head of the administration had been a *cautariya* (a member of the royal family not in direct line of succession to the throne)¹³, who remained very much an instrument of the King's will, but from the end of the 18th. century the practical importance of this post diminished. The word 'Chautariya' remained in use as a kind of surname for the royal collaterals but the government was generally run by a Khas minister. To maintain his position the minister relied on a combination of factors: backing from one or more members of the royal family, the ability to balance the conflicting interests among the *bharadars*, and the support of the army. None were able to retain power permanently until Jang Bahadur succeeded in changing the rules of the game and established the Rana family predominance that was to last until 1951.

13. *Cautariya* is derived from *cautara* (also sometimes used with the same meaning. The word *cautara* also means 'platform', which is the original sense, and the *cautariya* may have acquired his title because of his being on the dais besides the King's throne. See Balachandra Sharma, *Nepali Sabda-Kos*, Kathmandu, Royal Nepal Academy, 2019 V. S. (1961/2), pp. 331-2). Alternatively he may, in pre-unification days, have sat on the stone platform round the base of a peepul tree outside the royal residence and vetted petitioners before they were allowed inside to see the King (L. F. Stiller, *The Silent Cry: The People of Nepal from 1816 to 1839*, Kathmandu, Sahayogi Prakashan, 1976, pg. 20).

Jang Bahadur

Jang Bahadur Kunwar (the more prestigious name of 'Rana' was only officially adopted after he became Prime Minister) was born on 18 June 1817. His father, Bal Narsingh Kunwar, and his uncle, Revant, were both among the select few who held high office continuously during the administration of Bhimsen Thapa, the minister who dominated Nepal from 1806 to 1837.¹⁴ His mother was a niece of Bhimsen's, and it was her brother, Mathbar Singh, who suggested the name 'Jang Bahadur', meaning 'brave in war'. Jang entered the army in his mid-teens and while serving under his father at Jumla in N. W. Nepal he deserted his post and travelled for some time in the territories of the British East India Company. He considered enlisting in the army of the Sikh ruler, Ranjit Singh, as many Nepalis had already done, but eventually he was persuaded by his friends to return and was reinstated in the Nepalese army. In 1837, however, both Jang and his father lost their positions and much of their property in the purge of the Thapa clan and their adherents which accompanied Bhimsen's fall from power.

Gambling debts now forced Jang to leave Kathmandu, and at the end of the year, after an unsuccessful attempt to make money by elephant hunting in the Tarai, he travelled to Benares in East India Company territory, hoping to find profitable employment. He was again unsuccessful and after over a year in India he returned to Kathmandu, in 1839. On arrival he found that his wife (a Thapa) had died but he swiftly remarried and used the dowry to repay his debts. He was now probably sent back to Benares on a secret mission to arrest Ranodyat Shah, the King's uncle, who was disregarding instructions to return to Nepal. When Ranodyat, who was in ill health, had gone down to India in December 1837 the Nepalese government had approved but during 1838 they became apprehensive that he might be used

14. Stiller, *op. cit.*, pp. 19.

against them by the British. Jang was unable to carry out his orders, however, because he was himself arrested by the British authorities and deported.¹⁵

During 1839 Ranjang Pande, Bhimsen's bitterest enemy, was confirmed as head of the administration and renewed persecutions of the Thapas culminated in Bhimsen's suicide in prison in July. Yet despite his past associations with a defeated faction Jang was able to resume a career in the army and in February 1840, while accompanying King Rajendra on a hunting trip, he succeeded in tying together the legs of a wild elephant that had been surrounded. He was instantly promoted to Captain of Artillery. He gained further prestige from a series of acts of bravery over the following months. These included rescuing a mother and daughter from a burning house, and leaping from a roof onto the back of an elephant which had gone berserk and was rampaging through the streets of Kathmandu. Other exploits were performed at the behest of the King's eldest son, the cruel and capricious Surendra, whose behaviour was never checked by his father and was becoming more and more unpredictable.¹⁶ The prince allegedly had

15. Padma Rana (*op. cit.*, pp. 19–20), mentions only the private visit from late 1837 to January 1839 and Orfeur Cavenagh, the British liaison officer attached to Jang's party in 1850, only the covert mission of 1839 (*Rough Notes on the State of Nepal*, Calcutta, W. Palmer, 1851, pp. 253 & ff.). Possibly both accounts refer to the same episode and instructions to act against Ranodyat were sent to Jang when he was already living in India. If that is so Padma has concealed the real reason for Jang's departure from Benares (assuming he actually knew it) rather than show his father acting against British interests. But it is more likely there were two separate visits since it was only in January 1839 that the Nepalese will have been told the British would not help in persuading Ranodyat to obey his recall (FSC, 2 Jan 1839, No. 48: Govt.'s letter of 31 Dec. 1838 to British Resident in Kathmandu).

16. Jang told Cavenagh that he became unpopular at this time because of his reformist views, but no mention of this reason is made by Padma, and he was probably simply the victim of Surendra's unstable temperament .

Jang leap on horseback into the River Trisuli from a height of eighty feet. He disappeared from sight and his friends went to search for his body but finally discovered that that he had swum safely to an island some distance downstream. He was subsequently ordered to jump into a deep well. According to Padma's version of the story this was partly filled with buffalo bones on which he managed to have some bales of hay placed before making the leap; Cavenagh (assuming he is referring to the same incident) has the well full of water and Jang only able to survive by clinging with his fingers to the brickwork till friends arrived to pull him out hours later. Discrepancies like this are a warning that the tales of Jang's feats must have grown in the telling, and indeed after Cavenagh's *Rough Notes on the State of Nepal* was published Jang himself laughingly admitted to a new British Resident in Kathmandu that he had made up stories for his travelling companion because he knew he wanted material for his book.¹⁷ Nevertheless there is a core of truth to the anecdotes: the well incident, for instance, was noted at the time in the Resident's official diary¹⁸

The death of the King's senior wife, Surendra's mother, in October 1841 led to increasing political instability: Surendra wanted his father to abdicate in his own favour, the King himself was unwilling either to do this or to exert his authority over his son, while the Junior Queen, Lakshmi Devi, wished to place her own son, Ranendra, on the throne. Amidst the clash of factions Jang was able to remain in favour, being appointed to the King's bodyguard in November 1841, and in January 1842 made Kaji of Kumari Chauk, a post involving responsibility for the audit of all government accounts. At the end of the year the majority of the *bharadars*, exasperated by Surendra's behaviour, united to compel King Rajendra to sign a document appointing Lakshmi Devi

17. FSC 25 Feb 1859, No. 17, cited by M. S. Jain, *The Emergence of a New Aristocracy in Nepal*, Agra, Sri Ram Mehra, 1972, p. 32.

18. Entry for 27 April 1842 in H. T. Wheeler, (ed). *Diary of Events in Nipal 1841 to 1846*, Calcutta, Foreign Office, 1878.

regent and Jang was among the delegation which informed the British Resident of this development.

Lakshmi Devi now secured the return from exile of Bhimsen Thapa's nephew, Mathbar Singh, who had been in India since March 1838, and Jang went down to Gorakhpur to escort his uncle home. In December 1843, some months after his arrival, Mathbar was appointed minister and commander in-chief, but was caught between the conflicting demands of King, Queen and Prince. Although originally a partisan of the Queen's he eventually threw his weight behind Surendra seeing this as the best chance of increasing his own power. According to Padma's account,¹⁹ a rift now developed between Mathbar and Jang when the latter opposed his uncle on an issue of tenants' rights and was supported by the King and Surendra. Mathbar is supposed then to have had him removed from the council (the *bharadari*) and appointed to Surendra's bodyguard. However Padma goes on to claim that the quarrel deepened when Mathbar refused to intervene against a death sentence passed on Jang's cousin, Debi Bahadur, and as this person had in fact been among political enemies of Mathbar's executed before his appointment as Prime Minister, doubt is inevitably thrown on the whole of Padma's story.²⁰ The truth may simply have been that Jang saw that the political tide was turning against his uncle and preferred to remain associated with Lakshmi Devi's supporters. Whatever the real background, when in May 1845 the Queen obtained the King's agreement to have Mathbar assassinated as a danger to them both, it was Jang who was ordered to carry it out, allegedly under threat of his own death if he refused. He was concealed behind a screen in the palace and shot Mathbar as he entered the room, to which he had been summoned by a false report that the Queen was ill.²¹

19. Pudma Rana, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-4.

20. For Debi Bahadur's death see Jain, *op. cit.*, p. 50, fn. 63.

21. Jang subsequently helped Mathbar Singh's sons escape to India and was believed when he told the British Resident that

A coalition arrangement was subsequently agreed: the premiership went to Fateh Jang, one of the Chautarias (relatives of the royal family) and a former holder of the office, but his powers were to be considerably less than those of Mathbar, since Gagan Singh, Abhiman Singh Rana, Dalbhanjan Pande and Jang Bahadur were also to share in the government and have regiments under their command. Fateh was the King's man, Gagan the Queen's favourite (and rumoured lover), and Abhiman and Jang counted among her supporters although also thought to be well disposed towards Surendra.

The crisis which ended this inherently unstable arrangement was precipitated by the assassination of Gagan Singh on the night of 14 September 1846. According to an alleged death-bed confession made early the following year, the murder was committed by Lal Jha, a Brahmin who had been suspected of various crimes in the past but had always escaped conviction for lack of definite proof. Jha's confession stated that he had been acting for Fateh Jang, Abhiman Singh and other leading politicians, but after Prince Surendra had become King himself he told the British Resident that Fateh in turn had been acting on instructions from King Rajendra.²²

he had not committed the murder (B.J. Hasrat), *History of Nepal*, Hoshiarpur, V.V. Research Institute Press, 1970, p. 319. In later years, however, he openly admitted he had been responsible. The arguments marshalled by Jain (*op. cit.*, pp. 57-64) against Jang's involvement are unconvincing. He claims, for instance, that Jang gained no immediate benefit from the assassination, yet in fact he was promoted to the rank of general shortly afterwards and, although in practice subordinate to Gagan Singh, he was nominally acting-minister from May until Fateh Jang's appointment in September (May-September 1845 entries in Henry Lawrence's *Official Nepal Diary*, IOL, Eur MS. F. 85, No. 96).

22. Jha's account was supported by that of an alleged accomplice, Daddu Upadhyay, who was interrogated on 4 February 1847 in the presence of the head munshi (native clerk and interpre-

At the news of her favourite's murder the queen summoned civil and military officials to the Kot—the arsenal and assembly-hall by the royal palace at Hanuman Dhoka. Jang, who had become closely identified with the Queen and Gagan during the preceding months and supposedly feared he was himself in danger, brought his three regiments with him, as well as his six brothers, while the other chiefs came mostly unarmed with only a few followers. The Queen was convinced that a bharadar named Bir Keshar Pande was responsible for the murder, and she ordered Abhiman Singh to put him under arrest (both these men were later to be named in Lal Jha's confession.²³ Bir Keshar was placed in fetters, but when the Queen instructed Abhiman to kill him he refused as the King would not confirm the order. The King then left to fetch Fateh Jang and his relatives, who had not yet arrived, but he did not himself accompany them back to the Kot.

From this point Padma's and Cavenagh's accounts diverge significantly, even though both of them must have relied mainly on what Jang himself had told them. Probably more reliable than either is a third detailed account, written by Dr. Oldfield, surgeon at the British Residency in Kathmandu from 1850 to 1863²⁴

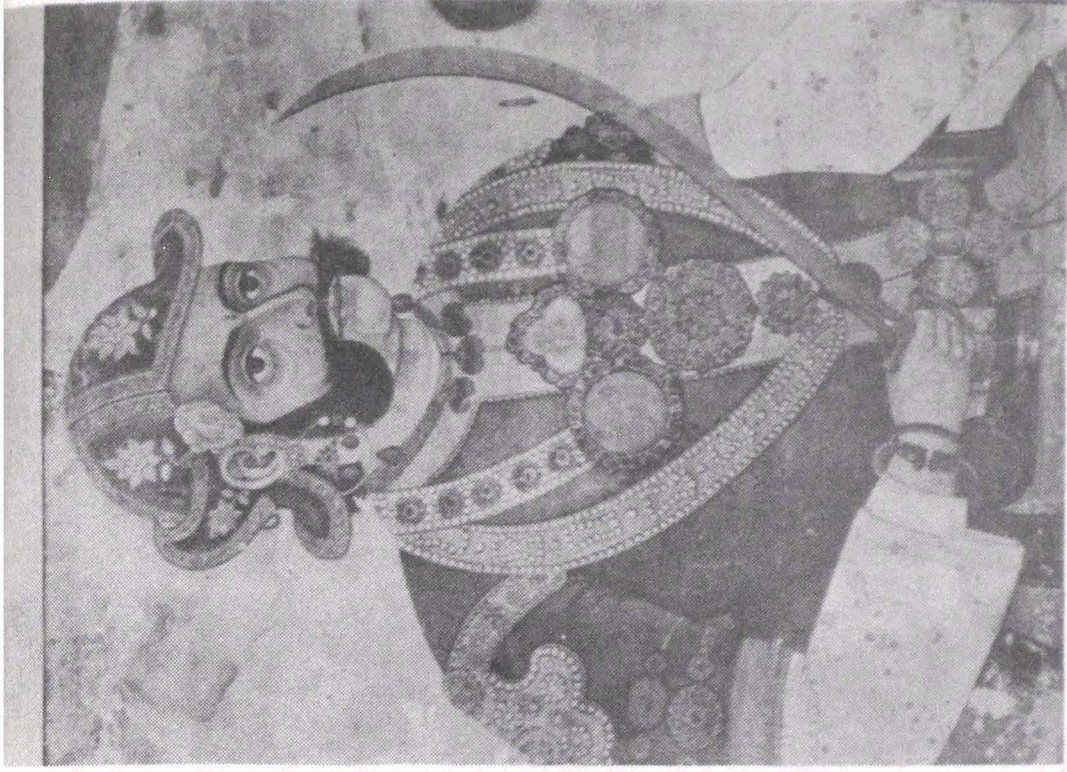
ter) of the British Residency. A translation of Upadhyay's statement was forwarded to Calcutta and a copy made for official records (FSC, 27 March 1847, No. 110). Surendra's conversation with the Resident is recorded in the 'Narrative of Events in Nepal from 1840 to 1851' by the then Assistant Resident, C. H. Nicolette (FPC, 11 November 1853, No. 3, published in Hasrat, *op. cit.* p. 309 & ff.)

23. Bir Keshar was a relation of the minister Dalbhanjan Pande and thus not a member of the 'Kala' Pandes, the hereditary opponents of the Thapa faction with which the Queen had earlier been identified. However both Bir and Fateh had gone into exile when Mathbar was at the height of his powers and then been recalled after his death (H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal*, London, W. H. Allen, 1880, Vol. 1, pp. 343 and 348).

24. Oldfield, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 359–365.



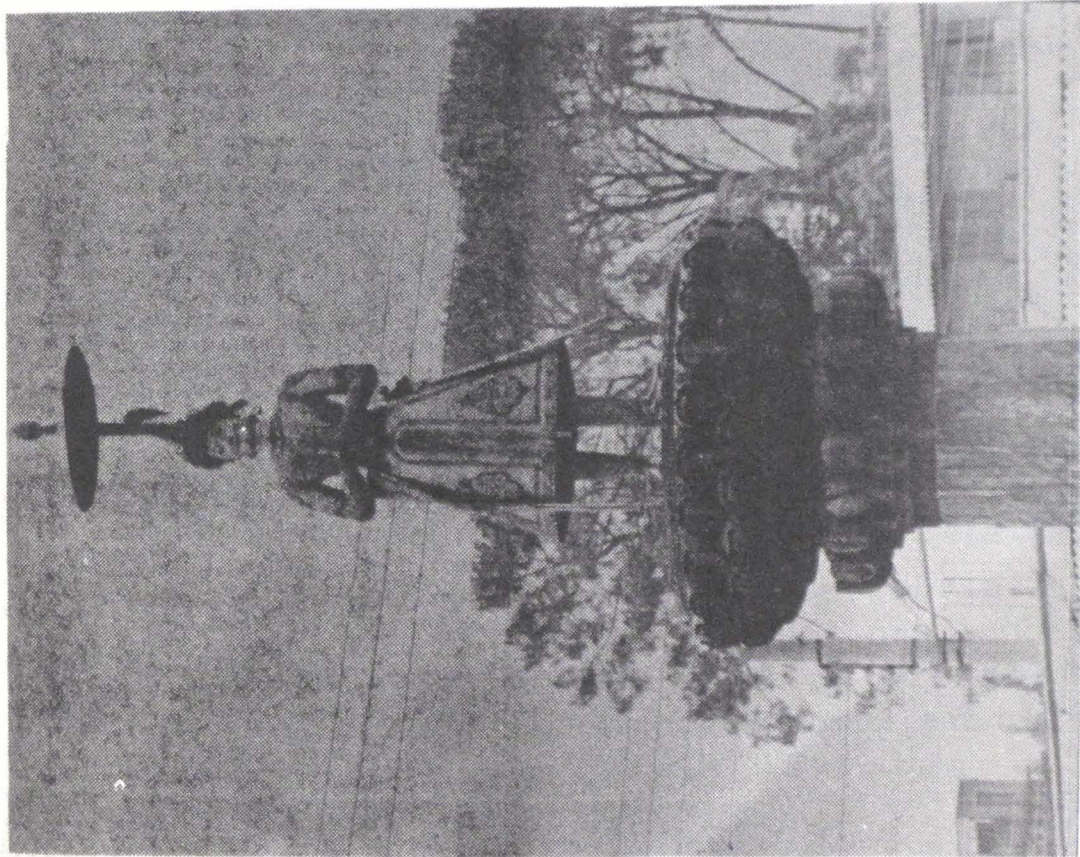
Bhimsen Thapa, mukhtiyar (premier) of Nepal from 1806 to 1837. (Portrait in Kaisar Mahal)



Jang's uncle Mathbar Singh Thapa, Prime Minister of Nepal from 1843 until his assassination by Jang in 1845. (Reproduced by courtesy of the National Museum of Nepal)



Kaji Bal Narsingh Kunwar, father of Jang Bahadur.
(Reproduced by courtesy of Maharajkumar Mussorie
Shamsher J. B. Rana)



Statue of Jang outside the Narayan temple at Tripureshwar. Originally erected on the Tundikhel (parade ground) it was moved to its present site towards the end of Jang's life.



Detail of equestrian statue of Jang on the Tundikhel, erected by his brother Ranoddip Singh in 1884.



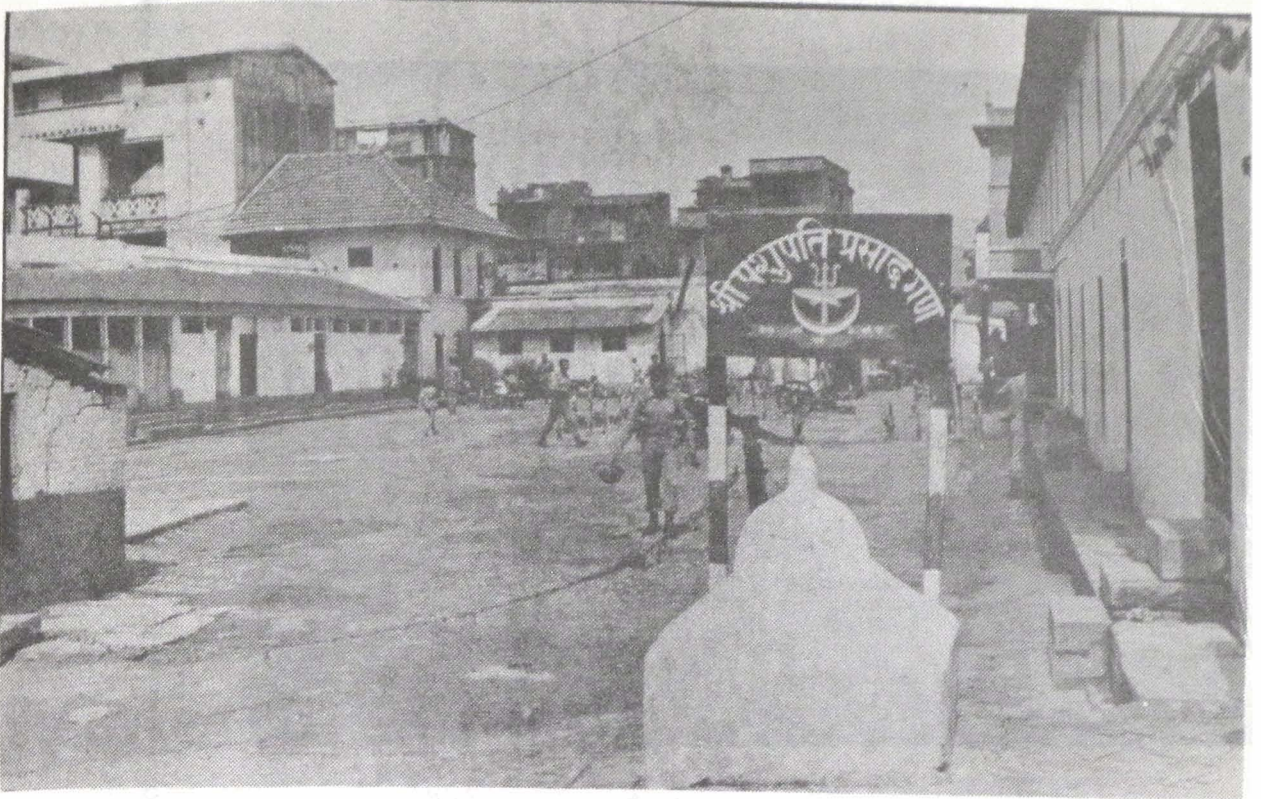
Portrait of Jang painted in 1905 V.S. (1848/9) by Bhajuman, the court artist who later accompanied him to Europe. (Reproduced by courtesy of Maharajkumar Mussorie Shamsheer J. B. Rana)



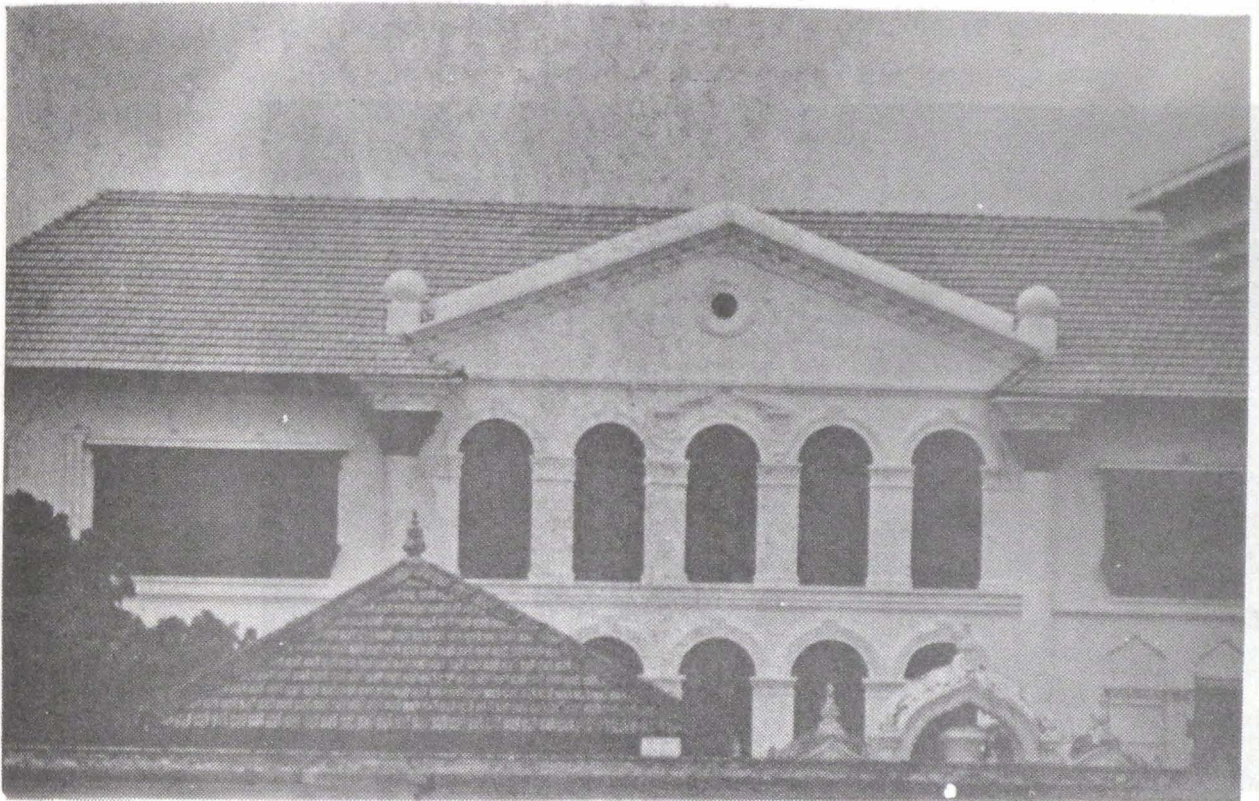
Portrait of Dhir Shamsher, Jang's youngest brother, in Kaiser Mahal.



Portrait of Jagat Shamsheer by Bhajuman. (Reproduced by courtesy of Maharajkumar Mussorie Shamsheer J. B. Rana)



Present-day appearance of the Kot, scene of the massacre which brought Jang to power in 1846.



Bhimsen Thapa's palace (now the National Museum of Nepal) at Chauni on the outskirts of Kathmandu.



Portrait of Jang in Kaisar Mahal, Kathmandu.



Jang as an old man. (Portrait in the Kaisar Mahal)

Oldfield drew mainly on a report submitted to the Indian Government by the Resident in March 1847,²⁵ though he added one or two further, inherently plausible details, presumably learned in conversation from Jang or other Nepali witnesses. The 1847 report did not state its sources but it was a translation from a Nepali original and is unlikely to have depended on Jang's testimony alone. Oldfield's version is likely to be nearer the truth than either Padma's or Cavanagh's and it will be followed here.

On Fateh's arrival at the Kot Jang met him in the courtyard and proposed that they should back the Queen and have both Abhiman Singh and Bir Keshar Pande killed. Fateh refused to take any action against Keshar without a proper trial, and maintained that Abhiman had done nothing wrong. He then went to join Abhiman while Jang rejoined the Queen, who was on the upper storey of the building. Abhiman was presumably informed by Fateh of Jang's proposal, as he ordered his officers to put his troops in the courtyard on alert.²⁶ From one of the upper storey windows Jang saw these troops loading their muskets and he informed the Queen, who immediately descended to the main hall on the ground-floor and demanded that the ministers reveal the name of Gagan's murderer. In her rage she then attempted to kill Bir Keshar herself, but Fateh Jang, Abhiman and Dalbhanjan Pande restrained her. She then started to go back upstairs, and the three followed her to the foot of the wooden steps in a dark passage room at the end of the hall. As they waited for her to go through the trap-door so that they in turn could mount the ladder shots were fired killing Fateh and Dalbhanjan immediately and wounding Abhiman. Oldfield suggests that one of Jang's brothers probably ordered the firing, in the belief that either Jang or they themselves were in imminent danger. This is certainly

25. FSC, 27 March 1847, No. 113.

26. Although presumably not accompanied by all his troops (like Jang he had three regiments under his command) Abhiman had brought a small detachment with him to the Kot.

plausible, and it is also likely that Jang, after his interview in the courtyard with Fateh and before he rejoined the Queen, warned them to be especially vigilant.

Abhiman now tried to get through the hall to join his troops outside, crying out as he did so that Jang's treachery was to blame (the accounts of Padma and Cavenagh make it clear that he was accusing Jang of Gagan's murder as well as of what had just happened). Before he could reach the door he was cut down by the sword of Jang's brother, Krishna Bahadur. Fateh's son, Kadga Bikram, now attacked both Krishna and another brother, Bam Bahadur. He would have killed Bam but was himself shot at the critical moment by Jang, who had rushed down from the upper-floor when he heard shooting.²⁷ Some of Jang's men now burst into the hall, and a general massacre ensued, Jang himself taking a leading part and the Queen shouting encouragement. The courtyard outside, which had been secured by Jang's troops as Abhiman's men fled, was soon filled with bodies even though Jang's brothers saved some of the people in the hall by smuggling them out through a back-door. When he met the British Resident on 16 September Jang himself put the number of chiefs killed at 30, but this figure must have included only the most important victims.

Padma's and Cavenagh's versions of events differ from Oldfield's in many respects, but they are consistent with it in presenting the Kot massacre as a response to changing circumstances after the bharadars had assembled at the Kot, not as a preconceived plot. However suspicion that the real truth may have been different has inevitably been fed by the fact that Jang himself originated conflicting accounts. Two days after the massacre

27. It is plausible that Jang himself should have arrived on the scene at this moment, although the Resident's report does not say who fired at Kadga and implies that Jang remained on the upper floor throughout. Padma and Cavenagh both state that Kadga was killed by Jang's brother Dhir alone.

he told the British Resident that the Queen, accusing all the ministers of complicity in Gagan's murder, had called on the dead general's soldiers to seize them and that in the ensuing confusion the bloodshed began with an attack by Fateh's son, Khadga, on Bam Bahadur.²⁸ In 1856, on the other hand, it was given out that the slaughter had been ordered by King Rajendra in written instructions to Jang.²⁹ Aside from Jang's own explanations there is a version long current in Kathmandu according to which the murder of Gagan Singh was planned by Jang and carried out by his brother, Badri Nar Singh, who, as the lover of Gagan's daughter, would have had no difficulty entering the house.³⁰ However, although there is no way of actually disproving this story, it is most unlikely that Jang, hitherto always a cautious political operator, would have risked precipitating a crisis in this way. Jang's own 1856 claim that all was done by prior orders of the King seems equally improbable, in view of Rajendra's own subsequent actions. The most plausible hypothesis, therefore, remains that Jang was basically reacting to events on the night of 14th September and that the massacre was not pre-planned.³¹

Whatever the real cause of the violence, before it was completely over the Queen had appointed Jang Prime Minister. In the morning he presented himself to the King, who, after sending Fateh to the Kot, had unsuccessfully sought an interview with the acting British Resident and had then returned to the safety of his palace. Rajendra demanded an explanation of the bloodshed

28. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal, op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 363.

29. This version emerged when Jang resigned the premiership in a manoeuvre to increase his real power and was 'spontaneously' begged by both king and bharadars to accept the title of Maharaja (Ramsay's 'Narrative of Events at the Court of Nepal, 1852-1861' in Hasrat, *History of Nepal, op. cit.*, p. 332.)

30. A story handed down in the Rana family itself (Rishikesh Shaha 'Jang Bahadur: the Strongman of Nepal', *Essays on the Practice of Government in Nepal*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1982, pg. 56.)

31. For further discussion of the variant versions see the Appendix.

and Jang replied that all had been done by the authority of the Queen to whom the King himself had granted full powers as Regent. The King then had a furious argument with his wife, but was too frightened to take any counteraction. The troops who had lost their commanders also acquiesced, partly from fear of Jang's own men, who were placed around them with weapons primed when the army was assembled to hear the news, and partly because of the prospect of widespread promotions which the elimination of so many senior officers had created.³² The Queen ordered the expulsion of the families of those who had been killed in the massacre and for eight days while this was carried out Jang's troops remained in position around the royal palace.

The Queen believed that she would now at last be able to get rid of the King's sons by his first wife and to place her own Ranendra on the throne. However although Jang did put Crown Prince Surendra and his brother Upendra under a kind of house arrest, he ignored Lakshmi Devi's repeated requests to have them killed. When at the end of October he finally received a written order from her to carry out the executions, he not only refused to do so but actually threatened her with prosecution if she ever raised the matter again. How far he acted from genuine abhorrence of the coldblooded murder of members of the royal family and how far from a wish to keep the princes as cards to be played in the future is uncertain. In response the Queen secretly appointed Bir Dhoj Basnet Prime Minister and instructed him to get rid of Jang. The plan eventually decided upon was, ironically enough, similar to that which disposed of Mathbar Singh: Bir Dhoj was to go to Jang's house with a summons for him to attend the Queen and when he reached the palace Gagan Singh's son would be waiting with his men to carry out the assassination. The plot

32. This is Cavenagh's explanation (*Rough Notes on the State of Nepaul, op. cit.*, pp. 241-2). Padma (*op. cit.*, pg. 81), less plausibly emphasises the general opinion of Jang as a man who had proved his capacity to rule.

was allegedly betrayed by one of the conspirators, Vijay Raj Pandit, and Jang set off at once with an armed escort towards the Bandarkhal palace. He met Bir Dhoj on route and had Ram Mehar Adhikari, who was later to accompany him to Europe, cut him down. The other conspirators were killed or arrested at the palace, though Gagan's son was able to escape.³³

A meeting of the bharadari was then convened and a sentence of banishment passed on the Queen. Although he had gone along with this decision the, King himself, despite Jang's contrary advice, insisted on accompanying the Queen when she left for Benares on 23 November 1846. He had previously announced his intention to perform a pilgrimage to the sacred city in atonement for all the recent bloodshed, but his actual motive for leaving now may have been different: fear of assassination, the influence which Lakshmi Devi still held over him, or an already partially formed plot for a counterstrike against his new Prime Minister are all possibilities.

Whether or not his mind was already that way inclined, once in India the King did fall in with suggestions from the Queen and some of the bharadars exiled after the Kot Massacre to act against Jang. He delayed his own return, despite the urgings of some of the Prime Minister's friends who had also accompanied him. In May 1847 two soldiers were sent into Nepal with written authorisation from the King to kill Jang. They were arrested and the intended victim himself read out their instructions before the

33. Jain (*Emergence of a New Aristocracy, op. cit.*, pp. 84-5) argues that there was in fact no plot to assassinate Jang but that he himself decided to strike against the Basnets as his principal remaining rivals for power. Whether or not this is so the details as given by Padma (*op. cit.*, p. 86) and Oldfield (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 370) are suspect: Vijay Raj, who is said to have received the rajguruship in return for revealing the conspiracy had in fact been appointed *dharmadhikar* (a post which normally went with that of rajguru) in October the previous year (Official Nepal Diary for 4-20 Oct 1845, IOL, Eur MSS F85, No, 96).

assembled army, challenging anyone who so wished to carry out the King's orders. When the troops proclaimed their loyalty to him he had the bharadari declare Rajendra deposed and Surendra King in his place. Surendra had been nominally acting as Regent from the time his father had entered India. Later in the year Rajendra led an invasion to reclaim his throne but his small force was easily defeated and he himself was brought back to the valley to end his days in comfortable confinement.

Although Surendra now sat upon the throne, real power was concentrated in Jang's hands. Thus was established the regime under which Nepal was to live until 1951, with the premiership held by a member of the Rana family and the Shah dynasty kings in name only. Jang's predominance continued to be resented by other members of the nobility, even though he showed he could be generous to his opponents once he considered they were no longer a threat to him. Cavenagh was, however, probably correct in saying that he was popular with the peasantry and army,³⁴ and his decision to embark on his European journey three years later was a measure of his confidence in the stability of his regime.

Nepal and the British

The significance of Jang's journey can only be fully appreciated against the background of Nepal's previous relations, generally unhappy, with British India. From the time of Prithvi Narayan Shah's unification of Nepal there was an obvious danger of a major collision between the two powers, both of which were

34. Cavenagh, *op. cit.*, p. 54. Although his regime seems to have maintained the overall tax-burden on the farmer at roughly the same (very high) level as prevailed before 1846 (M. C., Regmi, *Thatched Huts and Stucco Palaces*, New Delhi, Vikas, 1978, p. 64) Jang removed individual abuses and punished severely any official or land-holder shown to have extracted more than the legal amount from the peasants. A graphic illustration of the army's attitude is provided by a report in the *Times* of 6 August 1850 (v. chapter 3).

expanding their territories. In his political testament, the *Divya Upadesh* ('divine counsel'), Prithvi Narayan compared the new nation to a 'yam between two stones', i. e. between the British to the south and the Chinese to the north, and advised a policy of friendship with both. He believed that the British would in the end attack, but that Nepal should remain on the defensive and postpone the crisis as long as possible.³⁵ His successors did in fact become involved in one major war with the British but despite this Nepal had some success in using China as a counter-weight against them. With China's eclipse as a major power, however, the country had no alternative but to accept a position within the British sphere of influence and the problem became one of reconciling this status with the greatest possible degree of Nepalese independence. The success of Jang and subsequent Rana prime ministers in finding a satisfactory solution was a major achievement, whatever criticisms may be made of other aspects of their rule.

Initial Nepalese suspicion of the British stemmed not only from apprehension of a possible future threat but also from actual experience. Prithvi Narayan's long blockade of the Kathmandu valley disrupted what had been a flourishing trade between British India and the Newar kingdoms. The British accordingly responded to an appeal for help from Jay Prakash Malla, the last Newar king of Kathmandu, and in 1767 they despatched a force under Captain Kinloch to support him. Owing principally to supply difficulties this did not manage to penetrate into the heart of the country and plans for a second attempt were subsequently abandoned: the East India Company was reluctant to become involved in fighting in the hills unless the defence of its interests on the plains made this absolutely vital. The Gorkhas, however, naturally drew the conclusion that they should have as little to do with the Europeans as possible and on completing the conquest

35. Rishikesh Shaha, *Nepalese Politics, Retrospect and Prospect*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1975, p. 107.

of the Valley they expelled the Catholic missionaries who the Newar rulers had allowed to establish themselves there but who were now suspected of having encouraged British intervention.

The British, on the other hand, were eager to 'open up' Nepal once again as an avenue for trade into Tibet: they had unrealistically high expectations of the country as a valuable potential market in its own right, and as a possible channel of communication with the Chinese government which would bypass the local officials at Canton, the one Chinese port then open to European traders. As has already been explained, the Kathmandu Valley was on a major route for trade across the Himalaya between India and Tibet. Now, however, security considerations, as well as the wish to keep full control of trade in their own hands, led the Nepalese to deny British and Indian merchants access either to this route or to other passes which came under their control as they expanded eastwards and westwards along the Himalayan chain. Throughout Prithvi Narayan's reign and in the years immediately following his death in 1775 attempts by the British to be conciliatory had no effect on this isolationist policy

There was a temporary change in the Nepalese attitude during the regency of Bahadur Shah, who tried to improve relations with the British while pursuing an aggressive policy towards Tibet over terms of trade and the border passes. Nevertheless suspicion of the British amongst many at the Nepalese Court remained so high that he had great difficulty getting the proposal for a treaty of commerce accepted in November 1791,³⁶ even though it was by then obvious that Nepal's invasion of Tibet earlier that year would lead to Chinese retaliation. As the Chinese army approached the Nepalese frontier its commander sought British assistance as did the Nepalese themselves. The embarrassed Governor-General delayed replying as long as possible and eventually wrote to both sides proposing to send his representative to

36. The treaty was actually signed in Patna the following March.

Kathmandu as a mediator.³⁷ By the time the offer was received hostilities had already been concluded on terms which involved the nominal submission of the Nepalese but imposed no hardship on them other than the surrender of their recent Tibetan gains. Bahadur Shah's nephew, King Rana Bahadur, who was now old enough to take a hand in affairs himself, wrote to Calcutta that the sending of an envoy was now no longer necessary. However the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, insisted on Kirkpatrick's being received in Kathmandu. Faced with the evident hostility of the King and realising that the resentment aroused by his presence was weakening the position of the pro-British Bahadur Shah, Kirkpatrick in fact decided to withdraw after only a short stay in the country. The following year (1794) Bahadur Shah fell from power and, as the treaty remained a dead letter, the British were back where they started.

The next opportunity for the East India Company came when Rana Bahadur, having previously abdicated in favour of his infant son and then tried to reassert his authority, was forced by his opponents to leave the country. His arrival in India in 1800 placed the British authorities in a position to attract competitive bids for their support both from Rana Bahadur and from the party in power in Kathmandu. This resulted in the conclusion by the British in 1801 of a treaty with the Kathmandu government providing for the stationing of a permanent British representative, or 'Resident', in the Nepalese capital, with a corresponding Nepalese

37. Despite the strenuous efforts of the British to preserve their neutrality Fu K'ang-an, the Chinese commander, was convinced that they were helping his opponents, apparently because Nepalese troops in East India Company style uniform were thought to be British. This belief contributed to the failure of the Macartney mission to Peking in 1792-3, when Fu K'ang-an was one of the main opponents of concessions to the British. For further details see Mayura Jang Kunwar, 'China and War in the Himalayas' in *English Historical Review* Vol. 77 (1962), pp. 283-9.

official in Calcutta. As had happened in 1793, however, anti-British feeling was aroused rather than dampened by the presence of a representative and the Resident, Captain Knox, withdrew in March 1803. The following year, after the Governor-General had formally abrogated the 1801 Treaty, Rana Bahadur was able to return to Kathmandu and take control of the government as his son's minister.³⁸

Rana Bahadur's assassination in 1806 by his half-brother, Sher Bahadur, did not lead to any improvement in Anglo-Nepalese relations. Sher Bahadur himself was killed on the spot by Jang's father, Bal Narsingh Kunwar, and Bhimsen Thapa, who had become the late King's chief advisor during his exile in India, organised swift vengeance on all suspected of involvement in the plot. Rana's widow, Lalit Tripura Sundari, became Regent for her step-son, Girvana Yuddha, and under her patronage Bhimsen began his long predominance in Nepal. He followed a vigorous expansionist policy and forces under Kaji Amar Singh Thapa³⁹ pushed the country's western boundary to the River Satlaj; they would have pressed on to the ultimate objective of control of the Himalayan chain as far as Kashmir had not Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler of the Panjab, blocked their advance. At this same time the British were consolidating their hold on the plains east of the

38. Leo Rose (*Nepal, Strategy for Survival*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971, pp. 77-9) sees this whole sequence of events as deliberately engineered by Rana Bahadur, his own approaches to the British being intended only to panic his opponents in Kathmandu into sponsoring an unpopular treaty. But Ludwig Stiller's more detailed analysis (*Rise of the House of Gorkha*, New Delhi, Manjusri Publishing House, 1975, pp. 301-20) shows that the ex-king's proposals to the Company were only made when the conclusion of the treaty with Kathmandu was already imminent. It is nonetheless true that Rana Bahadur, or perhaps rather his advisors, played his hand skillfully later on.

39. To be distinguished from Bhimsen's father who had the same name but was of a different family.

Satla, which had been agreed as the boundary between their territory and Ranjit's, and in 1810 they ordered Amar Singh to withdraw from the lowland areas formerly controlled by the hill chieftains the Nepalese had recently conquered. He prudently complied.

Realising that conflict with the British had merely been postponed, Nepal now began a search for allies. The 1812 mission to Peking, bringing the tribute which Nepal had agreed to pay every five years under the 1792 peace agreement with China, appealed for support without success. Approaches to various Indian states and to Burma were equally unfruitful. War broke out in 1814 when the Nepalese refused to accept an ultimatum to withdraw from two disputed areas on the frontier, at Butwal and Syuraj. These lowland areas had been in the possession of a hill Raja whose territory had been incorporated in the expanding Nepalese state. The British maintained, however, that the Raja had held these particular areas only under title from the Nawab of Oudh, who had some years previously ceded to the East India Company the whole tract of land adjoining the Nepalese frontier in this region. A commission consisting of one Nepalese and one British officer had been set up to investigate the issue. Although the merits of the case were finely balanced, the reasoning behind the Nepalese claim at Syuraj in particular being similar to that which the British themselves were employing elsewhere along the frontier, the British Commissioner reported unilaterally to Calcutta that the British were entirely in the right.

The British decision to fight was of course motivated by more fundamental considerations than the possession of a few villages along the frontier. The question of Tibetan trade did not loom so large now in Company thinking as it had done two decades previously, but Nepal's territorial expansion and consequent increase in military strength were viewed as a potential threat, especially in the light of her common border with Ranjit Singh's kingdom and as the Marathas in central India were still independent. Nepal had to be made to acknowledge, and to be seen by

the other native states to acknowledge, that the Company was undisputed master on the plains. The British might, indeed, have forced the issue earlier but the war in Europe was a restraining factor. After Napoleon's abdication in April 1814 the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, was free to pursue a vigorous policy in line with his instincts. The Nepalese were not all agreed on the wisdom of taking up his challenge. Kaji Amar Singh Thapa and some other leaders wished to give ground. In successfully arguing for resistance Bhimsen Thapa did not underestimate the dangers but felt that compliance would mean accepting a subordinate status vis-a-vis the Company, with the danger of future British claims on other parts of the Tarai, which then as now was economically vital to Nepal.⁴⁰

Although this was the first war the British had fought in India in which their forces outnumbered those of their opponents, the Nepalese nonetheless managed to inflict a number of initial reverses on them, the most spectacular involving the death of Major-General Gillespie in an abortive attack on the fort of Kalunga above Dehra Dun. However Sir David Ochterloney eventually succeeded in out-manoeuvring Amar Singh Thapa, even though the latter's initial opposition to the war had in no way detracted from the courage and skill with which he fought the campaign. While the fighting was still continuing Ochterloney had

40. Henry Prinsep (*History of the Political and Military Transactions in India During the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings, 1813-1823*, London, Kingsbury, Parbury and Allen, 1825, pp. 79-80) claims that Kaji Amar Singh Thapa charged Bhimsen with urging war because of a family financial interest in the disputed lands, but the documents he cites (reprinted as Appendices A and B to his book) are not in fact explicit on this point. Prinsep, who himself appears to endorse the alleged accusation, seems to have been influenced simply by the fact that Bhimsen's father had since 1805 been governor of Palpa and thus responsible for this section of the border (see Surya Bikram Gyawali, *Amar Singh Thapa* (Hindi), Darjeeling, Ratnakar Press, 1951, p. 80.).

organised a corps of Nepali deserters and prisoners of war to fight alongside his British and Indian troops (it must be remembered that many of those who changed sides in this way were from districts only recently brought under Nepalese rule and that they therefore did not have the same strong sense of national identity as their former senior officers.) Subsequently the agreement of May 1815, under which Amar Singh evacuated the hills west of the River Kali, allowed the remainder of the Nepalese forces, except his personal escort, to choose whether to enlist with the British. Such was the origin of the Gurkha Rifles.⁴¹

Early in 1816 a British advance to within thirty miles of Kathmandu put an end to the war on terms which had been agreed the previous December but which the Nepalese government, in the unrealistic hope that Chinese help might yet materialise, had refused to ratify. The Nepalese escaped harsher treatment because Ochterloney was anxious to get his men out of the hills before the monsoon brought supply difficulties, and also because he was aware both of the imminence of trouble from the Marathas and of criticism in London of the financial burden the war had caused. The peace settlement fixed Nepal's western and eastern boundaries as they remain today, since she had to withdraw from her conquests in Sikkim and the Darjeeling area as well as renouncing any claim to the country between the Satlaj and the Kali already evacuated by Amar Singh Thapa. To the south, in addition to the small areas specifically in dispute before the war, she had to surrender a section of the Tarai along the western section of the border, this territory being transferred

41. For this (and a detailed account of the whole war) see John Pemble, *The Invasion of Nepal*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971.

42. The treaty as ratified provided for the cession of most of the remainder of the Tarai and the payment of pensions by the British government to bharadars whose lands were thereby lost. Nepalese objections to these arrangements were accepted by the British later in 1816 and the pensions effectively commuted for the return of all the lowlands except the section west of the River Rapti.

by the British to the neighbouring state of Oudh in return for financial assistance given during the conflict.⁴² The treaty also provided for the stationing of a British Resident in Kathmandu and, after an unsuccessful attempt to get this provision annulled through Chinese diplomatic pressure, the Nepalese had to resign themselves to the presence in their midst of the Resident himself, his Assistant and the Residency Surgeon, together with their office staff and escort of Indian troops.

For almost twenty years after the end of the war the monopoly of power by Bhimsen Thapa and his adherents gave the British no scope to influence Nepalese political developments. Bhimsen himself was secure while he had the backing of Queen Lalit Tripura Sundari, who had been Regent for her son Girbna Yuddha until his death in 1816, only shortly after coming of age, and then for her grandson, Rajendra. In 1832, however, the old Queen died and the following year Brian Hodgson, who had been in Kathmandu in a subordinate capacity since 1821, was appointed Resident. Although Bhimsen Thapa had been scrupulous in observing Nepal's treaty obligations towards the British, Hodgson viewed him with suspicion because under his leadership Nepalese life had remained highly militarised and the army was considerably larger than on the eve of the 1814-16 war. In addition Bhimsen used his position to prevent the Resident having direct access to the King or to other bharadars, and Hodgson believed he was continually presenting the monarch with a biased picture of the British and their intentions. As a result when after 1832 Bhimsen tried to move closer to the British in order to counterbalance the growing challenge to his influence, Hodgson was unwilling to support him. He was unsympathetic when in 1835 Bhimsen's nephew, Mathbar Singh, set off to Calcutta to try to negotiate the return of some of the territory lost in 1816, and he blocked Mathbar's plan to travel on to Britain as an official ambassador — the fulfilment of that project was to fall to his nephew, Jang Bahadur. The rebuff inevi-

tably dented Bhimsen's reputation in Nepal as a man who could 'handle' the British. His position continued to weaken and his fall from power came in 1837.

Unknown to Hodgson, however, King Rajendra, far from being more amenable than Bhimsen, had come to regard his Minister as too pro-British, and the most prominent of Bhimsen's opponents, Ranjang Pande, who had secured the backing of Rajendra's senior Rani, was seeking to restore his own family to power by holding out to the King the prospect of avenging Nepal's 1816 defeat. Ranjang's father, Damodar Pande, who had headed the administration in Kathmandu while Ran Bahadur was in exile in Benares, had been executed when the ex-King and Bhimsen Thapa returned to Nepal in 1804. The memory of his father's fate had made Ranjang a bitter enemy of the Thapas but no friend of the British, with whom Damodar had negotiated the 1801 treaty.

