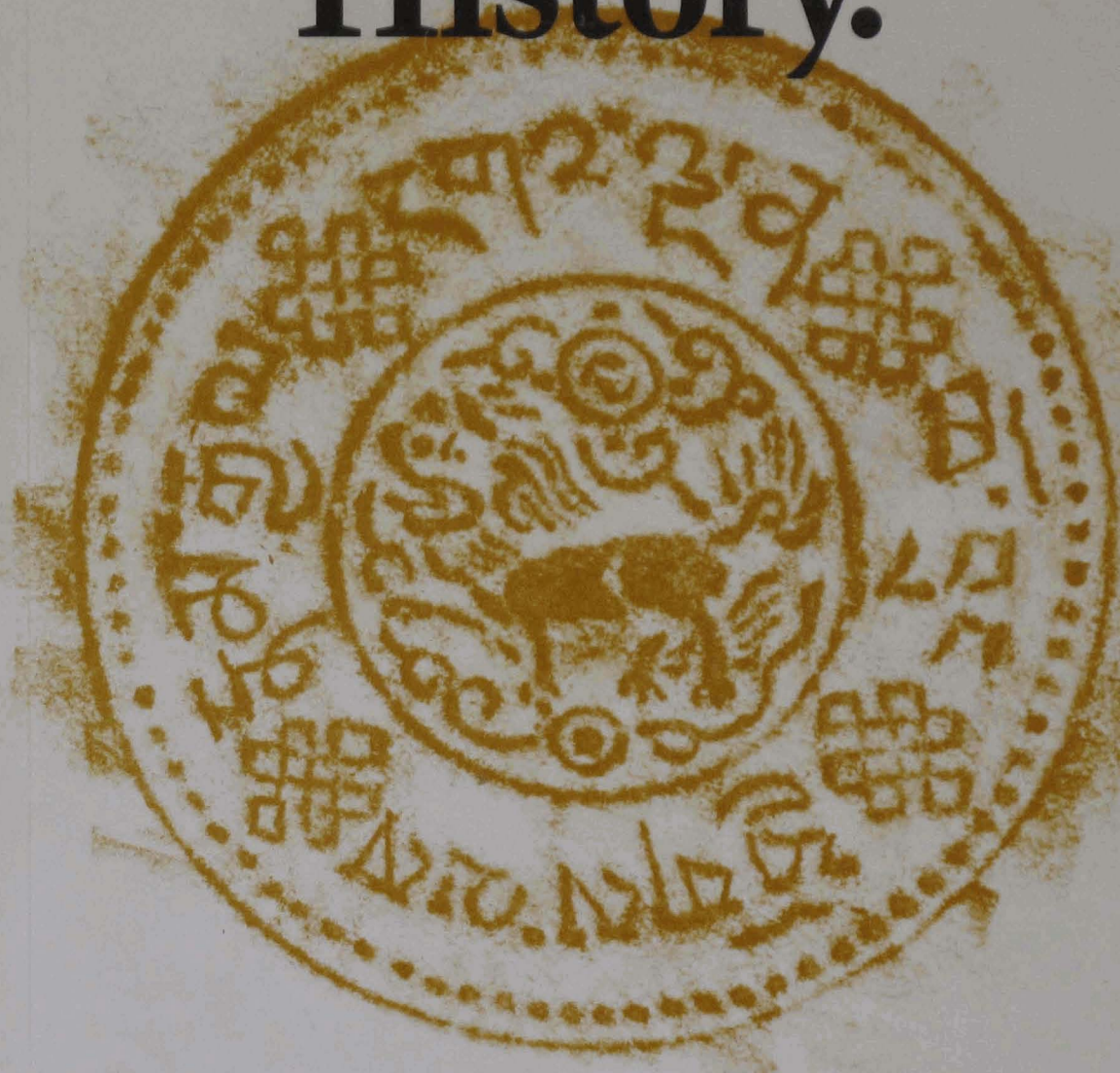


A Brief Account of 1500 Years of Tibetan History.



Louis Magrath King

Formerly British Consul at Thartse Do (Tachienlu), Tibetan-Chinese frontier.

Historical Introduction

By LOUIS KING

The First Monarchy

THE history of Tibet presents itself in four well-defined chronological periods : the First Monarchy from about the fifth century B.C. to the tenth century of our era ; the period of disunion from the tenth to the thirteenth century ; the Second Monarchy, or First line of Priest Rulers, from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century ; and the Third Monarchy, or Second line of Priest Rulers, from the seventeenth century to the present day.

Little of the exact is known of the political history and social conditions that obtained prior to the reign of King Song-tsan Gam-po in the first half of the seventh century of our era. For the Tibetans themselves have no contemporaneous records of the earlier period, and until they emerged in force from the natural stronghold which is their country they were not apparently of sufficient importance to obtain distinctive mention by the historians of adjoining countries.