With Bhimsen dismissed from office Nepal began in earnest an attempt to build an anti-British coalition among other independent native states.⁴³ During 1838 tension increased to the point that the Governor-General, Lord Auckland, had to reinforce the main garrisons south of the border and earmark sixteen thousand troops for the assembly of a field-force, should this prove nece-

43. Jain (*Emergence of a New Aristocracy*, op. cit.) rejects the usual view of Nepalese foreign policy in 1838-40 and argues that there was never any serious hostile intention towards British India. He believes that Hodgson misinterpreted a combination of innocent diplomatic missions and posturings designed solely for internal political purposes, as well as greatly exaggerating the threat posed by the Nepalese army. That there was at times an element of posturing is certainly true, but evidence such as Rajendra's February 1840 letter to Peking offering to attack the British shows that Nepal was actually prepared for war if only she could find allies (v. C. C. Imbault-Huart, 'Un Episode des Relations Diplomatiques de la China avec le Népal en 1842', *Revue d'Extreme Orient*, III (1887), pp. 1-23, and Leo Rose, *Nepal, Strategy for Survival*, op. cit., p. 100).

ssary. However he resisted pressure from some of his advisors for a pre-emptive move against Nepal, believing it would be unwise to bring matters to a head while preparations were under way to send a fifteen thousand man expeditionary force to restore Shah Shoja to the throne of Afghanistan. The following year brought news of British difficulties on several fronts: in Afghanistan the tribesmen were resisting the imposition of an unpopular ruler by a foreign army, in Burma a new king expelled the British Resident, while in Canton there was a dispute over the Chinese government's ban on the importation of opium. Among the factors restraining the Nepalese government from taking full advantage of this situation were the fear that Mathbar Singh, who had been in India since 1838, might use a crisis to restore the Thapas to power with British support, and the growing resentment inside Nepal against the high-handed behaviour of the Senior Queen and Ranjang Pande. The arrest and trial of Bhimsen Thapa for the poisoning of Rajendra's father Girvana, in 1816 and Bhimsen's subsequent suicide in prison caused such general revulsion that Hodgson was able to extract a written undertaking from the government to cease its diplomatic intrigues.⁴⁴

Matters came to a head the following year (1840), when news of the outbreak of war between Britain and China the pre-

44. The accusation against Bhimsen was a long-standing one. In his secret report to Calcutta on taking full charge of the Residency in 1833 (quoted in B. D. Sanwal, *Nepal and the East India Company*, New York, Asia Publishing House, 1965, p. 315 & ff.) Hodgson stated that Bhimsen was generally regarded as responsible for the King's death and that consequently Rajendra refused to be treated by the *raj vaidya* (court physician), who was supposed to have administered the poison to Girvana on the minister's instructions. Bhimsen had an obvious motive for the crime, as Girvana's death allowed Lalit Tripura Sundari to continue as Regent and thus ensured his own continued predominance. However the 'evidence' against him was almost certainly fabricated by his political opponents and Girvana's death a natural one from smallpox.

vious November reached Kathmandu and Ranjang Pande, who had previously had to share power with Pushkar Shah, was confirmed as sole premier. In April Nepalese irregulars seized control of several villages on the Indian side of the border. Although a British ultimatum soon secured the evacuation of this territory, Lord Auckland actively considered outright annexation of Nepal. However the Afghan situation still dictated caution and it was decided instead to pressurise the King into dismissing Ranjang. This Hodgson achieved in November, greatly helped by the internal dissatisfaction already referred to above. By the beginning of 1841, after a British 'observation force' had been moved up to the frontier, relations were improving. Hodgson was consulted on the detailed composition of a new Nepalese 'cabinet', ninety-four leading bharadars signed a personal guarantee of Nepal's future friendship with the British, and Rajendra's own communications expressed similar sentiments. Later in the year the death of the Senior Queen, Samrajya Lakshmi, removed a strong proponent of an anti-British policy. The apparent thaw did not prevent Rajendra in 1842 from bypassing premier Fateh Jang to send another offer of help to Peking (an earlier one having already been rebuffed by the Chinese), but the Opium War was over by the time the envoy reached his destination. News the same year of the Afghanistan disaster—the British had had to evacuate Kabul and only one member of the garrison survived the retreat—did not prompt any Nepalese move, both because of the acute internal crisis already described in the section on Jang Bahadur's early career (pp. 77–8 above) and because the British had avenged their defeat within a few months.

Thereafter the course of Anglo-Nepalese relations ran relatively smoothly. The British agreed to the return of Mathbar Singh to Nepal, believing he could be relied on to pursue a friendly policy. However despite Mathbar's frequent appeals for British assistance to strengthen his own political position, the new Resident, Henry Lawrence, adhered scrupulously to the Indian

government's new policy of non-intervention. Mathbar's assassination in 1845 did not lead to any rupture. The outbreak of the 1st. Anglo-Sikh War later the same year natural caused great anxiety in Kathmandu and an appeal for help was sent to Peking, with as little result as on previous occasions. Many members of the bharadari, including Premier Fateh Jang, allegedly wished to help the Sikhs, but this was strongly opposed by Gagan Singh and Jang Bahadur, who secured the King and Queen's backing.⁴⁵ When the second Sikh War began in 1848 Jang Bahadur, now in sole charge, offered the British military assistance but this was declined, as similar offers from previous Nepalese governments had been in the past. In 1849 when Ranjit Singh's widow, who had been imprisoned after the British annexation of the Panjab, escaped and fled into Nepal, Jang did not offer to extradite her but promised to ensure she refrained from political activity. The same year Jang revived Mathbar Singh's proposal for a visit to Britain and this was agreed to by the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, and by the government in London.

Jang's Mission

In the official letter seeking permission for the visit the Nepalese government stated that its purpose, apart from conveying presents and a complimentary letter from King Surendra to Queen Victoria, was 'to see and bring back intelligence respecting the greatness and prosperity of Britain and its capital, the perfection to which social conditions have been raised and the extent to which Art and Science have been made available to the comforts of life.'⁴⁶

45 Pudma Rana, *op. cit.*, p. 64. Information received at the time by the British Residency was merely that 'many ministers' and also Prince Surendra were for war, and the King and Queen for peace (FSC, 28 Feb 1846, Nos. 21 and 24). Padma's naming of Fateh Jang may reflect an attempt by Jang to blacken his predecessor's reputation with the British. Fateh, who had headed the 'British ministry' which replaced Ranjang Pande in 1840, was an unlikely advocate of the Sikh cause.

46. FSC, 27 October 1849, No. 14.

This is similar to the explanation given by the *Belait Yatra* in a passage which corresponds closely to one in Padma's book and therefore probably derives from Jang's own diary.⁴⁷ Ostensibly, therefore, the visit was to be a fact-finding exercise such as Dr James Login, surgeon at the Residency from 1856 to 1849, had privately urged Jang to undertake⁴⁸

In addition to straightforward curiosity, however, two other basic considerations must have been important. First, as the *Times* pointed out in an 1850 editorial, it made sound diplomatic sense for Nepal to make a show of her goodwill towards Britain in the aftermath of the annexation of the Panjab.⁴⁹ Secondly, and probably more importantly, Jang surely calculated that his own position in Nepal would be further strengthened if he had been personally received by the British Queen and by leading members of the British governing elite. The history of the past sixty years, and in particular of Brian Hodgson's time in Kathmandu, amply demonstrated the close connection between internal Nepalese politics and Anglo-Nepalese relations and, although Hodgson had been dismissed by a new Governor-General precisely because it was wished to revert to a policy of non-interference, no Nepali will have doubted that interference could occur again. This belief was probably strengthened because Mathbar Singh, though failing in fact to enlist Henry Lawrence's support, nevertheless created the impression that he enjoyed a 'special relationship'

47. See the opening of the *Belait-Yatra* and Padma Rana, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

48. Lady Login, *Sir John Login and Duleep Singh*, London, W. H. Allen, 1890, pp. 95 and 456. While not as crucial as his sister-in-law claims, Dr. Login's influence did have some effect on Jang. Their friendship may have begun in September 1846 when Login treated two of his brothers, who had been injured in the Kot incident (FSC, 31 Oct. 1846, No. 160.) They would also have been drawn together by Jang's keen interest in surgery and anatomy, amply attested in Oldfield's memoirs.

49. *Times*, 21 June 1850.

with the British, claiming for instance that it was his own influence with the Governor-General which had secured Lawrence's appointment as Resident in 1843.⁵⁰ Earlier Nepalese history, of course, demonstrated that too close an identification with British interests had sometimes proved a handicap rather than an advantage but by 1850 the East India Company's position was so strong that there probably seemed to Jang to be no danger of this happening in his case. He will not have expected to obtain complete British commitment to his personal position in Nepal but he might reasonably anticipate that his visit would at the very least encourage the British to keep firm control over the activities of his many opponents in exile in India.

In addition to promoting broad national and personal interests Jang had three concrete proposals to lay before the authorities in London. He wanted in the first place to extend the existing extradition arrangements between Nepal and British India to cover civil offenders. It is clear from correspondence between the British Resident in Kathmandu and the government of India following Jang's return that he was primarily concerned with the problem of revenue collectors in the Tarai who absconded across the border with their takings from the peasantry. This was of particular concern to Jang as he was trying to increase revenue by tightening control over the fiscal machinery.⁵¹ Although this is not explicitly stated in our sources, Jang may also have wanted to raise the question of extradition in criminal offences, since Nepal had for some time been unhappy that the British government extradited only for 'heinous' crimes and then often only after lengthy delays

50. See *Nepal Desko Itihas* ('History of Nepal'— part of an anonymous account compiled a few years after Jang's death). *Ancient Nepal*, No. 25 (Oct. 1973), p. 7.

51. Jain, *Emergence of a New Aristocracy*, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-3. Jain is wrong, however, to portray this single issue as the real reason for the embassy.

Jang's second request was for permission to employ British engineers in Nepal. Under the Treaty of Sagauli, which had ended the 1814-16 war, the Nepal government could not employ subjects of any European or American state without the consent of the British authorities. His written request stated that the technicians were needed for irrigation works but in discussion it became clear he was thinking also of military engineers. The third and final request was for the right to correspond directly with London in case he was dissatisfied with the Resident in Kathmandu.

Aside from the round of hospitality and public appearances, on which naturally the *Belait-Yatra* and the newspaper reports concentrate, the visit did not go quite as well as Jang had hoped.⁵² He had drawn up his proposals in the form of a letter to Sir John Hobhouse, who as President of the Board of Control was the cabinet minister responsible for Indian affairs. However, while the Board of Control exercised overall supervision of the East India Company, day-to-day management was in the hands of the Court of Directors, who were still theoretically responsible to the Company's shareholders. Captain Cavenagh told Jang he must discuss his requests first with the Chairman of the Court of Directors, Captain Shepherd, and that his third demand (for the right to bypass the Resident) would in any case be out of the question. Jang raised the other two with Shepherd on June 29th., just over a month after his arrival in the country. He was told that they could not be considered unless they were submitted first to the Governor-General in Calcutta, who would forward them to London with the necessary background information. Jang should not have been too surprised at this tactic: Mathbar Singh had been told in Calcutta in 1836 that he must present *his* requests to the Resident in Kathmandu, not direct to the Governor-

52. Seven years after Jang's death Orfeur Cavenagh published his 'behind the scenes' account in *Reminiscences of an Indian Official*, London, W.H. Allen, 1884, pp. 108 to 181, on which the following paragraphs are based.

General. However as Jang was himself used to taking detailed decisions on all aspects of Nepalese policy he was puzzled by the need to submit requests first to less senior officials. He later asked Orfeur Cavenagh about this and received the reply that 'the road was straight, though there were several doors that required to be passed through.' In fact Shepherd's reply was not simply the result of bureaucratic inflexibility, but rather of the political sensitivity of Jang's demands, since the British were reluctant to surrender suspected offenders to a country whose penal code they considered inhumane, while they were also, of course, adverse to any increase in Nepal's military efficiency. After Jang's return home negotiations on extradition were continued and resulted in the treaty of 1855. Despite Dalhousie's recommendation the Court of Directors did not allow revenue embezzlement to be included within its scope and the omission was only finally rectified in the supplementary treaty of 1866.⁵³

Once he had been rebuffed by Shepherd Jang did not try to argue but immediately asked to be given a reply to his complimentary letter from King Surendra to Queen Victoria and for permission to leave at the end of July. He also requested assistance with the return trip as the P. & O. Line's bill for the outward voyage had been very high.⁵⁴ The British made some difficulties over this, at first undertaking only to provide a passage from Suez onwards, but after Jang had suggested he could ask the French for a steamer from Marseilles it was arranged that a Royal Navy ship should take him through the Mediterranean. A date in August was fixed for his departure and Jang would, if left to himself, have remained in London for the rest of that time. However

53. Ramakant, *Indo-Nepalese Relations 1816-1877*, Delhi, S. Chand & Co., 1968, pp. 261-8 and 336-7.

54. Jang and his party provided their own food on board, but were still charged 62,000 rupees (£5,200), a sum which was condemned as excessive in the Indian press (*The Friend of India*, 21 March 1850).

Cavenagh was worried that if he left Britain having experienced nothing but London social life and having been the subject of so much adulation, he would take away an inadequate impression of British power and an exaggerated one of his own importance. He therefore talked Jang into undertaking a tour of the country, the objective being to display Britain's military and industrial strength. Jang certainly enjoyed the ensuing trips to Plymouth, Birmingham and Edinburgh, but travelling outside London also involved inconveniences, in particular making it more difficult to ensure that catering arrangements met the requirements of religion.

Jang's stay in France at the start of his homeward journey brought some new complications. While on British territory it had been natural that all the arrangements for him and his party should be made by the British authorities, and in particular by Cavenagh (though one suspects that even in Britain the school-masterly manner in which the Captain sometimes treated the Nepalese was a little irksome.) In France, however, it was important for Jang to counteract the prevailing impression that Nepal was some kind of British tributary. For this reason he was reluctant to call on the British ambassador in Paris, Lord Normanby, before the latter called on him. He was eventually persuaded by Normanby's assistant and Cavenagh that diplomatic etiquette required the British ambassador to receive the first visit, even though Jang was both ambassador and Prime Minister of an independent state. All ended happily in this particular case as Normanby himself subsequently offered to make the first visit after all, and Jang, not to be outdone in courtesy, insisted on abiding by the arrangement already made. There was a less satisfactory outcome when Jang tried to deal directly with the French by sending Macleod, his British secretary, to ask the Foreign Office if they could arrange rail transport to Marseilles. The French promptly reported this to Cavenagh, who remonstrated with Jang for acting behind his back. When Cavenagh himself

went to the Foreign Office, accompanied by Jang's brother, Dhir Shamsher, they were told that the French government was willing to help but expected the request to come through the British embassy. This was reported back to Jang, who then agreed to let Cavenagh make the arrangement as before. There was almost certainly more to this incident than Cavenagh chose to relate and the bad blood that seems to have existed between Macleod and Cavenagh probably contributed to the trouble. It is clear, however, that whatever Nepal's theoretical status in international law the French authorities regarded Jang as under British tutelage during his stay on their territory.

There were also other difficulties, which did not involve the issue of Nepalese sovereignty but which were irksome nonetheless. Jang had expected a British manufacturer to forward some rockets (presumably intended for military signalling) for which he had already paid, but the man refused to do so, claiming he was himself owed money for confidential design information he had given to one of the Nepalese officers. Jang complained indignantly to Cavenagh, threatening that Nepal would refuse extradition in fraud cases unless he was given either his rockets or a refund. Cavenagh thought Jang had been treated unfairly but he was unwilling to assist as the original transaction had been made without his knowledge. He merely attempted to explain the intricacies of British patent law and warned Jang that he must abide by the treaty provisions on extradition.⁵⁵ Another problem arose when a London painter began to sue in a French court for payment for a portrait he had done of Jang's two brothers. The Nepalese had refused to pay him because they were dissatisfied with the result, and their diplomatic immunity had protected

55. In fact there was no formal extradition treaty at this time. Understandings had been reached in 1835 for the mutual surrender of suspected dacoits (armed bandits) and in 1837 for *thugee* murders, but neither side was under any obligation to extradite in fraud cases (Ramakant, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-9).

them from legal action while they were in London. Embarrassment was avoided when the French authorities got the case stopped. Finally there were arguments with the French themselves: although Cavenagh was perfectly satisfied with the co-operation received from government officials, he was convinced that virtually every inn-keeper and railway official was out to cheat them, and Jang himself actually came to blows with one tradesman on the day they left Paris.⁵⁶

However even when all the problems encountered have been taken into consideration there can be no doubt that Jang's European journey was a great success. The extent to which he and his companions caught the popular imagination is amply illustrated in the following pages. That the impression of British power which he himself formed was precisely the one which his hosts were hoping to give was shown seven years later when he assisted them in the suppression of the Indian Mutiny. Early in 1858 when Jang led a Gorkha contingent to join the forces of Sir Colin Campbell in the assault on the rebel stronghold of Lucknow he told the general that had it not been for his visit to Britain he would now be fighting against the British not alongside them.⁵⁷ This statement was perhaps an exaggeration on Jang's part since even before 1850 he probably had a sufficiently realistic view of British power to deter him from risking openly opposing it. Nevertheless Jang would surely at least have stayed neutral if he had not had his own first-hand experience of Europe to set against the opposition of his advisers to assisting the British. The policy of intervention which that experience led him to had no fundamental

56. *La Presse*, 2 October 1850 (reprinted in chapter 3)

57. Diary of Sir Frederick Traills-Burroughs, quoted in Christopher Hibbert, *The Great Mutiny-India 1857*, Penguin Books, London, 1980, p. 428. Both Jang himself and one of his brothers had made similar statements to the Resident in Kathmandu (Major Ramsay to Sir John Login, 28 Nov. 1860, quoted in Lena Login, *op. cit.*, pp. 456-7).

effect on the final outcome in India, since the failure of the rebellion to spread beyond certain limited areas and the availability of reinforcements from Europe made a British victory inevitable in any case. Jang's action did, however, secure for Nepal the return of the far-western Tarai given up in 1816 and, even more importantly, it helped ensure continued British tolerance of Nepalese independence.

The Perspective of the *Belait-Yatra*

The sketch of the background to the journey given in the foregoing paragraphs has inevitably depended largely on European sources. In the *Belait-Yatra* itself, on the other hand, we have a picture of the episode as it appeared to one of Jang's Nepalese travelling companions. Inevitably many features of this picture will seem strange to the modern reader. An attempt has been made to explain specific points in the footnotes to the text, but it will perhaps be helpful to make some more general observations here.

The narrative's most striking characteristic is the uncritical admiration with which the author viewed virtually every aspect of the host society. His attitude is not too surprising given the contrast between his own society and the industrialised one he was encountering for the first time. Sixty years later when another Nepali, Subedar-Major Shersingh Rana, wrote an account of London, the attitude remained much the same, even though Shersingh, as a British Gorkha officer, was much more familiar with European ways before he left the subcontinent than was the author of the *Belait-Yatra*.⁵⁸ The earlier writer's enthusiasm nonetheless makes the greater impression when it is remembered that, unlike the Subedar-Major, whose book was published at

58. Shersingh Rana, *Mero Landan Rajtilak Yatra*, ('My Coronation Visit to London'), Benares, 1913. The author was one of his regiment's representatives in King George V's coronation parade. (Some extracts are reprinted below in the Appendix)

Benares in 1913, he cannot have anticipated that the British themselves would read his work. The author's sentiments may well be entirely sincere, though if his account was written and circulated partly as propaganda, in justification of Jang's close political association with the 'Firingis', a critical approach would have been automatically ruled out.

Despite all this it is still a little surprising given the reputation of Victorian London that there should be so much emphasis on the city's cleanliness. The explanation is partly to be found in the author's low standard of comparison, Kathmandu being notoriously unsanitary. But also, as is the way with official guests in most countries and in most periods, the Nepalese party's exposure to their surroundings was selective, their time being spent mostly in the fashionable areas of the capital. They will not have visited the London 'rookeries', or slum tenements, where could be seen conditions of which even many Londoners had not been fully aware until outbreaks of cholera in recent years had focused attention on them. When a report on the sanitary state of some of the worst areas had appeared in 1838 a member of the government, Lord Normanby, declared it must be exaggerated, but on being taken on a tour of the slums by the report's author he found the reality even worse than the report had suggested.⁵⁹ It was the same Lord Normanby who, as British ambassador to France, met Jang in Paris, but it can be safely assumed that his 1838 experience was not among the topics he chose to discuss.

Although the authors' enthusiasm for what he saw can thus

59. Lord Normanby's guide was Dr. Southwood Smith, who had produced his report on the Bethnal Green and Whitechapel districts for the Poor Law Commissioners (the central body supervising the local Boards of Guardians who administered the work-houses described in the *Belait-Yatra*.) For the background see chapter 7 of Sheppard, V.F., *London 1808-1870: The Infernal Wen*, London, Secker and Warburg, 1971.

largely be explained by his own background and experiences, in the case of Britain at least there is an interesting similarity between his attitude and the pride and self-confidence frequently expressed by many of the natives. The tone was prevalent in much of the journalism of the period, as for example in the *Illustrated London News* exulting in 1848, 'We are a rich, a powerful, an intelligent and a religious people. . . our spirit rules the world.'⁶⁰ It was to this sentiment that the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, successfully appealed in July 1850 during a Commons debate of which Jang's brothers had witnessed an earlier stage:

'We have shown that liberty is compatible with order: that individual freedom is reconcilable with obedience to the law. We have shown the example of a nation in which every class of society accepts with cheerfulness the lot which Providence has assigned to it; while at the same time every individual of each class is constantly striving to raise himself in the social scale— not by injustice and wrong, not by violence and illegality— but by persevering good conduct, and by the steady and energetic exertion of the moral and intellectual faculties with which his creator has endowed him. . .'⁶¹

The message was one which the author of the *Belait-Yatra* unconsciously echoed.

The description of British institutions, a counterweight to the lengthy British accounts of Nepal produced by Kirkpatrick, Hamilton, Hodgson and others, is inevitably distorted by the over-reverential attitude adopted and also by a good deal of simple misunderstanding. It does, however, show a clear grasp of some important points, particularly in the emphasis placed on the supremacy of Parliament and on the strictly limited role of

60. *Illustrated London News*, 22 July 1848.

61. Quoted by Jasper Ridley, *Life of Lord Palmerston*, London, Constable, 1970, pp. 523–4.

the monarch. Also, what at first sight appears very eccentric may, on examination, prove after all to have some basis in reality. The presentation of Parliament, for instance, as a religious institution may not be simply the transfer of ideas from the author's own culture, but could derive ultimately from what the members of the embassy were told about the position of the Church of England in the constitution. It has to be remembered that this special position was of much greater practical importance in 1850 than it is now, after over a century of steady secularisation; one good illustration of this, which occurred while the Nepalese were in the country, was the refusal of the House of Commons to allow Baron Rothschild to take his seat as an M. P. for the City of London because he could not, as a Jew, take an oath of allegiance including the words 'on my faith as a Christian.'

At the same time the author does fail to grasp many important features of the British political system and this fact can perhaps best be illustrated by considering in detail the background to the debate in progress when Jang's brothers, perhaps accompanied by the author of the *Belait-Yatra*, visited the Commons. Discussion ranged over Palmerston's entire record as Foreign Secretary, but the immediate issue was his recent use of the Royal Navy to blockade the Greek ports in support of claims for compensation for several British citizens, the principal one being that of the Gibraltar Jewish financier Don Pacifico, whose house in Athens had been burned down in anti-Semitic rioting.⁶² Palmerston's action had aroused great indignation among the other European powers, in particular Russia and France, and it was also felt to be unjustified by much upperclass opinion in Britain and by Queen Victoria herself. He had bowed to this pressure in

62. Ships which Jang's party saw at Gibraltar had just returned from taking part in the blockade. Cavenagh records that Jang was impressed by them but does not say whether he was made aware of the ships' recent employment (*Reminiscences, op. cit.*, p. 116)

February and suspended the blockade to allow the French ambassadors in London and Athens to act as mediators in the dispute. Eventually in April he agreed in London to terms which fell well short of his original demands, but he then deliberately delayed sending official notification of this to Athens. This delay enabled the British ambassador there, whose own negotiations with the Greeks had broken down, to reimpose the blockade and obtain a settlement on terms more favourable to Britain. Palmerston at first insisted that the Athens agreement, rather than his own London one, should stand. The outraged French withdrew their ambassador from London and there was even talk of war in some quarters. In mid-June the issue was debated in the House of Lords and the government was defeated—a serious matter in 1850 when the House of Lords' position relative to the Commons was stronger than it is today. Two days later Palmerston announced British agreement to revised terms, which, on the central issue of Don Pacifico's claims, combined the least favourable features of the London and Athens agreements. In Paris the French Foreign Minister boasted of a triumph over his British counterpart, and in London Palmerston offered to resign. However the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, despite earlier reservations about his Foreign Minister's policy, decided instead to back him and to appeal to the House of Commons for a vote of confidence.

In his own speech in the debate, from which an extract has already been quoted, Palmerston declared that the real issue was

'whether, as the Roman in days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say "Civis Romanus sum"; so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong.'⁶³

63. Ridley, *Life of Lord Palmerston*, *op. cit.*, pg. 524.

His rhetoric carried the day and the debate ended with a comfortable majority for the government and Palmerston himself a national hero. The victory he had won was one for the House of Commons over the House of Lords, yet the author of the *Belait-Yatra* does not distinguish between the two chambers (in fairness it should be added that foreigners were not helped in grasping the distinction by anomalies such as the one which allowed Lord Palmerston to be a member of the House of Commons because he was a peer of Ireland rather than of the United Kingdom). The government's victory was also one in which public opinion played a substantial part, for the Members of Parliament, less constrained in 1850 than now-a-days by party discipline, were influenced to support the Government by the many letters backing Palmerston which they received from their constituents between his finishing his speech and the end of the debate two days later. The *Belait-Yatra*, on the other hand, says nothing about the Members being elected and portrays Parliament as a purely aristocratic institution. This omission is not quite as serious as it would be today, given that the electorate in 1850 comprised only about one in twenty of the adult male population, though in fact support for Palmerston's policies was as strong among many sections of the unenfranchised working class as among the middle class voters. Finally, on a different level, it must be admitted that much that was said during the debate reflected nationalistic emotion rather than sober consideration of the facts, for although Don Pacifico and other British subjects had suffered some injustice at Greek hands, the amount of compensation sought was excessive and the methods used to extract it were highly questionable. This forms rather a sorry contrast with the *Belait-Yatra's* picture of Parliamentary omniscience and impartiality.

If the author's treatment of British politics is very different from that of any modern traveller from the Indian subcontinent, his reaction to another aspect of British society can be paralleled

from much more recent writing. Interesting light is cast on the *Belait-Yatra's* paeans of praise to the ladies of Britain by Dilip Hiro's account of his experiences in Stockton-on-Tees, after his arrival from India as a young engineer in the 1950's:

'...for the first few months, my critical faculties were, to say the least, underdeveloped. *All* girls appeared beautiful to me. There was an apparent confusion in my mind— something that I shared with most people from the Indian subcontinent— of equating fair skin with beauty. To me, then, being white meant being beautiful. It was only after many exposures to a bevy of young women in dance halls that I began to distinguish the plain-looking from the merely presentable, and the attractive from the really beautiful....'64

The *Belait-Yatra's* author, and presumably the rest of Jang's party, seem to have experienced a similar phenomenon, only in their case, happily, they were not in Europe long enough for the effect to wear off. The factors producing this reaction in Hiro and his predecessor by a hundred years were not, of course, precisely the same; Hiro, for instance, had already been conditioned by his exposure to Western sexual mores as depicted in the Hollywood films he had seen in Bombay, and the desire to escape an arranged marriage and try 'dating' for himself had been part of his motivation for coming to Britain. However both men were affected by the association in the Indian mind between fair complexion and high status— an association which Hiro himself alludes to and which, although reinforced by European colonialism, stemmed originally from the Aryan invasion three millennia before. Both were also influenced by the manner in which Western women could mix freely with men in public, for

64. Bhikhu Patekh (ed.), *Colour, Culture and Consciousness: Immigrant Intellectuals in Britain*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1974, p. 20.

although Victorian society was more restrictive in this respect than is modern Europe, the contrast with the purdah system then prevailing for high-caste Hindu women was dramatic enough.

One final point, applicable to the whole of the *Belait-Yatra*, needs to be borne in mind by the modern reader. Although the document is certainly marked by a real naivete, some passages which nowadays appear banal and commonplace reflect not so much the author's unsophisticated style as the fact that many things now taken for granted were new and strange to the author himself and to those for whom he was writing. Examples are not only the descriptions of such features of industrial civilisation as railway journeys and the telegraph service, but also the detailed accounts of how Queen Victoria received her guests at a court reception or how President Louis Napoleon of France came to the door of the audience chamber to welcome Jang. To those accustomed only to the ritual that surrounded the Nepalese monarch, or to the elaborate show of submission that, the Nepalese envoys had to make to the Celestial Emperor in Peking, such informality seemed very remarkable. Orfeur Cavenagh records that Jang himself was especially impressed by the Queen's standing for a long period to greet her own subjects, and that he compared the British system favourably with the Chinese (Jang was particularly indignant that the Nepalese envoys not only had to enter the Chinese Emperor's presence on their knees but also had to bring their own cushions as none were provided.)⁶⁵

Jang Bahadur— A Closer View

The *Belait-Yatra* and the European newspaper reports of the visit show only the public face of Jang Bahadur. A more rounded assessment of the man can be attempted on the basis of the more intimate portrait presented in Cavenagh's writings and of the clues provided by Jang himself in five letters

65. Cavenagh, *Reminiscences, op. cit.* (hereafter cited as *Rem.*), pp. 136 & 169.

he wrote from Europe to his brother Bam Bahadur in Kathmandu.⁶⁶

The qualities that stand out most clearly are his combination of great physical courage and of tact and presence of mind in social encounters. He seemed equally undaunted amidst the internecine rivalry of the Nepalese court, the alligator-infested waters of the lower Ganges, or the strange rituals of fashionable London and Paris society. Just occasionally, however, his nerve could fail him, as when he took alarm at his welcome by members of the French Academy who roared out his name in a variety of mispronunciations.⁶⁷ Nor was he immune from the routine anxieties that plague those who venture from one culture into another: in Calcutta one of his first questions to Cavenagh was whether when he met the Governor-General he ought to shake hands, embrace or salaam.⁶⁸ But despite the occasional lapse he was generally able to keep his poise in Europe and to use to great advantage a talent for telling people what he believed they wanted to hear. His very facility in this respect makes it difficult to be sure what his real feelings were. For example, whenever praising some feature of Paris within Cavenagh's hearing Jang always used to end up with 'Ah, but London is London,' and he compared the discipline of the French troops he saw unfavourably with the British army.⁶⁹ On the other hand in Marseilles, when he met two women who had been born in the Panjab and could hold a conversation with him without the aid of a British interpreter, he assured them that much as he admired the English he found their severe manner less to his liking than French warmth and

66. Published by Kamal Dixit in *Nepali* (No. 90, Magh-Chait 2038 (Jan-March 1982), pp. 3-48). The letters, three of which are in Jang's own (rather poor) hand-writing and two dictated to a secretary, deal hardly at all with his own activities in Europe, consisting instead of instructions, and reprimands, to Bam Bahadur on his conduct as acting Prime Minister.

67. See chapter 3.

68. *Rem.*, p. 107.

69. *Rem.*, pp. 145 & 152.

that if he had to live in Europe he would make his home in France.⁷⁰ There is no inconsistency in any of this, since one could certainly be more impressed by London than Paris but still find French company more congenial than British, but the question still remains how far Jang was simply playing to the gallery. Not only the opinions he expressed but also his general behaviour may have been affected in this way. Kamal Dixit emphasises this possibility in the context of his flamboyant generosity to the French ballerina Cerito, which he suggests might reflect not so much genuine infatuation as a wish to appear civilised and sophisticated. There may be some truth in this idea, but, since so many stories of Jang's amorous exploits circulate to this day in Nepal, it is safe to assume a more obvious motive was also present.⁷¹

The same question of how far Jang was role-playing can be asked concerning his relationship with Cavenagh, which appears to have been one of friendship but with the Briton decidedly the senior partner. The tone was set from the beginning when Cavenagh reprimanded Jang in front of the other Nepalis because he and one of his brothers had rushed into their carriage first, leaving him with the least comfortable seat. In Cavenagh's words:

'He accepted the rebuke in good part, excused himself on the plea of his being rude and unacquainted with the customs of civilised life, and begged me to rescind the resolution I had expressed never again to enter his carriage. From that moment I had not the slightest cause to complain of any want of courtesy, and I firmly believed that our

70. See *Le Constitutionnel*, 10 October 1850.

71. For the Cerito incident see chapter 3, and for Dixit's suggestion *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra* (3rd. ed.), Kathmandu, Sajha Prakashan, 2030 V. S. (1973/4), p. 115. Contemporary evidence of Jang's reputation in Kathmandu is provided by Henry Lawrence's Official Diary for 16–31 August 1845 IOL (MS Eur F 85, No. 96): the Resident noted disapprovingly his association with dance girls.

subsequent friendship owed its existence to the fact of my exacting the respect due to my position.'⁷²

Afterwards things did seem to go quite smoothly, though with occasional hitches, one or two of which have already been mentioned. After they had sailed from Marseilles on the way home Jang apologised to Cavenagh for any inconvenience he had caused him and told him that, although even brothers sometimes had disagreements, he had certainly looked up to him as an elder brother.⁷³ Jang's choice of words will have been influenced by the fact that in Nepali 'elder brother' (*dai* or *daju*) is a common way of addressing both an acquaintance of superior status to one's own and a person of equal status with whom one is not particularly intimate. However the conversation was in Hindustani, which Cavenagh understood very well, and Jang was certainly explicitly placing himself in the junior position. He may have been expressing completely genuine feelings, since Cavenagh was the representative of a much more powerful and advanced state than Nepal and Jang will have accepted it as completely natural that relationships between both individuals and states should be on a hierarchical pattern and described in familial terms. However one is left wondering whether he was really completely comfortable with subordination to a captain in a relatively junior position in the East India Company's service, when he himself held virtually unfettered sway over his own country.

Whatever the truth in this matter, there were times when the real Jang Bahadur certainly showed through, as Cavenagh claimed in another revealing passage:

'Although, like all Orientals, a perfect master of the art of dissimulation, and imbued with a feeling of suspicion of those around him, plainly discernible in all his acts and words, when thoroughly convinced that he is

72. *Rem.*, p. 108.

73. *Rem.*, p. 157.

treated with perfect candour, (Jang) at once banishes all reserve, and converses unrestrainedly on topics either connected with his own life or relative to his country, notwithstanding that in so doing he may make acknowledgements prejudicial to his own interests.'⁷⁴

Cavenagh might have done better to connect Jang's suspicious nature (itself well attested elsewhere) to many years experience of court intrigue, rather than to resort to dubious generalisations about 'Oriental character.' He was also a little too sure that he himself had the complete measure of Jang. However where his portrait of the man can be tested against Jang's own letters its truth is often confirmed: for instance, the genuineness of the grief Jang displayed in Cavenagh's presence when news reached them in Bombay of the death of King Surendra's favourite Queen is borne out by the great concern for her health he had shown when writing to Bam from Paris;⁷⁵ Cavenagh was therefore probably right to believe that his companion could be spontaneous and frank with him.

Several minor incidents related in *Reminiscences of an Indian Official* support this same conclusion. When the two of them ascended the dome of St. Paul's to see the view Jang 'made three salaams to the great city of London'⁷⁶, clearly an expression of the same attitude of wonderment displayed in the *Belait-Yatra*. After Jang had abruptly cut short his tour of the provinces and returned to London from Birmingham Cavenagh found him at

74. Cavenagh, *Rough Notes on the State of Nepal*, *op. cit.*, pp. 261-2.

75. *Rem*, pg. 163 and Jang's letter of 2 Bhadra Badi 1907 (24 August 1850), *Nepali*, No. 90, *op. cit.*, p. 37. Jang had explained to Cavenagh two days earlier, when it was learnt that the Queen was terminally ill, that 'she had great influence, which was always wisely directed, over her husband, and it was chiefly through her means that he succeeded in guiding the Rajah rightly' (*Rem*, p. 162).

76. *Rem*, p. 140

Richmond Terrace playing with his dogs on the lawn and asked him the reason for his hurried departure. At first Jang did not answer directly but finally he gave the frank explanation that he had been torn between going on to Edinburgh and returning to London but had been too embarrassed to speak of his indecision, and that when he had realised in Birmingham that his comfortable home was only three hours away the temptation had just been too much for him.⁷⁷ A third example is his confession, after they had left Marseilles, how, to avoid Cavenagh's possible anger, he had concealed from him an incident at a shooting gallery in Paris. Jang had unwisely lent his pistol to a girl who claimed she could shoot as well as him, and she had then accidentally wounded Dhir Shamsher in the thigh. The wound was not a deep one and Jang had successfully extracted the bullet himself but had then caused his brother considerable discomfort by insisting that he should continue to stand up whenever Cavenagh entered the room, so the captain should not realise anything had happened.⁷⁸

On the assumption that Jang was fairly open with his British companion, even if not quite as open as the latter himself supposed, an interesting comparison can be made between his private and public attitudes towards the restrictions imposed by Hindu caste laws and towards his British hosts. Taking the religious question first much light is shed on Jang's seeming strict observation of the rules by Cavenagh's account of an incident during the voyage from Egypt to Southampton on board the *Ripon*. They had only just sailed from Alexandria when Jang complained that cows were being killed on board; however he was mollified when promised that the time and place of the slaughter would be concealed from him and his party.⁷⁹ Subsequently there was trouble

77. *Rem.*, pp. 143-4

78. *Rem.*, p. 158.

79. *Rem.*, p. 115.

with an animal destined for the Nepalis' own table. European sheep were of a long-tailed variety that they were forbidden to eat and the permitted short-tailed variety should in theory not have been available on board a ship in the Mediterranean.

'...still, an animal with an apparently orthodox tail was duly made over to the Nepalese party for execution. The appointed executioner was not disposed to become too inquisitive as to the origin of the shortness of the tail of the fine fat sheep destined to become the dinner of himself and his fellows. Unfortunately, however, amongst the members of the Minister's suite was an old Kazi under a vow not to indulge in animal food for a certain period; under no circumstances, therefore, could he partake of the repast. This old gentleman, who was of a rather crabbed disposition, insisted on being allowed to satisfy himself that this bretheren acted in accordance with their religious tenets. The result of his minute scrutiny established the fact, a fact I am inclined to believe previously, if not actually known then very shrewdly guessed by all his comrades, that the animal they were about to sacrifice had in fact been born with a long tail, and that the tail had been docked. Outwardly great was the astonishment manifested. Inwardly, I fancy, many were the curses against their friend's officiousness. However, the requirements of religion must be obeyed; Monsieur le Mouton was at once released and bundled upstairs to become food for heterodox Christians instead of orthodox Hindoos; whilst the suite for the rest of the voyage were obliged to content themselves with rice and flour and such like comestibles. After the arrival of the embassy in London, I presume the Kazi was interdicted from showing himself in the neighbourhood of the kitchen, for I never heard any more complaints relative to the subject of

short-tailed sheep.'⁸⁰

Clearly for Jang, and most of his companions, what was important was simply that appearances should be maintained. They were afraid not that they would jeopardise their chances of securing a favourable reincarnation or attaining nirvana, but that they might be thought to have 'lost caste', with all that this entailed for their social and political status. The reality of this danger was indeed dramatically illustrated after their return to Nepal, when a conspiracy was formed against the Prime Minister, involving a brother and a cousin and also one of his travelling companions, Kaji Karbir Khatri. An allegation by the kaji that Jang had violated caste rules while in Europe formed a major part of a campaign to undermine him. It is unclear whether the man who figures in Cavenagh's anecdote was Karbir himself or one of the other two kajis in the party.

On what religious convictions Jang did really hold Cavenagh does not provide much evidence other than referring generally to his reformist and progressive views, including a wish to do away with *sati* (the burning of widows on their husbands' funeral pyres).⁸¹ He does record a conversation in which Jang told him there was complete religious freedom in Nepal and he himself replied that the British took charity even further by actually praying for the conversion of heretics. Though, ironically enough, his first comment now strikes the readers as more 'modern' in tone than Cavenagh's, Jang then agreed that the other's religion was superior in that respect.⁸² It may be doubted whether that admission, made soon after the two men had first

80. *Rem.*, pp. 115–6. A ban on eating the long-tailed Indian sheep, as against the short-tailed Himalayan variety, was observed both by the Newars (c. f. Sylvain Levi, *Le Népal*, Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1905, Vol. I, p. 250) and by the 'vice-born' Parbate castes.

81. *Rem.*, p. 170.

82. *Rem.*, pp. 110–11

met, reflected a genuine conviction. It is, however, also worth citing what was said by Karbir Khatri (either the kaji just referred to or the lieutenant of the same name), when Cavenagh asked him if he really believed that an individual's salvation could depend on his dying at a sacred shrine. Karbir replied that he was not in a position to say, but he then related the story of a Brahmin who was astonished by a maidservant's claim to be able to tell whether a dead man's soul had gone to heaven or to hell: the Brahmin asked how she could know something beyond even his own vast learning and was told that if ten people at the funeral were heard speaking well of the deceased, he was almost certainly in heaven, and if ten spoke ill of him, he could be assumed to be in hell.⁸³

Jang himself would probably have agreed with the implication that a man's conduct towards his fellows, rather than the observance of ritual, was what really mattered. He certainly seems to have believed that even before death wrong-doers brought retribution upon themselves. Warning his brother to deal severely with any official who oppressed the peasantry, he attributes the downfall of Bhimsen Thapa, Mathbar Singh and Gagan Singh to God's anger at their tolerating such oppression.⁸⁴

In this attitude towards Britain Jang was certainly impressed by the country's enormous wealth and strength, but his admiration for all things British was probably not as unbounded as that displayed by the author of the *Belait-Yatra*. If he was not at the time merely trying to flatter the French, then his remarks in Marseilles, already referred to, show he had his reservations about British character. In addition Cavenagh gained the impression that he was not totally enthusiastic about parliamentary government either. While Jang was in London Queen Victoria was assau-

83. *Rem.*, pp. 169–70.

84. Undated letter to Bam Bahadur, Dixit (ed.), *Nepali* No. 90, *op. cit.*, pg. 45.

ltd in the street by a deranged ex-Army officer, who hit her on the head with a stick, fortunately only crushing her bonnet and bruising her forehead. Discussing the incident the following day Jang told Cavenagh that the death penalty should be imposed and no plea of insanity allowed.

'He stated that in Nepal death is invariably inflicted, under whatever circumstances, in punishment for an attack upon the person of the Monarch, or even that of the Prime Minister; and that, although revolutions often occurred there, yet the country at large did not suffer more from such disturbances than England would from a change of Ministry; neither the army nor the peasantry taking any part in the disputes, and submitting without a murmur to the dictates of whichever party might prove the victors. I have little doubt that in his own mind his Excellency considered the Nepalese mode of procedure far superior to ours. He could never reconcile Lord John Russell's appearance with the idea of his being the Prime Minister of so powerful a country as England.'⁸⁵

It would, however, certainly be wrong to conclude that his exposure to European institutions had no positive effect on Jang's political thinking. Whether or not Padma was correct in suggesting that his father went to Europe specifically to seek ideas for a reform programme at home, it is certainly true, as Kamal Dixit points out, that his regime became milder after his return home.⁸⁶ The treatment of his political opponents became more lenient, an example being the decision not to execute those involved in the conspiracy against his life referred to above, but instead to hand them over to the British for safe custody. There was also a general reduction in the severity of judicial pe-

85. *Rem.*, p. 132.

86. Padma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur*, *op. cit.* p. 114; Dixit, *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra*, *op. cit.* p. 127.

nalties, as well as the codification of Nepalese law to produce the *Mulki Ain* (civil code). Although they were to be dropped later on certain sections of the first (1854) edition of the *Ain* attempted to place legal limitations on the actions of the King and Prime Minister,⁸⁷ a gesture in the direction of constitutionalism that was conceivably suggested to Jang by his observation of the British parliamentary system. The codification project itself, however, may have been inspired rather by the example of the French Code Napoleon, especially if the vividness of the passages concerning the Emperor in the *Belait-Yatra* reflect Jang's own impressions: given his own background he might more readily have taken the work of the French military adventurer as his model rather than been attracted by the less dramatic processes which produced the English legal system. This possibility is further supported by the fact that the *Belait-Yatra* includes *ain-kitap* ('law book') in a list of things which President Louis Napoleon suggested Jang might like to see while in Paris.⁸⁸

Alternatively, Jang's *Ain* was conceivably inspired by the example of British India, where work on the codification of the law had begun in 1834. But this explanation is much less likely, since this project had been proceeding very slowly and the Indian Penal Code was not actually enacted until 1860.

The effect of Jang's exposure to western culture was perhaps not always entirely beneficial. An indication that he could also be influenced by a less attractive feature of his hosts' outlook is provided by an incident after his return to India. Visited in Benares by an ex-Raja, after a very short time he politely but firmly told the man he must go, remarking after to Cavenagh, 'That's

87. M. C. Regmi, 'Preliminary Notes on the Nature of Rana Law and Government', *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol 2, No. 2 (June 1975), pp. 103-15.

88. See the 'Reception in France' section of the *Belait-Yatra* (below, chapter 2).

the way to get over an interview with a native.⁸⁹

The most striking evidence of the impression Europe made on Jang is that he considered staying on there and thus abdicating his power in Nepal. After only three weeks in London he told Cavenagh that he would not return home if he could obtain sufficient money to remain as resident ambassador.⁹⁰ Later, in France, he told his party that he wanted to stay on for two years while they went back without him, and when they opposed this suggestion he showed his displeasure by refusing to let them accompany him that evening on one of his regular visits to the opera. Jang's brothers in some anxiety asked Cavenagh to persuade him to continue his journey home.⁹¹ When he had finally set sail from Marseilles on board HMS Growler, Jang wrote 'a sort of poetic farewell to Europe, in which he stated that he should look upon his visit as a dream which could never recur', but he nonetheless then started talking of retiring there. When Cavenagh, in true Victorian style, reminded him of the demands of public duty, he agreed his idea was impossible but said he would still like to have some of his children educated in Britain.⁹² Some years later he did try to implement this more realistic plan: twice during the 1860's he sought permission to visit Europe again and to have some of his family educated under Queen Victoria's protection, but the British authorities did not favour the idea. Eventually a second visit was arranged in 1875 but Jang only got as far as Bombay where an accident while horseriding caused the cancellation

89. *Rem.*, pg. 175. However if the word Cavenagh translated as 'native' was the Hindustani (and Nepali) *deshi*, it is possible that Jang was referring not to South Asians generally but to the people of the Indian plains: *deshi* is derived from *desh*, literally 'country' but sometimes used in old Nepali (e. g. in Prithvi Narayan Shah's *Divya Upadesh*) in place of *madesh* ('low country') to mean India.

90. *Rem.*, pg. 157.

91. *Rem.*, pg. 151.

92. *Rem.*, pg. 157.

of the trip.⁹³ His 1850 journey had indeed been 'a dream which could never recur.'

There were three factors underlying this infatuation with Europe which seems for short periods to have overwhelmed all his other instincts. There was, first, the novelty and wonder of it all, and, second, the pleasure of being treated as a great celebrity by the people who possessed such power and wealth. The third, and possibly most important factor was hit upon by the American ambassador in London, who on being introduced to Jang congratulated him on having reached a country where his life would be safe.⁹⁴ Although by making such a remark the ambassador showed that he himself lacked Jang's own natural skill as a diplomat, he was certainly right in supposing that the Nepalese Prime Minister felt the attractions of security from the conspiracy and intrigue which at home he had had to face in the past and might have to face again in future. During the ship-board conversation with Cavenagh already referred to, Jang himself stressed the constant dangers that surrounded him. Seemingly fearless when danger actually struck, in moments of reflection he was naturally tempted by the prospect of uninterrupted security.

How did Jang regard Britain when he was thinking as a Nepali statesman rather than as an individual? Cavenagh realised that, despite all his public protestations of friendship, he retained considerable mistrust of Britain's ultimate intentions towards his country. This came out clearly when Jang explained to him, after their return to India, his reason for not wanting to build a road connecting Kathmandu with the plains. He said that he was sure Britain would one day take possession of Nepal and that if such a road were available for use by the invading force then

93. Permission was granted in 1875 because Jang no longer intended to raise unacceptable political demands as he had planned to in the 1860's (R. Shaha, 'Jang Bahadur: the Strongman of Nepal', . *op. cit.*, p. 85).

94. *Rem.*, p. 124.

its builder would go down in history as the author of his own country's destruction.⁹⁵ His attitude was illustrated, too, by the parable he used to give his view of the history of Britain's involvement in India: when man first invented the axe-blade the oak assured his fellow trees that they were in no danger as long as they remained united, but when the ash agreed to form the axe-handle the oak told the others that there was now no hope for them, Jang's view was that since others in the subcontinent had already been willing to work with the British, Nepal had no choice but to do the same, though this might do no more than merely postpone the time of her own felling. Cavenagh seems to have thought his suspicions unreasonable, but, given the way in which nearly all the other native states had one by one come under British domination, such apprehension on the part of any responsible Nepalese leader was only to be expected.⁹⁶

95. *Rem.* pp. 175–6. Nevertheless, after his return to Nepal, Jang requested the British to provide an engineer who would be able to construct a road to Kathmandu, train Nepalis to operate a steam engine ordered from England, instruct regimental bands and also play the piano. The Resident persuaded him that different individuals would be needed for the separate tasks, and the Governor-General proposed to make a road engineer available first (Govt. of India to Resident, 29 March 1851, Nepal Residency Records R/5/25) The road was needed to transport the steam engine, which Jang wanted to pump water for irrigation in the Pokhara valley. The latter scheme seems to have been abandoned after the Governor-General refused to make an engineer available to survey the valley, and the road proposal also was allowed to drop (FPC, 29 October 1852, Nos. 14–15 and 29 December 1852, No. 9).

96. The parable is told in *Rem.*, pp. 163–4. Jang's suspicions of the British were paralleled by Cavenagh's of the Nepalese. He thought they could be trusted to keep the peace only while Jang remained in power, and on his journey to Kathmandu with Jang in early 1851 he paid special attention to the possibility of taking a military force over the same route. His conclusion was that although an invasion would be resisted by the entire population, the British would nevertheless win in the end (*Rough Notes, op. cit.*, pp. 44–5). This was precisely Jang's

Finally it is worth asking whether, in addition to fear that Nepal might eventually share the fate of the other states, Jang could also have felt he was acting dishonourably in collaborating closely with the very power which had destroyed their independence. Although it is important not to fall into the error of ascribing to Jang and his contemporaries notions about 'imperialism' and 'self-determination' which were not part of political thinking in the subcontinent until considerably later, this question is still not an entirely anachronistic one. Even though Nepalis, then as now, thought of themselves primarily as such, not as 'Indians' or 'South Asians', cultural and racial ties did mean that they had some sense of solidarity with the peoples to the south. For very clear evidence of this one has only to look at the *Belait-Yatra's* description of the party's feelings when they reached Bombay on their homeward journey,⁹⁰ and it was undoubtedly such sentiments, as well as calculations of Nepal's own interest, which motivated those Nepalis who wished to help the Sikhs in 1846 and who were against supporting the British in 1857. Jang himself must have shared these sympathies to some degree, and even if he believed that some features of British rule were praiseworthy he will not have regarded these as compensating the Indian princes for the loss of their freedom (the notion that the princes' subjects might have separate interests which needed to be taken into consideration will not have occurred to him). Any uneasiness he felt on this score was, however, overridden largely by his sense of political realism: his experience of internal Nepalese politics had taught him that even close family ties must be disregarded when survival was at stake, and he will have had little difficulty applying the same lesson to foreign policy. Co-operation with the British was also made easier by a psychological factor well illustrated by an incident in Paris. Some Panjabi merchants, British subjects since the

own assessment, though the two are unlikely to have discussed the scenario in detail.

97. See the 'Paris to Bombay' section of the *Belait-Yatra*.

annexation of the Panjab the year before, called at the British embassy and got into an argument with Jang on the likely duration of British rule in India. They maintained that 'India was at sleep at present, but that ere long she would awake.' Jang replied that India would never be free while Britain remained a leading power in Europe as 'the English, though few, were men, while Hindustanis were' women.'⁹⁸ Alongside a rational assessment of the relative power of Europe and Asia Jang was displaying the hillman's prejudice against the peoples of the plain, a prejudice which still today can counteract Nepal's feelings of kinship with India.

Jang's Companions

The names of fifteen of Jang's Nepalese companions have been recorded, eleven by both the *Belait-Yatra* and *Padma*, one in the former alone and three only by *Padma*.⁹⁹ None were able to compete with Jang himself in terms of public attention received, but nevertheless some details are known concerning several of the more prominent members of the party.

Out of his seven brothers Jang took with him to Europe the two youngest, Jagat Shamsheer and Dhir Shamsheer. It was Jang's policy to associate all of his brothers closely with the administration of the country, and rules which he later devised for the succession to the premiership provided that on his own death or resignation the office should go in turn to any surviving brothers and only afterwards to his own sons. Neither Jagat nor Dhir ever actually became Prime Minister as both of them died before Ranoddip Singh, who, as the elder surviving brother, assumed power on Jang's death in 1877. In 1885, however, Dhir's sons staged a coup in which Ranoddip was assassinated and Jang's sons were either killed or left the country as refugees. Thereafter

98. *Rem.*, p. 148.

99. Below, chapter 2 (The Purpose of the Journey) and *Padma J. B. Rana, Life of Jung Bahadur Rana, op. cit.* p. 116. The three omitted by the *Belait-Yatra* are Subdedar Dalmardan Thapa the vaidya (physician) Chakrapani and the artist Bhajuman.

Dhir's descendants ruled Nepal until 1951, the premiership being held in turn by five of his sons and two of his grandchildren.

While Jagat appears to have made no great impact on the Britons he came in contact with, Dhir left a distinct impression. Laurence Oliphant, who accompanied Jang's party on the return to Nepal in 1851, struck up an especial friendship with Dhir and later wrote that he 'was in his manner more thoroughly English than any native I ever knew, and both in appearance and disposition looked as if he was an Anglo-Saxon who had been dyed by mistake.'¹⁰⁰ George Gimlette, who was appointed surgeon at the Kathmandu Residency in 1883 and thus knew Dhir during the last months of his life, quoted Oliphant's comments in his own memoirs and contrasted them with the view he had formed himself:

'When I knew him thirty-four years later, Dhere Shamshere was a dour, taciturn man, prematurely aged, weary of the cares of state and sated with the pleasures of life; he was more feared than loved by those about him, but could be dignified and courteous. He was anti-English to the core, obstructive and stubborn in his dealings with our Government in which his name did not always appear.'¹⁰¹

Gimlette also records that Dhir was devoted to Jang, whom he resembled in energy, unscrupulousness and fearlessness while lacking his enlightenment. He also asserts that Dhir was a leading opponent of Jang's policy of supporting the British in the Indian Mutiny.¹⁰² If Gimlette's assessment is correct, Dhir's anti-English sentiments perhaps developed after 1850, or, more probably, he was a good enough actor to disguise them for diplomatic purposes.

100. L. Oliphant, *A Journey to Kathmandu with the Camp of Jung Bahadur*, London, John Murray, 1852, p. 143.

101. G. H. D. Gimlette, *Nepal and the Nepalese*, London, 1928 (printed for private circulation), pp. 169-70.

102. *ibid.*, pp. 168 & 134.

After Jagat and Dhir first in precedence in Jang's party was his childhood friend Rana Mehar Adhikari, who had played an important role in the events of 1846. Adhikari's title was *bada kaptan* (literally 'senior captain', and thus the equivalent of a British major), a rank which appears to have been introduced in the Nepalese army only a few years previously, as no mention of it is made in Brian Hodgson's detailed account of the army's organisation.¹⁰³

Kaji Karbir Khatri was a veteran of many diplomatic missions for the Nepalese government.¹⁰⁴ Writing probably in 1839 Brian Hodgson described him as 'informed on Indian affairs, shrewd, prudent and intelligent, while according to Thomas Smith (Assistant Resident under Hodgson and Lawrence) he had made more visits to Peking than any other Nepali.'¹⁰⁵ In October 1840 he was arrested by the British in Benares while carrying secret letters addressed to the Sikh government in Lahore. Following the Kot Massacre in 1846 he was used by Jang and Queen Lakshmi Devi to keep watch on King Rajendra's movements. However he was apparently included in the 1850 party only because he was suspected of embezzling royal funds and Jang wished to keep him under surveillance. As has already been mentioned, on their return to Nepal in 1851 he joined a conspiracy against

103. Hodgson Papers (IOL) Vol. 6, f. 157 & ff. Written in 1838 or 1839 this account also shows that the actual word 'major', borrowed by the Nepalis some time previously, designated a junior non-commissioned officer who assisted the regimental pay accountant (f. 174). Hence, presumably, the term *bada kaptan* was coined when it was decided to create a new rank between captain and colonel.

104. The title *kaji* was held in the 18th. century by four functionaries next in seniority to the *cautariya* (see p. 74 above) who headed the administration. Later their number was increased but the new ranks of *janaral* (general) and *karnel* (colonel) took precedence over them.

105. Hodgson Papers, Vol. 6, f. 165 and T. Smith, *Five Years' Residence at Nepaul*, London, Colborn, 1852, p. 109.

Jang, accusing him of having lost caste while in Europe. Karbir was punished by having his own caste publicly broken, but he was later pardoned.¹⁰⁶

Because a lieutenant in the party was also called Karbir Khatri it is sometimes uncertain who is being referred to when the name is mentioned in British sources.¹⁰⁷ However the lieutenant will probably have been a much younger man, so it is almost certainly the kaji with whom Lawrence Oliphant became friends on the homeward journey and whom he described in his book:

'Poor old Kurbeer Khutrie was a venerable-looking old man, bigoted to an excess, and thoroughly disgusted with his trip to the land of the beef-eaters, though he could not but admit that what he saw was wonderful.'¹⁰⁸

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106. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal, op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 398–400 and Pudma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, pp. 156–161. The instigators of the plot were apparently Jang's cousin Jaya Bahadur and his brother Badri Narsingh; King Surendra's younger brother, Upendra, was also involved. Jang's brother Bam Bahadur was recruited, but then revealed the plot to Jang before it could be put into action. Jain (*Emergence of a New Aristocracy, op. cit.*, pp. 111–120) argues that Jang fabricated the whole story to rid himself of potential rivals. One or two of the many inconsistencies he claims to detect are real enough (e. g. Padma contradicts himself on whether Karbir Khatri was a prime mover or merely a tool in the plot) but they do not amount to decisive evidence for refuting the whole story. Jang persuaded the British to accept the main conspirators as state prisoners in Allahabad, arguing that otherwise he would be unable to save them from the *bharadars'* demand for the death penalty. If the prisoners were in fact innocent he would not have risked the British learning the true story from them.
107. The name 'Khatri' was given to the child of a Brahmin father and a mother belonging to either the Khas or a lower caste, such children being regarded themselves as Khas. When the Khas became known instead as Chetris (above, p. 72) 'Khatri' was expanded to 'Khatri Chetri', a name nowadays frequently abbreviated to 'K. C.'
108. Oliphant, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

Being already in disgrace with Jang, Karbir did not trouble to hide his true feelings from the British.

The other two kajis in the party were less prominent figures. Hemdal Thapa had been one of the agents sent from Nepal to Benares in autumn 1849 to help settle a dispute over the property of the exiled Queen Lakshmi Devi and her sons, and some time before June 1852 his own son was married to one of Jang's daughters.¹⁰⁹ Dilli Singh Basnet was a former superintendent of the elephant catching department and a hunting companion of Captain Thomas Smith (Assistant Resident, 1841–1844). On one expedition the two men had encountered a wild bull which threatened to attack them. Dilli Singh begged the Englishman not to kill 'the son of a cow', and then took to his heels, with the bull in pursuit. Disregarding the appeal Smith shot the animal dead and Dilli Singh survived to visit Europe.¹¹⁰

Lieutenant Lal Singh Khatri was the most interesting of the junior members of the embassy. At some time in the early 1840's he had been the subedar in charge of the Nepalese guard attached to the British residency and he had during that period been taught English by Brian Hodgson.¹¹¹ Although Kamal Dixit is probably wrong in suggesting that he was the first Nepali to learn the language, his accomplishment was still an unusual one.¹¹² His linguistic ability, as well as his expertise as a surveyor, will have been responsible for his appointment as a Nepalese representative on joint exercises with the British to define the border with the

109. Letters of Resident Thoresby to Governor-General's Agent Benares (6 Sept. 1849) and of Resident Ramsay to Collector of Gorakhpur (2 June 1852)—Nepal Residency Records (IOL), R/5/128.

110. Smith, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 110 and Vol. II, p. 110. But Smith, like Jang, was not always the most truthful of raconteurs.

111. Lawrence's Nepal Diary for 4 September, 1845 and Smith, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 110.

112. Dixit, *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra*, *op. cit.*, p. 133–4.

Indian district of Purnea in 1844, and with the district of Saran in 1849¹¹³ He appears to have been a close adherent of Mathbar Singh and four months after the later's assassination he was one of three subedars arrested because they had carried out orders of which the new government disapproved.¹¹⁴ His detention will have been only a short one and his appointment as a lieutenant was perhaps one of the many promotions made in the aftermath of the Kot Massacre the following year. His selection for the 1850 embassy will have been an obvious one, and while in London he wrote to the *Illustrated London News* on the subject of the Nepal-Tibet border; the letter is reprinted in chapter 3 below.

After his return to Nepal his career continued to progress. In 1859 he was a Nepalese Government Agent in Calcutta, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel.¹¹⁵ Almost thirty years later, following the 1885 coup in which Dhir Shamsher's sons seized power from their uncle Ranoddip Singh, Lal Singh, now a full colonel, was sent to the British Residency to explain what had happened. The Acting Resident, George Gimlette, was unimpressed by his argument that the numbers killed were commendably low by Nepalese standards, but as one who had lived through the troubles of the 1840's Lal Singh could at least claim to know what he was talking about.¹¹⁶

Lieutenant Karbir Khatri was another former trusted subordinate of Mathbar Singh, assuming he is to be identified with the Subedar Karbir Khatri who visited the Resident, Henry Lawrence on Mathbar's behalf on 4 March 1845. At that time, just two months before his assassination, Mathbar was being loaded with

113. Lawrence's Nepal Diary for 1 to 7 Jan. 1844 and Resident Thoresby's letter of 22 January 1849 to Director Saran Survey (Nepal Residency Records, R/5/128)

114. Lawrence's Nepal Diary, 4 September 1845.

115. *Regmi Research Series*, Vol. 13, No. 8 (Aug 1981), p. 126,

116. Gimlette, *Nepal and the Nepalese*, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-7.

honours (probably as a deliberate attempt to lull him into a false sense of security) and the subedar asked Lawrence the meaning of 'Prime Minister', which was being considered as an addition to his existing titles.¹¹⁷

Subba Siddhiman Singh Rajbhandari was a particular confidant of Jang's and has been suggested as a possible author of the *Belait-Yatra*.¹¹⁸ In November 1846, together with Kajis Karbir Khatri and Hemdal Thapa, he accompanied King Rajendra to India to keep a watch on him on Jang's behalf.¹¹⁹ Following his return from Europe he held financial appointments in the central government and from 1859 he was involved in district administration in the Tarai. In 1861 he carried out a survey of the *naya mulk* (new territory), the far-western section of the Tarai, which was restored to Nepal in return for services during the Indian Mutiny, and his work there earned him the rank of colonel.¹²⁰ In 1871, while in charge of the eastern Tarai, he accompanied Jang on a visit to Calcutta.¹²¹

Finally mention must be made of Khardar Prithvidhar Padhya (the *Belait-Yatra* uses the alternative spelling of Kharidar). Khardars were relatively junior civilian officials employed normally

117. Lawrence's Nepal Diary, 4 March 1845.

118. Dixit, *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra*, *op. cit.*, p. 134. A *subba* was originally an officer in administrative and sometimes also military control of a particular district. Under Jang and subsequent Rana prime ministers, if not even earlier, the title came to denote a grade in the civilian hierarchy not tied to specific duties.

119. Pudma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur Rana*, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

120. This was an honorary title not implying any military responsibilities. The Newar community, of which Siddhiman was a member, were not at this time allowed to serve in the army.

121. The details of Siddhiman's career are taken from D. Edwards, *Patrimonial and Bureaucratic Administration in Nepal* (unpub. Ph. D. thesis, Univ. of Chicago 1977), pp. 127-9.

on clerical duties and Prithvidhar presumably served as Jang's secretary.

The Original *Belait-Yatra* and its Authorship

The text which Kamal Dixit published in 1957 had been discovered written in an old exercise book in the Kathmandu house of Rudravikram Rana (a remote relative of Jang's), and was at that time the only version known to him. By 1863, when the third edition was published,¹²² three related Nepali accounts had come to light. The first of these was contained in a printed book, a biography of Jang published in Calcutta and written by Pratiman Thapa, who was an opponent of Jang's nephew, Chandra Shamsher, Prime Minister of Nepal from 1901 to 1929.¹²³ The fifth and sixth chapters of this work consist of an account bearing many similarities to the Rudrabikram Rana text, but largely written in the first person plural. Thapa explicitly states that this was taken from a diary kept by one of Jang's companions.¹²⁴ The other two versions are both in manuscript, one found in the palace formerly belonging to one of Chandra Shamsher's wives, and the other forming part of a *vamsavali* (chronicle) which was compiled by a court official named Buddhiman Singh and was completed in 1878. From a comparison of these four versions Dixit concluded that all four probably derive from one lost original.¹²⁵

A fifth version of the *Belait-Yatra* has been found incorporated in another *vamsavali*, which gives an account of Nepalese history up to 1890, and was in the collection of Hemraj Pande, great-grandson of Rajguru Vijay Raj. The *vamsavali* has been published serially in a Kathmandu journal, under the title 'Nepal

122. For details of 1st., 2nd. and 4th. editions see Bibliography. All page references in the present work are to the 3rd. edition, *op. cit.*

123. Pratiman Thapa, *Sri Tin Maharaj Jangbhadur Ranajiko Jivan Caritra*, Calcutta, Babu Hari Singh Thapa, 1908.

124. Thapa, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

125. Dixit, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-154.

Deshko Itihas', the section on Jang's journey appearing between October 1973 and April 1974.¹²⁶ This corresponds closely to the text published by Dixit, though as a paraphrase rather than as a copy, the language being generally less obscure and the orthography more modern (the *vamsavali* was, however, slightly modified by the editor before being printed). It could conceivably be a 'tidied-up' version of Dixit's manuscript, and even if not directly derived from it, is unlikely of be any nearer to the original *Belait-Yatra*.

Alongside all these Nepali versions, however, it is also necessary to consider the biography of Jang written in English by his son, Padma Jang Bahadur Rana, to which frequent reference has already been made. Padma was among those who went into exile in India after the 1885 seizure of power by Dhir Shamsher's sons. He managed, however, to take with him some of his father's papers and he used these, as well as his own recollections, to compile the biography, *Life of Maharaja Sir Jung Bahadur Rana, G. C. B., G. C. S. I., of Nepal*, which was finally published in 1909, three years after Padma's own death. The book was edited by the Professor of English at Muir Central College in Allahabad, Abhay Charan Mukerji, who had been tutor to Padma's sons. Although Mukerji is presumably responsible for many of the allusions to English literature and history, the major part of the book is undoubtedly Padma's own work. Jang's European trip is described in the sixth chapter and Padma explicitly states that this is based closely on a diary kept by Jang himself.¹²⁷ Comparing

126. *Ancient Nepal*, No. 25 (Oct. 1973), p. 20, No. 26 (Jan. 1974), pp. 1-14 and No. 27 (April 1974), pp. 1-4.

127. Kamal Dixit believes that the document Padma used cannot have been Jang's own diary, but, was, like the *Belait-Yatra* and *Battis Salko Rojanamca*, an account written by a courtier. He argues that an examination of Jang's handwriting shows he wrote so slowly and laboriously that he would not have had the time to write a diary himself, and that if he had regularly dictated entries to a secretary this

this account with the text published by Dixit, it is clear that though the latter is generally less detailed than the document Padma was using, the resemblances between the two are much too close to be coincidental. This can readily be appreciated from the following extracts from Padma's book (in each case the second reference given is to the corresponding section(s) in the translation of the *Belait-Yatra* below):

'What manner of men were they who held undisputed sway over the vast lands that adjoined the southern boundary of his own country ? What was the secret of their military organisation, the principles of their home and foreign policies, their revenue administration, their legislative measures ? What rights did Government possess over the land, and what relation existed between public and private rights in land ? What were the privileges of their King and Minister, and what functions were assigned to their Parliament ? What was the condition of the masses of the population ? Were the accounts of England and its people one found in newspapers as accurate and reliable as those that bore the testimony of truth from eyewitnesses ? Would, it not strengthen the ties of friendship that existed between the two countries, if he visited England ? Would not such a voyage afford opportunities of studying the manners, customs and laws that prevailed

would have been mentioned in the accounts of his daily routine left by one of his Ranis and some of his attendants, and published in *Nepali*, No. 76, Sravan-Asoj 2035 (July-October 1978), pp. 43-68. This suggestion cannot be wholly discounted but is unlikely to be correct. Any estimate of how fast Jang could write is inevitably subjective, while the silence of other sources cannot outweigh Padma's explicit statement that his father did keep a diary personally (*Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, p. 223), and Jang's composition of a 'poetic farewell' to Europe after leaving France (*Rem*, p. 157) shows that he was not so disinterested in literary activity as has often been claimed.

in other European countries as well ? Such were some of the thoughts that filled the breast of the young Minister, when he gazed out into the distant sky, with strange yearnings for some personal knowledge of that strange country.'

(pp. 114-5; 'The Purpose of the Journey')

'My father has left a sort of diary of his visit to Europe, and it is on this diary that the present account is principally based. I have only changed the diary form into narrative style, and otherwise left the original wholly intact. It is interesting to note in this journal how intensely Asiatic it is in tone, how simple in sentiment, how plain in delineation, and in so far it is essentially different from the journal of a tour made by a European, to whom objects of another kind are more interesting. In the very beginning of the narrative we find Jung Bahadur thinking it worth his while to record the rate of speed at which his ship sailed, the sight of whales and other kinds of marine animals during the voyage, and things of a like nature, which a modern European tourist thinks too puerile to note down. We miss, however, all mention of the feelings with which the isolated mountaineer gazed upon "the sea, the sea, the open sea," for the first time in his life; but we nevertheless fell quite sure that the sight was most impressive, and must have been accompanied by an elevation of the mind, a feeling of enchantment, which is inseparable from the first sight of a grand natural object such as the sea. We learn, however, that the party had to experience some rough weather, shortly after setting sail, when the waves of the sea "rose high like mountains, and people sleeping on bedsteads were in danger of being rolled down." We have it also clearly noted that everyone felt sea-sick, except the Minister and Ran Mehar, and the mention of the sea-sickness is probably the one point

of resemblance between this Nepalese diary and the journal of a tour made by a European at the present day. We learn also that the Minister's favourite amusement during the voyage was to throw bottles into the sea, or to hang them at the masthead, and make them a mark for his shots.'

(pp. 120-121; 'On Board Ship')

'A six days' voyage took the party to Madras, where another halt was made. The native name of Madras is Chinapattan, and it is by this Hindu name, and not by its foreign name, that it is mentioned in the diary. A salute of 19 guns was fired from Fort St. George. when the party landed in Madras, where the Minister noticed signs of busier mercantile activity than in the metropolitan town. Here they replenished their supply of provisions and fresh water; here they were received by the Governor, who came out in a carriage to meet the Minister and conveyed him to the pavilion which had been pitched for his residence. In the evening he visited the places of interest, and the next day embarked for Ceylon, where he was warmly received by the Governor and his staff, who escorted him to his residence, and showed him all the remarkable objects he passed by. In the afternoon he attended a review of the local troops that was held in his honour, and then took leave of his courteous host. The extensive jungles of Ceylon impressed his hunter's mind so closely that he could note nothing else about that island, although it ought to have interested him on other grounds as well, for the place is intimately associated with the story of the great Hindu Epic, the 'Ramayana,' as being the kingdom of the 'Rakshases' whom Rama, the king of Ajodhya,¹²⁸ overpowered in a fierce war waged for the

128. More correctly 'Ayodhya', modern Faizabad on the River Gogra in Uttar Pradesh

rescue of his queen Sita. The Minister also seems to have taken interest in the 'bazaars' of that country, where spices, precious stones, and pearls are displayed for sale. The pleasant tropical climate of Ceylon could not have failed to impress the mountaineer of an intensely cold region, and we find it mentioned that the mornings are cold, the noons hot, the evenings rainy, windy, and sometimes brightened with flashes of lightning. The frequent harvests, the perennial agricultural operations, which are a feature of Ceylon, struck the inhabitant of a rocky, frigid country, where the scanty soil is covered over with snow during the winter months, and a single harvest is all that can be raised in a year. The present inhabitants of the island, known as the 'Singalese', are not the race that originally occupied it, of whom we find mention in the 'Ramayana,' but conquerors from the Deccan, who crossed over into Ceylon, and drove out or destroyed the aborigines so completely that not a trace of Valmilki's¹²⁹ dark-skinned demons is found at the present day.

'From Ceylon to Aden in eight days. A British General and a Colonel came out in a launch to receive the Minister, when his ship was sighted off the coast of Aden, which welcomed him by a salute of 19 guns, as soon as he stepped on land. The two British officers were very hospitable in their entertainment and took him round the city and showed him all the noteworthy objects of the place. The contour is rocky, and the general aspect of the place so barren and desolate, that not a vestige of verdure is anywhere in sight. In former times Aden was a nest of pirates, who fell upon British ships as they passed by, and made the Indian Ocean extremely perilous for naviga-

129. The hermit in whose cottage Sita lived after her final exile from Ayodhya, and who is traditionally regarded as the author of the *Ramayana*.

tion, so that the acquisition of the harbour by the English has done them incalculable good, and placed in their hands the key to the Indian Ocean. The place was then guarded by four regiments of British troops, and defended by a fort, which was then in course of construction.

(p. 122-3; 'On Board Ship' and 'Ceylon and Aden')

'The next day, two of the party were sent in advance to London, to see what arrangements had been made for his residence, and they returned with the report that the splendid guest-house, known as Richmond Terrace, had been allotted for housing the guests of the country. Satisfied with the arrangements that were reported to have been made for his accommodation, Jang Bahadur and party left for London, where they soon arrived and took their lodgings at Richmond Terrace. The Minister was much pleased to see the house for it is a magnificent building on the banks of the Thames, in the heart of the city, with a garden to the north, commanding a splendid river view, with the public road to the south, and with an extensive lawn to the west. The house was lighted with gas, and the walls of the apartments decorated with beautiful paintings; the rooms were all well furnished with costly furniture and chandeliers, and the floors covered with the softest Brussels carpets.'

(p. 126; 'Arrival in Britain' and 'Richmond Terrace and the City of London')

(on Jang's stay in France) 'My father has left us descriptions of most of the sights he saw in Europe, but these descriptions are too much like the common-places we come across in ordinary Guide-books to be inserted here. It is a pity that these descriptions are only photographic in character, without any intermixture of that personal feeling, that individual sentiment, which gives to lifeless images the

hue of a living picture and without which the most accurate description fails to elicit the least interest.'

(p. 144; perhaps referring to descriptions such as those of Versailles and Fontainebleau in the French section of the *Belait-Yatra*)

On the basis of such similarities is it tempting to conclude that all the Nepali versions of the *Belait-Yatra* derive directly from the account written by Jang himself, some of the differences between the extant Nepali texts and Padma's narrative being put down to his translating his father's words into English rather freely, and the remainder to errors and deliberate condensation by those who copied and re-copied Jang's original. Such an explanation runs into difficulties, however, since it is virtually certain that the *Belait-Yatra* contains material which was not included in the document Padma had before him. For instance in the former the physical description of Ceylon is followed by a short note on the history of the island, precisely the aspect which Padma, in one of the extracts just quoted, rebukes his father for ignoring. He also remarks on Jang's failure to record his feelings on first seeing the sea, whereas the *Belait-Yatra* actually has a passage likening this experience to that of a new-born child opening its eyes. Admittedly, this view is not directly ascribed to the Nepalis themselves but reported as part of what they were told beforehand by the British, but even so Padma could hardly have written as he did if his own source had included such a passage. Finally there is the singular fact that Padma gives no indication that the diary included the descriptions of British and French institutions that form a major part of the *Belait-Yatra*. If these had been in the text he was using, he would surely have drawn attention to them, both to illustrate his father's keen interest in what he saw in Europe and (one suspects) to comment on some of the misunderstandings they contain. Either, therefore, Padma had brought only a mutilated copy of his father's

diary with him into exile, or Dixit's *Belait-Yatra* and the other Nepali versions (all of which resemble each other more than they do Padma's narrative) derive from an account produced by someone who combined parts of Jang's diary with material of his own.

The second of these alternatives is the more probable and the *Belait-Yatra* must thus, after all, be regarded as the work of someone other than Jang, almost certainly one of his travelling companions. As has already been seen, this is stated by Prati-man Thapa in introducing the version of the *Belait-Yatra* included in his biography of Jang, and even if he did not have any external evidence for this statement, it is a reasonable inference from the document he was using: this refers to Jang in the third person but uses the first person plural for the party as a whole, whereas a straightforward copy or condensation of Jang's diary would either have been in the first person throughout or have been uniformly changed into the third. The second argument against Jang's authorship is that many passages in the *Belait-Yatra* contain errors he would have been unlikely to make. An account by Jang of the British constitution, for instance, would not have shown the same degree of misunderstanding. His conversations with Cavenagh indicate a fairly good grasp of the system, while even before leaving Kathmandu he will have made himself familiar with the information already available there: an account of the British constitution included in a text-book prepared for Crown Prince Surendra and thus dating from before 1850,¹³⁰ gives a more accurate, if less vivid, picture than the

130. This account has been published in part in Bal Krishna Pokhrel (ed.), *Panch Say Varsa* ('Five Hundred Years'), Kathmandu, Sajha Prakasan, 2nd. Ed., 2031 (1974/5), pp. 373-4. It was also included in a compendium of material on Europe and British India, probably assembled shortly after Jang came to power and known as *Inglisra-jyaprabandhavamsavali* ('Chronicle of the English Political System'), Bir Library, MS 3/184.

Belait-Yatra. Finally there is also the argument that the more 'literary' passages in the text would probably have been beyond Jang's capabilities as a writer, in so far as these can be judged from his extant letters.

The precise process by which the author of the *Belait-Yatra* came to include parts of Jang's diary in his own account can only be guessed at. He may have worked from a complete text after the party's return to Nepal, but more probably he had access to the diary during the journey, either because he was present when Jang dictated it or because he was allowed to read it from time to time. It is also impossible to be sure how much of the *Belait-Yatra* is taken from the diary, and how much is the author's own contribution. However, as has already been suggested, the more elaborate and skilful of the descriptive passages are unlikely to have been Jang's work and so the author himself can be given credit for them. On the other hand, as the closest parallels between the *Belait-Yatra* and Padma's narrative occur in the sections covering the outward voyage and the arrival in London much of this material must have been taken from Jang.¹³¹

The identity of the author must remain a mystery, unless and until new evidence becomes available. It is, however, possible to narrow down the field for speculation. Chakrapani, the party's physician,* and the artist Bhajuman, both known from Padma's account, are not mentioned at all in the *Belait-Yatra* and may safely be eliminated from consideration, while if either of Jang's brothers, Jagat and Dhir Shamsher, had been the author one would have expected more attention to be given to their own activities. Kaji Karbir Khatri and Lieutenant Lal Singh Khatri can also be ruled out, the former because what is known of his attitude towards European civilisation is totally at variance with the *Belait-Yatra's* unrestrained enthusiasm, and the latter because as a fluent English speaker, he would have been even less likely

131. See pp. 138–141 above.

than Jang himself to make as many errors as occur in the text.¹³²

Venturing onto less certain ground, if Kamal Dixit is right to argue that an account such as the *Belait-Yatra* would only have been written on Jang's own instructions and that a civilian rather than a military man would have been selected for such a task, then Lieutenants Karbir Khatri and Bhim Singh Rana, as well as 'Senior Captain' Rana Mehar Adhikari, can also be eliminated. On the further assumption that Jang is unlikely to have asked men as senior as Kajis Hemdal Thapa and Dilli Singh Basnet to produce an account of the visit, the 'short list' which emerges is Subba Siddhiman Singh Rajbhandari, Subba Shiva Narsingh and Subba Prithvidhar Padhya.

Of these three candidates Kamal Dixit has suggested that Siddhiman was the author, while the late Baburam Acarya, doyen of Nepali historians, favoured Shiva Narasingh,¹³³ but in neither case has any hard evidence been produced. If Jang did in some sense 'commission' the work then Prithvidhar, as his secretary, would have been a more obvious choice; he would, also, of course, have had the easiest access to Jang's diary, of which part at least had probably been dictated to him in the first place.¹³⁴ A possible objection is that in the *Belait-Yatra* dates are given in terms of the solar calendar, whereas Prithvidhar might have been expected to use the lunar calendar, which was normally employed in official correspondence at the time and is in fact used in the only one of Jang's five extant letters from Europe which is dated. However the simpler solar calendar might have been though more appropriate for a less formal document such as the *Belait-Yatra*, so Prithvidhar remains a strong candidate.¹³⁵

132. Dixit, *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

133. Dixit, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-4 and 153.

134. In later life Jang alternated between writing his diary in his own hand and dictating it to a secretary (Pudma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur*, *op. cit.*, pg. 232.)

135. Solar and lunar (or, more strictly, luni-solar) calendars have long been used in parallel in Nepal, as in India generally.

The Language of the *Belait-Yatra*

Nepali is a language in its own right, but it has close similarities with the languages spoken immediately to the south, both because it shares with them a common origin in the dialects spoken by the Aryan invaders of the subcontinent, and because of constant borrowings that took place throughout the subsequent centuries.¹³⁶ Nepali was particularly influenced by Hindustani, which originated from the dialect of the Delhi region but which, with a great admixture of Persian and Arabic words brought into India by the Muslim invaders, had become the lingua franca of North India. Modern literary Nepali, following the example of

Solar months, which are nowadays employed in Nepal for all civil purposes, commence with the sun's entry into a new sign of the zodiac, while Nepali lunar months, still used today for determining the dates of religious festivals and for casting horoscopes, run from full moon to full moon. Since twelve lunar months are some eleven days short of a full year, the intercalation of additional months is required periodically to prevent the system getting too far out of phase with the sun and the seasons. Each lunar month is divided into a 'dark' (*badi*) and 'light' (*sudi*) fortnight corresponding to the moon's waning and waxing respectively. The days of each fortnight are numbered according to which *tithi* (thirtieth part of the moon's cycle) is current at sunrise. Being normally less than twenty-four hours long a *tithi* sometimes both begins and ends between one sunrise and the next, in which case the fortnight will have no day bearing that *tithi's* number (e. g. the 'loss' of the sixth *tithi* results in consecutive days being dated 5th. and 7th.). Although official correspondence in the 19th. century was always dated by this cumbersome system, letters might contain solar dates in the body of the text; for instance, a letter of King Surendra dated 9 Marg Badi 1904 (lunar date, equivalent to 1 December 1847) reports the birth of Prince Trailokya on '16 Marg' (solar date, equivalent in 1847 to 30 November) (letter published in Yogi Naraharinath (ed.) *Itihas Prakasma Sandhi-Patra-Sangraha* (A Collection of Treaties and Letters in Illumination of History), Dang, 2022 .V S. (1965/6), p. 581.)

136. See above, pp. 68-9.

modern Hindi, has replaced many words borrowed from Hindustani with alternatives taken directly from Sanskrit. The vocabulary of the *Belait-Yatra*, however, reflecting practice at the time, contains a large Hindustani element, which gives it a rather different flavour from most present-day Nepali prose.

Although, as has already been seen, it includes some elaborate 'literary' passages, much of the work is written in a loose, conversational style, often repetitive and sometimes obscure. This feature is also widely characteristic of other Nepali writing of the time, and is thus not solely the result of the *Belait-Yatra's*, hybrid origin. It does, however, pose problems for the translator, and the reader is warned that the interpretation offered is sometimes only conjectural.

The text employs traditional Nepali measures of time, weight and distance. In the translation these have been converted into English units, using the following equivalences (the last two being approximations only):

1 ghadi = 24 minutes

1 prahar = 3 hours

1 hat = 1½ feet

1 muri = 160 pounds

1 kos = 2 miles

The Devanagari script, in which Nepali, in common with Hindi and Sanskrit, is written, has forty-five characters in common use, and a fully accurate transcription into the Roman alphabet is thus only possible with the help of special symbols and diacritical marks. This system has been employed occasionally in the notes to the translation where the meaning of particular words and phrases is under discussion; the normal conventions have been slightly modified, homorganic nasals before a stopconsonant being transcribed as 'n' and long vowels marked by umlaut

(e. g. 'ā'). Elsewhere the standard system minus diacritical marks has been used, but exceptions to this rule have been made where a particular 'incorrect' spelling has become fully naturalised in English (e. g. 'Oudh' rather than the strictly accurate 'Avadh') and also where Nepali proper names have acquired standard English equivalents (e. g. 'Balchandra Sharma' rather than 'Balchandra Sarma').

CHAPTER TWO

THE BELAIT-YATRA: TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

The Purpose of the Journey

The territory of the English sovereign, visted in 1906¹ by Srimadraj Kumar Kumaratmaj Sri Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief General Jang Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji² borders on our own; yet its army, arsenals and weapons, the country and its wealth, its revenues and expenditure, its institutions, the whereabouts of the empire's seat of government, Belait,³ the

1. 1849-50 A. D. Nepali years commence in mid-April and are numbered according to the Vikram Era, which started in 57 B.C.
2. The first of Jang's titles is a compound of *srimat* ('illustrious' or 'noble') and *raj Kumar* ('prince'), while *kumaratmaj* means 'son of a prince', or perhaps 'descendant of princes' (reflecting the Kunwars' supposed descent from Rajput kings). *Sri*, from which *srimat* is derived, is nowadays used as an equivalent of 'Mister', but it retains here its connotation of especially high status. 'Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief' is the actual phrase used in the original Nepali, the English being simply transliterated; *praim ministar* replaced *mukhtiyar* (an Arabic word borrowed through Hindustani) as the principal title of the chief minister during the tenure of Jang's uncle Mathbar Singh, whilst the title *kamyandar in cif* was first granted to Bhimsen Thapa in 1835. 'Kunwar' is Jang's clan name (or *thar*). A royal edict of May 1849 had authorised Jang and his brothers to use in addition the name *Rana*, to which the honorific suffix *-ji* is regularly added. Before this time there had been no official recognition of the Kunwars' claim of descent from a collateral branch of the Rana rulers of Chittaur in Rajasthan, from whom the Shah dynasty also traced their origin.
3. The Nepali *belait* (Hindustani *wilayat*) is derived from an Arabic word with the basic meaning of 'control' or 'govern-

nature of the city of London, and the character of the nobility and of the population as a whole were all unknown until then since nobody from Hindustan had visited London Belait. Although something had been learned from the English people's own words and from newspapers, and although the lands of all the rajas and nawabs of Hindustan were included in the empire, still no one from Hindustan, from the plains, from the hills, from Tibet or from China had been able to examine the home territory of the English and the power and splendour of the English sovereign.

The Prime Minister now resolved that, God willing, he would visit the four shrines of Hindustan⁴ and would then learn about the rulers of the eleven islands of Belait⁵ and their indus-

ment', from which developed the secondary sense of 'province'. When borrowed, via Persian, into Hindustani, the meaning was extended to 'foreign country.' In the *Belait-Yatra* it seems normally to mean 'Europe', although the author sometimes appears to employ it to refer specifically to Britain (the modern Nepali usage) or even just to London (in the phrases 'Belait city' and 'London Belait'). See K. Dixit, *Jang Bahadurko Belait-Yatra, op. cit.*, p. 138 and J. T. Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English*, London, 1884, p. 1200.

4. The standard list includes the shrines of Jagannath at Puri near Cuttack in Orissa, of Rama at Rameshwaram on the coast of Tamil Nadu, of Krishna at Dwarka in Gujarat and of Badrinath near the head waters of the Ganges in Himachal Pradesh (see Balchandra Sharma, *Nepali Sabda Kos* (Kathmandu, Royal Nepal Academy, 1962), s. v. *dhām*). Jang visited the first three before his return to Nepal at the beginning of 1851, and the fourth in summer 1853 (Ramsay, 'Events at the Court of Nepal', published in Hasrat (ed.), *History of Nepal as Told by its Own and Contemporary Chroniclers*, Hoshiarpur, V. V. Research Institute, 1970, p. 326).
5. Europe was commonly regarded in South Asia at this time as a collection of islands and in the author's case this impression was perhaps confirmed because the embassy's route never took them across any European land frontier. Other passages in the *Belait-Yatra* give twelve as the total; for a list of the countries probably referred to see p. 153, fn. 14.

tries and that after gaining that knowledge he would make the rulers his friends. He placed his eldest brother, Srimadraj Kumaratmaj Sri Commander-in-Chief Bam Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji, in full charge of the civil administration and of the army, while he took with him his two brothers Srimadraj Kumaratmaj Colonel Jagat Shamsheer Jang Kunwar Ranaji and Sri Dhir Shamsheer Kunwar Ranaji. With a party of twenty-five that also included Major Rana Meher Adhikari,⁶ Kaji Karbir Khatri, Kaji Hemdal Thapa, Kaji Dilli Singh Basnet, Lieutenant Lal Singh Khatri, Lieutenant Karbir Khatri, Lieutenant Bhim Singh Rana, Subba Siddhiman Singh Rajbhāndari, Subba Shiva Narsingh, Kharidar Prithvidhar Padhya, and non-commissioned officers, soldiers and servants, Srimadraj Kumaratmaj Sri Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief General Jang Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji set out on his journey on the 4th. of Magh in the year 1906,⁷ travelling by the road that leads to the fortress of Chisapani. Hunting as he went, he reached the forest of Patharaghata and captured four elephants. He killed three or four tigers and many deer. From there he went on to the cantonment of Kadarawana Gadhi where the local peasantry had assembled. The Prime Minister greeted them and after pleasing them by distributing gifts of cash he left his own country and made camp with his troops at the village of Dhaka in British territory.

Patna and Calcutta

Proceeding in this way they reached the city of Patna in seven days and lodged in the Mahila Sahib's residence at Kamre in the Killa quarter.⁸ The next halt was at a bungalow on

6. Adhikari and other prominent members of the embassy are discussed above, pp. 128-135.

7. Corresponding to 15 January 1850.

8. Referring to *Nepali Kothi*, which is on Killa Road, named after the nearby *killa* ('fortress'), in the old city of Patna. Old Patna, now known as Patna Sahib, is situated to the east of the modern city, which the author refers to in the next

the north side of the Golghar (granary) at Danapur. The local English senior officials⁹ provided a warm welcome. The army was on parade and a nineteen gun salute was fired. All the military and civil officials greeted the Prime Minister enthusiastically. They said now that his Excellency was going to Belait the two governments would be firm friends, the military and the civilians would prosper and all would go well.

The English now told him that he should say if there was anything he needed for the journey and they would provide it. After a steamship with food and necessary equipment had been provided for the voyage, and a captain seconded to act as escort, the party set off. Travelling on the steamer they made their way towards Calcutta via the Sundarabans.

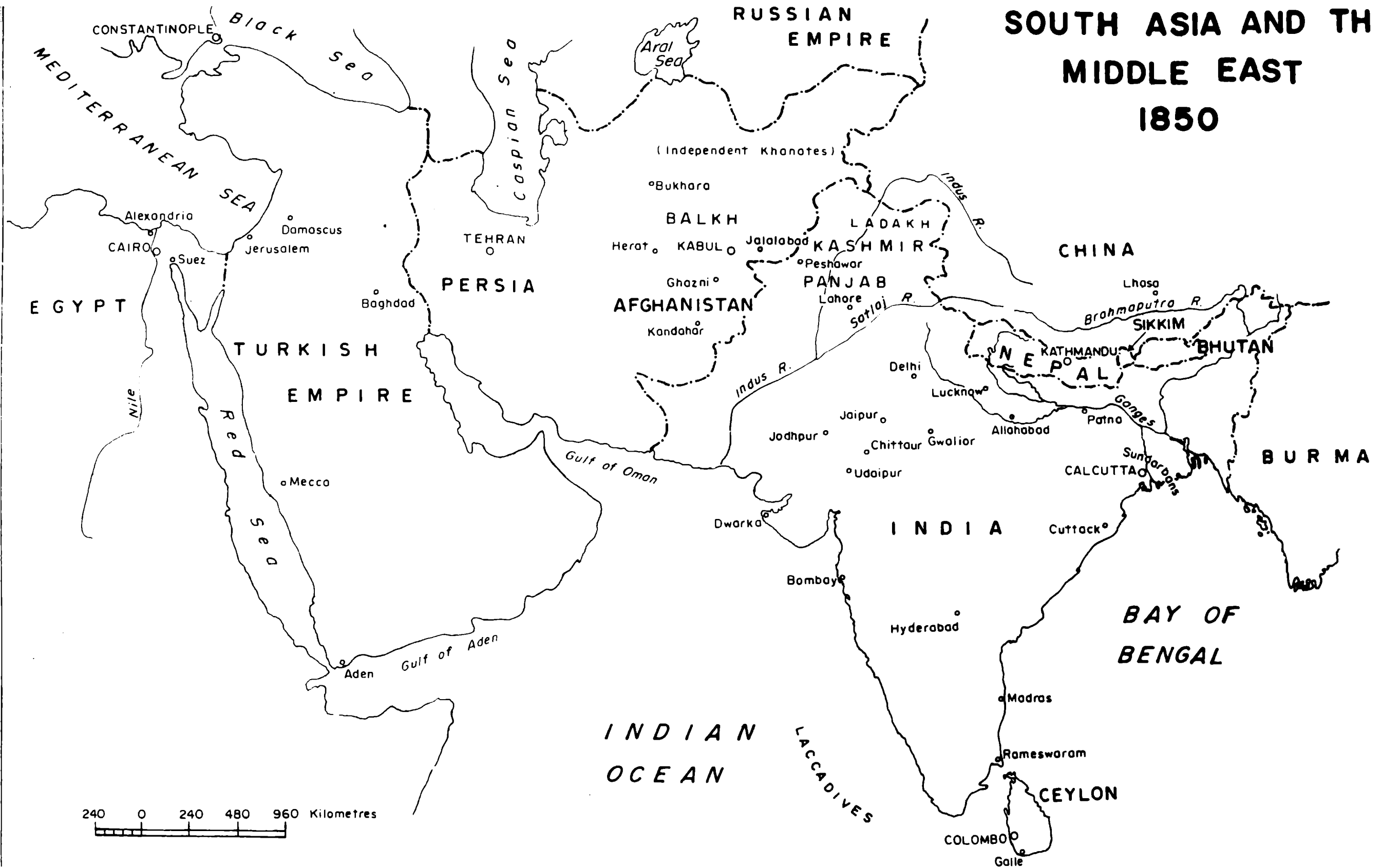
After eleven days they landed at Chanpal Ghat in Calcutta. The city's troops were on parade for the occasion. A band¹⁰ played and guns were fired in salute.

The English civil officials, the memsahibs and lady sahibs had ridden out by buggie. High and low, all the inhabitants of the city were there together. The crowd numbered some 125,000. The senior officials came and doffed their hats in greeting. It was a very happy occasion. They said what a good thing it was for the two governments that his Excellency was now going to

sentence as 'Danapur.' *kam(a)re* means room(s) in Hindi and this might be the sense here, but the word is more likely a distortion of a proper name not now identifiable. Nepali Kothi, originally used as a cardamom depot and known as *Ilayachi Kothi* ('Cardamom House'), remained in Nepali Government possession until 1961, when it was sold to the present occupants, Guru Govind Singh College. In 1850 it was evidently the personal property of Prince Upendra, the *mahila sahib*, or eldest brother of the king (*mahila* means second in seniority).

9. Nepali *bada* ('great') *sahib*, the phrase commonly used to refer to the British Resident in Kathmandu.
10. Literally 'imperial band' (*patsahi vaja*), which means a band with European, as opposed to traditional Nepali instruments.

SOUTH ASIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST 1850



240 0 240 480 960 Kilometres

London Belait, and that henceforward they would always be of one accord and nothing would disrupt their friendship. The nobles,¹¹ the merchants, the common people, everyone on both sides would be delighted. Up till then no sovereign, nawab, raja or nobleman from Hindustan had conceived the idea of travelling to Belait. How his Excellency's great prowess and intelligence had enabled him to do so and he would profit greatly from it. The English said that his feelings when he saw the sea with its mountainous waves and its different kinds of creatures would be just like the amazement of a new-born baby, when, after ten¹² months sightless in his mother's womb, he opens his eyes and sees the earth, the sky, the moon and the sun. By understanding the sea he would become a wiser man, and en route he would be able to see the countries of five or six sovereigns. When he reached Belait, they said, he would be in the home of the residents,¹³ the nobles and the merchants of twelve crowned Belait.¹⁴ Meeting them

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11. The Nepali *bharadar* (for which see above, p. 73) has been translated by 'noble' throughout. The author of the *Belait-Yatra* will have been unaware of the distinction between aristocrats and commoners within the British political elite, something that Jang himself found puzzling (Cavenagh, *Reminiscences, op. cit.*, p. 11).
 12. Ten months, rather than nine, was traditionally considered the ideal time for a child to remain in the womb.
 13. The Nepali uses the English word in transliteration. The British representative at Kathmandu, as at native courts in India generally, was known as the 'Resident' and the author uses the term here either to refer to the ambassadors of the various European countries in London or to Britons who served as Residents in India.
 14. *bahra topi velait* ('v' and 'b' are used interchangeably in the *Belait-Yatra*). The phrase apparently refers to the heads of state of the countries of Europe, believed to be twelve in number. Elsewhere in the *Belait-Yatra*, however, *topi* (lit. 'hat' or 'crown') seems to refer to the realm or nation itself rather than to the ruler, as, for example, in the phrase 'the sovereigns of the nine topis'. The *Inglisarajya-prabandhavamsavali*, which as explained above (p. 143, fn.

and seeing their country would be very profitable.

The English told the Prime Minister that from now onwards if he said what he wanted they would arrange it. If he wanted to see the sights of Calcutta they would show him the forts, the army, arsenals and weapons, factories, dancing and amusements. They assured him that wherever he went the officials would welcome him warmly. On the way to Belait there were several large cities. In each of them he would meet high officials, lords, dukes and generals, and in some places heads of state. His Excellency would receive 19 gun salutes. He would be shown forts, dancing and other entertainments, and troops. At some places they would provide him with banquets. He would be welcomed warmly. This was what he was told by the lords, deputies, Members of Parliament and officials. They escorted him to his quarters and then, leaving attendants to do the cleaning and a guard at the door, they said goodbye.

The next day a fine present of food was sent, consisting of eighty goats, 1,600 lbs. of rice and appropriate quantities of parched rice, salt, ghee, oil, turmeric, sweets, jam, pickle, curd, peas, chilli, tobacco, pan, supari, fruit and spices, together with the necessary utensils. The Rifle company, which had escorted him from Nepal, all the musicians in the band, everyone at the lodge, and the servants, doorkeepers and gardeners were fed from

30) was probably compiled around 1850, lists the 'names of the twelve *topis* of the territory of Europe' as. Great Britain and Ireland, France, Russia, Germany with Austria, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Denmark, Sweden with Norway, Sicily, Turkey. At this time the various German states were nominally linked with Austria in the 'Germanic Confederation' and Norway was under the Swedish Crown. 'Sicily' is presumably the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, whose capital was Naples, while 'Italy' must be the states in the northern half of the peninsular (even though these latter were not politically associated with each other). Greece is mentioned in a note at the foot of the list but is not actually reckoned as a *topi*, perhaps because it was imagined to be still part of the Turkish empire.

this. They were between fifty and sixty in number and the food lasted them between twenty and twenty-five days.

About an hour after dusk an invitation came from the Governor-General for the Prime Minister, his two brothers and all his officers to come and watch a dance. Together with all his party he set off for the palace. There the sahibs, with their mem-sahibs and lady sahibs, were dressed in splendid costumes and dancing to the music of a band. Those present numbered between a thousand and twelve hundred. In the midst of the proceedings Sri Prime Minister Sahib arrived and the Governor-General and lady sahibs greeted him courteously, seated him in a chair and showed him the dancing. Food had been prepared and people took this and sat down to eat. Everyone sat down with a glass of wine in his or her hand and then one of the sahibs stood up and wished long life to Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, Lord Dalhousie¹⁵ and Nepal's Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief General Jang Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji. After these four names had been mentioned everyone raised their glass and drank. This seems to be an English custom at banquets.

The following day they showed the Prime Minister the city of Calcutta, the cantonment, the camp, the fort, the gardens and ponds, the city centre, the bazar, the water-works, and the machines for weaving cloth, making bullets, minting rupee and paisa coins and for printing. He was given a thorough view of all the wonders. Then the Prime Minister said that he intended to go to worship Sri Jagannath. He asked for a relay of litters to be arranged along the route and he set off at once. He reached the shrine four days after leaving Calcutta. He paid his respects in the god's enclosure and after making a gift of four thousand rupees for the continuance of regular worship he took four days again to return to Calcutta.¹⁶ He remained there for twenty-

15. Governor-General of India from 1848 to 1856.

16. A man of Jang's rank was expected to make a large donation when visiting an important temple and because his decision

two days. The necessary food and baggage was sent for and loaded onto the steamship, Hatan (i. e. the SS Haddington) and he then boarded the ship and set sail for Europe.

On Board Ship

The ship was three hundred feet long, seventy-five feet broad and seven storeys high and carried between one thousand and twelve hundred passengers. Each had his own bed and bed-clothes. Food was provided three times a day: they were given dried fruit and water, daal, boiled rice, bread, ghee, sugar, fresh fruit, and anything else they wanted to eat. There was even a band present on board. The British ladies and sahibs enjoyed themselves dancing. Some people shot at targets, others read books or stayed on deck taking the air, some read accounts of different countries or works on religion. All the passengers on that ship went about their own business and nobody made any disturbance. In fact not a single person raised his voice.

Some of the crew attended to the sails, some watched the compass, some were busy with the ship's steering gear, others looked after the engine, worked as stokers, or prepared the meals. Others fed and watered the sea-creatures, gelded goats, sheep and billy-goats kept on board. There were milch-cows and horses on the ship and these were provided with hay and other fodder. Other crew-members attended to the ship's anchor, sometimes bringing it up and sometimes letting it down. There were four

to visit Europe had already made him suspect in many orthodox eyes it was especially important for him to show that he remained a good Hindu in all other respects. However Jang confided to Cavenagh beforehand that he was reluctant to put money into the hands of the priests whom he suspected would misappropriate it for their own private use. He accepted Cavenagh's suggestion that he should make the donation in the form of Government of India bonds, thus ensuring that although the Brahmins would receive the interest they would not be able to touch the capital (Covenagh, *Reminiscences of an Indian Official op. cit.*, p. 110).

canon on board and the artillerymen and ammunition carriers were at the ready throughout the twenty-four hours. The guns were fired from time to time. They were provided in case the ship had to defend itself against pirates. Everyone kept at his own task. No orders needed to be given, throughout the twenty-four hours everyone was at his post when his turn came. The ship sailed on in this fashion, covering four hundred miles each night and day.

Thus the ship reached the open sea. There was no mountain, no tree nor bush, no land to be seen. The sun rose out of the water and sank back into it. Fish the size of mustaid birds¹⁷ flew by at the speed of a bullet, in groups two or three thousand strong. Some fish flew past in great shoals, like herds of wild boar. The fish called the *bagral*¹⁸ was not seen close up, but was sighted at a distance of eight or ten miles, exhaling water from its mouth in a fountain as high as a minaret. As the ship travelled the force of its engine threw up white foam for a full two miles in its wake like curd being churned. When the wind blew and waves formed like huge mountains, the ship rolled up and down and from side to side. Some felt giddy or vomited, others lost their appetite. When the wind was very strong people asleep fell out of bed, banging their heads, and to stay in one position had to hold on to the legs of the bedstead.

When the wind was not blowing, however, the Prime Minister passed his time pleasantly, listening to the Englishmen's conversation, making amusing jokes, watching the dancing and other entertainment, taking the air on deck, and so on. Each day he shot two or three hundred rounds from his rifle, either at a

17. The Nepali phrase is *torī carā*. It is not known which species is here referred to, nor whether the bird is so called because of its colour or because it feeds on the mustard plant.

18. This must have been a whale, the sighting of which was mentioned in Jang's original diary (Pudma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur*, *op. cit.*, p. 120). The previous sentence perhaps refers to dolphins.

bottle thrown into the sea or at one hung from the mast. The Englishmen said that they too were good at shooting and confidently came up to join in, but none of them were a match for him. Everyone was very impressed. Those Englishmen and their memsahibs discussed him among themselves. 'This Prime Minister,' they said, is a young man, yet no skill is beyond him. His conversation is clever and he has great courage. When he talks, he is able to captivate everyone. When he eats he allows no one to watch and he lets no one touch his drinking water. If dried fruit, fried or fresh vegetables or fresh fruit is taken from the store he is particular to see that they are not polluted. He even milks his cows himself. He has the aspirations of a great emperor. His speech is full of self-confidence.' The discerning among the English remarked to one another that he was not subservient like an Indian: he was Prime Minister to an independent King. They noted that no one at court ranked higher than he except the King himself and that he headed the council, performing both civil and military functions. In short the discerning realised that he was his own master.

Six days voyage from Calcutta they came to a coastal town called Chinapattan,¹⁹ which was very crowded. Many rich merchants live there. A Governor with four regiments was in charge of the cantonment.²⁰ Steamships had to halt there for a day, take on board rations, water, vegetables and coal, and resume the journey with sufficient supplies to reach Ceylon. Accordingly the ship put into harbour. The Governor provided a guard of honour for the Prime Minister of Nepal. There was a nineteen gun salute. The Governor came in his own buggie to meet him. They talked together and the Prime Minister was given a warm welcome. He was provided with accommodation and a large gift of food. He was shown everything, including the fortifications,

19. i. e. Chennapatnam which combined with neighbouring Madraspatnam to become the modern Madras.

20. i. e. the Governor of the Madras Presidency..

the town, the cantonment, the market, the shops, the bazar and the troops. The citizens, both high and low, turned out to greet him. The crowd numbered one hundred thousand.

Ceylon and Aden

From Chinapattan he set sail for Ceylon and reached the island in seven days. He was met by a crowd of one hundred and twenty-five thousand. The high ranking people had come on horseback, and the crowd contained men and women in equal numbers. On one side was the cantonment with the troops drawn up in line. A band was playing. Guns were firing in salute. In the midst of all this the Governor rode up in his buggie to meet the Prime Minister, and other senior officials were also there. They came up to the Prime Minister, shook him by the hand and bade him a very warm welcome. Courtesies were exchanged, then riding in a buggie he was shown the town, including the cantonment, the shops, the bazar, the fortifications the troops, the arsenal and everything else. A parade was held in his honour and he was then taken to his lodgings where all kinds of food were provided. After making him very welcome everyone left for his own house.

Ceylon is covered by jungle and the city itself is surrounded by it.²¹ There is no end to the list of items available there. They sell pots and pans, cloth, vegetables, fresh and dried fruit, grain, stone, timber, charcoal, chandeliers and gems, including diamonds, rubies, cat's-eyes, garnets, coral, pearl and the rest of the nine jewels.²² It is packed with so many things. In the jungle are found cloves, betel-nut, black pepper, nutmeg, cocoa-nut, almonds, dates, cardamom and every kind of spice. There are papayas,

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21. Presumably referring to Galle, where the party stayed and which is situated on the west coast, south of Colombo.
 22. 'The nine jewels' (*navaratna*) are the gems listed in the text, together with emerald, sapphire and a second variety of ruby (*padma raga*). The expression is also used loosely to refer to precious stones in general.

mangoes, jackfruit, oranges, pears, apples, raisins, pomegranates, grapes and pistacchio nuts. There are also many elephants, rhinos, deer, tigers and bears. There are birds of various species. On the island of Ceylon the weather goes through three phases every day, as if that short time were the equivalent of a full year. In the morning it is cool and fresh, in the afternoon it is hot, in the evening it rains, clouds form as in the month of Asadh²³ and there is thunder and lightning. The land produces rice crops all year round. Each day and each night is always twelve hours long.

The country was formerly ruled by the rakshsas. After their destruction the land was deserted for four hundred years. Then Sijali Malla's people came and ruled there. Afterwards Sijali Malla's two sons divided the country between them and both became kings. Then the sovereign of another island, known as Yaksa, conquered the country, and a Jaksa became king. The English overthrew the Jaksa and they are now the rulers.²⁴ They have built

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23. Asadh (mid-June to mid-July) is the month during which the monsoon commences in Nepal. Jang's stay in Ceylon was in April and the rain encountered will have been showers preceding the full onset in May of the south-west monsoon, to which the western side of the island is subject.
24. The Nepali *jaksa* and *yaksa* should probably not be distinguished as 'j' is frequently substituted for 'y'. It is unclear from the text whether 'Jaksa' is the name of a race inhabiting 'Yaksa', or of a particular individual. Everything in this historical sketch has some basis in actual events, or in Ceylonese mythology, but has been wildly distorted by the author. The rakshas are the race of demons who inhabit Ceylon in the *Ramayana*; their king, Ravana, kidnapped Ram's wife, Sita, but was defeated and killed by Ram in his subsequent attack on the island. There is no 'Sijali Malla' mentioned in the Ceylonese chronicles, according to which the native dynasty was founded by Vijaya, a prince from Gujarat, at the time of the Buddha's death (c. 540 B. C.). Kamal Dixit has suggested (in conversation with the translator) that the author is referring to the Malla dynasty which

a cantonment there and the garrison consists of a Governor with four generals, some colonels and both European and native troops. The land is very barren, but is being steadily settled.

The ship remained two days in harbour in Ceylon while it took on board vegetables, water, coal and other supplies to last eight days. It then set sail westwards and after eight days reached the island of Aden, where there was an English garrison of white

ruled the Khas empire in western Nepal and Tibet in the 13th. and 14th. centuries (see above. p. 4) and whose capital was at Sinja (olden form 'Sija') near Jumla; when the empire disintegrated the successor states (the *baise* kingdoms) continued to acknowledge the nominal suzerainty of the king of Jumla who retained the title of *sijapati* ('Lord of Sija'). Presumably the author connected these Mallas, the only ones he would previously have heard of apart from the unrelated Malla kings of the Kathmandu Valley, with the Ceylonese Nisanka Malla and Sahasa Malla, half-brothers who reigned from 1187 to 1196 and from 1200 to 1202 respectively. The identification may also have been suggested by the similarity between 'Sijali' and either *Sinhala* ('Sinhalese') or 'Sivali', the name of a Ceylonese ruler of the first century B. C. There is no record of either Sivali or the Malla brothers having sons who divided the country between them, but from the 12th century onwards divisions of the territory still held by the Sinhalese (the north now being controlled by the Tamils) were frequent. In the 16th. century the Portugese exploited the rivalry between the local rulers to gain control of the coastal regions. They were themselves dislodged in 1656 by the Dutch, who were in turn expelled by the British in 1796. In 1815 the British annexed the kingdom of Kandy in the centre of the island, which had hitherto remained independent, and thus became masters of the whole of Ceylon. 'Yaksa' (or 'Jaksa') might refer to the Laccadives (Hindi *lakshadwip*), a group of islands off the Carnatic coast, but more probably reflects a confusion between 'Dutch' and the 'yaksas' who, according to Ceylonese legends, originally occupied the island before they were dispossessed by the Buddha or, in another version, by Vijaya (for the historical events mentioned see H. W. Codrington, *A Short History of Ceylon*, London, Macmillan, 1947).

troops under four officers, including a general and a colonel. As the ship reached the quayside guns were fired in salute. The general and colonel, wearing butterfly hats²⁵ and shirts, came out in a small boat to greet the Prime Minister. They welcomed him warmly and gave him a full description of the place. The island in fact consists only of bare rock. No trees or plants grow there and there is no soil. An English ship that had arrived in Aden had been attacked by bandits who looted it and took the crew prisoner. The English then fought a war with the local ruler and after defeating him occupied the place, stationing a garrison of four regiments and building fortifications. They had planted a garden with vegetables and fruit, and lived off its produce. They had started to construct the fortifications by continuous excavation of the cliff-face, blasting the rock with gun-powder and then digging again. Nothing in the world can defeat the determination of the English.²⁶

Egypt and Malta

Thence in eight days the ship reached the country of the

25. i. e. presumably ceremonial cocked hats.

26. The ship referred to is presumably the *Duria Dowlat*, a merchantman belonging to the Nawab of the Carnatic and flying the British flag, which went aground at Aden in 1837 and was plundered by the local people. This incident was, however, little more than a pretext for the British decision to occupy Aden, which was motivated partly by the need for a coaling station at the entrance to the Red Sea but more importantly by the aim of countering what was seen as the danger of growing Egyptian and French influence in the area. Aden, which is not an island but situated at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, was taken by force in January 1839 after tribesmen had fired on a British party attempting to negotiate with the Sultan of Lahej for the secession of the port in return for an alliance. For a detailed account see R. J. Gavin, *Aden Under British Rule*, London, G. Hurst and Co., 1975, pp. 24–37.

Suez Emperor.²⁷ At this point the ship was to turn round: it would not reach Belait. From the coast for sixty miles there were no farmsteads and no water. The English had paid 300,000 rupees to the Emperor and established eight staging posts with 6-horse carriages at each. The passengers and cargo which had come in the ship from Calcutta were conveyed by these carriages in eighteen hours to Alaxandarinadi.²⁸ This was a large city. It had a garrison and Musulmans were the only caste there. The people were very handsome. The women walked about with a piece of cloth covering their face. The land produced vegetables, fruit and wheat. It was a city well stocked with markets and shops and there was a strong wall around the place. The Emperor met the Prime Minister and greeted him warmly. He presented him with a large quantity of fine rice, flour, ghee, sugar and dried fruit. After a day's halt they sailed down the river Nile in a small boat and reached the sea where a large vessel called the *Faroja* had arrived from Belait. The Prime Minister set sail on board this ship.

Seven days later we reached²⁹ the town called Malta, to be met by a delightful sight: along the seafront could be seen the town, with its strange houses, fortifications, fine bazar, strange

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27. The 'Suez Emperor' was Pasha Abbas Halmi I (reigned 1848-54), grandson of Mehemet Ali, the Turkish governor of Egypt who had revolted against the Constantinople government. The eventual settlement had left the country nominally still part of the Ottoman Empire but made the governorship hereditary in Mehemet's family, who were in effect independent rulers. The dynasty remained in power until the overthrow of King Farouk by Colonel Nasser's 'Free Officers' in 1952.
28. i. e. Alexandria. Padma's account (*op. cit.*, p. 124) and British newspaper reports make it clear that the author has confused the details of the party's journey through Egypt. They reached Cairo overland, then sailed down the Nile on board the *Faroja* to Alexandria where they met the Pasha and then boarded the *Ripon* for the voyage to Southampton.
29. Although *pugiyo* is in origin a passive form ('it was reached') it functions as a first person plural in colloquial Nepali.

customs, costumes and gardens. The fields, the animals, the people were all beautiful to behold. Women came in great numbers, decked out with elaborate jewelry and clothes, and so beautiful with their faces like the moon, noses like streams of oil³⁰ and eyes like lotus-leaves. They made the same impression on all who saw them. Because Belait was now near just seeing these glimpses seemed like a dream.

From there in three days we reached a city called Jivapur.³¹ It had a garrison of one regiment. This city, too, was an enchanting sight. The ship stayed there for five hours and then went on its way.

The Arrival in Britain

On arrival four days later at the landing place in Belait, Sautanghat,³² it seemed as if we were in a dream or as if this was the heaven where virtuous men are said to go after death. So great was the town's beauty. The market, the shops, parks, gardens and people were all just like a picture. The ladies of the town came up to the Prime Minister and greeted him. Their appearance and their courteous words of welcome made them seem like nymphs, with faces shining like the moon, huge wide eyes, noses like streams of oil, triple lines around their necks, torsos that tapered like an elephant's trunk, slender waists, wide hips, tall bodies decked out in frills, lips red as if coated with pan, and perfectly even teeth. They wore skirts, stockings, gloves, scarves, exquisite hats on their heads, dresses of brocade, satin, silk and with embroidered fringes, all of which fitted as closely as if they were welded onto their bodies. There was such gracefulness in their manner and modesty in their speech. Not just one or two but each of them was like that. A crowd of between one thousand

30. The point of the comparison is that their noses were symmetrical and pear-shaped, like a drop of oil spreading out (Kamal Dixit); or perhaps rather that they were straight and sharp'.

31. Gibraltar.

32. Southampton.

and twelve hundred such persons had gathered there, and not one badlooking or undernourished individual was to be seen. Every person and every thing they saw was beautiful. This lovely sight captivated the entire party.

After coming ashore from the ship they were accommodated in a large house.³³ They had not yet had their morning meal, nor had preparation of it been started. The Prime Minister had with him a son of the English General Meglot.³⁴ He told this person and Lieutenant Lal Singh Khatri, an intelligent man who had learned English, that he would himself make the eighty mile journey to London the following day and that they should

33. In fact the P. and O. Shipping Company's office. No house had been secured for the party in advance, despite Cavenagh's having sent a message to request this.

34. A Donald Macleod, presumably hired in India, acted as secretary and interpreter for Jang, thus working directly for him rather than functioning as an intermediary between the Nepalese and the British authorities as did Cavenagh. According to Captain Smith's account (*Five Years Residence at Nepaul, op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 111) Macleod had been an advocate in Calcutta and then a deputy collector and magistrate in the East India Company's 'uncovenanted' service (i. e. he had been appointed on a temporary basis rather than as a career civil servant). However he cannot be identified with any of the senior officials listed in the *India Directory* between 1830 and 1850. Smith may therefore simply be in error; his book contains many inaccuracies and was roundly condemned by his former superior in Nepal, Brian Hodgson, (v. Sylvain Levi, *Le Népal, op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 141). It is also possible that Macleod's appointments were of too brief a duration to be included in the annual directory. The *Belait-Yatra's* making him the son of a general probably results from confusion with Genral Duncan Macleod's son, Donald Friell Macleod, a covenanted Indian civil servant who in 1850 was serving on the Board of Administration for the Panjab. Alternatively Jang's Macleod might have been a brother of Donald Friell, in which case it would have to be assumed that the *Morning Post* of 9 July 1850 was mistaken in giving his own first name as Donald (other sources give only the initial 'D'.)

take the train there at once, see whether the government had arranged accommodation for him and report back. If nothing had been arranged they were to find a good house for him and then return. The two men set off accordingly.

Travelling by rail they covered the eighty mile distance in about two hours. They made enquiries with officials in London, who told them that accommodation was ready and that they would arrange for the Prime Minister to come up. Going to the telegraph office they then sent a message that the Gorkha Prime Minister was in Southampton and that he should now be brought by train to London as accommodation had been found for him in Rijavant Karij.³⁵ The telegram reached Kevenpak sahib³⁶ in three minutes. The sahib came running up and said that instructions had come from London and would the Prime Minister now please board the train. He agreed and covered the eighty miles in two hours to arrive at the Karij house in London.

Richmond Terrace and the City of London

The accommodation provided for the Prime Minister in Belait city was a well-known house called Rijavant Karij on a delightful site in the centre of London near the River Thames. The house had walls and roof of stone, coated with paint, and was five storeys high. On the north side was a beautiful garden bordering the River Thames, on the east a hospital, on the south the main road, and on the west a large square.³⁷ It was a splen-

35. The house secured for the embassy was 1, Richmond Terrace, which is still standing, though the entire terrace is currently (October 1982) being renovated.

36. i. e. Captain (later Lieutenant-General Sir) Orfeur Cavenagh (1821–1891). An officer in the East India Company's forces, he had lost a leg fighting against the Maratha state of Gwalior in 1843 but was able to continue on active service. For his role in 1850 see chapter 1 and also his own letter to the *Times*, reprinted in chapter 3.

37. The orientation described here is ninety degrees out of true.

did house illuminated by gas-lamps. Inside it was full of pictures in gold and silver paint, and every room had been furnished with curtains, canopies, a bedstead, rugs and carpets. Chairs and couches had been placed at various points and glass jugs and chamber pots had been provided. In every room were portraits which looked as if they were about to speak. There were between twenty and twenty-five rooms on this pattern. There was a splendid drawing-room, with pictures, gold chandeliers, and huge mirrors fixed along all four sides— it was a really magnificent drawing-room. The staff consisted of two women and two men, the latter receiving a monthly salary of forty rupees and the former one of eighty rupees. The rent payable by the occupants of the house was 1,250 rupees per month³⁸.

No description can do justice to the city for it possesses every desirable feature. The River Thames flows northwards through it. Vast numbers of houses cover an area sixty to eighty miles across.³⁹ These are splendid residences, and indeed the city contains not a single house in disrepair. The walls and roofs

The Thames is actually on the east, the hospital will have been on the south, the main road (Whitehall) is on the west, and the square was on the north side, where the Ministry of Defence now stands.

38. In quoting these and other prices the author was almost certainly reckoning in East India Company rupees, then equivalent to two shillings (ten new pence), rather than the Nepali rupee, which was worth slightly less. The corresponding passage of the Hemraj Pande *vamsavali* refers explicitly to 'company rupees' and Jang was paying his expenses in Europe by drawing bills on the Calcutta treasury (Nepal Residency Records, R/5/25: Government to Cavenagh, 21 March 1850). Converted into sterling the monthly rent would be £ 125 consistent with Cavenagh's statement (*Reminiscences op. cit.*, p. 121) that the rent was £ 500 for the 'season', viz. the period during which fashionable society were in London and which ran from April to July.
39. In 1850 the maximum extent of the built-up area, both from north to south and from east to west, was under ten miles.

are of stone, the walls being painted inside and outside. Stone tiles fit on the roofs as closely as moulded lead. Every house in the city is fitted with glass windows and contains pictures finished in silver and gold. The squares, open spaces and streets are all paved with stone. There is no sewerage visible as this is taken away underground and into the Thames. No mud, dust, excrement or refuse is to be seen.⁴⁰ Around the houses and in the squares and open spaces are small gardens with, flowers, fruit and ivy. There are no yellow leaves on the trees and no dried-up leaves on the ground either, because these are cleared away. Various kinds of flowers grow there. The streets have three lanes: one for pedestrians, another for people on horseback, and a third for carriages. Night and day thousands of carriages go through the streets. Throughout the twenty-four hours the streets are full of people and carriages, for it is as light at night as in the daytime. Gas-lamps are lit up in rows along the streets while the windows of every house are illuminated throughout the night. The whole city is as bright as if bathed in moonlight, so you would think Diwali were being celebrated. Rooms, terraces, balconies, shops, fore-courts, stables, squares and open spaces, the different bridges over the Thames, indeed the entire city is continually lit up by these gas-lamps.

A Life of Ease

Water from the Papani River⁴¹ is led through copper pipes into a reservoir and is then channelled into all the surrounding

40. In November 1849 the Medical Officer of Health for the City of London had painted a rather different picture: 'Animals will scarcely thrive in an atmosphere of their own decomposing excrements, yet such, strictly and literally speaking, is the air which a very large proportion of the inhabitants of the city are condemned to breathe.' (V. F. Sheppard, *London 1808-1870, op. cit.*, p. 271).

41. This is the obvious sense of the Nepali text as it stands (*pāpāni bhanyā nadīko pāni*). However *pāpāni* may not be a corruption of a proper name but rather a copyist's error for

houses, also through copper pipes. When it is needed people turn on a tap and take the water, then close the tap again. There is no need for firewood in that country since instead they have charcoal-like stone which burns like oil and is clean and cheap. It is loaded in ships and brought along the Thames, then delivered to each house. The charcoal mines are between two and three hundred miles distant from London⁴² They use this charcoal to cook their food. It is also used in the mills and arsenals, for smelting iron and lead, for driving steamships, lighting gas-lamps and powering different kinds of machines. Timber for building houses, ships and railway carriages is brought from overseas by ship, across distances up to 3,000 miles. The English have made fire, water and wind their slaves.⁴³

The people of that country do not carry loads themselves. That is done only by ships, trains and carts. The English lead a very happy life. Nobody wears dirty or torn clothes. No one stays dirty: they wash by rubbing themselves down with soap and water and using a brush,⁴⁴ and everyone's face shines like the moon. Everyone from the head of state down to the oil-sellers and laundrymen wears the same kind of clothes. The difference is only that those of the upper classes are made of finer cloth, and those

pānī ('water'), in which case the first two words could be taken separately from *nadī* and the translation run, 'As for water, river water is led...' Most of London's water at this time was in fact still taken direct from the Thames.

- 42 This refers to coal brought from the Tyne-Wear coalfield, about 250 miles north of London. In 1850 most of the coal was still brought from Newcastle by sea, though rail was becoming an increasingly important alternative.
- 43 While being shown round Calcutta Jang himself had told Orfeur Cavenagh that 'it was impossible to oppose the English as they had now succeeded in making fire and water subservient to their will' (Cavenagh, *Reminiscences*, *op. cit.*, p. 108.)
44. i. e. as against simply pouring the water over themselves in ritual Hindu fashion? For British comment on Nepalese bathing habits see the first newspaper extract in chapter 3.

of the lower classes of coarser, the other features of everyone's dress being the same. The men wear dark clothes, comprising a hat, shirt, trousers, muffler, socks, gloves and shoes. The women wear brightly coloured clothes including a gown of cotton or satin, a white hat draped with satin cloth, gloves, stockings and shoes; all the women are dressed on this same pattern. Getting dressed, eating, keeping appointments, sleeping, getting up or going out—everything is determined by the clock. Everyone carries a watch. Clocks are fixed on the walls inside and sometimes placed outside on the walls of churches. Wherever you look, there you see a clock.⁴⁵ Whether they belong to the lower or the upper classes, no one shouts, no one skylarks or belittles or rebukes his neighbour, no one brawls. They speak very calmly, people of all classes treating one another with courtesy and discretion. There is dancing and suchlike entertainment in various places. Wherever there is dancing, a crowd thousands strong is attracted.

There are police stations and constables to protect the city. The constables' job is to keep watch throughout the city, standing here and there at crossroads and in doorways. They are on patrol twenty-four hours a day. They have to arrest thieves, swindlers and people making an affray. They also have to report the number of deaths and births each day, and the number of foreigners entering and leaving the country. The lame, crippled, blind and disabled and those with no means of support are taken by the police to the poor-house, have their names recorded and are locked up there. If there is any disturbance in the city the police

45. Jang himself was more than once made uncomfortably aware of the Western obsession with punctuality. Cavenagh lectured him on the need not to keep the Directors of the East India Company waiting and both men received a taste of the Duke of Wellington's anger when they were late for an appointment with him. The author of the *Belait-Yatra* may have had trouble personally as Cavenagh implies that some member of the party always managed to miss any train they were due to catch.

have to arrest those responsible. If they do not have sufficient force to do this they have a system for getting a message quickly back to the police station. This is how London is policed.⁴⁶

The entire nation—the common people, the army, the merchants, the nobles, the shopkeepers, the poorer classes, the sovereign herself—all live in great contentment and keep to their own station. It is there that Ramrajya⁴⁷ is today to be found. Whatever street one enters, one finds excellent shops and no matter what one wants, there will be no need to go to a second shop. The price of the goods is written on them and one simply hands over the money and takes the purchase. There is no bargaining: the written price is final.⁴⁸ There is never any question of some things being available and others not. Whatever is produced in the twelve countries of Belait, in the whole of Hindustan or in Jambudwip⁴⁹ is brought there by ship. Trees, fruit, corn, cloth, pots and pans, gold, silver, precious stones, creatures of land and sea, every object, every shape the world has to offer is available in Belait. Furthermore, the people themselves are talented. It is a country of artisans, merchants and valuers, of ministers, brave soldiers, lawyers, clean and wealthy people, theologians politicians, people on whom the goddess of wealth has smiled.

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46. A generally accurate account of the Metropolitan Police which had been formed in 1829. Captain Smith (*op. cit.*, p. 124) writes that Jang was astonished that 'a body of unarmed men, quiet and unobtrusive in their manner, possessing no external marks of personal fierceness or official authority' could keep the peace (the printed text has 'armed men', but this in an obvious misprint.)
47. Ram Chandra, the hero of the *Ramayana*, is regarded as the perfect king, and so *Ramrajya* ('Ram's Rule') is equivalent to 'Golden Age' or 'Utopia.'
48. The use of price labels had begun in London in the 1820's.
49. *Jambudwip* is one of the seven continents recognised by the traditional Hindu system of geography. It has nine subdivisions, the southernmost being the Indian subcontinent (*Bharat*).

No one can withstand their anger. Now-a-days gods, rakshasas and danavas⁵⁰ have returned to heaven and in this mortal world man alone holds away. And in this world the home of justice, so discerning foreigners believe, is truly Ilind-Belait.⁵¹

No one can be sure about the world-wide situation but from what information is available it seems that now-a-days the powerful sovereigns are the ones who adopt English methods. For their techniques in ship-building and in constructing cannons and rifles, their army's tactics and drill, their institutions, their ways of fighting their enemies and their monetary system are all surreptitiously copied by the sovereigns of the twelve nations⁵² while they co-ordinate their own plans and strengthen their position. For example, as long as Ranjit Singh reigned in Lahore he maintained relations with the English and also had Englishmen in his own service.⁵³ He had a purpose in employing them: he

50. 'Rakshasas' and 'danavas' are classes of demon.

51. i. e. 'England-Belait'.

52. Literally, 'the emperors of the twelve *topis*.' As explained above (p. 153, fn. 14), the 'twelve crowns' are the crowns of the heads of state of the various European countries. The fact that the author here goes on to cite the Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh as an 'example' probably reflects the somewhat confused nature of this passage rather than a deliberate use of the expression in a wider sense than usual.

53. Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) united the hitherto divided Sikh community and expanded the Lahore territory to include Kashmir as well as the entire Panjab. In 1809-10 he halted the westward expansion of the Nepalese and compelled them to withdraw to the east bank of the Satlaj. After the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809 he remained on friendly terms with the British, though both sides were wary of the ultimate intentions of the other. On the eve of the Anglo-Nepalese war (1814-16) Ranjit rejected Nepal's appeals for support and passed over some of the correspondence to the British authorities, but by also moving his own forces up to the Satlaj he made it clear that his own intervention could not be entirely ruled out (Rose, *Strategy for Survival*, *op. cit.*, p. 37). The British were anxious throughout his reign to ensure that his

was thereby able to get his arsenals, rifles, cannons and troops into good order. On the surface he remained on good terms with the English but at the same time he was building up his own strength, so that, seeing his power and the arrangements he was making, they dared not move against him. But after Ranjit Singh's death divisions arose within his own household in Lahore. No one obeyed the law, the army did as it pleased and so Lahore fell. Thus if the ruler's own house cannot hold together, the country cannot hold together either. The study of other countries' experience brings knowledge and understanding which should be used to form a correct assessment of one's own king's power.

Jang Bahadur's Welcome

Sri Prime Minister Sahib arrived in the city of London on the 15th day of Jyestha in the year 1907.⁵⁴ There he was accommodated in a house called Rijavant Karjij. The English Prime Minister⁵⁵ and Commander-in-Chief,⁵⁶ lord-sahibs, Dukwalint,

army, trained on western lines with the aid of French and other expatriate officers, was used for expansion towards the north and west rather than in their own direction. Ranjit's death in 1839 was followed by a struggle for power within the royal family and general instability, with the Sikh army—the *Khalsa*—becoming virtually a law unto itself. This situation led to two wars with the British ending with Dalhousie's final annexation of the Panjab in 1849 (see above, p. 98).

54. Corresponding to 26 May 1850.

55. The Prime Minister was Lord John Russell, grandfather of the philosopher Bertrand Russell. There is no record elsewhere of his coming to Richmond Terrace to visit Jang (though the two did meet in other places) and the author has probably here, as in other passages, confused him with some other member of the government.

56. If the words *praim ministar ra kamyandar in cif* refer to two different individuals then the *Belait-Yatra* is wrong to list 'Dukwalint' (the Duke of Wellington) separately, since the Duke was in fact Commander-in-Chief of the British army at this time. In Nepal Jang was styled 'Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief' and his eldest brother, Bam Bahadur

generals, colonels, Company officials, Parament councillors⁵⁷ and their relatives, the sovereign's uncles,⁵⁸ leading personages of Belait city, all came to meet the Prime Minister. They welcomed him warmly. 'Your coming here is an excellent thing,' they said, 'excellent for both the Gorkha and the English government. No person as distinguished as yourself has ever come here from Hindustan. Because they have seen what a great man you are, people here of all classes now have a high impression of the Gorkhas. You have also endeared yourself to our nobles and our government.' They assured him warmly that henceforth nothing would disrupt the two countries' friendship.

Every day throughout the rest of his time in Belait individual nobles and officials in London took turns in issuing him with invitations, bringing him in the evening to their own houses and entertaining him there. On these occasions many officials with their memsahibs, ladysahibs and young women gathered together. Wearing elaborate jewelry and costumes the nobles' wives, daughters and daughters-in-law all came up, took him by the hand and greeted him. While their husbands sat down nearby, the women came forward, asked the Prime Minister courteous questions, inspected his jewelry and clothing and talked in very respectful terms with him. Lords, dukes and officials brought forward their daughters and daughters-in-law — all of them beautiful young women— and asked him whether or not he liked them. They extended and withdrew their

'Commander-in-Chief', and so an alternative possibility is that the author was aware of the Duke's position but imagined the words 'Commander-in-Chief,' were part of Lord Russell's title also. This is, however, less likely as in that case one would expect the use of English 'and' in transliteration rather than the Nepali *ra* (see page 149, fn. 2).

57. i. e. Members of Parliament.

58. The Duke of Cambridge was the only one of the Queen's uncles in London at this time (he died while Jang was still in Britain) and the author is possibly referring to the Queen's relatives generally.

right arms.⁵⁹ Had he seen their figures, their youthfulness, their elaborate jewelry and costumes, their clear skin and their beautiful faces, even Sukadeva,⁶⁰ conqueror of the ten senses, would have felt desire for them: they were so beautiful, so attractive that it is impossible to describe them.

It needs the Chitrugupta⁶¹ to write about the drawing-rooms in those houses. Mirrors, portraits, chandeliers, huge carpets, chairs and couches were placed at various points; perfume pervaded the air; there was a dazzling display of flowers and there were huge tables of gold and silver, elaborately decorated. Bands played. Memsahibs wearing lovely costumes began to dance. To one side the food was waiting: different kinds of bread, fruit, spices, jam and meat were ready in gold and silver dishes. The great lords, dukes and officials sat down on their chairs while woman as beautiful as Indra's apsarās, the moon-faced Kama-

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59. This is the obvious interpretation of Dixit's text (*dahinya bahu aghi-pachi rakhidinya*). It seems the ladies expected Jang to shake or kiss their hands but that he did not respond. However as he was certainly aware of the western convention in this matter, it is probably better to follow the Hemraj Pande *vamsavali* version of the *Belait-Yatra* and correct *bahu* ('arm') to *baya* ['left (side)'] so that the sense, understanding the verb as passive, becomes 'they were placed on his right and left, in front and behind him.'
60. Sukadeva was the son of Vyasa, the mythical author of the *Mahabharata*. When a guest of Janak, King of Mithila, he spent the entire night in meditation, ignoring the women of fairy-like beauty who had been assigned to him as companions (see Vettam Muni, *Puranic Encyclopaedia*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1975, p. 757). The 'ten senses', as listed in the most influential of the Hindu law codes, the *Manavadharmaśāstra* (2.90), are the five recognised in the west plus five 'active senses', viz. evacuation, reproduction, movement of the hands, movement of the feet, and speech.
61. The Chitrugupta is the Hindu equivalent of the Recording Angel of Christian mythology. He is a servant of Yama, lord of the dead, and notes down the good and evil deeds men perform throughout their lives.

kandala and Urvasi,⁶² began to dance. In the midst of this scene were the Prime Minister of Nepal, Sri Prime Minister Sahib Jang Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji, and his brothers Colonel Jagat Shamsheer Kunwar Ranaji and Colonel Dhir Shamsheer Kunwar Ranaji, all three wearing splendid jewelry and costumes. On their caps were rows of moon-pearls inlaid with diamonds, pendants of emeralds, screwed-in front pieces encrusted with rows of gems,⁶³ and plumage from the Bird of Paradise. They wore earrings, bracelets with pearls and emeralds, sashes decorated with pearls, necklaces of diamonds around their necks, garlands of emeralds and pearls, well-fitting tunics of green velvet and sable, mufflers bedecked with pearls and diamonds, belts with leather badges encrusted with diamonds, rubies, pearls and emeralds, trousers of gold and silver thread, and embroidered shoes adorned with pearls. Hanging from their waists were golden swords in blue scabbards and on their arms were armbands inlaid with diamonds. As,

62. The apsaras are celestial nymphs who dance at the court of Indra. Nothing is known of Kamakandala, but Urvasi is one of the most famous. She was banished to earth for a time when she offended the gods Mitra and Varuna. There she married the mortal Pururavas, promising to stay with him provided that she never saw him naked and that her two pet rams could sleep by their bed. The first of these conditions was broken when the Gandhavas (celestial musicians and consorts of the apsaras) stole the rams and then, as Pururavas leapt out of bed to investigate the noise, caused a flash of lightning to illuminate the room. The couple then separated but were afterwards reunited once a year and the Gandhavas eventually granted Pururavas' wish to live with Urvasi in heaven (for further details see J. Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968 (11th. Ed.), pp. 247-9, and B. Walker, *Hindu World*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1968, Vol 2. p. 535).

63. The Nepali phrase in *nauratna jadyaka pecavanda seli*. The translation assumes this refers to the jewelled device at the front of Jang's head-dress (see the *Illustrated London News* drawing), but the more natural meaning is perhaps 'a row (or necklace) of various gems screwed together'.

dressed in this fashion, they stood amidst a gathering resembling one in the city of the gods, the three brothers' clothing reflected the light from the chandeliers, so that they appeared as splendid to those who saw them as did Sri Krishna, Bhimsen and Arjuna as they entered Jarasandha's assembly.⁶⁴ For three months they continued receiving invitations from all the officials and witnessing dancing and entertainment of this type.

British Institutions

The constitutional arrangements of Ilind-Belait: The sovereign's role is as follows: to issue orders, on the Prime Minister's recommendation, concerning the organisation of, and the review of appointments in, the country's armed forces, and concerning the administration of justice; to invite and entertain the nobility on ceremonial occasions; to give banquets; to watch dancing; to reward anyone who pleases him;⁶⁵ always to be happy; to treat the people compassionately and not to be violent or insulting to anyone. As far as punishment is concerned, if the Paramount Council condemns someone under some old statute, why should the sovereign carry out the sentence and thus incur the guilt? The executioner is still guilty whether the punishment is carried out contrary to law and religion, or in accordance with them, or in fuller measure than they require. Doing what the statute demands may be blameworthy or it may be morally right, but that should be a matter for those who made the statute in the first

64. Jarasandha was a king of Magadha (modern Bihar) and an enemy of Krishna, who had killed his son-in-law Kansa. Krishna, with the Pandava brothers Bhima and Arjuna, came to his capital to rescue a number of other kings whom he was holding prisoner. Jarasandha accepted Bhima's challenge to single combat and was slain by him (see Dowson, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-4).

65. The Nepali *patsah* or *badsah*, rendered in the translation by 'sovereign' or 'head of state,' means literally 'emperor', and so the masculine pronoun is used throughout this section, although the sovereign at the time was, of course, a woman.

place. So the sovereign himself does not take anyone's life.

The sovereign cannot confiscate anybody's property, punish anyone, resort to violence or insult, nor hand out and cancel appointments at his own pleasure, as if he were absolute master of his own resources. His wealth in fact comes from the earnings from agriculture of the nobility, the military and the common people, who give up one half as the King's share.⁶⁶ They also hand over, in the form of excise duty, some of the proceeds from trade. If people obtain spoils by raiding an enemy country, they hand them over as the King's property. If they mine iron, copper, lead, gold, silver or precious stones, they set aside a share for the King. If enemies come to attack the country, then the nobles and soldiers defeat them at the risk of their own lives and so save

66. The author is implicitly comparing the British with the Nepalese system and links the more limited powers of the British sovereign with the fact that the land held by his subjects is their own property, not his. In Nepal all land was, at least in theory, the property of the state, so that a private individual's right to cultivate it could be revoked whenever the King wished, and payment of part of its produce to the state was really rent rather than taxation. The author's point is a valid one (contrasting favourably with the more fanciful assertions elsewhere in this section), since so much of British constitutional history has been shaped by the struggle to protect private property from royal interference. However the assertion that half of agricultural earnings went in taxation is completely wrong; this was the proportion of the crop traditionally claimed by the Nepalese government from hill farmers and the author seems to have assumed the same figure applied in Britain, although elsewhere (p. 185 below) he himself gives the more plausible figure of ten per cent. Government revenue in 1850 was actually derived largely from import tariffs and from various indirect taxes (a fact appreciated by the Nepali author of the pre-1850 account included in the *Inglisrajyaprabandhavamsavali* (for which see above, p. 143, fn. 130), which also stresses that the control of land and revenue from it was largely in the hands of the aristocracy.) The proportion of the British national product taken in taxation of all forms at this time was under ten per cent.

the nation. They then assign themselves larger or smaller shares according to the effort each makes and they contentedly and unanimously agree to accept this as their wages. When the enemy comes the sovereign himself does not take the field: he neither kills anyone else, nor is he himself killed.⁶⁷ It is the nobles who have to kill or be killed, which is why the treasury is the common property of them all. That wealth has to be used both when the country's condition is deteriorating and when it is improving. One individual's authority is not sufficient for the money to be released. The sovereign represents the system. He has to be like a marble pillar while the ministers and nobles act and cause others to act. If there is any wrongdoing, they are the ones who must die or have others die. The sovereign does not do any killing, but the law lays down that he would have to do so if he wanted to intervene and act himself. If the sovereign does not obey the law, then the Parament council can replace him.⁶⁸

67. A British monarch had last led his army into battle over a century before Jang's visit, when George II fought at the Battle of Dettingen in 1743. The author is, however, incorrect in seeing lack of a direct military role as a cause of the monarchy's lack of real political power: William III, brought to the throne by Parliament in 1688 as the champion of constitutional government, had led his men in battle just as had his autocratic predecessor, James II. As in the case of taxation, false analogy with Nepali practice may be behind the misunderstanding: the author perhaps had in mind the contrast between an effective ruler like Prithvi Narayan Shah who led his own army in the field and later monarchs who took no part in fighting because they were under age or for other reasons, and who often became the tools of their ministers.

68. This last statement may well reflect an account given to the Nepalese of the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688. It is tempting to speculate that the ultimate source was the Duke of Wellington, who, Padma writes, discussed the British constitution with Jang (*Life of Jung Bahadur Rana, op. cit.*, p. 137). A distorted report of that conversation may, indeed, lie behind much of this section of the *Belait-Yatra*, in which case the failure to mention the democratic element in the

Role of the Nobles:—

The mukhtiyar⁶⁹ or Prime Minister's functions are as follows: attending on the sovereign; conducting investigations and arranging new projects on request; issuing instructions if asked to do so by the Parament council; giving permission if the Commander-in-Chief needs to make new arrangements for the army; supervising diplomatic relations with, or war against, foreign sovereigns, kings and nawabs; reviewing the appointments of government contractors, civil officials, judges, revenue collectors, and officials of the military and civil departments at home; reviewing the appointments of ambassadors abroad; sanctioning and investigating everything connected with the salary of government officials and the court's administrative expenses; paying salaries and making appointments. All this has to be done by the Minister. If the Prime Minister becomes arrogant and acts illegally, then the Parament council punishes him.⁷⁰

constitution (see above, p. 111) might reflect the Duke's own prejudices as the man who led the abortive conservative opposition to the 1832 Reform Bill.

69. First used in Nepal by ex-king Rana Bahadur when he became his son Girvana's chief minister in 1804, this title was later replaced by the British 'Prime Minister' (see page 149, fn.2).
70. It is interesting that no mention is made of other members of the government and that the Prime Minister is portrayed as running the administration single-handed. Although the author does include the all important point of parliamentary supremacy, the list of duties itself it really more appropriate for Jang's role in Nepal than for Lord John Russell's in Britain (Padma (*op. cit.*, p. 121) mentions that an Englishman on board ship with Jang 'was extremely astonished to hear that he had to manage the Foreign, the Military, and the Civil Departments...'). M. S. Jain has argued (*Emergence of a New Aristocracy in Nepal*, Agra, Shri Ram Mehra, 1972, p. 106) that this emphasis, together with that on the limited function of the monarchy, was intended by the author to justify Jang's own action in depriving King Surendra of any real role in the administration and concentrating power in

The Commander-in-Chief's responsibilities are as follows: to review appointments in the army and pay out salaries; to keep arsenals, cannon, rifles, gunpowder, bullets and weapons of war in general in a state of readiness; to get the army to where the fighting is; to construct camps and fortifications to accommodate the troops and to build landing-stages, paths and roads alongside them; to provide the army with supplies by lawful means; to drill the army; to acquaint them with the law and to keep them happy; not to make anyone pay more than is prescribed by law; not to allow the citizens' crops, fruit or other goods to be looted; when making appointments to give posts to men who are strong-limbed, in good health, bold and law-abiding; to keep to order of seniority when making promotions; when reviewing appointments to follow the order of sepoy to amaldar, amaldar to havildar, havildar to jemadar, jemadar to subedar, subedar to lieutenant, lieutenant to captain, captain to colonel, and colonel to general (thus everyone, whatever his rank, has some hope of advancement—otherwise it is difficult for them to work hard);⁷¹ not to show favouritism

his own hands. However this interpretation is belied by the *Belait-Yatra's* repeated insistence that the Prime Minister was subordinate to Parliament, a system very different from that existing in Nepal and from anything that Jang would have wanted to introduce. It is much more probable that the author's distorted view results from misunderstanding rather than from manipulation of the facts for political purposes.

71. The rank structure given here appears to be a simplified version of that of the contemporary Nepalese army, although the author may also have had in mind the hierarchy within the British Indian army, on which the Nepalese system was in any case partly based. In the native regiments of the Indian army sepoy and havildar corresponded to private and sergeant respectively. The Nepalese amaldar seems to have corresponded to the Indian naik, the equivalent of a corporal. In both Nepal and India jemadars and subedars carried out duties similar to those of lieutenants and captains in a European army. In the East India Company's forces, however, they were subordinate to any British officer, which explains why the Nepalese could adopt 'lieutenant' and 'captain' to denote

in making appointments; not to give posts to men who are crippled, maimed, one-eyed or disabled, or to children who have not attained the proper age; not to dismiss anyone unless he has done something wrong; to discharge from the army anyone who is too old, or sick or unable to carry out military duties, and to appoint others in their place; not to keep posts vacant and pocket the salary himself; not to cause loss of his men's lives in time of war by neglecting to make proper arrangements. If the Commander-in-Chief fails in any one of these many duties, the Parliament council punishes him by removing him from office.⁷²

Parliament

The Parliament council's chamber cost three crore rupees to construct.⁶³ It is a large building, with roof and windows of glass,

senior ranks. Promotion from subedar to lieutenant was possible only in the Nepalese army, since native officers in British India at this time could rise no further than subedar-major (the senior subedar in a regiment).

72. Like the emphasis on the Prime Minister's role, the prominence given to the Commander-in-Chief reflects the situation in Nepal rather than in Britain. The author was possibly also influenced by the great personal prestige of the Duke of Wellington who had been re-appointed to the office for life in 1842, but there is some doubt whether he actually knew the Duke held this post (see p. 173, fn. 56).
73. In 1850 construction of the present Palace of Westminster, replacing the earlier building accidentally burned down in 1834, was still in progress. The final cost was around £2 million so that three crore rupees (i. e. 30 million rupees, or £3 million) is an overestimate. The Commons were not able to move into their new chamber until 1852, and in the meantime had to meet in the Court of Requests, a part of the old palace which had survived the fire (it has since been demolished). The description the author gives is, therefore, probably of the Lords' chamber, which was completed in 1847 and was the scene of the Queen's proroguing of Parliament described below (pp. 186-8). The account of proceedings, however, must also reflect the Commons debate attended by Jang's brothers (above, page 108); the author was probably not himself present on either occasion, so could easily have conflated details of both.

and furnished with pictures painted in gold. It contains chandeliers, lanterns and lamps of various kinds, mirrors and portraits. Huge cushions are spread everywhere. Chairs and couches are placed at intervals in parallel lines, and on a higher level is the sovereign's throne. To the right of the throne on chairs and benches are seated between a thousand and twelve hundred persons who seem to strike fear into the beholder, while themselves fearing nothing. Awe-inspiring, venerable old men, with luxuriant white beards and moustaches, they include the foremost lords and dukes, the Commander-in-Chief, the Prime Minister, generals, colonels, judges, collectors and knowledgeable government officials. Anyone would be afraid of speaking before such an assembly. Litigants called before it find it hard enough to speak out when their story is true, let alone having the courage to tell lies. Who would be bold enough to speak improperly before such a body? For in front of the members are set huge books which one might suppose contain all the wisdom of the Satya, Treta, Dvapara and Kali Yugas,⁷⁴ all the knowledge in heaven and earth; thus they are able to tell who is speaking the truth, while if anyone has done wrong, they are ready to punish him. There can be no unseemly argument in the assembly. One person speaks and then another replies. If an argument is accepted, then they all show their agreement by saying 'yes.' If an argument does not completely convince, they discuss it, consider the facts of the case, consult the books and give their verdict. The Parliament council does not tolerate wrongdoing on anyone's part. They can even replace the sovereign. If the Prime Minister offends, they can dismiss him. If the Commander-in-Chief offends, they can replace him. Be he lord, duke,

74. These are the four ages into which the cosmic cycle of Hindu mythology is divided. Literally translated they are the Age of Truth, the Age of the Two, the Age of the Three (from throws of the dice) and the Age of Strife. We are at present in the Kali Yuga, the most degenerate of the four. When this age is completed the universe will be dissolved, and then recreated to begin the next cycle.

general, colonel or anything else, a man's rank is of no account if he does wrong. If a regiment mutinies, then the Parliament council brings up other regiments and blows the mutineers to pieces with cannon. The law establishing this powerful house of God was drawn up by the old ancestor of the English, Jesu Christ.⁷⁵

The responsibilities of the common people are as follows: not to fight or slander one another; not to try to harm others; not to be contemptuous or make fun of anyone because he lacks wealth, rank, looks or strength; to have compassion for the weak; to respect their superiors; to speak the truth; to take care of their own property; not to wear dirty clothes (clothes must be clean, though it is alright if they are of coarse material); not to get dirt on their bodies; to wash and keep clean God's handiwork⁷⁶ so that the goddess of wealth will be bound to favour them; if they have a house or fields, or a road near their house, or a garden near a water-source, or land around the house, to use the space to grow flowering plants or fruit trees; to carry out agricultural work in season; to keep cows, goats, sheep, cats, dogs and birds; to instruct, reform and teach their wives, and to treat them with affection, even if they are bad-looking, burdensome, ignorant, foolish or ugly; to engage in agriculture or trade or go into service; to carry out whatever their occupation entails; not to take another's life or covet his goods; to do honest work with an honest intent.

75. In the manuscript the words are *jijyü kyäs*. The first word is a fair approximation to the English 'Jesu' (a less common variant of 'Jesus', with the regular substitution of 'j' for the English 'hard s' ('z') sound, which does not occur in Nepali. *kyas* is therefore presumably a corruption of 'Christ'; in the printed text of Dixit's third edition the spelling was actually corrected to *krist*, though without reference to him. In Nepali *jijyu* is a word meaning 'grandfather' or 'forefather,' and this coincidence is probably the reason why the author supposed the English were Christ's descendants.

76. i. e. their own bodies.

The state's functions⁷⁷ include the following: collecting in taxes one tenth of the common people's farm produce; using that revenue to maintain the army; constructing, camps, fortifications and barracks; providing the troops with good food and clothing and keeping them content; valuing everyone's life equally; not distressing the subjects; imprisoning thieves, swindlers and those who assault, slander or ridicule others or blacken their reputation; feeding and clothing prisoners well and acquainting them with the law, instructing each one in his own trade and releasing him at the end of his sentence; punishing with a beating and re-imprisoning anyone who commits a second offence and then releasing him; sentencing third-time offenders to transportation,⁷⁸ putting murderers to death. If the King himself takes another's life, covet's someone's wealth, punishes an innocent person, or does anything illegal or wrong, then the practice is for

77. The Nepali *rajako thiti* means literally 'the king's arrangements' (or 'practices'), but the phrase is often used to refer to the administration generally rather than to the ruler personally. This seems to be the case here, because, although later in the paragraph, the King clearly *is* referred to as an individual, he is not the one carrying out these functions but a potential victim of their implementation by others. In the latter half of the paragraph the 'state' appears to be identified with the 'Parament council'. although since the sequence of infinitives which make up the Nepali text have no explicitly stated subject, the precise meaning remains obscure.

78. At this time long-term prisoners (not exclusively those who had previous convictions) were still transported to Tasmania. Good behaviour earned them a degree of freedom of movement within the island but the unco-operative could be kept in a penal settlement under harsh conditions, so that the reference to 'living on roots' is not without some justification. British penal practice did not include a rigid distinction between first, second and third-time offenders as here described, and the author in any case contradicts himself a few lines below on the consequences of the first offence. However ideas of penal reform, including a greater emphasis on rehabilitation, were in the air at the time and these may have been confused with current reality.

the Parament council, together with the nobles and the army, to imprison the King and replace him with another member of his family. After due consideration the state has also to instruct and educate everyone, including the King, the nobles, the common people, the army, foreigners, travellers, orphans, the ignorant, the delinquent and the unfortunate. It has to proclaim, teach, educate and give instruction concerning the constitution. If anyone commits an offence once, he must be pardoned; if he does it again he has to be punished; and if he offends a third time, he must be sentenced to transportation and has to live on roots.

The law establishing this Parlamint assembly embodies the essential elements of moral and political wisdom and of ancient tradition. If a councillor takes up the book containing this law, enshrines righteousness in his heart, follows the right path with partiality towards none, and thus does justice, then he earns great merit and his ancestors for seven generations back will be able to cross over and enter heaven. But (so it is written in the book) if a member of this assembly speaks falsely or acts unjustly out of hope for gain, then for as long as the moon and sun continue to rise and set and be above the earth, he must remain in hell. The Parament council was built as a house of God. It is a support for King and subjects if they are victims of injustice, the place where everyone's complaints are heard, the source of right for the righteous man and perdition for the sinner. The life of Belait is enshrined in this Parament council. For as long as the council endures, Belait will endure. When the Parament council disappears, then London Belait will wither away. So it is written in the book.

The law requires Queen Victoria, too, to come to the Parliament council.⁷⁹ The procession was headed by a line of cavalry

79. Jang was among the members of the diplomatic corps present on August 15th, when the Queen prorogued Parliament in person, the first time she had done so for two years. The report in the *Times* the following day mentions the respectful bows he and the Duke of Wellington exchanged. The Queen's

then came the nobles in 6-horse carriages and behind them one hundred special white troops, carrying spears and lances and dressed as colourfully as butterflies, escorted the sovereign's carriage. The carriage itself was drawn by eight *khin* coloured⁸⁰ horses. There were countless other carriages carrying the nobles: thousands of carriages were in motion. The sovereign's dress was as follows: on her head she wore a crown inlaid with diamonds, she had a diamond necklace, and on her breast she wore the Koh-i-Noor diamond,⁸¹ while her gown was made from silver thread. In this elaborate costume she rode in her carriage. As the Queen went in procession the people of London lined the streets where she was to pass, the crowds stretching for four miles. Raising their hats they watched the Queen and cheered her with shouts of 'varey, varey.' The Queen herself looked at all the people who were at the windows on both sides of the street and bowed her head in acknowledgement. Seeing her smiling face, the great modesty in her bearing and her beauty like a living incarnation of Lakshmi⁸² the

speech, as given in the same report, did not mention the specific figure of six months quoted below, but it was certainly normal at this time for Parliament to remain in recess from August until early in the new year, thus enabling the gentry to return to their country estates for the hunting season.

80. Nepali *khinrang*. The second syllable is the normal word for 'colour' but the first is completely obscure.
81. The Koh-i-Noor ('mountain of light'), best known of the British 'crown jewels', was mined in the Deccan in 1550, passed into the hands of the Moghul Emperors, and was then carried off by the Persian invader Nadir Shah in 1739. After Nadir's assassination his Afghan bodyguard took the diamond back to their own country, where their leader, Ahmed Shah, made himself King. It remained an Afghan royal possession until the deposed King Shah Shuja, who had brought it with him when he took refuge at the court of the Panjab ruler, Ranjit Singh, was forced to hand it over to his protector. It came into British possession on the annexation of the Panjab in 1849 and its arrival in London at the end of June 1850 caused considerable excitement (*Times*, 1 July 1850).
82. Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth, and her most famous in-

people were glad and said how praiseworthy was their sovereign's character. Moving slowly along she finally reached the Parliament assembly and took her seat on the throne, then greeted all the nobles and councillors as follows: 'You have been loyal servants. Now that you have done your work, depart cheerfully and spend six months enjoying yourselves with your families.' Reading these words out from a book she dismissed them.

Meeting Queen Victoria

At the first meeting with Queen Victoria she had with her the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-Chief, lords, dukes, Company officials, the Chairman⁸³ and Prince Albert. The Queen, attended by these people, was standing in a drawing-room. The Prime Minister of Nepal brought with him his two brothers, the kajis and sardars⁸⁴ and his other companions.

carnation (*avatar*) is Sita, heroine of the *Ramayana*. Richard Burghart has pointed out in discussion with the translator that the language used here, as in other passages, foreshadows that of the panegyric biographies of Victoria produced in India after her adoption in 1876 of the title 'Empress of India.' Raja Baldeva Singh's *Sri Cakravarti Viktoriya Bharates Bharatvase Samvat 32 Vijaypatra*, for example, portrays the Queen as an incarnation of Laksmi as well as as a *cakravarti* ('Universal Monarch').

83. Jang was presented to the queen for the first time on 19 June at St. James' Palace by Sir John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control. Sir John might be the 'Chairman' referred to, but strictly speaking that title should only have been used for Captain Shepherd, Chairman of the East India Company's Court of Directors. The author has in any case given a stock list of British dignitaries, not an accurate report of those present, as neither the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, nor the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Wellington, was there on that occasion.
84. 'Sardar' is strictly speaking a specific rank, above subba but below kajji, but the term is also used in a looser sense of senior officials generally. In the Court Circular describing the presentation, as published in the *Times* the next day, only Jang's brothers, Captain Cavenagh and Mr. Macleod are mentioned

He handed to the sovereign the complimentary letter from His Majesty the King of Nepal, and as she accepted this, the Queen bowed. She asked questions about Nepal and he answered these as fully as was required. She asked him how the journey, including the sea voyage, had been, and whether he had had any problems with food and drink. He replied that under Her Majesty's protection neither he nor his companions had had any difficulty and that with her help they had travelled comfortably. The Queen was glad to hear this. She welcomed him, saying that his visit was an excellent thing, that the two governments were now of one mind, that there would always be affection between them and that there would never be any hindrance to their friendship. The onlookers remarked how intelligent, handsome and fittingly dressed the Nepalese vizir was, and that he was a fine young man. The Queen ordered that a capable man should see to accommodation and provisions for the Nepalese. She instructed her Prime Minister to ensure that they had no problems. Two captains,⁸⁵ and a number of constables and servants were assigned to look after them. That was how the first meeting went.

At the second meeting⁸⁶ with the Queen some fifteen or sixteen hundred nobles were present with their memsahibs, all

as accompanying him. Possibly some of the other Nepalis went to the palace but remained in the background during the ceremony. Alternatively there may be some confusion with the Court Reception the following day, when (according to the *Times* of 21 June) Major Rana Mehar Adhikari, Kaji Karbir Khatri, Khaji Hemdal Thapa, Kaji Dilli Singh Basnet, Lieutenant Lal Singh Khatri and Lieutenant Karbir Khatri were presented by Jang to the Queen.

85. Perhaps referring to Captain Cavenagh, who of course had been with the embassy since Calcutta, and to Captain James who is mentioned in newspaper reports of the visit and who appears to have been attached to the party after their arrival in Britain.

86. This took place the following day (20 June). The occasion was a 'Drawing Room'— i. e. day-time court reception— held to mark the anniversary of the Queen's accession.

wearing beautiful jewelry and costumes. The Queen was standing beside the throne when the Nepalese Prime Minister and his party entered and greeted her. The Queen asked them very courteously to come forward and sit near her and they did so. The nobles paid their respects to the Queen one by one. Some greeted her from a distance and at once moved on, others grasped the Queen's hand to greet her, while some ladies also kissed her on the cheek before passing on. Everyone bowed to the Queen first and then paid their respects to Prince Albert. The British Prime Ministers⁸⁷ identified each individual for his Nepalese counterpart, telling him which noble was which and what job each did, explaining that a lady was the wife of such and such a noble or saying what this or that person's relationship with the Queen was. Thus the nobles and their ladies were received by the Queen while Nepal's Prime Minister, Jang Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji, watched the engrossing sight. Reports of the reception these nobles and their ladies gave him were published in several countries.

On the third occasion that the Nepalese Prime Minister met her the Queen had invited in addition many nobles from all over Belait city together with their ladies.⁸⁸ The guests arrived

87. Jang's guide was more probably the President of the Board of Control, Sir John Hobhouse.

88. According to Padma's account (*Life of Jung Bahadur Rana, op. cit.*, pp. 135-6) the third meeting was on 22 June at the christening party for Prince Arthur, where Jang was introduced to the Prussian Crown Prince Wilhelm, afterwards Kaiser Wilhelm I. In Padma's version the offer Jang refused was of wine, not fruit, and possibly the author of the *Belait-Yatra* deliberately altered the story to avoid any implication Jang might have drunk the wine provided he were not in European company; alcohol was forbidden for high-caste Hindus (though in later years this was not to stop many of Jang's sons and nephews from drinking in private, often to excess). However, it is also possible that the author has confused the christening with the state ball held on 26 June, which Jang also attended, and where he had to decline the Queen's invitation to dinner afterwards (Padma, *loc. cit.*).

one and a half hours after sunset. The palace drawing-room is impossible to describe adequately. It was three hundred feet long and seventy-five broad, covered by beautiful carpets, with mirrors on all four walls and lines of portraits. The room was illuminated by multi-coloured candelabra, and made even brighter by lanterns, oil-lamps on stands, chandeliers and gas-lamps everywhere. Various kinds of flowers had been placed on tables by the windows and perfume pervaded the room. The pictures had been painted in gold. Gold and silver vessels produced a dazzling display. In this room were seated many nobles and between one thousand and twelve hundred white officials in red hats, shirts and butterfly hats. Bedecked with diamonds, emeralds, rubies and pearls and wearing beautiful costumes, a similar number of women, resembling Indra's asparas, were also present. They and the men were seated together. A band was playing.

The Prime Minister of Nepal, his two brothers, the kajis, the sardars, the captain and the lieutenants were also present. The Queen called the Prime Minister over and asked if he would take some fruit. When he replied that it was against his country's custom to eat in the presence of the sovereign, the Queen laughed and told him to sit down in his chair which he did. Just then the dancing started. All the ladies and officials took part. After a short time the Queen, too, joined in the dancing. As she danced she asked, still smiling, whether the Nepalese Prime Minister approved of her taking part or not.⁸⁹ Some of the officials and their

The dancing mentioned below suggests that the latter occasion is being described, as does the statement that Jang brought with him the kajis and other officers (the *Times* refers to their presence on the 26th. but not the 22nd.)

89. Perhaps the Queen noticed a look of surprise or disapproval on Jang's face. When he had first seen Europeans dancing together in Calcutta, he had asked Cavenagh whether all the couples were man and wife, and had thought it unseemly that members of the Governor-General's council should indulge in such activities (*Reminiscences, op. cit.*, p. 109).

wives danced, some walked about and others remained seated. They paid no attention to differences of rank, ignoring all questions of precedence. Such was the entertainment.

One day the Queen sent an invitation to the Prime Minister to watch a dance by some young women as beautiful as apsaras. When the Prime Minister arrived, the dance was under way. It is impossible to describe adequately their beauty and their dancing. Legends say that even the thousand-tongued serpent-king Sesh⁹⁰ would have been unable to describe the dancing, the singing and the beauty of Indra's apsaras Kamakandala and Urvasi. It was a similar situation with this delightful entertainment. During the performance the Queen asked the Prime Minister if he liked the dance and he replied that he liked it very much. Then she asked if he understood the words of the song and he replied that although he did not understand the meaning, he enjoyed listening to it, in just the same way that men enjoy the song of the nightingale. The Queen was pleased with this answer and remarked that he was very quick-witted.⁹¹

A Warm Welcome Everywhere

Deciding one day to go to see the dancing at Lamadi's⁹² opera the Prime Minister, his two brothers, the kajis, the sardars,

90 Sesh is the multi-headed serpent who forms the couch on which Vishnu lies and whose fire periodically consumes the universe. For Urvasi see above p. 176 fn. 62.

91. Padma tells the same story but places it at the christening party on 22 June (*Life of Jang Bahadur, op. cit.*, p. 136). The episode demonstrates Jang's acting ability as much as his mental agility. Although he genuinely enjoyed ballet performances he regarded operatic singing as 'abominable screeching' (L. Oliphant, *A Journey to Kathmandu with the Camp of Jung Bahadur*, London, John Murray, 1852, p. 134).

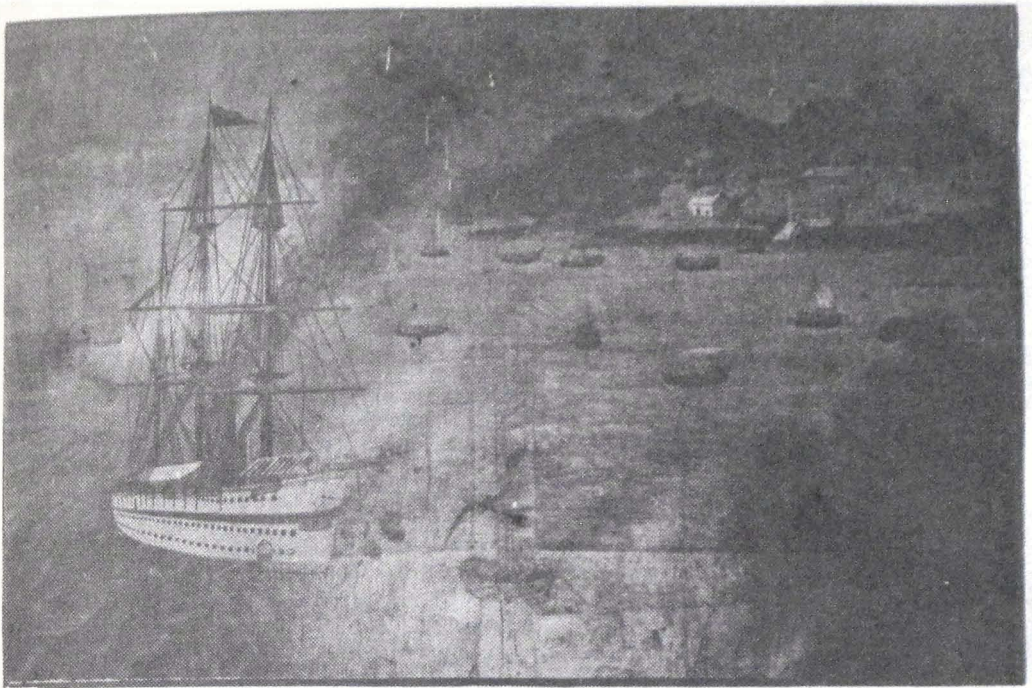
92. i. e. Benjamin Lumley, the Manager of 'Her Majesty's Theatre.' Describing the impression the theatre made on him, Jang himself told Lumley that 'he did not know how "to sit still", so much was he struck with the brilliancy on both sides' (B Lumley *Reminiscences of the Opera*, London, 1864, p. 282).

मासिज् माहितासा देवजीउ
 तईले पलठनूलाई उदिदिपकराका
 दनेपंगरीलाई तुरंततानावानावुजी
 नेलगलफंदिगेकीदे
 वरूजानामीलीजसकवरयेका
 नूतदुनूछतुरनूतकयेपगर
 तेरावेसलमा नू तीरजोवाकरीग
 छुठकरेजागीरेकादुनूदेसवाल
 लाईपर्वतेलाईत्रीसुगंगाकठाई
 देदेसवाललाईसीसागडीकठाई
 दे

A letter written by Jang from Europe to his brother Bam Bahadur, who was apparently having difficulties at home: 'If an officer challenges your orders to the army, remove his insignia at once and place him in irons. If four (sc. or more) persons gather in anyone's house, arrest the man at once. If anyone whether out of or in service, Brahmin or Indian, pays court (*cakri garcha*) to His Highness the Mahila Sahib, (i.e. Prince Upendra, later implicated in the 1851 plot against Jang) without your permission, then if he is a Nepali (*parbate*) put him across the Trisuli, and if he is an Indian (*deswala*, c.f. p. 124, fn.89) put him beyond Sisa Gadhi (also known as 'Chisapani', this fortress controlled the main route to India).' (Facsimile reproduced from *Nepali*, No. 90, by courtesy of Kamal Dixit.)



Sketch of Jang in London, first published in the Illustrated London News of 8 June 1850 and subsequently in L'Illustration of 30 August 1850.



Painting showing either the **Haddington** or the **Ripon**, the vessels which carried Jang from Calcutta to Suez and Alexandria to Southampton respectively. (Reproduced by courtesy of Colonel Shambhu Shamsheer J. B. Rana)



Platform scene at Paddington Station. (From a painting by W.P. Frith, reproduced by courtesy of Royal Holloway College)



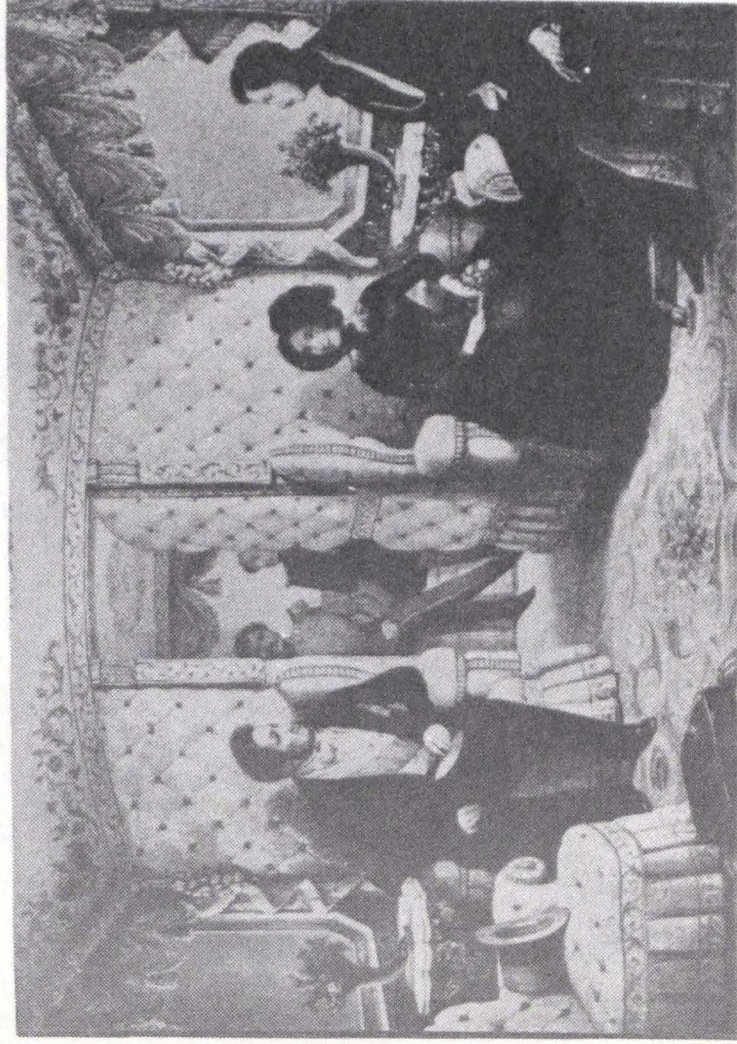
Race-goers at Ascot in 1844. (Illustrated London News.)



Police patrol in the London slums. (Gustave Doré)



Lord John Russell (second from the left) and Lord Palmerston (seated in front of the map) in the Coalition Cabinet of 1854. (Painting by J. Gilbert, reproduced by courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery)



Queen Victoria and Prince Albert on board the Royal Train with King Louis-Philippe of France during a visit by the latter to Britain in the 1840's. (By courtesy of the Guildhall Library)



Queen Victoria's carriage in procession in 1837.
(By courtesy of the Guildhall Library)



Traffic at Hyde Park Corner in 1851. (Illustrated London News)



Vauxhall.

Entertainment at Vauxhall Gardens. (Punch, July 1850)



The tower from which Jang was reputedly ordered to jump by Crown Prince Surendra. Originally erected by Bhimsen Thapa, who had to re-build it after it collapsed in an earthquake in 1890 V.S. (1833/4). The present structure, re-built a second time after the more recent earthquake of 1934, is two storeys shorter than in Jang's day.

the major, the lieutenants and the subbas all set off. When they reached the place where they were to see the dancing, they were greeted by a delightful sight: it was a tall, seven-storeyed building, built round a central space as big as a fruit-market. In this space, seated on chairs, benches and cushions, was a crowd of about four thousand townspeople, both men and women, who had each paid one mohar⁹³ to watch the performance. The building had between eighty and ninety windows fitted with thin glass⁹⁴ and at these were seated nobles and officials with their wives, daughters and daughters-in-law, all wearing elaborate jewelry and costumes. The Prime Minister of Nepal took his seat in a window on one side. All the nobles and ordinary people who had come to watch the performance raised their hats in salute to the Prime Minister. Everyone greatly enjoyed the sight of his jewelry and costume and he was welcomed with honour. At this moment the band started to play and a magical entertainment commenced. At one moment the sun was rising and it was faint morning twilight, then came afternoon brightness and finally the setting of the golden evening sun and nightfall. Then the moon rose and the stars came out. It clouded over and there were flashes of lightning. A machine was used to produce sultry heat and then to make waterfalls cascade down and clouds discharge their loads so it became cool again. They saw ships travelling over the sea, and also great cities. Sometimes large forests were shown and sometimes huge armies in battle. Bonaparte was shown with his army of five million conquering the lands of nine sovereigns and then battling

93. i. e. half a rupee, and thus the equivalent of one shilling (five new pence).

94. Obviously the theatre-boxes, which the author apparently supposed were separated from the main auditorium by glass screens. Nepali *aina* means both 'mirror' and 'pane of glass', so the reference might alternatively be to mirrors at the rear of the boxes, but the use of the adjective *patla* ('thin') makes this unlikely.

with his troops amidst the snowy mountains of Russia.⁹⁵ The people were amazed and astounded at this entertainment. Suddenly thirty or forty girls like Indra's apsaras came and stood on the stage and there was great astonishment. On seeing these beautiful girls of 15 or 16 years, their costumes and the way they danced like butterflies on the wing, everyone was captivated. Delighted with the performance, the Prime Minister gave them a reward of 1500 rupees.⁹⁶ The aristocracy spend altogether three hundred thousand rupees a month in rewards for these dances, so devoted are the people of Belait to their pleasures. The dance troupe's instructor receives a salary of 150,000 rupees a month while the dancers are given 12,000 rupees by the government.

There is a *bagsal*⁹⁷ outside London to the south, and one

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95. Scene changes at 'Her Majesty's' were produced using back cloths wound round cylinders above the stage and let down by ropes. In elaborate productions dozens of men were required to operate the system. The sequence described first in the text might be from Halevy's opera *La Tempesta* (based on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*), which had its premiere at the theatre on 8 July 1850. The Napoleonic scenes could be from a separate production, the author having confused two different occasions.
96. This sum, and the three given subsequently, are equivalent to £150, £30,000, £15,000 and £1,200 respectively. These amounts would have to be multiplied at least ten-fold to retain the same purchasing power today, and some of them must be exaggerations. However in 1847 the singer Jenny Lind had been paid £5,600 for a single season at the theatre, while in 1845 Lumley raised £90,000 by 'leasing' boxes for a fixed number of years to prominent members of London society. The statement that the performers received a government salary is probably a misunderstanding caused by the name 'Her Majesty's Theatre', but they certainly did receive expensive presents from upper class patrons (see B. Lumley, *Reminiscences of the Opera, op. cit.*, and D. Nalbach, *The King's Theatre 1704-1867*, London, 1972).
97. This was Vauxhall Gardens, the well-known amusement park and entertainment centre situated on the south bank of the Thames about a mile upstream from Westminster Bridge.

day the official in charge issued an invitation to the Prime Minister. Suggesting it would be a good idea for him to see the entertainment at his *bagsal* the official came himself in a small steamship to fetch him and they set off. As the ship sailed along it was accompanied by between one thousand and twelve hundred boats carrying ladies, young women and officials from the city. From every roof the people who lived in the houses along the River Thames fired in salute the small guns they kept at home, and all doffed their hats. Just as people were greatly impressed when Queen Victoria passed by, so they were greatly impressed by this new person.

When they reached the *bagsal* guns were fired in salute. There was a crowd numbering several thousands. The mansion itself was seven storeys high and built round a central courtyard, with four separate out-buildings and five gardens. It was a very beautiful place covering an area four miles in circumference. The paths looked as if they were in a picture, and the large garden was like Vrindravan with its hanging creepers.⁹⁸ In one place an area for horse-riding had been set aside and between fifteen and twenty horses were ready saddled there. Elsewhere areas had been set aside for rifle shooting and loaded rifles and pistols had been provided. There was also a place for archery where bows and arrows and archers' gloves were kept ready. In one place *gatakapharis*⁹⁹

As well as slightly distorting it ('b' and 'v' are frequently confused in Nepali) the author mistook the place-name for a generic term for such establishments. A visit by Jang to Vauxhall is briefly reported in the *Times* of 20 June. He, or other members of his party, made many subsequent visits, these sometimes being advertised in advance by the management in order to draw larger crowds.

98. *vrindravan* (usually spelt *vrindavan*) has been taken here as referring specifically to the famous wood at Mathura where Krishna was born. However the word may also be used as a common noun meaning simply 'wood' or 'grove.'
99. Meaning unknown. Kamal Dixit, who supplied the translator with the correct reading (*latakaphari* in the text of the 3rd.

were ready, in another wrestling was in progress, while in a third girls as beautiful as apsaras were dancing on a rope. Elsewhere there was a conjuring show, a band playing, balloons flying and a firework show. There was a delightful display of gas lamps and candles. The inside of the house was illuminated by chandeliers, candelabra,¹⁰⁰ lanterns and wall-lamps, while in the garden pots containing lamps had been hung from every branch. The brightness was beyond description. Stalls selling things to eat were also provided. The nobles went up and paid the appropriate fee, then some rode horses, others fired rifles, engaged in archery. played cards for money, danced or played musical instruments. Thus people enjoyed themselves there without a break, night and day.

The Prime Minister took aim with bow and arrow and with a rifle in the areas set aside for this and everyone was amazed at his constant success. Whatever amusement he went to see, the crowd kept pressing round him. People were full of his praises, commenting on the Prime Minister's handsome appearance, his elegant dress, his skill at rifle-shooting and archery, the great intelligence displayed in his conversation and the presence of mind with which God had endowed him, and also on the nation which could produce such a man. Wearing the most splendid gems, worth hundreds of thousands of rupees, exceedingly beautiful women, the wives and daughters of lords and dukes, came up to touch and look at the Prime Minister's costume. They fetched interpreters and then talked and joked with him and kissed his hand.¹⁰¹

edition being a misprint), suggests a possible connection with the Hindustani *kaphir*, 'African' or 'negro'.

100. The words *mainbatti jhainjhar* (*bhainjhar* in the 3rd. edition is a misprint) have been taken together as meaning 'candle-chandelier' viz. 'candelabra') but the translation 'candles and chandeliers' is also possible.

101. It is uncertain exactly what Jang thought of this and of other examples of highly un-Hindu behaviour by western women. While on the way home to Kathmandu he married in Benares a young daughter of the ex-Raja of Coorg (see

They talked on and on, their faces assumed flirtatious expressions, blushes came to their cheeks, perspiration stood out on their foreheads, their bosoms swelled and they were altogether consumed with passion. When the Prime Minister started to move off, saying that it was late and time for him to go home, they quickly seized his hands and urged him to stay a little longer. They treated him with great respect. They asked him when he was returning to Nepal, and when he said he would leave soon, they asked him why and begged him to stay for good if possible, or failing that for ten years or at least for one year. Their faces fell and they said it was hardly worth having come at all for such a little time and that when they heard him say he was going, they felt as if arrows were piercing their hearts. They asked whether, if he had to go, he would at least leave a portrait with them so they could look at it and always be reminded of him. They said they would be glad if, when he got home, he would write to them to say he had arrived, and as they were speaking their eyes filled with tears and their hearts became so heavy that they were finally unable to say any more. Such was the honour shown him by the really fine

p. 221 below), and one of his companions noted how he made her 'shake hands, and behave otherwise quite like a European lady' (Letter of Laurence Oliphant to his mother, quoted in Margaret Oliphant, *Memoirs of the Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, His Wife*, Edinburgh and London, Blackwood, 1891, Vol. 1, p. 41). Orthodoxy reasserted itself, however, presumably as a matter of political necessity: when in 1875/6 the Prince of Wales, his guest on a hunting expedition in the Nepalese Tarai, asked to be introduced to his wives, Jang stressed the difference between European and Indian ways and said that the meeting could only take place if the Prince would not be offended by a greeting from a distance instead of a handshake (see Kamal Dixit (ed.), *Battis Salko Rojanamca* ('Diary for the Year 32', i. e. 1932 V. S., 1875/6 A. D.), Kathmandu, Jagadamaba Prakashan, 1966, p. 100; this contemporary account of the Prince's visit is similar in style to the *Belait-Yatra*, and was also presumably written by one of Jang's entourage.)

people there. Even with a thousand tongues it would be impossible to describe those people adequately.

Outside London

One day there was a visit to a city called Pimla on the sea-coast west of London.¹⁰² It possesses a fort and barrackes, and is very beautiful and strongly built, a delightful place a thousand miles from London. The inhabitants are charming. The town is well provided with different commodities, including fresh fruit, vegetables, corn and dried fruit. The Prime Minister reached there in a single day, travelling by train. There was a garrison of four regiments with a lord-sahib in charge, who came to meet him. A nineteen gun salute was fired and he was provided with accommodation and food and shown every kind of consideration. A dance-show was under way in the centre of the city. Deciding to see it, he made his way there. A crowd hundreds of thousands strong was present, all of whom raised their hats to salute the Prime Minister. They cheered him with shouts of 'varey, varey' and then everyone watched the dancing.

On the seashore enormous funnelled ships were under construction. Five hundred men were working on each one. With that number employed on a ship each day, half the work had been completed in six months and the people there said that it would be finished in another six months. The ships were three hundred feet long and seventy-five broad and a single one carried one hundred guns, had accommodation for one hundred men and was five or six decks high; this was the pattern of the fifty or sixty warships under construction. They used machines to move the anvils, machines to plait the ropes and machines to carry out

102. i. e. Plymouth, where Jang arrived on 29 July. For further details see the reports in the *Times* of 31 July and 3 August (chapter 3 below). The author has greatly exaggerated the distance from London, which is in fact approximately two hundred miles.

repairs. With machines doing the work the ships were of good quality and strongly built, and progress was rapid.

Five hundred miles from Pimla is a city called Bramadi.¹⁰³ Its industries are the smelting of metals, iron and glass and the manufacture of cannons, rifles, cannonballs, bullets and other munitions, pots and pans, mirrors, chandeliers, lamps on stands and for fitting on walls, and metal portraits. There are iron, lead and stone-charcoal mines and other metals are also mined in the area. From this place various metal objects, pots and pans and glass containers are sent to all parts of the island of Ilind.¹⁰⁴ All the city's inhabitants are craftsmen and there are houses for ten or twelve thousand of them. When the visit took place a copper tower for placing in the ocean was under construction,¹⁰⁵ and they were producing sheets of glass fifteen or eighteen feet square. Metal pots are gilded in Bramadi.¹⁰⁶ The citizens are very rich and it is a delightful place, densely populated because employment is available.

Entertainment

London's daily amusements— In some places, they construct enormous balloons of silk, the size of houses. The balloon is filled with smoke and air by a machine and fourteen people plus a horse and rider are then embarked. A boat and oars are tied to the car of the balloon and then the fourteen men, horse, boat and oars take off into the sky. As the balloon, which is as large as a house, rises upwards it becomes smaller and smaller until it appears the

103. i. e. Birmingham (actual distance from Plymouth about one hundred and seventy-five miles) visited by Jang on 1 and 2 August.

104. i. e. England.

105. The lighthouse mentioned in the *Midland Counties Herald* report (reprinted in chapter 3).

106. Presumably referring to electro-plating, which was carried out at one of the factories Jang visited (Pudma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, p. 140).

size of a puffed latte seed and then disappears completely from sight. If, as sometimes happens, it lands in the sea, the men board the boat, row ashore, and then travel back by rail.¹⁰⁷ The people who go to watch a balloon ascent pay one mohar each, and the total receipts are fourteen or fifteen thousand rupees.¹⁰⁸

Sometimes there are fire-work displays and sometimes mock-

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107. When Jang attended Epsom races on 29 May he was met by a balloonist who invited him to a demonstration to take place a day or two later (Cavenagh, *Reminiscences, op. cit.*, p. 122). Some of the party subsequently witnessed balloon ascents from Vauxhall on 22 June and 5 July. The report of the former occasion in the *Illustrated London News* of 29 June described their reaction:

‘Three of the members of the Nepalese Embassy were present, to whom the baloon, when inflated, was an object of great interest, as also was the ascent. They examined the baloon with great minuteness, and its construction evidently excited their wonder and admiration. As it ascended they stood gazing at it with marked anxiety and attention, and remained on the spot until it was almost lost to view...’

Twelve years before Jang’s journey King Rajendra, in conversation with Brian Hodgson, had revealed a detailed knowledge of aeronautical progress in Europe (FSC 16 May 1838, No. 26: Hodgson to Government, 28 March 1838), but the author of the *Belait - Yatra* is unlikely to have been so well informed and may not even have seen an ascent in 1850 personally. His fanciful description probably combines an eyewitness account from a companion with garbled reports of other flights which took place that summer. On 31 July, while Jang was in Plymouth, the balloonist Green made an ascent mounted on the back of a pony (*Morning Post*, 1 August), while a flight on 22 July involved a ‘Patent Aerial Machine,’ which was a balloon car designed to act as a boat in case of a landing at sea (*Illustrated London News*, 27 July).

108. One mohar, or half a rupee, was the equivalent of a shilling (five new pence). In fact spectators at Vauxhall had to pay two shillings and six pence (twelve and a half new pence) to enter the main grounds, and then the same again to enter the balloon enclosure.

battles and wrestling matches. There are dance-shows with horses, on whose backs beautiful women fight girded with weapons. Five-year old girls dance on one leg on the backs of the horses as they run round. Sometimes in the evening people go to a dance-hall wearing masks and watch the fun, with no one able to recognise anyone else. There are horse-races, at which sixty or seventy thousand rupees are won and lost and the spectators number as many as two or three hundred thousand.¹⁰⁹ People arrive in thousands of carriages. Sometimes on the River Thames there are boat-races on which three or four thousand rupees are won or lost. There are displays of pictures and exhibitions of new designs, for which eminent craftsmen make the arrangements.¹¹⁰ In some places they keep land and sea creatures from the twelve islands of Belait and from Hindustan.¹¹¹ Eminent lords, dukes, ladysahibs, memsahibs and missisahibs wearing lovely costumes are among the thousands of people who come to see the animals.

Some people cross back and forth through an opening in the road on a quayside by the Thames.¹¹² After they leave the street

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109. On his Epsom outing Jang correctly predicted the Derby winner, Vortigern, but unfortunately does not appear to have placed a bet.
110. Jang attended a regatta on the Thames on 6 July, but did not find it very interesting (Cavenagh, *Reminiscences*, p. 137). Nor, apparently, did he appreciate the paintings at the Royal Academy, where he 'looked tired and puzzled and seemed glad to get away' (*Atlas for India*, 7 June). In mentioning 'new designs' the author was perhaps thinking particularly of the 'Exposition of the Products of French Industry' which Jang visited on 11 July (*Morning Post*, 12 July 1850).
111. Jang was at the London Zoo on 16 and 17 June.
112. This is the tunnel between Rotherhithe and Wapping built by Marc Isambard Brunel. It was the first ever tunnel beneath a river-bed, its construction which took place between 1825 and 1842, being made possible only by Brunel's invention of the tunnelling shield. As funds proved insufficient to provide access ramps the original intention of carrying road traffic had to be abandoned and it was used instead by pedestrians

the river flows above them and ten or twelve thousand boats go past. Inside the entrance one finds stalls on both sides. This bridge is a tube of copper as large as a house and is so long that the far end is out of sight. It is an object of wonder to everyone and is illuminated by gas-lamps night and day. Inside there is a two-lane road lined by shops where everything you could want is available. People come from abroad to see this bridge and are amazed by the sight

Thus entertainment in the city is provided by balloon-ascents, animals and birds from other countries, and by exotic items including pictures, books and trees, while sea and land animals are also kept there. Visitors from all parts of the country come to see these amusements, some by carriage, some on horse-back, others on foot. The people of Belait are always happy: there is no weeping, rioting or fighting, no one assaults, insults, curses or upbraids his neighbour. They are always happy and nothing is ever wanting.

Vocational Education

Charity in the city of London— The very wealthy, the nobles and the merchants combine in groups of forty or fifty and pledge as large a contribution as they can afford: ten million, a hundred thousand or a thousand rupees, according to their means. The money is collected together, honest men are appointed to look after it and it is then loaned at interest to people in commerce. The interest is used to construct houses built round a central courtyard, which cover an area two miles in circumference and contain a canal and a pool in which ships are placed. In one part of the building chairs and couches are made, elsewhere flour-mills and laundries are set up, classrooms are built and provision is made for masonry, carpentry, weaving, leather-work and inlay-work. Whatever the trade, men skilled in it are hired and given

(a million people had paid to walk through it within three months of its opening in 1843) and as a venue for fetes.

a monthly wage Children from the age of five up to twenty come to this place for their education: they enter the building and have their names enrolled. They are assigned to an expert in the trade they wish to learn and the instruction begins. Some learn to be seamen, others study books, or learn leather-work or masonry or carpentry, while others are taught to work with wood, copper or brass, to mould metal, to work with iron, gold or silver, to do inlay-work, or to sew, weave and wash cloth. Some study books on military training. Each one studies intently his own particular trade. The children's food and clothing is provided out of the charitable fund. There are four or five thousand children in a single establishment and thirty or forty such establishments in the city. From the age of five until they reach twenty the children live there learning a trade. After the age of twenty each is offered a position in his particular trade. If anyone declines the position he is allowed to return to his own home.¹¹³

Farewell to Britain

On the 6th. of Bhadra 1907¹¹⁴ Victoria, sovereign of Hind-

113. Discounting some discrepancies in points of detail, this reads like a description of the schools opened in some London districts at around this time to provide vocational education for the children of the destitute poor on lines pioneered by James Kay-Shuttleworth in the 1830's. They were operated by the Boards of Guardians who maintained the workhouses referred to on p. 170 above and were thus dependent on public funds. From the *Belait-Yatra's* careful description of the financial arrangements it seems, therefore, that Jang (or other members of the party) did not visit a Board school but rather a similar institution run as a private charity. Although the district schools were of considerable size, and hence known as 'barrack schools', 'two miles in circumference' is, of course, a considerable exaggeration. For further details see F. Sheppard, *London 1808-1870: the Infernal Wen, op. cit.*

114. Corresponding to 14 August 1850. That this is the correct date for Jang's final audience with the Queen is confirmed by the notice in the *London Gazette*. The departure for France took place on 20 August.

Belait, her Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief,¹¹⁵ Duke Weland, Prince Albert and various lords, dukes, Company men and high officials from all over Belait city in session together sent for the Nepalese Prime Minister and spoke to him in terms of high regard. 'Your Excellency,' they said, 'came to meet with us and it has all gone very well. The visit to London Belait by the Prime Minister of the independent Gorkha state has been reported in the newspapers in the twelve countries of Belait. Each paper has given a lengthy account. They say that the Prime Minister is a magnanimous young man and a great minister, and that his visit will prove very valuable. Your coming here means that the the two governments are firm friends, and it has been good for everyone on both sides — nobles, military, common people and merchants alike.' The Queen and the high officials went on to say that henceforth there would never be any obstacle to their friendship. 'Now you are going,' they said, 'everything you need for the journey— horses, carriages, coaches, litters, ships, money for provision, servants and anything else— will be provided by our officials at each stage. There will be no trouble at all. They will see you as far as the Gorkha frontier.' They added that they would be very glad if when he reached the Gorkha court he wrote to them with news of his journey and arrival. After obtaining what he needed, the Prime Minister took his leave and set off for the territory of the French sovereign.¹¹⁶

115. It is uncertain whether the author intended 'Commander-in-Chief' to be taken (correctly) as the title of 'Duk Weland' (i. e. the Dukc of Wellington), as forming part of the Prime Minister's title, or as referring to a third individual. Cf. p. 173, fn. 56.

116. The 'French sovereign' was Louis Napoleon, nephew of Nepoleon Bonaparte. He had been elected President in December 1848, ten months after the revolution which overthrew King Louis-Philippe. Having failed to persuade the National Assembly to amend the constitution to enable him to stand for a second presidential term, he staged a coup in December 1851, after which he formally abolished the republic and proclaimed himself Emperor Napoleon III.

Reception in France

Four hundred miles from London is the city of Paris,¹¹⁷ the French sovereign's capital. The journey involves a sea-crossing of eighty miles. The Prime Minister set out by rail from Belait three hours before nightfall and reached the coast in the evening. During the crossing by steamer everyone became giddy and sick: no one on board could keep upright and they had to lie down and go to sleep. The reason was that a gale had arisen and the force of the waves it produced rocked the ship up and down causing great difficulties. Nine hours after nightfall the Prime Minister reached the coast and got some sleep in a hotel. In the morning he boarded the train and reached Paris three hours after dawn. At the news that the Gorkha Prime Minister General Jang Bahadur Kunwar Ranaji was arriving that day a crowd of one hundred and twenty-five thousand had gathered, including people of all classes. Everyone greeted him and senior officials came up and asked him how he was. The government had arranged for him to stay in a famous house in the lovely city of Paris.¹¹⁸ A great amount of food and other necessities was waiting there. The French Prime Minister¹¹⁹ escorted him to the house and was most hospitable. He was treated with great consideration and attention.

117. Actual distance about 250 miles.

118. Jang stayed at the Hotel Sinet on rue Faubourg Saint Honoré.

119. There was at this time no French Prime Minister, as Louis Napoleon had himself been acting as head of the Council of Ministers since his dismissal of Barrot the previous year. Nevertheless the author refers to the 'Prime Minister' here and on p. 207 below, where he also describes him as the President's *bhai*, while 'the President's *bhai* the minister' (p. 213), who accompanied Jang to Fontainebleau, is presumably the same individual. As we know from Cavenagh (*Reminiscences*, p. 150) that their guide at Fontainebleau was the president's aide, Prince Bacchicochi, and from the French press, that Bacchiochi had escorted Jang to his interview with Louis Napoleon, this is most probably the man whom the

The day after the arrival the French Prime Minister¹²⁰ came to take him for a drive in a carriage and showed him all the sights of the city: the interior and the exterior of the palace, the storerooms, the parks and gardens, the canals, tanks and cisterns, paintings, dance-shows in various places, the fortifications, the city centre, elephants and horses, strange animals and birds from different countries, and the churches. The local merchants and craftsmen came bringing wonderful things, After viewing these the Prime Minister bought between a hundred and a hundred and fifty thousand rupees worth of items.

At this time the French sovereign was in the west of the country where he was on a pleasure trip. After about a week he returned to Paris and on the following day sent an invitation for the Nepalese Prime Minister to come to the palace.¹²¹ The Prime Minister did so. The sovereign, who was sitting in a drawing-room, got up and came to the door to receive him. He took him by the hand and greeted him. He asked him about his journey and the Prime Minister gave him a full account. Speaking in compli-

Belait-Yatra is referring to. He was the nephew of Louis Napoleon's cousin Napoleone-Elisa, the daughter of Felix Bacchiochi and of Marie-Elisa, who was the first Napoleon's sister. In the passages just cited *bhai* thus means 'cousin' rather than 'younger brother'; this extension of the word's basic meaning is very frequent in Nepali. For further details concerning Bacchiochi see *La Grande Encyclopédie*, Paris, n. d., Vol. 4, p. 1068.

120. Assuming the author is right about the day the 'Prime Minister' will again have been Prince Bacchiochi (see previous note). However Padma Rana (*Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, pg. 142) says that Jang was shown the sights of Paris on 24 August, viz. *three* days after his arrival, by Louis Napoleon's cousin 'Joseph Charles Bonaparte' and this person, more commonly known as Prince Napoleon, may thus be the one here referred to. (See *La Grande Encyclopédie, op. cit.* Vol. 7, p. 259, s. v. 'BONAPARTE, Napoleon-Joseph-Charles-Paul')
121. After returning from a tour of the provinces Louis Napoleon received Jang at the Elysée Palace on 30 August.

mentary terms the sovereign told him that he had heard how in Hindustan the Gorkha and British territories bordered on one another and that it was by divine providence that they were actually meeting that day. Then he said that if there was anything he needed to have or if he wished to see dancing, the fortifications, the army, the lawbook, the arsenals, or anything else the country had to offer, then he should mention it to his cousin, the Prime Minister, who would arrange everything for him. At this point the sovereign called his own Prime Minister into his presence. The interview was a very courteous one.

France has an army of six hundred thousand.¹²² The former sovereign's army and the common people staged a revolt, established a republic, drove out the sovereign and made Bonaparte President.¹²³ As President he has kept the people and the army happy with his policies. There is dancing and suchlike entertainment in various places. Everyone applauds the President.¹²⁴

Immensely wealthy merchants live in Paris and the city's inhabitants are very rich. The whole city is full of splendid mansions with glass windows, glass roofs and various kinds of pictures. Chandeliers provide the illumination. Gold and silver are used for making pots and pans or for gilding them, and for the pictures in the houses. They also make gold and silver thread which is used

122. A law of 1868 fixed the regular army's establishment at 640,000 but, as the Franco-Prussian War demonstrated two years later, the actual strength was considerably less (*La Grande Encyclopédie, op. cit.*, Vol. 18, p. 142), and this presumably was also the case in 1850.

123. For these events see above, p. 205 fn. 119.

124. The author perhaps had particularly in mind the reception the President received on 14 September when he returned to Paris from a visit to Cherbourg. Cavenagh (*Reminiscences, op. cit.*, p. 150) describes how the crowds ran down rue Faubourg St. Honoré, where the British Embassy and Jang's hotel were both situated, shouting 'Vive Napoléon,' 'Vive l'empereur.'

for embroidering hems and for tassles.¹²⁵ These are the only uses for gold and silver. No one wears these metals as jewelry. They wear precious stones if they can afford them, otherwise no ornaments at all. The women, whatever their class, all wear a dress of satin, a woollen shawl, stockings and gloves, a white hat and shoes. The men are all dressed on the one pattern: a hat of black woollen cloth, a shirt, trousers, gloves, socks and a scarf. Every section of the community attends to its own business.

No nation on earth has men of skill and intelligence to match the French. They are leaders in the construction of cannon, rifles and arsenals. In different kinds of printing on cloth, in manufacturing generally, in ship building, in the construction of litters, railway coaches, clocks, pictures, chandeliers and other kinds of lamp, large mirrors and different kinds of crystal vases the French are pioneers. Other countries copy the design afterwards to manufacture it themselves.

The main streets are one hundred and fifty feet broad, the other streets seventy-five. Throughout the city the squares, the large open spaces and the streets are paved with stone. On the roadsides shade is provided by large trees. Thousands of coaches move along the roads. There is no sewage, rubbish, mud or dirt visible in the streets. No one is to be seen in the city wearing dirty, poor quality or torn clothes. In the midst of the town there are huge parks in which flowers of many different colours make a beautiful display.

The parks are full of birds from different countries, deer, varieties of bear, monkeys, zebras, rhinos, buffalos, sheep, goats and other kinds of animal, and of flowers and trees. The streets are built as if they were in a picture. There are shops selling things to eat— bread, meat and wine. The gas-lights in the parks, in the city-centre, in the squares and large open spaces, in the streets and in the windows are as bright as moonlight. Always and every-

125. *guchali*, presumably a variant of *guccha* ('cluster' or 'bunch').

where the lights shine through the night as if it were Diwali. When night falls the young people of the city, both men and women, come to the parks, dance and buy and eat bread, meat and wine. Laughing and joking, they enjoy themselves greatly. Some learn to ride horses, others fire rifles at targets. Thus people enjoy themselves greatly, night and day. As for the army, this is stationed on all sides of the city at a distance of ten or twelve miles in the forts and barracks built for it. Seeing this city of Paris is like being on Mount Kailas, and indeed, one finds oneself suspecting it might really be Kailas.¹²⁶ Such is the city of Paris.

In the middle of the city there is a tower built from cannon-balls brought back by Bonaparte after his conquest of nine realms. By ascending the tower one gets a wonderful view of the heaven-like city.¹²⁷

The Prime Minister was taken to a number of palaces built for pleasure and relaxation. In the drawing-rooms of the richly decorated palaces carpets, tables and couches are placed at intervals, and there are chandeliers, mirrors, pictures, bowls of gold and silver, and different kinds of vases, all making a splendid display. From the windows on one side can be seen huge ponds, with delightful fountains sending water up to a height of a hundred and fifty feet. On another side are huge gardens. The spreading branches of the groves provide deep shade. Many mansions of this sort have been built at various locations.

The nobles are all energetically engaged in their own work. No one quarrels with anyone else. The chief nobles are ten or twelve ministers, all with equal powers. If one of them does anything

126 A mountain in SW Tibet, reputed home of the gods, and especially of Shiva.

127 This refers to the Vendome column, erected between 1806 and 1810, and decorated with bas-reliefs made from the metal of guns captured at the Battle of Austerlitz. The 'nine realms' are probably meant to be the standard list of twelve (see p. 153 fn. 14), less France, Britain and Russia.

wrong, the other ten ministers all judge his case. If any new problem occurs, all of them are consulted.¹²⁸ They work as a team.

Fifty-four miles from the French city is a large forest, called Fatanbulu, in the midst of which a town has been built.¹²⁹ Two regiments of foot guards and one of cavalry are stationed there. There is a palace which cost seventy million rupees to build, is five storeys high and has hanging in it pictures of the sovereigns of the last three hundred years. There are pictures showing the royal army fighting in different places, with nymphs watching from flying chariots. The chandeliers are past counting. Chairs, couches and thrones, all kept clean, are positioned at intervals. In the worship-room¹³⁰ a glittering collection of chalices, ornaments, costumes and rugs have been placed as offerings to a god who looks as if he is about to speak. These objects, which defy description, have been left undisturbed for the last three years. In the reception-room are various articles made of gold: the pictures, the chandeliers and the surrounds of the glass windows are all of that metal. Rubies, emeralds, diamonds, pearls and coral are set in the sovereign's table. Opening the windows on all sides of the drawing-room¹³¹ one sees to the south large ponds covering

128. This description of the Council of Ministers implies, correctly, that there was no 'Prime Minister', despite the references in other passages to the holder of such an office (see above p. 205 fn 119).

129. Fontainebleau, visited by Jang on 16 September, is 40 miles east of Paris. The present palace was built in the 16th century on the site of an earlier hunting lodge, but much additional work was done subsequently. King Louis-Philippe, before his overthrow in 1848, had carried out an extensive restoration programme at a cost of over three million francs (seven million rupees). The *Belait-Yatra's* figure of '7 crore' (a crore is ten million) perhaps results from confusion between millions and crores in interpreting from French into Hindustani.

130. i. e. the Trinity Chapel.

131. There is no single room in the chateau with a view in all directions as described here, but the author was perhaps

an area two miles in circumference, surrounded by stone steps and containing very clear, cold water with fish and swans. To the east are large gardens full of different kinds of flower in bloom. At the time of the Prime Minister's visit several varieties of fruit were ready to pick: pomegranates, grapes, pears, apples and many others. Fountains water the trees along picturesque paths. The gardens are indeed very beautiful. To the north is a fine clean city with a large market. To the west is a large open space where at the time a thousand cavalry were drilling. The citizens had come in large numbers to watch the delightful sight. The local people are very pleasant and, as it is neither too hot nor too cold, it is a very comfortable place.

Fatanbulu has a connection with Bonaparte¹³² who gathered an army of 500,000, defeated the peoples of seven realms and then went into Russia. On seeing this army the Russian sovereign lost confidence and evacuating his own army and people from his capital set it on fire so that it blazed as he fled. At this moment it started to snow. Bonaparte's army was unable to find shelter and was exposed to the winter weather, as a result of which only three hundred thousand out of the army of five million survived. The forces of the sovereigns of nine realms took this opportunity to come after him; now that Bonaparte was in trouble and retreating they were in pursuit. As Bonaparte neared his own city of Paris, all the ordinary citizens appealed to him. 'The five gods have turned against you,' they said, 'your soldiers have been killed, in Russia and now the sovereigns of the nine realms are pursuing you. They will destroy the city. So you must go to the town of Fatanbulu in the forest, where there is a fine palace for you to stay in.' They said they would give him help in other ways, and Bonaparte, accepting that the people had spoken correctly, went to

thinking of the Francis I Gallery, which overlooks the Courtyard of the Fountains and an ornamental lake to the south. The 'large open space' on the west is the White Horse Court.

132. viz. the first Napoleon.

the town in the forest called Fatanbulu and stayed there.

At this point the sovereigns of the nine realms consulted together. They concluded they would never conquer the country. Its people were too strong, and, besides, God had already punished them enough. One sovereign had been defeated by nine and it was not right that a country defeated by nine sovereigns should be taken over by any one of them alone. Besides the people would not accept such an arrangement. Therefore they ought to put on the throne the former French sovereign who had been deposed by Bonaparte and who was now living in London. The nine sovereigns in conference made a solemn agreement under which Napoleon would be sent to the island of Yalavu, and given an allowance of one hundred thousand rupees a month, equivalent to one million two hundred thousand a year, while the old French sovereign would be restored and they themselves would in future remain in their own countries. The agreement also provided that if any of the sovereigns committed any offence the other eight would combine to defeat him. The nine sovereigns placed the former French sovereign on the throne, while Bonaparte, after signing a statement that he had abdicated willingly, went to the island of Yalavu. After signing the treaty the sovereigns also returned to their own countries.¹³³

133. There are some peculiarities in this passage, and it is also difficult to see how the author calculated the totals of Napoleon's adversaries: they are neither the correct figures, nor do they accord with the assumption he himself seems to make elsewhere, viz. that before the Russian campaign Napoleon had conquered all the countries of Europe except Russia and Britain (v. above, p.209 fn. 127). Nevertheless the broad outlines are correct. Neapoleon invaded Russia in 1812 with an army of 453,000 (the *Belait-Yatra's* '50 lakh' (500,000) is perhaps a copyist's error for '5 lakh' (500,000)). Following the failure of this campaign a new coalition was formed against him, consisting ultimately of seven states: Russia, Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, Sweden, Spain, and

The President asked the Nepalese Prime Minister whether he would like to visit Fatanbulu as it was worth seeing and was the place where the nine sovereigns had concluded their agreement. The Prime Minister said that he would like to visit it, so accompanied by the President's cousin, the Minister,¹³⁴ he travelled by rail to the town of Fatanbulu. He was told about the forest town's palace, the ponds, the barracks, the gardens, the fortifications, the cavalry's training, and about Bonaparte's exploits. The Prime Minister was then taken in a carriage to see the whole of the forest. He was shown the work that each previous sovereign had had done and was treated with great consideration. Then he made the return journey of 54 miles to Paris. The round trip of 108 miles was completed in just under three hours—their speed was faster than the wind.

The whole country is full of gardens and the people grow a lot of fruit. Rice is not cultivated but wheat, oats and cotton are.

Portugal. The allies invaded France at the end of 1813 and in March 1814 Napoleon left Paris to prepare an attack on the approaching armies from the rear. However, on reaching Fontainebleau, he learnt that the provisional French government under Talleyrand had declared him deposed. Persuaded by his Marshals, he abdicated formally on 6 April (Cavenagh (*Reminiscences, op . cit* , p. 150) records that Prince Bacchiochi showed the Nepalese party the table on which the Emperor signed the abdication document). The allies then brought back from exile the younger brother of Louis XVI, who had been guillotined during the French Revolution (in 1793, before Napoleon's rise to power), and installed him on the French throne as Louis XVIII. Napoleon was sent to Elba ('Yaluva'), leaving Fontainebleau for the island on 20 April, after an emotional farewell from his old soldiers in the White Horse Court. As ruler of Elba he was to receive an annual income, from French revenues, of 2,000,000 francs, equivalent at the 1850 exchange rate to 800,000 rupees.

134. i. e. Prince Bacchiochi (see above, p. 205 fn. 119).

It is forbidden to slaughter any livestock within the city of Paris.¹³⁵ They do the slaughtering outside and bring the meat into the city. They abide by the regulations which govern food, agriculture, commerce and military service. The common people, the army, the nobles and the sovereign are all governed by the Parliament assembly¹³⁶ and both people and army are very content. They take part in dancing and suchlike entertainment. There are many wealthy men in France. The city of Paris is continually expanding. The French create standards for everything and work very skillfully. In skillfulness they are the teachers of the whole world. There are palaces built on ten or twelve sites and contingents of the army are stationed at intervals everywhere.

Versailles

Fourteen miles from the city of Paris is a place called Versel.¹³⁷ For the last fifteen hundred years French sovereigns have been building a palace there and construction is still going on. The palace covers an area two miles in circumference, and is surrounded by huge gardens and ponds. There is a maintained forest all around it and in the middle of a clearing is a small city, the size of Patan in Nepal.¹³⁸ Roads lead away from it on all sides.

135. The Nepalese sought and were granted special exemption from this regulation so that they could slaughter animals within the hotel and so ensure the ritual purity of their meat, but it is unclear whether they actually made use of this concession. See below, chapter 3.

136. Under the constitution of the Second Republic legislative power was in the hands of the National Assembly (the French Parliament), which limited Louis Napoleon's freedom of action until his 1851 coup.

137. The distance from Paris to Versailles is correctly given. The palace was constructed by Louis XIV in the second half of the 17th century (hence 'fifteen hundred' is perhaps a mistake for 'one hundred and fifty years'), and was converted into a museum by Louis-Philippe in 1837.

138. The population of Patan was estimated in the 1870's as around 60,000 (Sir Richard Temple, *Journals Kept in Hydera-*

The place is full of flower gardens and fruit trees and seems just like heaven. There are barracks and forts and two thousand troops are stationed there under the command of a colonel. The sovereign gave instructions for the Nepalese Prime Minister to be shown this place and sent his cousin to accompany him. They completed the journey of fourteen miles by rail in twenty-five minutes, and the local senior officials came to give them a courteous welcome. They took the keys of the palace and showed them the reception and other rooms, the balconies, the terraces, the ball-room, the treasury, the store rooms, in fact the entire palace. Great travellers and learned men have written that no other palace anywhere in the world is as beautiful as this one. Every room, whatever its size, is full of gilded paintings. The pictures and chandeliers are beyond counting. In the whole palace there are 250 reception and other rooms. In every room there are huge paintings of battles fought by previous sovereigns. Bonaparte is shown making his brothers sovereigns after defeating the sovereigns of seven nations, performing mighty deeds himself on the battlefield, installing himself as sovereign, marrying a sovereign's daughter and winning great victories after invading different countries with an army of five million.¹⁸⁹ All the paintings show armies, chieftains, fortifications, and maps of different countries and the panorama defies description.

One day the sovereign of Paris asked the Gorkha Prime

bad, Kashmir, Sikkim and Nepal, London, W H Allen, 1887, Vol. II p. 252).

139. Referring to David's 'La Coronation' and other Napoleonic works in the Versailles collection. Napoleon's brother Joseph was made king of Naples in 1806, and then of Spain in 1808. His two other brothers, Louis and Jerome, became kings of Holland and Westphalia in 1806 and 1807 respectively. Napoleon's own coronation as Emperor of the French took place in 1804, and his marriage to Marie Louise, daughter of the Austrian Emperor, in 1810. 'Five million' is again a mistake for 'five lakh.'

Minister if he had any special request. When he replied that he would like to see a parade of nine hundred thousand troops, the French sovereign said he would show him such a parade at the barracks called Barsya.¹⁴⁰ However, all the nobles now appealed to the sovereign. 'This place', they said, 'is called repaplin.¹⁴¹ If a hundred thousand troops are brought together the army could do whatever it liked.' So the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-Chief and the nobles of the Parliament council asked the sovereign that hundreds of thousands of troops should not be brought together and he agreed. He ordered that a parade of fifty thousand be held instead, and so cavalry and infantry were drawn from nearby barracks and a parade of that size held. Salutes were given and guns fired in salute. The entire army saluted the Prime Minister and he was shown its drill. In order to see this parade senior officials and lady sahibs of the city of Paris had driven out in thousands of carriages. Everyone paid his respects to the Nepalese Prime

140. i. e. Versailles. This request was made at Jang's audience with the President on 30 August, already described above. The figure Jang mentioned was probably one hundred thousand, as stated by Padma (*Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, p. 144), since the total strength of the French army was no more than 600,000. The review was actually held on 24 September.

141. *repapalin* or *repaplin* (the spelling would be the same in the Devanagari script of the original) is a corruption of 'republic'. The political atmosphere in Paris at this time was highly charged: the right-wing dominated National Assembly had recently passed a controversial measure disenfranchising some three million of the poorest citizens, while republican opinion was apprehensive that Napoleon might overturn the constitution and re-establish the empire (a step he did, of course, take the following year). In Padma's account of the interview (*loc. cit.*) it is the President himself rather than his advisors who points out the danger in assembling such a large force. Whether or not this is right, Padma is certainly correct in stating that in was popular reaction that the government feared, not, as the *Belait-Yatra* implies, disaffection among the troops themselves. It was in the army that support for Louis Napoleon was the strongest.

Minister as a very distinguished man. The French nobles, councillors and older people remarked to one another that the Nepalese Prime Minister was a man of great distinction; he was handsome in appearance, wealthy, talented and courageous and there was alertness in his way of walking, sitting and talking. They said that he was an intelligent man who wanted to see, hear and find out everything for himself, that he did not consider it a burden to spend his money when it was right to do so, and that it was a point of pride with him to give to everyone and take from no one. It was said in the assembly that in the nature of his actions, in the appropriateness of his speech, in the way he looked at things, spoke, walked, laughed and sat he resembled their own former sovereign¹⁴² and would surely prove to be a great man. Everywhere the Prime Minister went on that journey prominent people gave good reports of him.

Paris to Bombay

After a stay of forty days in Paris he took his leave of the sovereign and travelling by rail reached the port of Marsya in ten days.¹⁴³ There a ship provided by the English sovereign for him was ready and waiting. On board this ship he travelled to Bombay via Aden. Small mountains were seen at various points in the sea. One of the mountains was made of sulphur and was on fire. As they neared Hindustan birds also began to be sighted, as well as fish of various sorts and pearl-insects. Things became pleasanter.

142. The 'former sovereign' is presumably the first Napoleon and the 'assembly' (*kucahari*) the National Assembly.

143. As *ya* in the Belait-Yatra's orthography represents an open 'e' (similar to the first element of the diphthong in English 'late') *marsya* is an accurate rendering of the pronunciation of 'Marseilles.' Jang left Paris on 1 October and reached the port on the 4th., setting sail for Egypt on the 8th. The account of the return ignores the land journey across the Suez isthmus.

In the early morning the ship reached the port of Bombay and guns were fired in salute. When they saw Indian people and the city of Bombay it felt as if they were back at home with their own families and they were very happy. After a stay of eight days in Bombay the Prime Minister set out to sea again aboard a steamship to pay his respects to Sri Dwarkanath.¹⁴⁴ He reached the shrine in three days, paid his respects to the god, distributed money to all the priests and left an offering of four thousand rupees in the god's enclosure for the continuance of regular worship. From there he returned to Bombay in three days.

Pligrimage to Ramnath

Then the Prime Minister asked the English ship's captain to help him make a visit to pay his respects to Ramnath.¹⁴⁵ The captain told him that if they went via the island of Colombo¹⁴⁶ it would take seven or eight days, while sailing directly along the coast would take only three days, but involved going through

144. This is the title under which Krishna is worshipped at Dwarka (in Gujarat), the site where his capital is supposed to have stood. Jang sailed from Bombay on 14 November and reached Dwarka on the 16th. He reached Bombay again on the 21st. Cavenagh (*Reminiscences, op. cit.*, p. 165) records with relish the contrast between the eager anticipation of the Brahmins at the shrine when Jang announced he would make a large donation, and their subsequent disappointment when he explained it would be in promissory notes and that he would request the British government to ensure that the interest was actually employed for the relief of the poor (c. f. above, p. 155 fn. 16).

145. The shrine of Ramnath ('Lord Ram') is at Rameswaram on the coast of Tamil Nadu, the town from which Ram himself crossed over to Ceylon. The storm Jang's party encountered en route is briefly mentioned by Cavenagh (*op. cit.*, p. 166), but not by Padma, who simply states (*Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, p. 148) that the Prime Minister left Bombay on 24 November and reached Colombo on the 29th.

146. i. e. Ceylon.

very stormy waters,¹⁴⁷ The Englishman told him that it would be extremely difficult to cross these waters but the Prime Minister would not be persuaded and said that he wanted to go by that route, so that is what they did. When they reached the area, gales and storms arose, the ship was rolled up and down by the waves and neither the English captain, nor any of the officers on board the ship were able to stand up straight. The captain himself became very frightened and people began to panic, Kaji Dilli Singh Basnet also being greatly affected. However as for the Prime Minister he was not frightened in the least. Under his protection the ship negotiated the waves and covering in one day what normally took three, we reached the island of Colombo. In olden times the great emperor Sikandar had come upon those stormy waters when trying to reach the island of Lanka by that route, and being unable to get across, he had had to turn back. He had erected a sign inscribed with a couplet which ran as follows:

In the body of the ocean the heart rolls like the waves

Sikandar's arms are raised in the river—Enter not the water!

They say that this sea is the furthest point that the Emperor Sikandar reached and that he put up that sign there and turned back.¹⁴⁸

The ship's captain was very afraid because what had happened would have to be reported to the Governor and if this were not done he would be very angry with him.

We reached the island of Colombo as the sun was rising. White and native troops and a Governor were stationed there in a cantonment within a large city. The Prime Minister was met

147. Referring to the waters near the Indian coast of the Gulf of Mannar.

148. 'Sikandar' is the Indian name for Alexander the Great, who actually penetrated no further into the subcontinent than the Panjab. The couplet quoted is in rather obscure Hindi. The author does not claim actually to have seen the inscription, and presumably he is simply repeating a local fable.

by the Governor,¹⁴⁹ guns were fired in salute and a guard of honour was provided. He was asked how his journey had been and gave a full account of it. The welcome was very courteous. Afterwards the ship's captain reported the storm incident and the Governor was angry. 'The Nepalese Prime Minister knew nothing about the sea routes,' he told the captain. 'You told him about the direct route and a great man who hears of anything out of the ordinary naturally becomes interested in it. You took him by the wrong route. If anything had happened, our friendly relations with the Gorkha Maharaja would have been damaged.' The Governor was upset and angry, because the English would have been to blame if there had been an accident. He then had another ship made available and arranged for the Prime Minister to be taken by the coastal route to pay his respects to Ramnath and then to be brought back.

The journey to the shrine was very comfortable. Accommodation in a fine house and food arrangements were ready there. After resting a short while the Prime Minister went to pay his respects to the god. He did this with an elaborate act of worship. He delighted all the priests by distributing money to them, made an offering of four or five thousand rupees for the continuance of regular worship, bathed at each sacred place and made offerings of rice balls cooked in milk.¹⁵⁰ After spending one day there he set out again for the island of Colombo. He stayed there four days and then went by carriage to Galle where he halted one day

149. Nepali *lathsaheb* (i. e. 'lord sahib'), normally used to refer to the Governor-General of India, who was always a peer. The *Belait-Yatra* here uses it of Sir George Anderson, Governor of Ceylon, even though he was not in fact a lord, while elsewhere the author seems to apply the expression to peers in general (e. g. p. 173 above.) He may, of course, have thought that all governors were lords and vice versa.

150. These are offered to the deity at major shrines as well as being employed in the anniversary rites for deceased parents (*sraddha*).

and then embarked for Calcutta.¹⁵¹

Wedding in Benares

The Prime Minister reached Calcutta in twelve days. There he met the Governor-General¹⁵² and stayed for ten days during which he purchased essential items and ten or twelve Arab horses before travelling to Benares by litter. In Benares he married the daughter of the Kutuk Maharaja¹⁵³ and then left for Nepal.¹⁵⁴

151. The round trip from Colombo to Rameswaram and back occupied the 3rd. to the 6th. of December. Jang travelled to Galle on the 7th., setting sail for Calcutta on the 8th and arriving on the 19th

152. i. e. Lord Dalhousie.

153. Jang's bride was the younger daughter of the ex-Maharaja of Coorg, Cavenagh explains that the marriage had been planned some time previously but then postponed because of rumours that the girl had lost her caste (*Reminiscences, op. cit.* p. 174) These had presumably arisen because her elder sister, who was later to be baptised a Christian in London with Queen Victoria as her godmother, had been brought up in European style and allowed to dine with British families (E. Dalhousie Login, *Lady Login's Recollections*, London, Smith Elder & Co., 1916, pp. 148-9). Jang's father-in-law asked him to sign a Persian document which he said was an undertaking to help with arrangements for his own forthcoming trip to England. As none of the Nepalis could read Persian, Jang showed it to Cavenagh, who pointed out a blank space where a sum of money could be written in later. The Prime minister was thus able to fill up the blank before signing, and, as an additional safeguard, he left a copy of the agreement with the local British agent. Financial pitfalls aside, Jang was evidently very pleased with his bride, and while still in Banaras was about to show her to his European travelling companions when he was prevented by the sight of his father-in-law approaching. He later introduced her to Laurence Oliphant as 'his beautiful Missis' (Oliphant, *A Journey to Kathmandu with the Camp of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, pp. 20 & 26).

154. Jang crossed the Nepal frontier on 29 January 1851 and, after a few days' hunting in the Tarai, reached Kathmandu on 6 February.

CHAPTER THREE

THE VISIT AS REPORTED IN THE EUROPEAN PRESS MAY — OCTOBER 1850

The following extracts from British and French Press coverage of Jang's visit are arranged in chronological order. Because of the great number of newspapers published in London and Paris at this time, a completely exhaustive search through the archives was not practicable. However all the leading papers were consulted and, since editors in both Britain and France tended to reprint information on the embassy which had first been published by their competitors, it is unlikely that anything of significance has been missed.

Extracts from the British Press

Morning Post, 28 May

ARRIVAL OF THE NEPAULESE EMBASSY AT SOUTHAMPTON

The Oriental Company's steamer Ripon, Capt. Moresby, arrived from Alexandria, Malta and Gibraltar, at Southampton, at seven o'clock on Saturday morning, with the heavy portion of the India mail, and with 166 passengers, 101 of which were first class.

Among the passengers were his Excellency General Jung Bahadoor Koorman Ranagee, Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the kingdom of Nepaul, situated on the borders of Thibet. His suite consisted of twenty-four persons, the most distinguished of whom were Colonel Juggut Shumshere Koorman Ranagee and Colonel Dheer Shumshere Koorman Ranagee,

brothers of the general; Captain Rummih Singh Adhikaree, Kajee Kurbeer Khutree, Captain Hemdul Singh Thapa, Lieutenant Kurbeer Khutree, Lieutenant Lall Singh Khutree, and Lieutenant Bheem Sen Rana. The general's visit to this country is as Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of Nepaul to the Queen of England, and he is charged with a complimentary letter and costly presents, consisting of the most valuable Nepaulese productions and manufactures, worth, it is said, nearly a quarter of a million of pounds sterling, from the King to her Majesty. The mission is accompanied also by Mr. M'leod, private secretary to his Excellency, and Captain Cavenagh, political agent at Nepaul.¹ The travelling expenses of the embassy, since it left Nepaul, have amounted to nearly ten thousand pounds; his Excellency and suite profess the religion of Buddhism;² and, on account of their strict notions respecting their religion, diet, and ablutions, and their dread of having their food, or the vessels which contain it, touched by Christians, they were compelled to engage the whole of the forecabins and saloons of the Ripon, in which they fitted up a cooking apparatus, which was constructed out of a large square box made of planks and paddle-floats, filled with mud and sand. The fuel they used was charcoal. Their principal food on board was poultry, kids, eggs, rice and vegetables. They took in themselves at each port they touched at, what water they used. The features of the Nepaulese partake of the Mongolian and Hindoo caste. Many of the embassy are most pleasing and handsome-looking men, and their dresses are gorgeous beyond description.

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1. Cavenagh was not in fact on the staff of the Nepal Residency but had been especially seconded from his regiment in order to accompany Jang to Europe.
 2. As the article elsewhere refers to the members of the embassy as Hindus, the writer understood 'Hindu' to mean an inhabitant of Hindustan regardless of religious belief, or else he regarded Buddhism as a Hindu sect. Although in some sections of Nepalese society the boundary between the two religions has indeed become blurred, the ruling elite of the country have for many centuries been orthodox Hindus.

The general is a handsome and most intelligent man, about 32 years of age, very dark, with long jet black hair. He is the first Hindoo of high caste that has visited this country.³

The Ripon arrived at the Southampton Dock soon after seven in the morning. Many of the general's suite were promenading the deck, and amongst them his two brothers, very handsome young men, and splendidly dressed. The general made his appearance on deck at about half-past seven. His dress consisted of a black satin cloak, profusely embroidered with gold of elegant workmanship. His head-dress was a cap nearly covered with large emeralds, diamonds, and other precious stones. The cap was surmounted with a bird of paradise, the fastening of which was covered by a profusion of brilliants. His fingers were covered with rings, on one of which was a diamond, an amethyst, and an emerald of immense value. His wrists were also covered with bracelets adorned with gold and precious stones. He left the ship soon after nine o'clock in the morning to go to the Peninsular and Oriental Company's offices, just outside the dock gates. On walking from the ship, his excellency was preceded by one of the chiefs of his suite, and followed by a number of other chiefs. Such a strange and gorgeous sight is seldom witnessed. There were fourteen or fifteen princely personages, evidently from a refined and highly cultivated state on the borders of the Himalayan range, with most strange but handsome countenances, clothed in dresses of elegant and costly workmanship. Many of their head-dresses, when the sun shone on them, were literally blazing with brilliants. They were all armed with pistols, mounted, and many of their swords were in golden scabbards. They were escorted by Captain Engle-

3. This is not strictly true as Jang, whether he be regarded as a Khas or a genuine Rajput, belonged to the *Ksatriya* order of the Hindu hierarchy, and was thus technically subordinate to Brahmans, at least one of whom (Dwarkanath Tagore) had visited Britain previously. However no Hindu who had been in Europe before had enjoyed such political importance in his own country as did Jang.

due, the Southampton superintendent of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, to a very fine apartment in the company's offices, where his excellency resolved to await the result of negotiations which were going on in consequence of his displeasure with the conduct of the British government towards him, of which the following is an explanation:

It appears that, in anticipation of the arrival of the Nepaulese Embassy at Southampton, instructions were sent to the Southampton Customs-house authorities, ordering them not to search the baggage and presents brought by the embassy. On Friday night, however, instructions were sent to the Southampton Customs-house authorities from London, ordering them not to open the presents for her Majesty, but to partially examine the personal baggage of the embassy, the same as is usually done with foreign embassies when they arrive in this country. On the latter being informed of the counter orders, he appeared much disappointed and displeased, and he declared that if any portion of his baggage, or that of any of his suite, were touched, he should be compelled to remain at Southampton until the departure of the next outward Alexandria vessel, when he would leave England without accomplishing the object of his visit.⁴ This created the utmost alarm, and telegraphic communications were immediately received by the Treasury, the Board of Customs, and the Peninsular Company in London, from the authorities in Southampton, urging that the obnoxious instructions should be rescinded. The directors of the Peninsular Company were entreated to wait on Lord John Russell immediately, if the matter could not be accomplished without it. In consequence of these communications, a message was transmitted to Southampton, ordering everything belonging to the embassy to be passed without examination. While these negotiations were proceeding, the baggage was lying in the docks, protected by a Hindoo guard. A bed belonging to the embassy got

4. The threat was actually that he would leave for France (Pudma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur*, *op. cit.*, p. 126).

by accident into the baggage warehouse of the Customs, and while one of the officers was examining it, a Hindoo drew his sword on him. He was soon pacified, but he refused to receive the bed back after it had been touched.

The Ambassador declined to go to any Southampton hotel, unless he could have it entirely to himself. This arose from religious scruples, lest any food prepared for Christians should be mixed with his own. In consequence of his determination, immediate arrangements were made to enable the Ambassador and suite to sleep and cook their food at the Peninsular offices during their stay at Southampton. During the whole of Saturday afternoon the Hindoo servants were busy conveying their cooking utensils, water pitchers, bedding, rice and other kinds of food from the ship to their temporary abode. A tent was formed in a back yard, where a Nepaulese cooking apparatus was fitted up. Messengers were employed running all over the town purchasing eggs and vegetables. The Hindoos refused hen-eggs, and preferred the larger eggs of ducks and geese. They took a great fancy for cauliflower, which is very plentiful at Southampton, and purchased a great quantity of that vegetable. They appeared to observe the utmost secrecy in dressing and eating their food, and were much alarmed lest any of the blacks and other persons belonging to the Peninsular Company should observe them. But though so secret about their cooking and eating, they appeared to be quite indifferent as to who saw them at their extraordinary ablutions. They wash after they touch anything, the washing being a religious ceremony, and not for the purpose of cleanliness. Not only the Hindoo servants, but some of the chiefs were in the back-yard washing themselves almost perpetually. They stripped, with the exception of a slight cloth around their loins, and they would wash themselves all over with about a half pint of water. The servants of the Embassy were evidently of the lowest caste; some were meanly and miserably clad, many of them without shoes, and their clothing formed a striking contrast to the magnificent costume

of the chiefs. His excellency dined with a few members of his suite on Saturday. After dinner they all commenced smoking. They also rode out in a carriage in the evening. They seemed very much pleased with the apartment in which they resided, which is a very spacious and handsome one, and particularly in the evening, when it was lit up with gas.

Illustrated London News, 1 June⁵

....(The General)....is considered one of the foremost men in India, possesses great power and influence in Northern Hindustan, and has rendered great services to the East India Company. He was treated with great distinction by the Governor-General of India, having been received in full durbar at Calcutta, and saluted with nineteen guns on his arrival and departure. Although so young he has been a great and most successful warrior, and is one of the most perfect marksmen ever seen. He used (it is said) repeatedly to fire at and strike a bottle from the mast-head of the Ripon during the voyage from Alexandria. He was sea-sick after he left Egypt and so ill that it was determined to land him at Marseilles, in order that he might reach England through France. He, however, through the kindness and attention of all on board, got better, and was enabled to enjoy the voyage.⁶ He was particularly fond of the music of the Ripon's band and rewarded the musicians most munificently. His manner was regal and graceful, and appeared more like that of a polished European than an Oriental....

Times, 3 June

THE NEPAULESE MISSION

The members of this mission, which, it will be recollected, has

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5. The omitted portion of this article repeats the information in the *Morning Post*.
 6. According to Cavenagh's own account (*Rem.*, p. 112) he dissuaded Jang from landing at Marseilles by explaining that he would have to meet the French President if he travelled

just arrived in England from Nepaul in charge of a very valuable consignment of presents for Her Majesty the Queen from the Rajah of that State, have taken a mansion on Richmond Terrace and purpose remaining in England about three months. The more distinguished personages attached to the mission drive out daily 'lionising'. On Saturday afternoon much interest was elicited by their appearance in full costume in Covent garden market, where they passed nearly an hour, and in the evening they were present at Lady Palmerston's assembly. The following is an authentic list of the gentlemen comprising the mission:— General Jung Bahadoor Koowur Ranajee, Prime Minister of the Rajah of Nepaul, and Commander-in-Chief of the Nepaul forces; Colonel Dher shumsher Jung Koowur Ranajee, Colonel Jueshumsher Jung Koowur Ranajee. These three gentlemen are brothers, and form the principal members of the mission. The suite consists of the following nine persons:— Kajee Karbeer Khaltiy, Kajee Himdulsing, Kajee Dhilleesing, Colonel Ranmuhur Odhekary, Lieutenant Carbeer Khaltiy, Lieutenant Laulsingh, Lieutenant Rhemshen Rana, Soobha Leedmansingh, Soobha Leebnursing. His Excellency General Jung Bahadoor Koowur Ranajee and the other members of the mission have expressed themselves highly gratified with their reception, as well as with all they have seen in this country. His Excellency will be introduced to the Queen in the course of the present week by Lord Palmerston. The presents he has in charge are stated to be worth more than half a million sterling.

Illustrated London News, 8 June

Viscount and Viscountess Palmerston entertained a large party at dinner, on Saturday evening, at the family mansion in

through his country, and that it would be discourteous for him to do this before he had been received by Queen Victoria.

7. He was in fact presented to the Queen not by Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, but by Sir John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control for Indian Affairs. The paper's error

Carlton-gardens. After the banquet, the noble Viscountess received a brilliant circle of the nobility and corps diplomatique, etc. Amongst the visitors were the Nepaulese party, consisting of twelve gentlemen, all of whom were attired in Oriental costume of a most recherché description. They arrived from the Opera shortly after eleven o'clock, accompanied by Major Macleod, Consul to the Rajah of Nepaul, and by Major Kavenagh of the East India Company's Service. Amongst the earliest diplomatic visitors were his Excellency the Russian Minister and the Chargé d'Affaires of the French Republic.

EXTRAORDINARY FEAT AT PATNA

A CORRESPONDENT at Berhampoor, in Bengal, anticipating the interest attaching to the visit to this country of his Excellency, Jung Bahadoor, Commander-in-Chief and Prime Minister of Nepaul, has favoured us with the accompanying sketch of an extraordinary feat performed by his Excellency during his stay at Patna.

The exploit consisted in riding to the top of a large masonry granary on the back of a hill pony, which animals are famous for their sure-footedness, and a more trying experiment, both to the rider's nerves and to the pony's paces, can scarcely be conceived; the height of the dome is about 200 feet, with two most peculiarly awkward and dangerous staircases leading to the summit.⁸

The granary was the first of an intended series proposed to be built at all the towns in the province of Behar, in order to avert famine and want during the years of excessive drought; the

serves to emphasise that Jang was regarded by press and public in Britain as an ambassador on a level with any other representative of an independent state, and not as a dependent of the East India Company.

8. Thomas Smith (*Five Years' Residence at Nepal, op. cit.*, Vol. II, pg. 119) claims that this ride had previously been accomplished by many British officers.

occasion of its being built was the dreadful famine of A.D. 1770, when nearly one-third of the population of Behar was swept away—men eating men and mothers their children. What prevented the completion of the intended series of these granaries, does not appear. Fortunately, since A. D. 1770, no such famine has again occurred in Behar.

Illustrated London News, 15 June

TOWN TALK AND TABLE^o

...But really, the great sight of the whole — the grand cynosure of the four million eyes which are winking and blinking this moment in London, is nothing more nor less than the Princes from Nepaul — and their diamonds. People look at these glittering personages and begin to have doubts as to the 'Arabian Nights' being a work of fiction. What if they have arrived here flying through the air on a magic carpet! What if they have a tent packed up in a turban big enough to cover a regiment! What if they bear signets carved with the token of Solomon, and giving them power over the King of the Genii! What if Peris and Fays flutter invisibly about them! What if they have a retinue of African musicians, and eat cream tarts and lambs stuffed with pistacchio nuts. For myself, I have an inward comfort in believing that all the jewels displayed by their Oriental Highnesses were found sticking to the pieces of flesh carried by the eagles out of the Valley of Diamonds, and it would be difficult to divorce me from the creed that the gentlemen in question are near relatives to Prince Camaralzaman, King Beder, Nouredin, and the fair Persian — to say nothing of Aladdin, Ali Baba, Sindbad, and that 'cute' fisherman, who *did* the geni in such magnificent style, when the latter was fool enough to re-pack himself in the copper vessel. At all events, if the Nepaulese noblemen were so connected, they could not excite more lively curiosity than they do. At Chiswick, last Saturday, the poor men were nearly smothered by inquisitive ladies and

9. The title of the paper's regular 'gossip column.'

gentlemen. ¹⁰

*Indian News,*¹¹ 17 June

VICISSITUDE OF FORTUNE.— “Every one who has passed through St. Paul’s Church-yard to Cheapside on a rainy day, when birch brooms are very much in requisition, must have noticed the well-known Hindoo crossing-sweeper, who has for years past regularly stationed himself at the north-east angle of the Cathedral. A day or two ago he was at his post as usual, when the attention of the Nepaulese Ambassador, who was passing at the time, was attracted towards him. His Excellency ordered the carriage to stop, and entered into conversation with him, the result of which was that he threw his broom with desperate eagerness over the railing of the burial-ground, and then scrambled into the carriage and took his seat by the side of his Excellency, who immediately drove off with his singularly acquired companion. We understand what our ex-crossing-sweeper is engaged during his Excellency’s stay in this country, which will probably be about two months, to act as interpreter to him and his suite. He now appears in the carriage of his Excellency every morning arrayed in a new and superb Hindoo costume and is not too proud to recognise his old acquaintances and friends of the broom.”

Such is the paragraph which appeared yesterday in the columns of some of our morning and evening cotemporaries. In one particular it is accurate enough. “Buxoo” was picked up by a portion of the Embassy in St. Paul’s Church-yard; but his Highness the Ambassador was not in the carriage at the time, the act of national sympathy having been evinced by some members of his suite. The ex-sweeper, moreover, is not, of course, enlisted as an interpreter to the Ambassador. The Oriental world knows

10. This refers to Jang’s visit to the Horticultural Society’s fete at Chiswick, reported elsewhere in the same issue.

11. A newspaper published in London but covering Indian affairs.

full well that Mr. Macleod has accompanied the mission from India in that capacity. and that Captain Cavenagh, also in political charge of the embassy, is an able Oriental linguist. Buxoo, being proficient in English as well as Hindostanee, and having led a roving 'life in London' for some years past, may prove an invaluable adjunct to the *attendants* of the Ambassador in their bewildering rambles; but he has not quite jumped, as alleged by our cotemporaries, from the lowly besom to the exalted position of dragoman,¹² *par excellence*, to a Royal Ambassador.— ED.
Home News

Times, 21 June 19

The Nepaulese Ambassador has been introduced, after a seasonable interval of acclimatisation, into the actual presence of Royalty. On Wednesday Prince JUNG BAHADUR presented to the Queen of ENGLAND the missive of the Sovereign of NEPAUL, and yesterday, as our report announces, he attended with his suite at the ceremony of a drawing-room. What his Excellency thought of the scenes before him would be a curious subject of speculation. The Court of a constitutional monarchy would, perhaps, be hardly more intelligible to an Oriental Prince than a Hyde-park review to the Autocrat of All the Russias. Except by a powerful effort of the imagination certain of the household uniforms can hardly be thought to communicate an idea of dignity or grace, nor can we conclude that his Excellency's impressions of the grandeur of England were likely to be heightened by the holiday costume of its Prime Minister.¹⁴ But the Nepaulese Prince

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12. 'interpreter.' The word derives ultimately from Aramaic, via Arabic, Greek and French, and usually denoted an interpreter from Arabic, Turkish or Persian.
13. In addition to this editorial on the visit the same issue reported briefly Jang's presence at the Court reception on 20 June.
- 14 A perceptive remark, as Cavenagh later wrote that Jang 'could never reconcile Lord John Russell's appearance with the idea of his being the Prime Minister of so powerful a

is sagacious enough to argue from what he does not see no less than from what he sees, and perhaps his final conceptions may suggest opinions not altogether unfavourable to our customs and manners.

The motives which have secured us the favour of so novel a visit appear still but imperfectly disclosed. Lord Brougham, indeed, was prepared the other day to certify, from a never-failing intuition, that the illustrious stranger 'had come for the best and purest of purposes;'¹⁵ but the authorities of the East India house professed less circumstantial information, and were content to presume that either the desire of knowledge or the gratification of natural energy had lead his Excellency across the dreaded ocean to the shores of Britain. 'Friendship and courtesy,' we are briefly told, have suggested this interesting mission, nor is there any reason to doubt the substantial truth of the report, but the occasion is so novel, and the relations of the parties are so peculiar, that we may dwell upon the subject at somewhat more length than would be appropriate at the festive reunions by which, after the English fashion, the visit of the strangers is celebrated.

For 35 years peace has now subsisted undisturbed between the Indian Government and the State of Nepaul, but although such has been the literal character of the relationship, yet there was no cordiality between the parties, and the Court of Kathmandu was almost the last in India from whom but a few years back any mission of amity or compliment might have been reasonably expected. The hostilities which terminated with the peace of 1815 had been short, though decisive, nor was any great advantage

country as England.' (*Rem*, p. 132)

15 Lord Brougham (1778–1868), a former Lord Chancellor and throughout a long political career an advocate of reform, including the abolition of slavery, the improvement of popular education and the simplification of the legal system. The remark quoted was made in a speech at the East India Company's banquet for Jang on Saturday 15 June, referred to in the final paragraph of the editorial.

taken of the superiority which rested with the British at the close of the campaign. Nepal was subdued, but not subjected to British dominion, and only partially to British influence. Stipulations were made for the reception of an English Resident at the Nepalese capital, but the condition was insisted upon solely as a probable method of averting future ruptures, and the Indian Government even offered to forego the privilege in favour of the Court of Peking, if the EMPEROR, whose 'good offices' had been exerted on the occasion, would himself depute an envoy on such a duty. But the Nepalese had deliberately measured swords with us as a rival Power, and they were unable to brook the first serious disaster which the arms and fortune of the reigning dynasty had ever sustained.¹⁶

It is very remarkable that the characteristic of modern origin so apparently inseparable from Indian dynasties should be discoverable even in the State of Nepal, though reputed for antiquity of lineage and traditions to be the Wales or the Asturias of Hindustan. There was probably indeed a Hindu principality existing from very remote times in these parts,¹⁷ but the Sovereign now represented by Prince JUNG BAHADUR has as little connexion with these shadowy Rajahs as the Tartar autocrat of Peking with the legendary dynasties of China. It was in the reign of our GEORGE III, and some years after the Battle of Plessey, that the chief of a certain hill tribe, observing the domestic quarrels of the

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16. The terms of the Treaty of Sagauli, which ended the Anglo-Gorkha War, were agreed in November 1815 but not ratified by the Nepalese side until after Ochterloney's advance to Makwanpur early in 1816 (see chapter 1, pp. 93-4). For Chinese diplomatic intervention see below, p. 237, fn. 21.
17. The earliest Hindu ruler in the Kathmandu Valley who can be definitely dated was a king named Manadeva. His Chagunaryan inscription is dated to 464 A. D., but it is clear from this and later inscriptions that the Licchavi dynasty to which he belonged had already been in power for several generations. The Licchavis claimed descent from the tribe of that name who had been a major power in Northern India in the time of the Buddha (6th. century B. C.).

the Royal family of Nepaul, assembled his followers, extinguished the reigning House, and founded the State with which we are now concerned.¹⁸ The conquering clan were termed 'Ghoorkas,' and the cradle of the tribe is probably indicated by the city still called Ghorackpoor, in the district ceded to us by the King of OUDE.¹⁹ But whatever may have been the descent of these Ghoorkas, they soon practically asserted their title to sovereignty. They first crossed the Himalayas and actually laid Thibet under tribute, receiving submissive offerings from the GREAT LLAMA himself. Inasmuch, however, as this exalted dignitary is held to be the veritable living type of BUDDHA, the scandal of such profanity became intolerable to all true Buddhists and a mighty Chinese army was marched to the Himalayas for the purpose of bringing the aggressors to reason. It is worth noticing that the Ghoorkas, who have before and since proved such formidable antagonists, were beaten at every step by the Chinese soldiers, and their first relations with us were suggested by their apprehen-

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18. The Battle of Plassey took place in 1757, twelve years before the completion of the conquest of the Kathmandu Valley by Prihvi Narayan Shah, ruler of the state of Gorkha. The Shah dynasty claimed descent from Rajput refugees who had entered the Himalayas in the 14th century to escape from Muslim domination in the plains, but (as explained above, pp. 68-71) the Gorkhas were most probably the descendants of Aryan peoples who had settled in the Himalayas at an earlier date and intermarried to some extent with the earlier inhabitants.
19. The link between Gorkha and the city of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh was not the direct one here suggested; rather both were named after Gorakhnath, a 12th century mystic who founded a sect known as the Kanphatta ('Split-eared') Yogis, and whose cult is widespread in North India. The Gorakhpur territory had been relinquished by the Muslim ruler of Oudh, whose capital was at Lucknow, during Lord Wellesley's period as Governor-General (1798-1805). The British annexation of the remainder of the kingdom in 1856 was a major cause of the uprisings of the following year.

sions on this occasion.²⁰ But when, satisfied with extracting a recantation, the Chinese withdrew, the Ghoorkas rapidly recovered their audacity, and in the course of a few years pushed their claims and conquests to such an extent that at the commencement of the war to which we have referred they had actually crossed the Sutlej, and were fighting with Runjeet Singh for the privilege of despoiling the hill chiefs of the Punjab. As our expedition penetrated their country, they appealed to China against us, as they had formerly appealed to ourselves against China, and there did at one time seem to be a probability that the forces of England and Tartary would come into collision on the frontiers of Thibet. But with a sagacity highly creditable, the Court of Peking tested the allegations of the Nepalese envoys by a direct application to the Governor-General of India, and on receiving his unhesitating avowal that the English had no intention of marching on Nankin via Lassa and Tehingtoce, they finally dismissed the petitioners with contumely and scorn.²¹

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20. For Nepal's wars with Tibet and China see above, pp. 88-89. The Manchu rulers of China were not themselves Buddhists, as here implied, but the 1789 Tibeto-Nepalese treaty, under which Nepal was to receive annual tribute, was considered an affront to China's own sovereign rights in Tibet, and when in 1791 Nepal again invaded Tibet to force compliance with the treaty terms, Chinese intervention followed. Although the war did end in Nepal's nominal submission, her defeat was not as crushing as the *Times* imagined. The story of a Chinese reverse in the final battle of the campaign which is given by Nepalese sources is also borne out by one Chinese account (see Rose, *Nepal, Strategy for Survival*, *op. cit.*, p. 63, fn.94).
21. A small Chinese force, sent to investigate the conflicting reports which Peking had received from the Nepalese and their British adversaries, reached Lhasa in the spring of 1816, after the war was over. Once he was sure there was no threat against his own country the Chinese commander was reluctant to intervene further, but, after repeated Nepalese appeals, he sent a politely worded request to Calcutta for the British Resident to be withdrawn from Kathmandu. As stated earlier in the editorial, the Governor-General agreed to do this if

The war, as the reader knows, resulted in discomfiture, though not in disgrace to the Ghoorka rulers. They succeeded in inflicting on us one or two serious reverses, and in creating, for a few weeks, a persuasion that we had at last found an enemy too strong for us. Since that period they have sate sullenly, and perhaps suspiciously, in their mountain home, debarred, like all other native Powers, from the pleasures of conquest by our supremacy, but maintaining an attitude well calculated to command respect. Their country has been respectably governed and their independence vigilantly preserved. Cordiality, as we have said, there was none, and but little intercourse between the two governments beyond that suggested by political necessities. Few English visitors found admission into the RAJAH's territories, and whenever the disturbance of general tranquillity might be thought to suggest opportunities to the ambitious or ill-disposed, the eyes of Indian statesmen always glanced uneasily at Nepaul. Still, no act of overt hostility was ever committed,²² and our continuous successes have now left the Ghoorkas so isolated in their independence that apprehension for the future may well have suggested a conciliatory mission to the mighty SOVEREIGN beyond the seas. If only half what is reported of his Excellency's sagacity be really true, he will at least have no difficulty during his soujourn amongst us in satisfying himself that the possessions of his countrymen are in no danger from the ambition or avarice of England. He can scarcely fail of ascertaining that the profession of amity and the desires of peace which were interpreted to him on Saturday evening came from the very heart of those by whom the Indian army is commanded and maintained; and although we must not strain the application of Oriental hyperboles, yet there can be no error in concluding that his reply on that occasion, like his com-

a permanent Chinese mission could be stationed there. The Chinese declined to accept this responsibility and did not press their objections further. (v. Rose, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-94).

22. This ignores the Nepalese seizure of several villages in the Ramnagar district in 1840 (v. p. 97 above).

munication of Wednesday, demonstrated a sincere anxiety to preserve concord between the two States by that cordial alliance of sentiment and strength which he promised for his SOVEREIGN and himself²³.

Illustrated London News, 22 June

BANQUET IN HONOUR OF THE NEPAULESE MINISTER— The East India Company entertained his Excellency General Jung Bahadur Koonwur Ranajee, the Minister from Nepaul, on Saturday evening, at a grand banquet, at which a large party assembled to welcome the distinguished guest and his companions. The company included some of the principal functionaries of state, members of both Houses of Parliament, and a number of gentlemen of eminence connected with India and the East India Company. The entertainment was provided at the London Tavern, and all the resources of the establishment were employed to do honour to the occasion. The tables, glittering with their massive and elegant ornaments, had been prepared with admirable taste and skill. Mr. Shepherd, the Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, and the president of the evening, entered the dining room about seven o'clock, accompanied by his Excellency the Nepaulese Minister and his brothers, Colonel Juggut Shumshere Jung Bahadoor Koonwur Ranajee, and Colonel Dheer Shumshere Jung Bahadoor Koonwur Ranajec, attired in the brilliant and magnificent dresses proper to Orientals of their rank and station. As the guests proceeded to their places, the Coldstream band, which was stationed in the gallery, played a grand Indian march. His Excellency took his seat on the right of the chair, his countrymen, with Lieutenant Laul Singh, a member of the suite, having place at the head of another table, which occupied the middle of the apartment. By

23. Referring again to the banquet on 15 June, described in the next extract, and to Jang's audience with the Queen on the 19th.

the Minister's side was Captain Cavenagh, his interpreter, and his Excellency's private secretary, Mr. Macleod, and another interpreter, were seated with his Excellency's brothers.... Not permitted by the laws of caste to join the company in partaking of the rich viands which loaded the tables, his Excellency and party retired to the drawing rooms as the banquet commenced, and there partook of lychees (a sweet Chinese fruit in appearance like a walnut) and of peaches, nectarines and other choice fruits; returning to their place at the table by the time dinner was over. Speeches of the most complimentary character were delivered, that of his Excellency being spoken in his native tongue²⁴. It was interpreted by Captain Cavenagh.

Atlas for India, 24 June

(from an account of the East India Company banquet)

....His Excellency Jung Bahadoor returned thanks with much apparent feeling in the Nepaulese tongue, all the members of his suite standing while his excellency was addressing the company. His address was afterwards translated by Captain Cavenagh, the political officer attached to the mission. His excellency, he said, was convinced that the destiny of England was great, more especially since he had witnessed the conquests achieved in India during the reign of her present Majesty, the wisdom of her senators, and the bravery of her soldiers, which dazzled the eyes of the world as the sun dazzled the eyes of mankind. (Cheers). Seeing the wisdom of this country, and knowing its victories, it had given him great satisfaction to visit a land and to see a Queen who ruled over so wise and so gallant a nation. (Great applause). His excellency referred to his residence on shipboard as being attended with much

24. The European press invariably failed to distinguish between Nepali (or Gorkhali), which was Jang's mother tongue, and Hindustani, which was understood all over northern India and in which Jang and Cavenagh communicated, While the two languages are closely related, they are not fully mutually intelligible

inconvenience, but the courtesy and kindness he had experienced since his arrival in England had made him forget all that suffering. He begged to assure them that his army, his munitions of war, and his own life would be devoted hereafter to the service of the great British nation (Applause.) In conclusion, he trusted that the relations of amity and friendship at present subsisting between his master the Rajah and the East Indian government might long be maintained. He begged to offer to the company his most sincere and cordial thanks for the high honour they had conferred on him in drinking his health in connexion with the name of his master. (Great applause).²⁵

Times, 26 June

(From a letter to the editor by Captain Cavenagh)

Sir-Having perceived that in your journal I am frequently alluded to as the interpreter to the Nepaul Ambassador, I deem it right, considering the extensive circulation of 'The Times', to make you acquainted with the position I really hold. . . . Upon the intended departure of the Embassy for England being intimated to the Indian Government, the Nepal Durbar requested, as a favour, that a British officer should be placed in political charge to act as the medium of communication between the head of the Embassy and the British Government, and as a political officer of some years standing, in the absence of Colonel Lawrence,²⁶ the officer origi-

25. The British speeches were similarly rhetorical, but also contained direct references to Nepal's position between India and China. Sir John Hobhouse said he was sure Nepal would side with the British if forced to choose between them and China, while Lord Brougham said that the envoys should 'above all things... be able to convey to their master the most positive assurances from all quarters that there was no intention to diminish by a single acre the distance that separates our eastern frontier from the western frontier of China.'

26. Sir Henry Lawrence, who had been resident at Kathmandu from 1843 to 1845 and was thus a natural choice for the task.

nally nominated, I was selected for the duty, and therefore, although attached to the Embassy, I am not a member of the Ambassador's suite.

Illustrated London News, 6 July

TOWN TALK AND TABLE TALK

. . . . The Nepaulese Princes continue to form one of the most brilliant cynosures of the day. They are, certainly, going through the London season in style; while, as for diamonds, the brilliant eruption appears to take new forms and still more glittering features every time the Oriental magnets appear in public. Prince Esterhazy used sometimes to wear a jacket so thickly encrusted with small gems and seed pearls that he boasted of loosing from £80 to £100 worth every time he put it on.²⁷ If the Nepaulese garments are not better made, it must be quite a California spec²⁸ to follow in their trail, through some half-dozen evening parties, soirées, fêtes and balls, with the humble but laudable object of picking up the jewels that fell from the rich man's coat. We will trust, however, that their Oriental Highnesses have employed more trustworthy tailors, although, perhaps, jewellers may have had more to do with the manufacture of their raiment. What a grand notion it is, that of sending to a jeweller to take your measure for a jacket, or a tunic, and considerately reminding the man of gems that he had better bring a good variety of pearls, rubies, emeralds, turquoises and brilliants so that you may choose your own pattern

It is news to the bulk of my readers that the Nepaulese Minister is the Regent for an infant Prince, that his brothers, who accompany him, were shrewedly suspected to be his rivals for the

He was, however, detained by duties on the North-West frontier.

27. Referring presumably to the Hungarian diplomat Prince Pal Antal Esterhazy (1786–1866), who had attended conferences in London during the 1830's.

28. For 'speculation'. A reference to the California Gold Rush.

reins of power, and that the project of politely asking if they would be his *compagnons de voyage* in his western trip was generally regarded in Nepal as a masterly *coup d'état*, which would have the undoubted effect of preventing anything like political advantage being gained by any of the Oriental Whigs, Tories, Radicals, or Protectionists, during the Regent's absence.²⁹ In the matter of eating and drinking, the Nepalese gentlemen continue to keep rigidly to their rules of faith and custom. As regards animal food, they eat mutton and goat's-flesh. . . . of course these dishes are cooked after their own fashion by their own retainers. Fruit is the only refreshment, as my readers may be aware, of which the Nepalese will partake in the dwelling of Giaour;³⁰ and in consuming even it, the most curiously rigid system of isolation appears to be requisite. At a recent fête, at which all artistic and aristocratic London were present, the Nepalese, before they sat down to their collation of peaches, nectarines, and so forth, were not only ensconced in a closed room with trusty sentinels at the door, but the carpet of the apartment in which they sat, and which was of the same piece as that which covered the floor of the adjoining chamber, was, at their request, severed at the threshold, and rolled back on either side, so as to destroy the idea of any immediate connexion or communication between themselves and

29. Jang was not, of course, Regent, and Surendra, now 21 years old, had in theory exercised the full powers of kingship since replacing his father in 1847. It is unlikely that Jang took Jagat and Dhir with him for the reason suggested. They were the youngest of his brothers and the least likely to pose a threat. However, one member of the party, Karbir Khatri, had certainly been included so that he could be kept under surveillance, and was later implicated in a conspiracy against Jang involving two of his brothers who had stayed at home (see chapter 1, pp.120 and 130-1).

30. The word derives, via Turkish, from the Persian 'gaur,' meaning 'infidel'. The writer was probably familiar with it from Byron's poem, *The Giaour, a Fragment of a Turkish Tale*, but has misused the term as a proper noun.

the neighbouring infidels. The first remark made by the Ambassador when introduced to Her Majesty's Theatre, *apropos* of the female *artistes*, is worth recording. It was, literally, 'There are singers and dancers in my own country, but these are spirits— or angels.'

Illustrated London News, 27 July

We have received the following letter from Lieutenant Lall Singh (a member of the Nepaulese Embassy at present in London) on the subject of the Northern Frontier of Nepal:—

(To the editor of the 'Illustrated London News')

Sir,— Since my arrival in this country, I have had occasion to refer to the maps of India published in England to see how the territory of Nepal was laid down upon them, and have been much surprised to find that the northern line of boundary as shewn by them is quite incorrect. That line should run much more to the north than is laid down on your maps. I should, therefore, feel obliged if you can make known, through your widely-circulating Journal, the correction which I wish to make, and which I have marked on the accompanying map. As no English surveyor has yet been to the furthest limit of our boundary on the Himaleh Mountains, and as I have been myself frequently there for the purposes of our survey, I am the more anxious to have the error corrected.

I have the honour to be, sir, yours, etc.

LIEUTENANT LALL SING KHATTRY
Nepaul Officer

In conformity with the request of our intelligent correspondent, we have engraved a Skeleton Map showing the northern boundary line of Nepal as at present laid down on our best maps and the boundary-line moved further north, as it has been indicated by Lieutenant Lall Singh. The line should leave the

boundary (as at present laid down) at Gosangthan,³¹ from which place westwards both slopes of the main chain of the Himalaya belong to Nepal. The boundary then runs along a ridge to the north of the Himalaya, *including* Mustang,³² a place about thirty miles from the foot of Dhawalagiri, and much in resort among pilgrims. From Mustang the frontier continues west, including the valley of Humla, with the head-waters of the river Gogra.³³ From this it appears that the distance from the Nepal and Tibet frontier to the Brahmaputra, or Dsanpo,³⁴ is about seven kos, or fourteen miles. The Brahmaputra, or Burrampooter, as it is sometimes spelt, is at this place about as wide as the Thames at London, and fordable in some places. Thak³⁵ and

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31. The present border runs to the south of this peak (now-a-days normally known by its Tibetan name of Shisa Pangma), but as stated in the text, the main peaks to the west are in Nepalese territory.
 32. The town of Mustang is the capital of the kingdom of the same name, which retains a large measure of autonomy although incorporated in the Nepalese state. There is here evidently some confusion with the pilgrimage centre of Muktinath which lies about forty miles to the south of the capital.
 33. This is the name by which the Karnali is known after it reaches the Indian plains. Of the various rivers which make up the Karnali system two, the Mugu Karnali and the Bheri, rise in the mountains immediately west of Muktinath. The Humla Karnali, which is presumably here referred to, has its source beyond Nepal's present western border but on entering the country flows roughly parallel to the northern border until its confluence with the Mugu Karnali.'
 34. Now-a-days normally spelt 'Tsangpo.'
 35. Thak (more usually 'Thak Khola') is not a single village but the name of a whole section of the Kali Gandaki valley south of Mustang and north of the main Himalayan crest line. The particular settlement Lal Singh had in mind was probably Tukche, main centre of the part of Thak Khola inhabited by Thakali speaking people. For the population of this region and their trading links with Tibet, which remained of great importance until their recent suppression by the Chinese, see chapter 6 of Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf, *Himalayan Traders*, London, John Murray, 1975.

Mooktinath,³⁶ the two places marked on the map by Lall Singh, and which are omitted in our maps, are very large and populous villages, carrying on a great trade in salt with Thibet.

Times, 31 July

Plymouth, Tuesday. His Excellency the Envoy from Nepaul, with the princes and suite, arrived here from Paddington by express train at about 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon. They alighted at several of the stations, but partook only of water on the journey. A considerable number of official gentlemen, with their families, waited on the Plymouth platform, where the illustrious visitors were officially received by Lieutenant Warren, flag-lieutenant of Commodore Lord John Hay, who has the honour of entertaining them during their stay here. Port Admiral, Sir W. Hall Gage and his secretary, Mr. Irving, were also at the station, and paid their respects to the Envoy. The party consisted of his Excellency, with two other princes, two superior officers, and 12 domestics, 10 of whom were in Oriental costume. The former were conveyed in two of Moorshead's chaises and the latter in three flys from the station to the Dockyard, where all the officers of the establishment and a military guard of honour were ready to receive them. The old check office, now occupied by Lieutenant Warren, and vacated for the convenience of his Excellency and suite, has been prepared for their occupation, and sentinels posted at the entrance. It is understood that they will remain several days in the neighbourhood and that they will visit Falmouth and descend

36. Muktinath lies to the east of the main route into Tibet and its importance was and is religious rather than commercial. However it is included as one of the halting points in the itinerary from Kathmandu to Mustang published in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. XX (1851), pp. 252-3, an article based on Lal Singh's information and repeating the details given in his letter to the *Illustrated London News*.

some of the Cornish mines. Every attention was paid to the visitors and their attendants by Mr. Kerr, superintendent, and other railway officers, who carefully prevented all unnecessary intrusion. On leaving the station the princes were greeted by a hearty cheer from the crowd assembled outside.³⁷

Times, 3 August

THE NEPAULESE ENVOY— Plymouth, August 1

On Tuesday, the day after their arrival, his Excellency General Jung Bahadoor, Commander-in-Chief and Prime Minister at the court of Nepaul, Colonel Juggut Shumshere Jung, and Colonel Dere Shumshere Jung, accompanied by Captain Cavenagh, Captain James, and suite, and attended by Commodore-Superintendent Lord John Hay, the principal officer of the yard, and the Commander-in-Chief of the western district, General Sir Henry Murray, and staff, inspected the ships in progress of building in the Devonport Dockyard and all the various departments of the establishment. His Excellency made the most minute inquiries, and closely examined every object of interest which presented itself. In the afternoon the strangers proceeded in open carriages through the three towns of Plymouth, Devonport, and Stonehouse, and visited Rendle's Royal Botanical Gardens, which were opened on that day. On Wednesday they proceeded on the *Fearless*, steamer, from Hamoaze into the Sound, and were received with a royal salute on board Her Majesty's ship *Albion*, 90, Captain J. Hope Johnstone, through which they went even down to the powder magazine. His Excellency appeared to take great interest in all the warlike objects on board and at his desire several balls were fired from the guns over the Breakwater into the Chan-

37. In recounting this excursion Cavenagh expressed his disapproval of the public acclaim Jang received: 'The love of the English people for displaying this sort of adulation is certainly marvellous, and not very creditable to their good sense.' (*Rem.*, p. 141).

nel. The marines on board, about 40, were also put through their manual and platoon exercises in presence of the visitors, who expressed themselves greatly pleased with the discipline of the ship, her officers, and crew. From the Sound the Fearless returned through Hamoaze for the river Tamar. On passing through the powerful fleet laid up in ordinary, his Excellency, who was amazed at their number and dimensions, inquired if the whole ships were used in the Chinese war, and appeared surprised when he learned a comparatively small number engaged, and that the largest ship there was of little more tonnage than the Thetis Frigate now in harbour.³⁸ His Excellency further observed that, notwithstanding the long peace with France, Great Britain had continued greatly to improve her means of defence.³⁹ Up the Tamar the Envoy descended a mine some 150 ft. deep, and on reaching the surface munificently rewarded with 5 guineas a young girl who unexpectedly presented him with a small basket of cherries.⁴⁰ This morning his Excellency, with the Princes and suite, left by the express train at 10.20 a. m. Their route is Bristol, Gloucester, Birmingham, Holyhead. Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

38. For the Opium War between Britain and China see Introduction, pp. 16–18. The comparative strength of these two powers was of vital concern to any Nepalese statesman and particularly so to Jang, who was to go to war with Tibet in 1854 and in 1850 was already contemplating northwards expansion, if only hypothetically. While in Calcutta he had shown Cavenagh on the map passes through which he thought a joint Nepalese-British force could invade China (*Rem.*, p. 110).

39. This display of Naval power also prompted Jang to tell Cavenagh that 'a cat would fly at an elephant if it were forced into a corner, but that it must be a very small corner into which the Nepalese would be forced before they would fly at the British or cease to be their faithful allies.' (*Rem.*, p. 141).

40. Jang spent two hours down the mine, getting himself thoroughly filthy in the process. He borrowed clean clothes from the superintendent of the mine and a neighbouring farmer and commandeered the shoes and stockings of one of his aides, who had to go barefoot until they got back to Plymouth. (*Rem.*, p. 141).

Midland Counties Herald,⁴¹ 8 August

The Nepaulese Embassy, consisting of his Excellency General Jung Bahadour, Commander-in-Chief and Prime Minister of the Court of Nepaul, Colonel Jugget Shumshere Jung, and Colonel Dere Shumshere Jung, attended by Captain Cavenagh, Captain James, and a numerous suite, arrived in this town, on Thursday evening last. The Mayor having been apprised of the visit was in waiting to receive them, as were also Mr. G. R. Collis, whose guests they became, and other gentlemen. After the party had been introduced to the Ambassador, his Excellency and suite entered the carriages which were in waiting for them, and proceeded to the residence of Mr. Collis in the Crescent. On entering the house, Captain Cavenagh, by command of his Excellency, made known some of the peculiar customs of their guests, intimating that neither himself nor suite could partake of any food killed or prepared by Europeans, and that they would require a place to be expressly set aside for their own use, in which they could kill and cook any animal they might require. His Excellency then went to the rear of the premises, and expressed a wish that a temporary room should be immediately erected of wood, quite apart from Mr. Collis's dwelling, in which his servants might prepare their food. The impossibility of raising an erection with such expedition being pointed out to his Excellency, he abandoned that mode of carrying out his wishes, and it was arranged that one of the kitchens in Mr. Collis's house should be given up for their use, and other necessary arrangements for satisfying their national scruples were made. Everything having been thus arranged according to their wishes, a fat kid was obtained for them, and killed, prepared, and eaten in strict privacy. Having finished their repast they joined Mr. Collis's party, who were waiting for them, but did not partake of any of the viands with the company. The following day the party, accompanied by the Mayor, the High Bailiff, Mr. Collis

41. A newspaper published in Birmingham.

and Mr. Stephens, Superintendent of Police, set out in three carriages and proceeded first to the glass works of Messrs. Harris and Co., Broad Street, where they viewed with considerable amazement the interesting process of glass-blowing, and after fully satisfying their curiosity, they left for Messrs Osler's establishment, where they inspected the immense variety of candelabra, etc., for which these works are famed. They were much pleased to learn that the establishment from which they purchased in London the colossal magnificent crystal candelabrum belonged to these gentlemen. The works of Messrs. Winfield, in Cambridge street, were next visited and six bedsteads and other articles were ordered by his Excellency. The party then proceeded to the town hall, where a considerable number of persons had assembled to receive them; and on his Excellency entering the front door in Paradise Street, the whole of the company rose and paid him marked respect, which compliment he returned in a very graceful manner. Mr. Stimpson was in attendance at the organ, and played the national anthem, his Excellency and suite and company all standing. They then took their seats in the centre of the Hall, and viewed with great interest the magnificent organ,⁴² on which several other pieces were played. At the termination of the music, his Excellency, through his interpreter, expressed himself highly pleased. The party then left the Hall for the works of Mr. Collis, in Church Street, where his Excellency made extensive purchases of plate, selecting also statuettes of the Marquis of Anglesey and the Duke of Wellington. He then gave orders to Mr. Collis to supply him with statuettes of the Queen, his Royal Highness Prince Albert, and the Duke of Wellington; and remarked with considerable animation, that it afforded him more pleasure to be-

42. An organ was among various items which Jang, a few days later, asked the East India Company to purchase on his behalf. It was shipped out to India in 1852 (Nepal Residency Records (IOL) R/5/106, Cpt. Cavenagh to India House of 19 Aug 1850 and R/5/128, Resident to Ordnance Department of 2 Sept 1852.

come possessed of the figures of these illustrious persons than all the other purchases he had made in England. He then ordered statuettes of Napoleon, Viscount Hardinge, the Marquis of Londonderry, the Duke of Devonshire, Viscount Gough, the Earl of Dalhousie, Sir John Hobhouse, Marshal Ney, and Mr. Shepherd, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East India Company. His purchases at this establishment amounted to about £ 1,200, exclusive of an order he gave for other patterns to be forwarded to him in London for inspection. He was particularly attracted by a solid silver table, in process of preparation for part of a splendid service making for the Turkish Ambassador in London, the diameter of which is upwards of 55 inches, being the largest sheet of silver ever rolled in the town, and weighing upwards of 750 ounces. His Excellency intimated that if it was then ready, or could be prepared in time for him, he would like to purchase it. Having remained at this establishment about two hours, the Ambassador proceeded to the important works of Messrs. Fox, Henderson, and Co., at Smethwick, and thence to the Tube Works in the same neighbourhood. In the former establishment he seemed particularly interested. His attention was arrested by a light-house in process of construction, and he intimated his intention of giving an order for a similar erection at a future time, to be placed at some point on the Indian coast. He was also highly pleased at the Tube Works, and ordered a quantity of tubing, selecting with considerable judgement everything calculated to render it useful for the purpose for which he designed it.⁴³ The party then returned to town, and visited the sword and gun

43. Jang presumably required the tubing as part of a water pumping system. Among the items which he subsequently ordered through the East India Company were a syphon and forcing pipe to raise water from a six inch pipe to a height of 200 ft., as well as a 15 h. p. steam engine and boring tools and rods. Later, however, the order was apparently cancelled when Jang abandoned the project of irrigating the Pokhara valley (see above, p. 126, fn. 95).

manufactory of Mr. Sargant. Here they were particularly inquisitive relative to the mode in which the work was being carried on, and conversed with each other in an animated strain. The Ambassador and suite returned to Mr. Collis's house about seven o'clock and, as on the previous evening, dined in private. They afterwards-joined for a few minutes a select party, consisting of the Mayor and High Bailiff, and the officers of the Fourth Dragoon Guards quartered in this town. Whilst thus engaged, a special message from London arrived for his Excellency, requesting his immediate attendance in town; and consequently he took his departure for London by the eight o'clock express train, leaving only one member of his suite behind him.⁴⁴ Before quitting the Crescent his Excellency expressed himself highly pleased at the hospitality and attention he had received from Mr. and Mrs. Collis, and the courtesy evinced towards him by the authorities and inhabitants generally. The whole of the party were dressed in their foreign costume, and although of middle stature, are evidently men of great activity and muscular power. The Ambassador himself is of slender make, of dignified demeanour, and martial bearing. In the evening, the member of his suite who remained behind him visited the theatre, in company with the Mayor, the High Bailiff, and the Officers of the Regiment, and a number of other gentlemen, and was warmly greeted in the house, and also on returning from it.⁴⁵ Mr. Collis has received the following from the Private Secretary of the Nepaulese Ambassador:—

'1, Richmond Terrace, London,
3rd August 1850

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44. Jang's abrupt departure was purely the result of the inconvenience he was suffering while out of London (see above, p. 118).
45. Cavenagh's account of this incident is worth quoting at length: 'As usual, one of the Nepaulese officers, with his servant, missed the train, and returned to me for instructions. As there was no other train until near midnight, I thought

'MY DEAR SIR— The attention shown by Mrs. Collis and yourself to his Excellency General Jung Bahadoor Koonwur Ranajee, etc, etc, demands, on the part of his Excellency, a suitable acknowledgement, and I am directed by his Excellency to state how much obliged he feels to you for having put yourself to so much inconvenience to make him feel comfortable. His Excellency was much pleased by what he saw when visiting your establishment at Birmingham, and the facilities you gave and readily offered for his Excellency's seeing the manufactures of your town. His Excellency will always be glad to hear of your prosperity, and

'I remain, dear sir, yours faithfully,
'D MACLEOD, Private Secretary

From an un-named Lancaster newspaper, quoted in T Smith, *Five Years' Residence at Nepal, op cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 132-3.

The Nepaulese Ambassador and suite passed through Lan-

they could not do better than accompany us to the theatre, to which we were all going, the programme having been notified as being under the Ambassador's patronage; with the aid of our kind hostess we had smartened up the appearance of the officer, and when he was seen to descend from the carriage he was at once taken for his master, and received with corresponding respect. The lesée of the theatre preceded him into the box that had been set apart for the Embassy, and upon his entrance the whole of the audience— and every seat throughout the house was filled— rose to welcome him, and when, in accordance with a hint from myself, he made a profound salaam, his courtesy was received with enthusiastic applause; in fact... the good people of Birmingham, for that evening at all events, were perfectly satisfied. Unfortunately they were subsequently disenchanted as to their illusion and felt somewhat annoyed at what they considered the hoax that had been played on them. The lessée, however, had good reason to be well pleased, for he told me the audience would have been furious if, after the announcement had been made they had been disappointed of seeing the Indian Prince. (*Rem.*, p. 148).'

caster on Wednesday last, by the morning down mail, en route for Glasgow. Whilst the train was stopping at the Castle station, an incident occurred which illustrated a characteristic of the religion of these Oriental visitors. His highness being thirsty the interpreter inquired for some water, and, in the emergency, one of the porters hastily procured it in one of the men's coffee cans. This not being accepted, and the porter supposing the vessel was too plebeian for his highness to use, a clean tumbler, containing the pure element, was tendered, but also solemnly rejected. In this dilemma his Highness, or Magnificence, as the splendour of his costume would warrant his being styled, caught sight of the stand-pipe and hose by which the engines are supplied with water, and supposing it to be a spring, endeavoured to find where he could dip in his own drinking-cup, and procure water unpolluted by contact with any vessel in Christian use. The whole party curiously examined the water-pipe, but of course could make nothing of it, and returned to the train with his Highness's want unsatisfied.⁴⁶

Edinburgh News, 10 August

VISIT OF THE NEPAULESE AMBASSADOR TO EDINBURGH

His Excellency General Jung Bahadoor Koonwur Ranajee, Prime Minister of the Rajah of Nepal, and Commander-in-Chief of the Nepaul army, accompanied by his brothers, Colonel Jugget

46. Hindus of 'pure' caste could not accept water from 'impure' groups, which category included both the outright untouchables, and those like Europeans and Muslims, whose impurity was considered to be transmitted through water but not by bodily contact. Thus Jang could shake hands with his British hosts, but not take a glass of water from them. The description of this incident, which occurred on 7 August, when the party were on their way to Edinburgh, reads convincingly; yet it is strange that Cavenagh (who does not mention the episode in his book) or Macleod did not think to send one of the Nepalese servants direct to the station canteen.

Shumshere Jung, and Colonel Dere Shumshere Jung, and the members of his suite, arrived in Edinburgh from London, by the Caledonian Railway, at half past one o'clock. The illustrious party left the English metropolis about nine o'clock on Tuesday evening. From previous intimation of their anticipated visit, the Lord Provost had engaged a private residence for the members of the Nepaulese Embassy, at No. 7 Moray Place. His Lordship also awaited the arrival of the train at the platform of the Caledonian railway, with Mr. Sheriff Gordon, Major-General Riddell, Colonel Eden, and Captain Riddell. His Excellency the Ambassador, and the principal members of his suite, amounting, with the native servants, to nearly a dozen individuals, occupied a first-class carriage, and upon leaving the train his Highness was introduced by Major Cavenagh to the Lord Provost and the other officials present. He was in oriental costume, and after acknowledging the salutations of the crowd assembled to witness his arrival, his Excellency, accompanied by his brothers and some of his suite, visited the general meeting of the British Association⁴⁷ in the Music Hall about four o'clock. He wore a superb oriental costume, consisting of a robe or tunic of rich blue cloth or velvet, trimmed with gold lace. His cap, which fitted closely, was of white silk and glittered with pearls and diamonds, loops of emerald coloured stones hanging in front, while a long feather of the bird of Paradise waved in the air. The General has a very handsome and intelligent appearance. His age seems to be about twenty-five, and his deportment is frank and dignified. His brothers have a more robust appearance, and were dressed in a less splendid manner. The illustrious party, accompanied by the Lord Provost, afterwards drove in an open carriage through several streets in the Old and New Town. They made no visit to any public place; and between eight and nine o'clock they walked in the grounds at

47. i. e. the annual conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science which was taking place in Edinburgh that year.

Moray Place.

According to arrangements, the Lord Provost and Mr. Sheriff Gordon waited on the Prince at Moray Place, at a quarter before twelve on Thursday, for the purpose of conducting them to the principal places of interest in the city. The party immediately entered the carriages— his Excellency being seated in that of the Lord Provost — and first drove to the castle, where they were received at the gate by Major-General Riddell, Colonel Eden, and the staff. The 93rd Regiment was turned out on the parade-ground, and when the distinguished party arrived, the band played the Queen's Anthem. His Excellency proceeded to inspect the troops, and after he had viewed them for some time from the outside ranks, he expressed to Major-General Riddell his anxiety to be permitted to inspect them more closely by walking between the lines. General Riddell immediately gave orders to Colonel Sparks to open the columns, when the prince proceeded along the entire line from the bottom to the top of the esplanade, examining minutely and with the greatest interest the accoutrements of every man, and from time to time expressing his admiration of the whole appointments in such phrases as 'very fine,' 'beautifully arranged,' 'handsome men,' etc. He appeared to be particularly delighted at recognising the party of Highland pipers connected with the regiment, exclaiming with considerable enthusiasm, 'Ah, that's our own instrument— we have pipes in Nepal !' After finishing his inspection his Excellency addressed himself to Colonel Sparks, through the interpreter, to the following effect:—He was very highly pleased, he said, with the appearance of the gallant regiment. He had seen the troops of many countries, but he had seen none to equal the splendid body of men before him. They were worthy of a great nation like ours, and of the great and gracious Queen who ruled over it. With such a body of men (continued his Excellency warmly) Great Britain need fear no foe.

The party then entered the Castle, and on reaching the portcullis, a salute of nineteen guns was fired from the 24-pounder

placed on the batteries. On reaching the Victoria or highest battery, the Prince instantly mounted the ramparts, and after surveying with much interest the magnificent and extensive view of the city obtained from that elevated position, he expressed through an interpreter how much he admired 'the city, the plain and the water,' adding in English that 'he had never seen a more beautiful city.'⁴⁸

His Excellency and suite were then conducted to the Crown-room, where they were received by Sir Adam Ferguson. The Prince seemed very much struck with the richness and brilliancy of the jewellery with which the crown is ornamented; and was very minute in his inquiries regarding the ring which, it is believed, was cut from the finger of Charles I after he was beheaded.⁴⁹

In passing through the barrack-square, the Prince requested once more to be shown the view from the Victoria battery, and having again mounted the ramparts, he remained for some time seemingly enchanted with the scene. After viewing 'Mon's Meg,' the party again descended, and preceded by the Highland pipers, left the Castle, when they were received with vociferous cheering from an immense crowd which had by this time congregated.

The party having entered their carriages, they proceeded to Holyrood Palace, accompanied by General Riddell. In passing the locality of John Knox's house at the Nether Bowl the Prince made several observations which showed that he was to no mean extent

48. Jang's command of English never progressed beyond isolated sentences. His knowledge of the language was described by Laurence Oliphant as follows: 'His stock consisted chiefly of— How do you do ? — Very well, thankyou — Will you sit down ? — You are very pretty — which pithy sentences he used to rattle off with great volubility, fortunately not making an indiscriminate use of them.' (Oliphant, *A Journey to Kathmandu*, *op. cit.*, p. 7).

49. This conversation may have been another source of the *Belait-Yatra's* emphasis on the monarch's subordination to Parliament.

acquainted with the history of the great Scottish Reformer, and appeared to regard the ancient structure with much interest. Arrived at Holyrood, the party were conducted through the different apartments about to be occupied by her Majesty, and also through the picture-gallery and the throne-room.

The party next proceeded eastward round the Queen's Drive, and surveyed with much delight the ever-changing panorama of magnificent scenery opened up to view. Proceeding by St. Leonard's, the party drove to the residence of the Lord Provost, in George Square, where an elegant dejeuner had been provided for them. Following the advice of the Prince's secretary, his lordship had furnished two separate tables—one intended for the Prince and suite, and the other for the rest of the party. On being asked, however, to partake of the refreshments, his Excellency politely stated that they never ate in the presence of persons professing another religion than their own; but that, in order to mark their sense of the kindness of the lady (Mrs. Johnston), they would take a portion of the fruit with them; which they accordingly did.

Times, 6 August⁵⁰

THE NEPAULESE AMBASSADOR

The following passages, relative to the Nepalese Minister, are extracts from a letter from Calcutta, written on the very day of his embarkation for England:—

‘Calcutta, April 7

‘The visit of the Nepal Minister will be, I imagine, the most remarkable one you have received this century. Ramohun Roy was a clever, quiet, intellectual Bengalee Hindoo gentleman, who, I believe, turned Unitarian, and died in England.⁵¹ Dwarkanath

50. The bulk of this article also appeared in the *Illustrated London News* of 17 August.

51. Rammohan Roy (1772–1833), the Bengali social and religious reformer, travelled to Britain in 1830 as envoy for the Mogul Emperor. Although he was not actually recognised by the

Tagore, whom the good folks at home seemed to think a very great man, was a humbug; in fact, he was rich only, or thought to be so.⁵² The Pasha of Egypt was comparatively next door to you, and a Mahamedan; but our 'Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Nepaulese,' fresh from his mountains, is a genuine and most strict Hindoo— a nobleman of the Rajpoot caste and the Goorka tribe— the most valiant, and now nearly solely independant of the native states. As he will probably remain in England two or three months, you may perhaps, see, and will, I am sure, be interested by him. He is thirty-two years of age only; rather slight in figure, but neatly formed; strong, firm, and agile as a hart; forming a strong contrast with his two stout, or, rather, fat brothers, who accompany him. His features are of the Tartar cast, He appears to have great physical courage. On his way down to Calcutta, in the steamer, passing through the jungly shores of the Sonderbunds,

British as an ambassador, he was nonetheless well received and gave evidence on Indian affairs to a House of Commons Committee. He died in Bristol on 27 September 1833 and was buried there. The Brahma Samaj which he founded advocated a monotheistic form of Hinduism, dispensing with re-incarnation and many other orthodox beliefs. He was sympathetic to Christianity and did attend Unitarian services for a time, but he was never formally converted.

52. Dwarkanath Tagore (1795–1846), grandfather of the poet Rabindranath, was a friend and ally of Rammohan Roy, with whom he co-operated in campaigns against 'suttee' and other social evils. He resigned from a post with the East India Company in 1834, and, in partnership with European friends, started a successful business career, his interests including commodity dealing, sugar refining, coal mining and river steamers. On his first visit to Britain (1843–4) he was received by Queen Victoria. He returned again in 1845 and died the following year in London. He was a prominent figure in Calcutta society, becoming known as 'Prince Dwarkanath' because of his lavish parties and donations to charity. However, shortly after his death a bank in which he was involved crashed, leaving his estate deeply in debt, and this probably lies behind the writer's jaundiced attitude towards him.

some object of game attracting his attention, regardless of tigers and alligators, and to the great alarm of his followers, he jumped overboard into the water or mud, but returned equally safe and unsuccessful.

'I have said nothing of his history in my letters to our sisters; it might horrify their feminine, and startle your European feelings, but will add to the romantic interest of your visitor. He is, or rather was, nephew to the late Prime Minister of Nepaul, Mahtub Singh, who, with his regiment of Goorkas, visited Calcutta some years back.⁵³ About four years ago, this young man (Jung Bahador) discovered that his uncle, the Minister, had conspired against the lives of himself and brothers—for what reason I know not; where upon, slinging his double-barrelled rifle over his shoulder, he proceeded to the Durbar (council and council-room), confronted the Minister, and charged him with the intent. The latter hesitated, and they speedily came to hot words; when our hero, unslinging his gun, shot the said Minister dead upon the spot. A bloody fray then ensued between the Durbaree people and Sree Jung and his brothers (he has some six or seven), who were with him. The former were nearly all cut to pieces. Sree Jung, with the loss of one brother killed in the fray, was victorious; and immediately, all bloody as he was, hastened to the King, told his own story, declared it was self-preservation, and demanded the Royal sentence at once. The Monarch, however, thinking it better to conciliate such a spirit, told him in reply that he had no doubt the slain minister had been in the wrong and he in the right; on which, 'staying no further question,' he hurried back to the Durbar and proclaimed himself Prime Minister. Now, I certainly did not receive this story from his own lips, but from those of a gentleman who came down with

53. For Mathbar Singh's 1835 visit to Calcutta see above, p. 94. The author confuses Jang's murder of his uncle, which took place in 1845, with the Kot massacre of the following year, and the details given are completely inaccurate (see above, pp. 80-84), and also the Appendix).

him on the steamer. I believe it, however, to be perfectly correct. Of course, in giving you this anecdote I should be sorry if the spirit of

Our fiercer Orientalism,

Should somewhat shock your European sentimentalism.

I should be sorry, that is, to prejudice his reputation amongst any who, ignorant of the elements of Asiatic character, or Asiatic education, mind, morals, doctrines, and opinions, might regard him as a sort of George Barnwell⁵⁴ or ordinary cut-throat. On the contrary, his manners, his ability, his tact, and energy have alike confirmed him in the goodwill of the Nepaulese army and people; and I look upon his visit to England as one of the many gradual but sure measures and steps by which the Almighty is paving Asia with civilisation. His power as Minister is unbounded (over life and death), and is, indeed, greater than that of his sovereign. I suspect that, like Macbeth, 'he shall be King hereafter.' The present one (whom, in point of fact, Sree Jung placed on the throne) is nothing, or little more, than a boy and a puppet. Intelligent, energetic, high-spirited, ambitious, inquisitive, and politic, knowing that the Company's charter is nearly out,⁵⁵ and observing that our conquests are extending left and right, he probably thinks it well to conciliate the Queen of England on her throne. His visit, therefore, (of which no one knows the precise

54. Presumably the name of a murderer who had been recently in the news.

55. The legal basis for the East India Company's position in India at this time was the Charter granted by Act of Parliament in 1833 and due to expire in 1853. While in London Jang asked Sir John Hobhouse, President of the Board of Control, whether the Charter was likely to be renewed, and was told that it probably would be, with minor modifications (*Rem.*, p. 136). This turned out to be the case, but the new Charter was revoked in 1858 when, in the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny, the British government decided to bring India under its own direct control.

object) may probably arise from mixed feelings and motives of policy, ambition, curiosity, and a love of show and adventure. He gave me to understand that his leaving Nepaul on this mission was much opposed, and that he had to steal away, as it were, to effect it. It is to be hoped that you English will not kill him with balls, routes, late hours, coughs and colds. Cold, however, is his element. Were he not to return safe, his brothers and attendants would not dare, I am told, to return to Nepaul.

Previous to the return of the troops which had escorted him here, I witnessed his leave-taking. First, the officers, after each receiving pay or a present of money (which he and his brothers touched) stood in front, and one by one addressed him. He replied, and after some reluctance, as it appeared to me, withdrew. They had, of course, spoken in Goorka, but, on their leaving, he turned and explained to me in Hindostance the purport of their address. 'They say it is putting shame on them that they have to return to Nepaul without me; that they have brought me in safety here, and it is equally their duty and their desire to take me back in safety. So I told them, "It is well; on my return from England you can do so; come down again to Calcutta and take me back to Nepaul." They can't understand,' said he (speaking generally), 'why I should take all this trouble and expense leaving my country and friends. See how great an outlay I am submitting to, so many lacs (a lac is a hundred thousand rupees, or ten thousand pounds) expended here, and for the ship, so many more will go in England, and so many more on my return;⁵⁶ and my pay of course goes to another (my brother) during my absence.'

In reference to his companions, he added that he had reduced the rank or pay of all during his absence; that those who were

56. The total cost of the embassy is not known, but while in Calcutta arrangements were made for Jang to have credit on the Government treasury, up to a limit of three lacs of rupees (£30,000)—Nepal Residency Records (IOL) R/5/25, Cavenagh to Government of 12 March 1850, and reply.

colonels (his two brothers) he had made captains, and those who were captains, lieutenants, and so forth. I replied that I hoped his visit to England would prove not only for his own pleasure, but also for the good of his country.

The sound of a bugle now announced the troops to be ready to salute him; so he stepped into the verandah overlooking the garden, on the broad path of which a long line of bright and terrible bayonets (shaped like the kookree or Nepaulese daggerknife—a very handsome weapon) glittered in the sun. After he had addressed a few words to the men the line saluted twice and were then (half of them with their faces towards him) ordered to march. One or two companies, however, at the end nearest to him appeared unwilling to move, and while they stood men from the ranks addressed him. He stopped them, however, by reminding them that it was not customary to address their officers with arms in their hands, and again ordered them to move which they did with evident regret; those about me declaring that they were 'rota-hy' i. e. crying. He is certainly very much liked by them all.

As they marched through the garden, the band played (and played well too) English martial tunes, but on getting outside of the gate they struck off into one of their own wild and peculiar mountain airs. He has been picking up a little English, and, to my great gratification, told me what he had learned. I corrected the sentences for him, and he repeated the alteration until he was perfect; after which he asked me to teach him others, carefully inquiring and noticing the difference in addressing equals, inferiors and superiors.⁵⁷ Two of his attendant officers speak English—one of them very well indeed.⁵⁸

57. Nepali, like other Indo-Aryan languages, has a variety of pronouns and verbal forms whose selection is governed by the relative status of the speaker and the persons addressed or referred to.

58. The latter must have been Lal Singh Khatri. The identity of the other English speaker is unknown.

Atlas, 24 July⁵⁹

When the season waxed and grew middle-aged, and when concerts, exhibitions, operas, fetes, and balls were in their full swing and sparkling height, one of the boats of the Peninsular Steam Navigation Company crossed the Bay of Biscay, and landed upon English ground the Princes of Nepaul. They came, they were seen, and forthwith they conquered. To look at the lustre of their retinue, to count the diamonds which sparkled on their brown skins, to mark the gemmed turbans, the jewelled aigrets, the white bird of Paradise plumes—who would not have been forgiven for believing that the whole party might be an incarnation from the ‘Arabian Nights,’ whisked thither from Bagdad or a city of Cathay, attended by the Fairy Pari Banou, with Solomon’s seal in their carpet-bags, and journeying with passports covered with hieroglyphics and stars, the genuine autographs of the King of the Genii ? Coming in this guise, lavishing diamonds and gold, enshrined in a halo of oriental mystery, the Nepaul Embassy became at once the talk of the town.

Wonderful rumours of the prowess as a warrior and an intrigant of the ambassador were buzzed about in the salons, the clubs, and the gossipy alleys of the operas. Did he commonly bow-string his footmen and drown his wives in a bag ? One likes to see, quietly listening to ‘Norma,’ or driving through Piccadilly, a swarthy gentleman, whose every-day practice it is, when freed from the conventional restraints of what we call society, to cut off the blundering head of Selim with a scimitar, or with oriental gravity and decorum to introduce the frail and flirting Fatima to the recesses of a clean rice sack, and thence to the muddy bottom of an eastern stream, very slow and very deep.

Impressed with such notions, vast admirers of jewellery, great favourers of interesting foreigners, and inordinate worship-

59. Reprinted in Smith. *Narrative of a Five Years’ Residence at Nepaul*, *op. cit.* Vol. II pp. 113–6.

pers of Princes, all the world looked with applauding eyes upon him of Nepal. He was feted, courted—perhaps a little bit toadied—and maintained his rank as the very greatest curiosity, until—alas ! for human stability—a ship of the same line which introduced the brown and illustrious stranger to our shores, made its appearance with a still rarer, at all events a still newer, object of curiosity; and accordingly one bright, summer morning, in utter defiance of all natural history, the Hippopotamus of the Nile became the Lion of the banks of the Thames.⁶⁰

Indian News, 1 August⁶¹

..Our Nepaulese guests have abundantly partaken of the national hospitality. They have been lionised in public and private, armies have been paraded before them, and royalty itself has been their *cicerone*.⁶² No evening party having the slightest pretension to the aristocracy of either rank, wealth or talent is held to be complete without them. And this is as it should be. They visited our shores *dona ferentes*,⁶³ they have spent their money among us with a liberality amounting to profusion, and they have received our hospitalities with a full appreciation of the spirit in which they have been offered.

All this, we repeat, is as it should be; but the moral constitution of an Englishman is peculiar, and, it would seem, as much subject to the influences of climate as his natural one. Let him but round the Cape, or traverse the Desert, and the atmosphere of India produces a singular revolution in his opinion on questions of colour, individuals of the caste and complexion of those feted Nepaulese being regarded, not merely with indifference but with contempt. . . .

60. In fact the hippopotamus arrived on board the Ripon with Jang on 25 May (*Morning Post*, 28 May).

61. Reprinted in Smith, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 116–18, with some omissions.

62. 'guide'.

63. 'bearing gifts'.

We have averted to this subject for the purpose of exhibiting the inconsistency and folly of the prejudice prevailing in India, on the part of the white, against the coloured, population. We have on former occasions endeavoured to show the ill effects of this feeling, as evinced by the European, towards the native officers; who being thus shut out from the sympathies of their superiors, are thrown back on those of the private soldier, to the great detriment of the discipline and efficiency of the army. We hope, indeed we believe, that more enlightened opinions are gaining ground in India, and that, as the intellectual powers of the natives become developed, a better order of things will obtain, and ultimately bridge the gulf which prejudice has interposed between the subjects of a common sovereign—the children of a common Father, whose name is Love.

Extracts from the French Press

La Presse, 23 August

On the boulevards yesterday, in two open coaches, were to be seen two very dark-skinned Indians, wearing resplendent costumes and strange-shaped hats decorated with gold, feathers and precious stones.

They were the Nepalese ambassador and the chief members of his party, who have arrived from London en route, via the continent and Egypt, for Suez, where they will embark for Calcutta.

The face of the ambassador, Djang-Bahadour, gives an accurate impression of the strength of character which he has demonstrated. He is the man responsible for the revolution in Kathmandu which resulted in the deposition of the old maharaja in favour of a child, a puppet in the hands of his minister and of the English Company.⁶⁴ His journey to England can only have

64. For the events of 1846–7 here referred to see chapter 1, pages 79–86. King Surendra, born in 1819, was hardly a boy but certainly dominated by Jang.

served to strengthen British influence in the Himalayas, and if in the near future the question of the annexation of Nepal should arise, then no doubt it will be resolved by the influence of the ambassador, who has been shown the power and splendour of England on her home territory.

The Nepalese ambassador and his party are staying at the Hotel Sinet, on rue Faubourg Saint-Honoré.⁶⁵ The Indians prepare their own food and each morning have a cow brought to them which provides the milk they use. These strange practices have aroused intense curiosity in the district.

Le Constitutionnel, 24 August

It is generally known that there recently arrived in England a large embassy sent by the King of Nepal to Queen Victoria. Before leaving Europe the strangers wanted to visit France. Yesterday all the high-ranking members of the embassy, twelve persons in all, and the ambassador, Jamy Bohadoor-Koonavor Ramagee, with the English captain Fanshaw accompanying them as interpreter, paid a visit to the picture-galleries of the Louvre and to the museums recently opened there. M. de Nieuwerkerke, the director-general, and M. Horace de Viel-Castel, secretary to the management, guided them round. They inspected each room and display-case in turn. They particularly appreciated the naval gallery, the battle paintings, the weapons and the ethnographic room. The Chinese drawings and implements seem to have given them most pleasure. They kept up a continual stream of questions to their escorts throughout their two hour visit. The Orientals'

65. The original French is 'à l'hotel Sinet, Faubourg Saint-Honoré,' which might mean specifically rue Faubourg Saint-Honoré, or the Saint-Honoré area generally. The former is assumed in the translation as Cavenagh's account makes it clear that the Nepalese were staying very close to the British Embassy, which in 1850 already occupied its present site at the lower end of rue Faubourg Saint-Honoré. There is no 'Hotel Sinet' in Paris today, though the building itself may, of course, still be standing.

splendid costumes of gold cloth and plumes of pearls and diamonds produced the most beautiful effect amidst the marvellous galleries of the Louvre.

On leaving they spoke in the warmest terms to M. de Nieuwerkerke, through their interpreter, asking him to thank the artists of France for the gracious reception they had received.

At the Hotel Sinet, where the envoys are staying, they have been given accommodation separated off from the rest of the hotel. They have no communication with anyone and they are very careful to keep the curtains drawn so that their activities cannot be observed by persons not sharing their religious beliefs. Among the obligations their religion imposes on them is that of ritually killing the animals destined for their table. The Prefect of Police, at the request of the British ambassador, has agreed to allow the slaughter of these animals in the hotel itself.

La Presse, 25 August

Several newspapers have claimed that among the obligations their religion imposes on the Nepalese ambassador and his party is that of ritually killing the animals destined for their table. The newspapers add that to enable them to fulfil this requirement the Prefect of Police, at the request of the British ambassador, has agreed to allow the slaughter of the animals in the hotel itself.

This story involves one slight difficulty, namely that the Brahminical religion forbids Indians to eat meat. These newspapers must have mistaken for a bullock meant for slaughter the cow which is brought to the Indians daily so that they can personally extract the milk they drink. Their scruples are such that they themselves go out to buy and bring back in their carriage the vegetables and rice which make up virtually their entire diet.

From an unnamed newspaper, quoted in T. Simith, *Five Years' Residence at Nepaul*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 142-4

The ambassador is accompanied by his two brothers, and

has a suite of twenty persons. He is only twenty-six years of age, but he is already a distinguished general, and is considered one of the most intelligent men of his country. He appreciates the diplomatic attention that he has received here, but expresses an earnest desire to see the President of the Republic before his departure, which is at present fixed for the 29th. instant.⁶⁶ In his own language he said, 'When will the sovereign President return?' and his interpreter replied that it would be possible for him to be presented to the President before his departure. He then said, 'It is well, for my nation and myself have a great veneration for the name of the Emperor, whose courage and exploits we admire!'⁶⁷

General Changarnier and his suite has paid him a visit, as also the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and he was much flattered at this mark of attention by the government. The Turkish ambassador had previously called upon him. It is difficult, however, to make the Ambassador comprehend that France is a republic and cannot offer him the same splendid fetes as Queen Victoria when he was in London. The Ambassador and his suite have expressed a wish to conform as much as possible in Europe to the religious usages of India, which require that the Princes should themselves immolate the animals destined for their food, but they have experienced great obstacles. It has been erroneously stated in the

⁶⁶ The original plan was for the embassy to spend only a week in Paris. However, on 27 August Cavenagh wrote to the East India Company authorities explaining that Jang was postponing his departure because of illness (Nepal Residency Records R/5/25: Enc. to Bombay Govt.'s letter of 16 October 1850). The illness may have been genuine, as he turned down some invitations on the plea of a headache (below, p. 275), but he perhaps simply wanted more time in Paris, as *L'Assemblée Nationale* reported on 12 September, or to avoid sailing down the Red Sea in September: he had originally been warned in London that this was too early for a comfortable passage, but had insisted he could bear the heat (*Rem.*, pg. 137).

⁶⁷ Louis Napoleon's uncle, Napoleon Bonaparte.

journals that the animals are slaughtered daily in the yard of the Hotel Sinet. It is true that the Prefect of Police has given permission for this to be done but neither Paris nor the banlieu⁶⁸ have furnished the kind of animals fit for immolation according to the prescriptions of the Indian religion. The Ambassador asked for a fat male deer, of from one to three years old, but could not obtain it. Several females were brought but these would not do. As yet neither he nor his suite have killed any animal.⁶⁹

Their mode of living is very singular. There must be as many rooms as there are persons, for each must eat alone.⁷⁰ As yet their only animal food in Paris has been a little game. Their principal food is fish and vegetables. On the return of the President of the Republic, he will offer a grand fete to the Ambassador, if he can postpone his departure.

L'Illustration, 31 August

Are not still more illustrious names sometimes mangled, even by Academicians?⁷¹ Thus it was with the name of the Nepalese ambassador, who visited the Institute yesterday (readers will be aware that this individual has arrived in Paris to meet our rulers and see our country.) It is impossible to list all the travesties of his name produced by our intellectuals. Some pronounced it in Tartar fashion, and some as if it were Chinese. The Institute's

68. suburbs.

69. This is probably the truth behind the conflicting claims in *Le Constitutionnel* and *La Presse* already quoted. Although in India high-caste Hindus are frequently vegetarian this is not the case in Nepal and Jang himself was certainly a meat-eater. If, as the article goes on to state, he had eaten game in Paris, his claim at the Academy (see next extract) to be on a vegetarian diet was presumably a panic reaction to the interviewer's suggestion that he was eating beef.

70. The prohibition was not on dining in company but on dining with a member of a different caste.

71. This passage follows a reference to a Belgian newspaper's mis-spelling of the names of two French scholars.

only Persianist uttered piercing cries. 'Bahag-Thaumor,' he thundered out.⁷² 'Braquemor, Blagamar,' repeated the learned throng. The nabob, not liking this welcome, was starting to retreat, when the permanent secretary explained to him through the interpreter that this clucking was only intended as a mark of respect and that it was the academic way of expressing admiration. Once the misunderstanding had been cleared up a friendly discussion ensued. Amongst other queries, the foreign dignitary was asked whether it was true, as *Le Constitutionnel* had reported, that every morning he killed a bullock and ate it raw. 'Allah,'⁷³ exclaimed the barbarian, 'all I live on is dates and milk.'

An academician who composed fables announced his intention of memorialising the occasion with an apologue. In the absence of the President of the Republic the ambassador expressed the wish to see his residence and the same academician offered to act as guide. 'I have no objection,' he said, by way of a classical allusion, 'to showing the Tartar the way to the Elysée.'⁷⁴

The public here have taken little notice of the Nepalese envoy, yet he deserves their attention. He is no vacant-eyed, dark-skinned nabob, decked out in counterfeit finery. The ambassador is a young man, and a very distinguished person, well-known in the Orient as the hero of a revolution. He deposed a king but had no wish to play the role of a Cromwell.⁷⁵ He is the Cincinnatus of

72. As *jang* and *bahadur* are common Persian words (meaning 'war' and 'brave' respectively) one trusts that this scholar actually got the name right but was misheard by his colleagues and by the journalists.

73. Not being a Muslim Jang would hardly have called upon Allah; presumably his listeners misinterpreted a gasp of surprise or indignation.

74. The point is the incongruity of a 'barbarian' entering the Greek paradise (Elyseum).

75. This is correct if the meaning is that Jang did not kill the old king or supplant the monarchy altogether, but misleading if it implies that he did not retain effective power himself.

the east, minus the plough and plus several millions. A number of French ladies, their interest in him aroused by all the stories that are told of his munificence in England, have offered to introduce him into high society, with all the consideration deserved by so liberal a dispenser of diamonds and cashmeres; it is even said that a princess has offered him her hospitality. Whether out of indifference or bashfulness he has stubbornly refused all the seductive offers made to him. . . . What innocents these Oriental travellers are ! To come to Paris only to see the Academy, milk heifers and participate in the lottery! The Nepaulese ambassador has invested ten thousand (i. e. £400) in the eight million franc national lottery.

Le Constitutionnel, 1 September

The following has appeared in the 'Bulletin de Paris':—

The Nepalese ambassador and his two brothers were received at the Elysée yesterday at three o'clock. M. Bacchiochi, aide de camp to the president, came to the Hotel Sinet to fetch them in one of the presidential carriages and presented them to the president who gave them a fine welcome. Through his two interpreters, Captain Cavenagh and Captain James, the ambassador had a long conversation with Louis Napoleon.

When the president commented that our dress was less glittering and splendid than that of Nepal the ambassador replied with tact and perfect courtesy. 'It is true,' he said, 'that our costumes are more striking than yours, but that is because in our country they serve to distinguish the different ranks and classes from one another. But if France is not conspicuous for the splendour of her

In this last respect Jang was certainly *not* like Cincinnatus, who resigned from his dictatorship and returned to his farm once he had led the Romans to victory against the Aequi. In addition Jang did later on consider taking the throne himself, and would probably have made the attempt had he been able to secure British backing for the step (Rishikesh Shaha, 'Jang Bahadur; the Strongman of Nepal,' *op. cit.*, p. 82-3).

dress, she is the foremost nation of the world through the splendour of her science, the prestige of her civilisation and the excellent organisation of her administration and government.' One of the interpreters interrupted the ambassador's brilliant reply to remind him that France is a republic.⁷⁶

Le Constitutionnel, 5 September

(From a review of the re-opening night at the Opera)

The great excitement of the evening was caused by the Indian princes, so much so that the show began before the curtain went up. His Excellency the Nepalese ambassador, his brothers and the rest of his party, whom I saw so often in London this summer, and with whom I dined at Mr. Lumley's,⁷⁷ occupied a large box between the pillars. Their glittering costumes, the gold and precious stones covering their chests, their necklaces of emeralds and plumes of diamonds were the objects of everyone's gaze and of everyone's admiration. People hardly noticed the improvements to the theatre, and there was insufficient appreciation for the efforts of the management, who had done everything in their power to make it pleasanter and more comfortable. It was only the entrance of Mlle. Albioni that was able at last to fix the audience's attention upon the stage.

L'Assemblée National, 12 September

The Nepalese ambassador, his two brothers and the sovereign princes in his party will attend this evening's performance at the Opera.

76. Cavenagh saw this report and complained to a French official that neither he nor Captain James made any such comment. He was told that it was a fabrication invented for political reasons by a royalist editor. He actually has the official say that the *Constitutionnel* was a royalist paper (*Rem.*, p. 147), but as it was in fact strongly Bonapartist, the Frenchman's remark was presumably aimed at the *Bulletin de Paris*, where the article originally appeared.

77. i. e. Benjamin Lumley, manager of 'Her Majesty's Theatre.'

The Marquess Aguado, with that courtesy and good taste that comes naturally to him, has given up his stage-box to the Indian princes.

M. Roqueplan has interrupted 'Favorite' to present for the ambassador the ballet 'Le Violon du Diable,' which he wished to see performed by la Cerito. We also learn that the distinguished Indians are so enchanted with their stay in Paris, where they were originally only going to spend a week, that they have decided to prolong their stay for the whole month of September.

Le Constitutionnel, 13 September

Yesterday evening the director of the Opera noticed the Nepalese ambassador in the house and during an interval offered to show him the mysteries of the area back-stage, which has a world-wide reputation. In order to prolong for the illustrious stranger the pleasure which penetrating the holy of holies had evidently given him, M. Nestor Roqueplan offered him the use of the director's box, which is behind the curtain, and it was from there that the ambassador watched the ballet.⁷⁸ The graceful talent of Mme. Cerito made a great impression on him and he indicated that he would like her to be presented to him. The presentation took place and it concluded with the gift of two costly bracelets, which passed from the arms of the ambassador to those of the delightful dancer. The gallant director's hospitality could not have been repaid in more royal a fashion.

L'Illustration, 21 September

....This generous Indian is the celebrity of the hour.

78. The director's action may have saved Jang from becoming the victim of an attempted robbery. *L'Événement* of 17 September reported the arrest in connexion with another offence of a bandit chief, calling himself 'Le Comte des Ardennes', who on the 12th. had taken the box next to the one which Jang and his party were to have occupied, with the intention of stealing his diamonds. However, even if the story is true, it was probably the bandit rather than Jang who had reason to be thankful that the attempt did not take place.

Parisian curiosity, previously dormant as far as he was concerned, has now suddenly been awakened. For his part the foreign dignitary has begun to cast off the reserve which caused his female admirers so much distress. To escape the invitations pressed upon him for more or less ulterior motives, he had pleaded the excuse of a migraine, which the attractions of the ballet have now happily cured. Those who did not fully believe the reports of his fabulous wealth now admit his munificence. He has placed glittering proofs of it on the arms of 'la Cerito.' The shah will take back to the kingdom of Herat⁷⁹ all kinds of pleasant memories of his visit; he has divested himself of all his diamonds, cashmeres and plumes but he has kept hold of his handkerchief.⁸⁰

(From the 'Chronique Musicale' in the same issue) The ballet returned last week, with Mademoiselle Fanny Cerito and M. Saint-Léon. It is in 'Le Violon du Diable' that these two excellent artistes have made their reappearance. We have no need to add that they were given an enthusiastic reception. The celebrated ballerina's talents received that evening a most flattering and valuable testimonial, clearly proving that the enthusiasm she arouses is a natural one, since strangers from far-away countries share in it and express it in so grand a manner. For the last week everyone in Paris has been talking about the magnificent way in which the Nepalese ambassador, introduced onto the stage during the performance, demonstrated to Mademoiselle Fanny Cerito the pleasure which her talent had given him. In the wings of the theatre on rue Lepelletier there will long be talk of those two splendid diamond bracelets, offered, as they say, from hand to hand by the great Indian prince to the graceful and delicate prima donna. 'The Thousand and One Nights' are no longer mere fables,

79. The city of Herat, now in Afghanistan, was in 1850 ruled by an independent chieftain. The name is used here to represent the East in general.

80. The point is perhaps that his handkerchief was infused by the perfume worn by the many beautiful women he had met.

but true stories, or at last that is now the opinion of all those young ladies in short petticoats and gauze bodices.

L'Événement, 21 September

The Nepalese ambassador, prince Jung-Bahador, yesterday paid a visit to the palace and forest of Fontainebleau, accompanied by all the members of his party and escorted by an officer on the staff of the President of the Republic.

He was given a thorough tour of the apartments and as the historical significance of each room, gallery and piece of furniture was explained to him he was unable to conceal his enthusiasm, which was shared by all his companions. He was struck by the design and strength of the splendid furniture in the palace, which is several centuries old. He was particularly impressed by the new rooms and galleries which were entirely renovated through the efforts of King Louis-Philippe.

Refreshments were served to the distinguished guests in the Garden of Diana. The tables were adorned with magnificent grapes.

When the ambassador re-entered the chateau he found the 8th. Regiment of Hussars drawn up in battle order in the White Horse Court. It was under the command of its colonel, who had wanted to make a gesture of respect for the foreign dignitary. The prince mounted a horse, the members of his party formed an escort, and he proceeded to review the regiment.

Le Constitutionnel, 22 September

Mme. Fanny Cerito danced once more this week. She won as much praise in 'Stella' as in 'Le Violon du Diable.' She always displays the same charm, the same delicacy, the same irresistible seductiveness. The Nepalese ambassador, who needs no interpreter to understand and appreciate her entrancing postures, rapid movements and graceful foot-work, is now always in the balcony or the wings of the Opera, and his presence heightens

the excitement and interest of the performance. All the glinting opera-glasses move alternatively from the dancer to the prince and then back again. The other evening he seemed lost in one of those exotic trances which opium produces in primitive peoples, and from time to time he touched his right arm with his left hand as if trying to find some new bracelets. I foresee that if every time Cerito wins applause or cheers, prince Jung-Bahadur is going to try to show his admiration with rubies and emeralds, then all the treasures of Golconda⁸¹ will not be sufficient. He will lay his jewels one by one at the feet of the enchanting dancer, and will soon be poorer than the poor Indian in Regent Street, whom he made abandon his broom and climb into his carriage.⁸²

L'Événement, 26 September

The following has appeared in 'L'Opinion Publique':—

The Hindu prince, Jung-Bahadur, certainly has a liking for the delights of the Opera. Not only do he and his party not miss a single performance, but yesterday, as the noble ambassador had told M. Nestor Roqueplan that he would like to see an opera in rehearsal, the gallant director informed him that he was preparing to show him something even more out of the ordinary, namely the ballet company having a dance lesson.

Artistes excepted, no one in Europe can boast of having witnessed these strange proceedings, where the ballet-master, like a Commander-in-Chief, drills his battalions and prepares them to face without flinching the inferno of foot-lights and opera-glasses. For this occasion the management had brought its newest ballet costumes out of the store-room.

81. Golconda was a Deccan Muslim kingdom of the 16th. and 17th. centuries, famed for its diamonds. Its original capital, now only ruins, was also called Golconda, and was situated about five miles outside Hyderabad.

82. For this incident, which in fact took place besides St. Paul's Cathedral, see above, pp. 232-3.

The best pupils were placed in the front row and when the signal was given by M. Saint-Léon, the generalissimo, the entire army commenced marching, or rather dancing. After a wide range of manoeuvres M. Nestor Roqueplan offered his visitor refreshments, consisting of fruit, sherbet and preserves. As the rules of their religion forbid them to eat in the presence of unbelievers the Indians did not so much as touch the food they were offered. Instead prince Jung-Bahador, with perfect politeness, exercised a guest's prerogative, and asked the ballet company to partake on his behalf, a task which the young ladies tackled with the same enthusiasm they had displayed in the other exercises.⁸³ Once again it was easy to see that ballet dancers are not averse to fruit and preserves.

After the ballet lesson M. Roqueplan led his guests onto the stage, where a kind of dais draped with gold-trimmed velvet had been erected. The prince took his place there, together with his two brothers, his aides de camp, his priest,⁸⁴ and the two East India Company officers who are accompanying him on his journey. They were shown a rehearsal of the first two acts of 'L'Enfant Prodigue,' an opera by MM. Scribe and Auber, which is to be given a public performance shortly.

As can well be imagined, the prince was charmed and delighted and after the rehearsal he asked M. Roqueplan to assemble the young ladies of the ballet company so that he could personally thank them for their kindness and for the pleasure which their

83. In its report of this visit, which took place on Saturday 21 September, *Le Constitutionnel* of 23 September stated that Jang told the director that if a refusal would offend him then he would accept even if it meant violating the rules of his religion but that he would much prefer M. Roqueplan to ask the company to act on his behalf.

84. There was no priest as such in Jang's party, though his *vaidya* (physician), Chakrapani, may well have been a Brahmin. His presence on the embassy is recorded by Padma Rana (*Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, p. 116).

exercises had given him. The prince made a short speech in Hindustani, which was immediately translated by the interpreter.

'I shall be leaving soon,' he said, 'but I shall take back to my own country the memory of everything I have seen at the greatest theatre in the world. My thoughts will often leave, the Court of Nepal to return to you and I shall repeat there what I am fortunate enough to be able to say to you today. Never have I seen such grace, such talent and, above all, such youth and beauty. I should be glad if you, too, could sometimes think of the stranger you welcomed so warmly. However, as I cannot give each of you individually something to remember me by, I am asking the director to act as intermediary between me and his gracious company.'

After his speech the noble prince handed over to M. Roqueplan a sum of around two thousand five hundred francs in British gold coins⁸⁵ to be divided among the young ladies.

The prince and his party had entered the Opera at eleven in the morning, and when they came away, after expressing their congratulations and thanks to M. Roqueplan, it was past two o'clock. A large crowd was waiting for the carriage on the boulevard, and many of the onlookers greeted them as they went on their way.

It is obvious that the Indian prince comes from the land of Bayodères,⁸⁶ so we should have preferred him to be shown something else in Paris other than the ladies of the Opera.

Le Constitutionnel, 25 September

(from an account of the Versailles Review).... after ex-

85. One hundred gold sovereigns (as 2,500 francs was equivalent to £100.)

86. 'Bayodère' is a French adaptation of the Portuguese 'baladeria', which means 'dance-girl', especially one from India. The word was sometimes used in English in its French form, and sometimes anglicised as 'bayadeer' (see the *Oxford Dictionary*, s. v.)

changing salutes with General Neumayer, in command of the first division, who had come forward to greet him, the princes⁸⁷ passed along the front of two huge lines of infantry and cavalry. There is no sight more majestic than that presented by those troops and the prince appeared proud to be able to show them to Jung Bahadour, the young Nepalese ambassador, who was conspicuous among the whole party for the ease and grace with which he controlled a magnificent horse, and to the English officers who had come to witness this military display. . . .

After leaving the review ground the President of the Republic, with Jung Bahadour, came up to Lady Normanby's carriage to thank her for the gracious hospitality she had extended to him that morning at her Versailles home.

The crowd followed the President's example had begun to move off. As they did so there were cries of 'Vive Napoléon !' and 'Vive le Président !' The Indian princes were also the object of popular curiosity and were watched with great interest. In a carriage behind that of the Indian embassy (only the ambassador himself had accompanied the President on horseback) there could be seen the elegant queen of the Opera, Fanny Cerito, her arms adorned with the bracelets of precious stones which Jung Bahadour had given her; two lancers escorting the embassy were taking good care of her as well. . . .

L'Événement, 2 October

The Nepalese ambassadors left today for Marseilles, where they are to embark for Calcutta. The eldest of the young princes had yesterday had a final sitting with MM. Claudius Jacquant and Dantan, who, as is well known, are producing full-length portraits of him. To be ready in time our famous sculptor (*sic*) has spent many nights on this arduous task.

Before leaving, the Indian prince gave M. Jacquant ten thou-

87. i. e. Prince Louis Napoleon

sand francs in British sovereigns and M. Danton five thousand.⁸⁸ The two portraits will remain in Paris for the forthcoming exhibition and will then be sent to Nepal, after the artists have made two copies for the Versailles museum.

Prince Jung-Bahadour-Kouwur-Ranaja gave the artist plans of his palace and gardens, so that they could be depicted on the canvas. The artist was only able to include the crenellated boundary wall with the crests of the Himalayas visible in the distance behind it.⁸⁹

One of the members of the ambassador's retinue, an enamel painter at the Nepalese court, succeeded during his short stay in Paris in making very accurate copies of several paintings and portraits which will serve him as models for the pictures he will be commissioned to paint when he reaches his native land.⁹⁰

La Presse, 2 October

The following rather embarrassing details of the Indian prince's departure were reported in 'Événement':—⁹¹

His retinue had gone on ahead with the baggage and the prince had kept with him only the two colonels (his relatives) and the principal members of the embassy.

The departure was not a trouble-free one and caused a mi-

88. £ 400 and £200 respectively.

89. The report rather confusingly switches from the plural to the singular. Presumably it is Jacquanti's painting that is being referred to. According to the *Moniteur du Soir* of 27 September this showed Jang wearing 35 million francs (£140,000) worth of gems and 'a most splendid Tartar sword, with which he has killed two tigers on the dangerous hunting expeditions for which Indian princes are great enthusiasts.'

90. The artist's name was Bhajuman (Pudma Rana, *Life of Jung Bahadur*, *op. cit.*, p. 116).

91. A mistaken ascription as no such report appears in *L'Événement*, but immediately before this extract *La Presse* printed an identical account of the paintings of Jang to that given by *L'Événement* and re-printed above.

nor disturbance in the Saint Honoré district. Either because the interpreters had made a mistake with the bills, or because the merchants had tried to over-charge them, the distinguished visitors were assailed at the last moment by various demands for money. Discussion was difficult because the French had to be translated into Hindustani, and as neither side could understand the other the argument inevitably became heated. The tradesmen became very angry and closed the doors of the Hotel Sinet, refusing to let the prince go until they had received satisfaction.

There came a point when Jung Bahadur himself, as he was explaining his meaning with a gesture, struck a coachman with considerable force. The latter, heedless of diplomatic immunity, replied in kind. Three of the Englishmen accompanying the prince had to intervene to stop the fight.⁹²

A more or less satisfactory settlement was arrived at and the Indians were released and able to make their departure in two *Messagerie*⁹³ coaches which were waiting at the door. But they appear to have completely misunderstood the rules of precedence governing stage-coach seats. In fact the ambassador and the two

92. The three will have been Cavenagh, James and either Macleod, or possibly the Captain Fanshaw who acted as interpreter at the Louvre (p. 267). According to Cavenagh's account (*Rem.*, p. 153-5) problems had started that day with the mistress of the hotel refusing to let the luggage be loaded until she had been paid for damage to furniture. Cavenagh had sorted this out and then gone to the British embassy, when Jang arrived to report that the coachmen were now holding up the carriage on the pretext that they, too, were owed money. After a police inspector had been called and promised to settle the matter Jang returned to the hotel, but a few minutes later Dhir rushed into the British embassy saying that his brother had been insulted and had struck the man responsible and that a large crowd had gathered. Cavenagh was eventually able to get Jang into the carriage with police assistance.

93. 'Messagerie' is a company providing transport for the general public.

colonels installed themselves with the interpreters inside, placed three servants on the front seat, and put the venerable Brahmin accompanying them up on top.⁹⁴ Thus arranged, they drove off off at high speed, amidst the indignation of some, the regrets of others and the astonishment of all.⁹⁵

L'Événement, 3 October

Before leaving Paris the Indian ambassador sent the famous Lola Montez a magnificent gown of gold cloth.⁹⁶

Lola Montez is the only woman in either France or England with whom prince Jung-Bahadour has been able to converse in the language of his own country and he greatly enjoyed this opportunity.

At one point it appeared possible that the Countess of Lansfeld would travel to Nepal. However after a three year war with the English Jung Bahador concluded on behalf of his cousin the sultan a treaty with Great Britain under which all Euro-

94. As explained earlier, Vaidya Chakrapani was probably a Brahmin. However the journalist most likely simply assumed that some elderly, non-military looking member of the party belonged to the priestly class.

95. Thomas Smith, who gives a slightly different account, writes that the argument had been over a 5 franc charge (i. e. two rupees, or four shillings) which one of Jang's companions refused to pay as unjust. When the party reached Marseilles Jang discovered that the man involved had eventually paid the tradesman the money after all. Regarding this as giving way on a point of principle, he immediately imposed a 200 rupee fine on him. When he claimed inability to pay, Jang broke off the hilt of his sword and instructed him to raise the money by melting it down (*Narrative of a Five Years' Residence at Nepaul, op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 129-30).

96. 'Lola Montez' was the stage name of Marie Cibert (1818-1861), daughter of an Irish army officer and his part-Spanish wife. She had spent some years in India as a child and returned there for a short period with her first husband, Captain Thomas James; she was thus able to speak to Jang in Hind-

peans were forbidden to enter Nepal for any reason⁹⁷ Even British subjects are not exempted from this provision which the Indian prince very much regrets. as otherwise he would have taken more than two hundred people back with him to introduce European enlightenment and civilisation into his country.

The English government was presumably afraid that Lola Montez might achieve the same success in Nepal as she did in Bavaria. The two English captains, who never leave the Indian princes alone, adduced arguments proving that the treaty with Nepal covers both sexes equally,⁹⁸ and Lola Montez is staying in Paris to bring a law suit against her inconstant, if not unfaithful,

ustani— not, of course, in Nepali, as the newspaper implies. In 1843 she began a stage career as a Spanish dancer and in 1847 travelled to Bavaria, where she became the favourite of King Ludwig, who gave her the title of Countess of Lansfeld. She was the effective ruler of Bavaria until an insurrection in 1848 resulted in the King's abdication and her own banishment.

97. This is a confused reference to the Treaty of Sagauli, which ended the Anglo-Nepali war of 1814–16 (Jang was only born in 1817), and of which one clause prohibited Nepal from employing without British consent the subjects of any European or American state. The admittance of visitors, however, was purely a matter for the Nepalese government, which chose for reasons of security to keep the numbers extremely restricted (a policy which was only ended with the downfall of the Rana regime in 1951). The statement that the King was a cousin of Jang's is, of course, untrue, though might be a confusion based on his being a relative of Bhimsen Thapa, 'mukhtiyar' (i.e. premier) during the 1814–16 war.
98. As Cavenagh tells it (*Rem.*, p. 151), the British did not try to stop Lola joining Jang's party, but Jang himself turned down her request to accompany him to India on the plea that Cavenagh would never allow it. This version is quite plausible—Jang would thereby have got out of an embarrassing situation without incurring the odium of refusing her directly— and would also explain satisfactorily how the newspaper story arose. Cavenagh was told by Lola herself that she wanted to revisit India to research her autobiography.

husband.⁹⁹

Le Constitutionnel, 7 October

The following has appeared in the 'Saint Public de Lyon' :

The Nepalese envoys, whose exploits have been so carefully chronicled by the newspapers in the capital and who have also aroused the curiosity of Parisians, dazzling them by the splendour of their costume and astonishing them by their munificence, arrived yesterday in our city. They are accompanied by a large retinue and by two English colonels, who (so it is said) are to accompany them as far as Calcutta, after acting as their guides in their own country. The envoys party filled two huge coaches belonging to the management of Messageries Générales.¹⁰⁰

Prince Jung Bahadour Kouwur Ranaji moved into the Hotel du Parc. At two o'clock the prince, who had been invited by General Castellane to watch the mock-siege operations at la Vitriolerie, left the hotel. Two carriages had been placed at his disposal. The first contained Jung Bahadour, wearing a glittering costume, the two English colonels in dress uniform, and M. de Grammant, one of General Castellane's aides-de-campe. In the second were his two brothers and two leading members of the embassy. A platoon of guides formed the escort. The foreign

99. In 1849 Lola had married her second husband, George Heald, in England, but the couple had then had to flee to Spain to escape a bigamy prosecution brought against her as her divorce from her first husband (which he had initiated in 1842 on grounds of her adultery) had not been finalised. Either, therefore, the report is inaccurate here in portraying her as the plaintiff, or possibly she was herself bringing an action against Thomas James (not to be confused with the Captain James accompanying Jang) to stop him from harassing her.

100. The original French has 'messageries générales', without initial capitals, but it makes better sense to assume the reference is to a specific company, as it seems to be in the *La Presse* article of 2 October (p. 282 above) and of 10 October (p. 287).

dignitaries watched with great attention and interest the various manoeuvres carried out by our troops, and they came away well satisfied.

The inquisitive spectators, who surrounded the princes' carriages during the excursion along the left bank of the Rhone and throughout their journey across the city, discovered that the Parisian press had in no way exaggerated the splendour of their dress and their air of distinction. One thing which drew as much attention as the magnificence of the clothes worn by Jung Bahadur and his two brothers was the style of dress of one of the members of the retinue, who in several places on his black robe, particularly on each side of his chest, wore circular escutcheons decorated with devices and legends similar to those worn in the XIIIth. and XIVth. centuries by our nobility, their wives, and even their servants.

At five o'clock the ambassador's carriages returned to the hotel, outside of which the fascinated crowd remained in position until late into the evening.

It had been announced that the Nepalese ambassador, his brothers, and some others of his party were to attend yesterday's performance at the Grand Theatre. The ballet, 'Ciselle,' put on especially for the foreign dignitaries, whose great liking for our dances and above all for our French lady dancers is well known, was intended to satisfy their curiosity and their tastes. The crowd, which was eager to see the Italian (*sic*) princes, had flooded into the theatre early, and was awaiting their arrival with much impatience when a message came that they would not be attending the performance. Apparently, tired by the journey and the day's activities, they had opted for an early night.

La Presse, 10 October

The following appeared in the 'Courier de Marseilles' of 6 October

Since yesterday, Saturday, we have had in our town the

Nepalese prince ambassador and his party. They arrived about mid-day, by the Messageries Nationales.

Confronted by atrocious weather, which must have given him a very poor impression of our much-vaunted Provence climate, Prince Jung Bahador expressed the wish to see that day's performance at the theatre. This was a stroke of luck for the director, who did not miss the opportunity to give his public advance notice in huge letters across the top of the poster. In fact once the Indian ambassador was on the programme a full house could be expected, and expectations were not disappointed.

The prefect and the mayor had put their box at the disposal of the distinguished traveller, and the artistes offered him a show to suit his declared liking for ballet. The entire company was in a state of nerves and we are told that the memory of those bracelets so gallantly offered to Cerito disturbed the peace of mind of more than one of our ballerinas.

All the members of the embassy will leave tomorrow for Alexandria, on board the English frigate 'Growler.' They will travel across Egypt to Suez, where they will embark for Bombay, to return from there to Nepal by the usual route.

Le Constitutionnel, 10 October

Jung-Bahadour, whose arrival in Marseilles we reported last week, has attended a performance at the Opera.

A present surprise awaited him in the prefect's box, reports the 'Courier de Marseilles'; this was the presence of Mmes. Allard and Court, both of whom were born in the kingdom of Lahore and are thus virtually his compatriots as well as being the only women with whom he has been able to talk in his native tongue since leaving Nepal.¹⁰¹

101. These women were presumably the daughters of the French soldiers Allard and Court, best known of the expatriates employed by the Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh to train his army. Like Lola Montez (of whose meeting with Jang the *Courier de Marseilles* was evidently unaware) they will have spoken

The ambassador conversed at length and his comments were both lively and pertinent. Faced with a barrage of questions, he acquitted himself in a way that captivated his audience. We understand that he passed the following judgment on our neighbours across the Channel and ourselves. 'I have a high opinion of the English,' he said, 'but if I had to make my home in Europe I would come to live among the French. I prefer their warmth and amiability to the formality natural to the English.'

He particularly appreciated the fine quality of our army, their speed of manoeuvre and the precision of their drill.¹⁰²

On the equality supposed to exist between all members of French society he had this to say— 'You have abolished caste distinctions based on law or tradition, but you have replaced them with those of luck and ability. Ability will always raise one man above his fellows, just as a real diamond shines out amongst false stones.'

We cannot in good conscience omit to inform our readers of Jung Bahadour's opinions on singing. Of all the voices he has heard he prefers the tenor because it reminds him of the melodious singing of the birds, which, he says, never sing base.

Le Constitutionnel, 12 October

The Nepalese ambassador sailed from Marseilles at 8 a. m. on board the 'Growler,' which is proceeding directly to Alexandria. At Suez the Indian prince will find a steam frigate, placed at his disposal by the East India Company. He will then journey on to Bombay, Ceylon, Madras and Calcutta, on a pilgrimage to atone for offences which he may have committed against the

with Jang in Hindustani, the lingua franca of North India, and not in his native Nepali.

102. A fine example of Jang telling his listeners what they wanted to hear (c. f. chapter 1, page 114). At Versailles he had commented to Cavenagh on the loose formation and indiscipline of the French as compared to the British army (*Rem.* p. 152).

religious laws of his country during his travels.¹⁰³ These cities are known to contain temples held in great veneration in that country.

103. In addition to pilgrimages to Dwarka, Rameswaram and Puri, Jang and his companions underwent a formal purification at Benares, where they were met by the *rajguru*. According to Laurence Oliphant's hearsay account in a letter to his mother (Margaret Oliphant, *Memoirs of the Life of Laurence Oliphant, op. cit.* Vol. I, pp. 37-8) this involved the taking of a ritual bath in public. The ceremony was necessary in order to restore their caste which they were deemed to have lost by the very act of travelling to Europe.

APPENDIX

(i) The Kot Massacre: Alternative Versions

The Thoresby-Oldfield account of the critical events on the night of 14 September 1846, which was followed in chapter I¹, makes the starting point of the violence a volley of shots, which killed Fateh Jang and Dalbhanjan Pande and wounded Abhiman Singh as they were about to follow the Queen to the upper storey. There are, however, four other versions of the affair whose claims need to be considered.

(1) Cavenagh's account in *Rough Notes on the State of Nepal*² corresponds almost exactly with Oldfield's as far as the point where the three ministers started to follow the Queen to the upper floor, but then diverges significantly. He portrays the violence as starting when Jang, who had presumably descended to the main hall with the Queen, attempted to arrest Fateh. He took this step on his own initiative, though he had previously informed the Queen of his intention. Before the arrest could be completed Fateh's son, Khadga, attacked Bam Bahadur and Krishna and was subsequently killed by Dhir Shamsher. Fateh himself then tried to kill Bam but was shot down by Jang, who personally accounted for 14 of the 150 chiefs killed that night. As in Oldfield's version, Abhiman was killed by Krishna, but Cavenagh implies that this took place only when the violence was well under way.³

1. pp. 80-82 above.

2. *op. cit.*, pp. 232.

3. An almost identical account to Cavenagh's is given by Laurence Oliphant (*A Journey to Kathmandu with the Camp of Jung Bahadur*, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-110), but, since Cavenagh himself was in the same party, Oliphant may have got the story from him rather than directly from Jang.

(2) The account offered by Padma Rana⁴ differs even more extensively from Oldfield. In Padma's version of the critical interview with Fateh in the courtyard Jang did not actually urge action against Abhiman and Bir Keshar, but put the onus of decision on the other man, telling Fateh that bloodshed could only be avoided if the Queen were either placed under immediate arrest or alternatively obeyed unhesitatingly, and that he himself would follow Fateh whichever course he chose. The latter indicated he preferred the first alternative but he said they should delay before acting. From an upstairs window the Queen had observed the two talking together and it was now (not, as in Oldfield and Cavenagh, after the subsequent interview between Fateh and Abhiman and Abhiman's military preparations) that she descended to the court-yard and attempted to kill Bir Keshar herself. After she had been restrained and had retired once more to the upper floor, Jang was told that Fateh and Abhiman were conferring together and that three hundred of Abhiman's troops were approaching the Kot. He informed the Queen, who ordered Abhiman's arrest. At this moment Jang heard from his brother, Ranoddip Singh, that Abhiman was trying to leave the hall to join his soldiers outside. He relayed this information also to the Queen, who gave the order to shoot the general. This instruction was passed to Jang's troops at the entrance and Abhiman, who had already been challenged by the sentry, was run through by a soldier's bayonet. With his dying breath he accused Jang of Gagan's murder. Fateh's son, Khadga, repeated the accusation and was contradicted by Jang's brother, Krishna. This led to Khadga's attack on the latter, the intervention of Bam Bahadur, and finally Khadga's death at Dhir's hands. Jang himself now appealed to Fateh to let the quarrel go no further. But Fateh began to climb the steps to the upper floor and Jang, afraid that he would repeat Abhiman's accusation to the Queen, tried to call him back. One of Jang's officers (and later companion in Europe), Ram Mehar Adhikari, ordered a private to shoot Fateh. The soldier glanced at Jang,

4. *Life of Jung Bahadur, op. cit.*, pp. 70-77.

took his silence as indicating consent rather than hesitation, and carried out the order. General fighting broke out between Jang and his brothers and the other chiefs, who ignored his promise that their lives would be spared if they surrendered. The fight turned into a massacre with the entry into the hall of a company of Jang's troops.

(3) In an interview with the officiating Resident on 16 September 1846⁵ Jang himself claimed that the Queen had accused all the ministers of complicity in Gagan's assassination and had called upon the dead general's soldiers to seize them. In the confusion and recrimination which followed, Khadga attacked Bam Bahadur and the massacre ensued.

(4) One of the clerks in the British Residency office, Ganpat Sahai, gave an account of the Kot Massacre in a personal letter written on 15 October 1846 to Brian Hodgson, his former chief, who was then living in Darjeeling.⁶ Like Thoresby and Oldfield, Sahai's version has the violence starting with the shooting of the three ministers, but he asserts that they had been summoned upstairs by the Queen herself, who had Jang and his brothers with her inside the room ready to shoot them as they entered. The brothers then rushed downstairs to kill the *bharadars* in the main hall.

The discrepancies between the various accounts may stem partly from innocent confusion or lapses of memory on the part of Jang or other eye-witnesses, or of the authors, reflecting the speed and confusion of the events themselves. However there are also instances of systematic bias. Jang's own account given two days after the massacre can be discounted since it is patently an attempt to minimise his own responsibility for what occurred. Padma's version is similarly suspect: in his anxiety to show that his father was acting at each step under the Queen's direct instruc-

5. H. A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal, op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 363.

6. Hodgson Correspondence, Royal Asiatic Society.

tions he paints a highly implausible picture of information being continuously relayed from Jang's brothers or followers to Jang himself and thence to the Queen, and of orders flowing back through the same channel. On the other hand the version which Jang gave to Cavenagh in 1850/51 seems to display an opposite bias: secure in his position Jang was now anxious not to play down his own responsibility but to emphasise the decisive way in which he seized control of events.

Ganpat Sahai's story of Laksmi Devi deliberately luring the three ministers to their deaths is suspiciously similar to the circumstances in which Mathbar Singh was killed⁷ and is therefore probably either Sahai's own supposition, a version fed to the Residency by Jang's opponents, or simply a rumour going the rounds of Kathmandu. The letter does, however, indicate that two important elements' of Thoresby's account, viz. the shooting of the ministers as they were on or near the steps leading to the Queen's room and Jang's presence on the upper floor at the start of events, were already known to the Residency five months before the forwarding of Thoresby's report to Calcutta in March 1847.

The origin of the Thoresby account has been the subject of some controversy since his covering letter gives no indication of his sources.⁸ M. S. Jain and Ludwig Stiller have argued that the source was Jang himself.⁹ This view is implausible, given the political circumstances in March 1847. Jang's position was then far from secure, since King Rajendra was in British territory and being urged by the political exiles to act against him. Jang will, therefore have been particularly anxious to convince the British of the legitimacy of his position and would surely have stuck to his story of September 16, which attributed the striking of the

7 Above, p 78.

8. FSC 27 March 1847, No. 112.

9. Jain, M. S., *The Emergence of a New Aristocracy in Nepal*, *op. cit.*, p. 70, Stiller, L. F. *Letters from Kathmandu: the Kot Massacre*, Kathmandu, CENAS, 1979, p. 370.

first blow to Fateh's son, Khadga. Thoresby's report may well have been based partly on information obtained directly or indirectly from Jang, but it must also have used other sources and can thus be accepted as the most trustworthy of the extant accounts.¹⁰

If the Thoresby-Oldfield report broadly represents the truth, it is nevertheless not the whole truth. There remain the vital questions of responsibility for Gagan Singh's assassination and for the initial shooting at the Kot. In a recently offered reconstruction¹¹ Ludwig Stiller has suggested that Gagan's murder was arranged, on the king's instructions, by *all* the ministers, including, of course, Jang himself, so that Lal Jha's confession¹² and Abhiman Singh's accusation, both made by dying men, were both also literally true. Stiller also argues that it was Jang who suggested to the Queen that Bir Kesar was responsible, Bir being chosen as scapegoat because he had actually been involved in the plot and, more importantly, because as a non-minister he would serve to draw the Queen's attention away from Jang and his ministerial colleagues. Stiller believes that after Jang had failed to make an arrangement with Fateh Jang and was instead in danger from an alliance between the latter and Abhiman, he gave a direct order to his troops to shoot the two men. Events, however, moved further and faster than Jang had intended, since his followers accidentally also shot down Dalbhanjan Pande, an 'elder statesman' and not a serious competitor for political supremacy, and they then went on to attack the *bharadars* generally. The Queen was not the initiator of what occurred, but she accepted Jang's explanation that all was being done for the protection of herself and her two sons, and therefore gave him cover for his actions by appoint-

10. c. f. K. K. Adhikari, 'Particulars Relating to the Massacre Occurred at Kathmandu Between the 14th. and 15th. of September 1846', *Voice of History*, Vol. III, 2034 V. S. (1977), p.79.

11. *The Kot Massacre, op. cit.*, pp. 369-378.

12. Above, p. 79.

ing him Prime Minister and by exhorting his followers to 'kill my enemies'¹³

Stiller's account of Gagan's assassination is certainly more plausible than the view that Jang alone was responsible, since Jang's basic political tactic had always been to swing behind the dominant power of the moment and he was thus more likely to have gone along with a plot backed by the King and the other ministers than to have taken the risk of acting against Gagan on his own. Nonetheless it remains equally conceivable that Jang was left out of the plot altogether, in view of his close identification with Gagan and the Queen, and that he was speaking the truth when he told her he was afraid he would himself be the victim of Gagan's murderers.¹⁴

The suggestion that Jang engineered the Queen's rage at Bir Kesar is not convincing. If, as Stiller argues, Jang was trying to steer her attention away from the ministers then Bir Kesar, who was a close relative of Dalbhanjan Pande,¹⁵ would have been a most unsuitable choice.

It is, on the other hand, quite conceivable, that Jang gave the order for the initial shots. Possibly Jang was euphemistically referring to just such an action when he told Cavenagh of the 'attempted arrest' of Fateh Jang. If Jang did give such an order, rather than simply warning his people to be on the alert, then clearly his responsibility for the massacre was greater than he himself ever admitted. It would still, however, have been less than claimed by those who adhere to the unlikely theory that the whole series of events was planned by him beforehand.

13. FSC 27 March 1847, No. 113.

14. *ibid.*

15. The family tree of the 'Gora Pandes' included in the Hodgson Papers in the India Office Library (Vol. 18, folio 5) shows that the two were first cousins.

(II) Subedar-Major Shersingh Rana's *Mero Landan Rajtilak Yatra*¹⁶

Shersingh Rana was a British Gorkha officer who travelled to London in 1911 as one of the representatives of his regiment at the ceremonies marking the coronation of King George V. Like Jang he landed at Southampton, but he was subsequently accommodated in a specially established camp for overseas army contingents on the outskirts of London. Besides forming part of the guard lining the route of the coronation procession and receiving a Coronation Medal from the King himself at Buckingham Palace, Shersingh and his companions visited Hampton Court, the Houses of Parliament, Woolwich arsenal and Windsor Castle, as well as watching a motor-race at Brooklands and a review of the Fleet at Portsmouth. His account of his experiences, published at Benares in 1913, is written in clear and simple Nepali and was one of the sources drawn upon by Sir Ralph Turner in compiling his dictionary.¹⁷ The book contains interesting points both of contrast and similarity with the *Belait-Yatra*.

Having been many years in the British Army, including service with an expeditionary force in China, Shersingh had a good knowledge of English and was a more sophisticated observer than Jang Bahadur's companion. His descriptions, therefore, naturally tend to be more sober and accurate. He gives a straightforward account of the Houses of Parliament and is fully aware of the distinction between the Lords and Commons, while in describing Hampton Court he correctly notes its connection with Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII.

At the same time it is apparent that much of the technology which he encountered on his visit was either new to the author himself, or at any rate had to be explained for the benefit of readers who were totally unfamiliar with it. Thus he gives a care-

16. Discussed briefly in chapter one, pp. 106-7.

17. Sir Ralph L. Turner, *Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language*, *op. cit.*

ful account of the crane unloading cargo on the dock-side at Southampton, and of the London Underground railway (the 'tube') including the lift by which the platform was reached. When mentioning that a boating party on the Thames had with them a *gramophon* he has to define this device as 'an instrument which sings by itself' (*aphai gaune vaja*)¹⁸ The public lavatory at Olympia, with its seemingly endless row of cubicles and its flush system, was an object of particular amazement to the Nepalis. Fortunately Shersingh's companion who needed to use the facilities found a friendly native to explain that the mechanism opening the doors would not work until a coin was inserted.

Technical matters apart, a number of features which had attracted the attention of the author of the *Belait-Yatra* also struck the subedar-major in the same way. He comments on the universal use of price-labels at Wheatley's Department Store, where one could buy 'everything from a needle to an elephant.'¹⁹ He was impressed by the apparent quiet and orderly nature of the British, noting the decorum of the crowds at Hampton Court, the courteous conduct of policemen towards the public, and the silence in which passengers entered and exited from 'tube' trains. Like his predecessor, Shersingh, too, found literary inspiration in the female sex, commenting as follows on the women among the spectators at a polo match:

'Ladies (*ledij* — the English word used in transliteration) in the bloom of youth, beautiful in every respect,²⁰ were wearing costly clothes, garlands of precious stones or necklaces of pearls, and gold earrings with pearl pendants, so that to those who saw them it seemed

18. Shresingh Rana *op. cit*, p 10.

19. *ibid.*, pp. 104–5. Cf. p. 171 above.

20. There is no adequate English equivalent for the Nepali phrase *sarvangi sundari* (literally 'beautiful in every limb', which denotes not only perfection in physical proportions but also in posture and bearing.

as if apsaras (fairies) from the court of Indra Maharaj had just that instant been shorn of their wings and deposited in the enchanting city of London.²¹

In the last analysis the verdict on British society is virtually identical to the *Belait-Yatra*'s. It is encapsulated in the characterisation of the Sunday crowds by the riverside— 'All the people here appear prosperous and happy, they cannot have encountered sorrow even in their dreams',²² and in the comment made after describing the countryside between London and Portsmouth:

'O England, you are a blessed country, for your bold sons have displayed supernatural skill, finding great favour with the goddess of wisdom and transforming this mortal world into an image of heaven. We Gorkhas worship Saraswati from afar, but the people of this civilised land concentrate their minds on the study of wisdom and then obtain their desires.'²³

21. *ibid.*, pp. 117-8

22. *ibid.*, p. 11.

23. *ibid.*, pp. 77-8.

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69	12	preped	prepared
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On 25 May 1850 Jang Bahadur Rana, Prime Minister of Nepal and Ambassador to the Court of Queen Victoria, landed at Southampton. 'It seemed as if we were in a dream, or as if this was the heaven where virtuous men are said to go after death,' was how one of Jang's party described his first reaction. This courtier's account of the whole episode has been translated into English for the first time and is presented alongside the British and French press reports of their visitors' progress 'lavishing diamonds and gold, enshrined in a halo of oriental mystery.' **Jang Bahadur in Europe** also looks in depth at the background to the mission, including the changing pattern of Nepal's relations with British India from 1769 to 1850, and Jang's own rise to power amidst the intrigue and violence of the 1840's.