It appears however, from the evidence of tradition and of material structures which have survived to this day, that they were already at that time a highly civilized people. They had already for centuries past practised agriculture, irrigation and mining. The Tibetans, though many of them are pastoral, are mainly an agricultural people and have been so since recorded time.

There is no reason to suppose that agriculture came to Tibet any later than to China or to Europe. And if there is any weight in the view that the Chinese style of architecture denotes a pastoral origin, it might well be held that the Tibetans whose houses bear no resemblance whatsoever to the structure of a tent were an agricultural people before the Chinese. It does not absolutely follow, of course, but it is an interesting possibility.

The origin of the imposing style of Tibetan architecture is, as far as I am aware, unknown. The great temples, massive forts, substantial bridges and solid dwelling-houses they build to-day they would appear to have built in the same style from time immemorial. They attained in fact at some unrecorded time in the remote past a skill in architecture that would not disgrace a modern nation of our own day. Of old buildings which still stand there is the Lhasa Cathedral, the Jo Khang, which is after the Potala the most striking building in the Tibetan capital, and was built in the time of Songtsan Gam-po himself ; and the huge monastery of Samye built a century later.

And Herodotus, writing twenty-five centuries ago, presents, in recording a traveller's tale, a picture of the Tibetan gold-miners of that remote period which was recognized by the travellers of our own times. The story is of interest in itself and is well told by Sir Thomas Holdich in his book *Tibet the Mysterious*.

Tibetan traditions go back to the dawn of time. One an age-old tradition, ascribes the origin of mankind to the mating of a monkey with a supernatural being

Tibetan mysticism of a later age, dealing with this old legend, claims the monkey to have been the incarnation of the Bodhisat Avalokitesvara, Chenrezi, the guardian deity of Tibet. This tradition is commonly held in Tibet but it has not the field to itself. An alternative explanation of the origin of man, also widely held, was propounded to me by a learned Tibetan Ge-she or Doctor of Divinity. Men, according to this view, originally emerged adult ; as well out of the Lotus as from the air itself. They were immortal. There were neither sun nor moon nor stars. Mankind was self-luminous, men exuded their own light. Their food grew of itself, in the grass and on the trees. They took what they wanted as they wanted it, and it immediately re-grew. It was the same with their raiment. But then men began to take more than they needed at the moment. They thought to save themselves trouble and to make sure of the days ahead. So they laid in stocks. From that they proceeded to claim the sources of supply. They acquired in fact the sense of individual property. And men and women took to looking at each other and the sense of sex came into their minds. Heaven was offended and decreed that man should henceforth live on the fruits of his own toil, that he should produce his food from the soil. The sun and moon were provided for him, and he lost his own luminosity. He became the man of to-day, mankind as we know it.

Thus the same two opposite points of view, the opposing conceptions of man's origin, the rise of man and the fall of man, obtain with the Tibetans as with us.

The Tibetans themselves date the First Monarchy

from the fifth century B.C. The Monarchy had thus already been in existence upwards of a thousand years before Song-tsan Gam-po came to the throne. It was he, however, who brought his people to the notice of history by invading the Chinese Empire in the early part of the seventh century of our era.

The Kingdom, consolidated by him, was extended in area and power by his successors until Tibet became one of the most powerful nations of Asia. It comprised at its zenith, in addition to Tibet proper, Nepal, Bhutan, Upper Burma, Turkestan, and parts of Western China. It confronted on an equality the Chinese Empire as it then stood. Wars between China and Tibet were frequent in those days, and the honours would appear to have been evenly divided. On one occasion, *circa* A.D. 650, the armies of the Empire over-ran the Kingdom and captured Lhasa, the Tibetan capital. On another, *circa* A.D. 763, the Tibetans dictated a peace at the Chinese capital, Changan, the modern Sianfu, and exacted tribute from the Empire.

China and India alike contributed to the evolution of the distinctive culture of Tibet. Buddhism, which the Tibetans moulded in the course of time into the form we term Lamaism, was introduced from India but the impulse to it came from the Chinese Princess Wen Chang of the Imperial House of T'ai Tsung (A.D. 627-50) of the T'ang dynasty whom the Emperor, in accordance with the time-honoured method of recognizing the might and power of a fellow-potentate, had given Song-tsan Gam-po to wife in result of his invasion of the Empire.

The Princess took with her from China as her wedding present to her husband a large bronze Buddha which had originally come from India. It is recorded that on the way the Buddha was one day found to be immovable. The priests divined that he was captivated by the peaceful charm of that particular place and that if a replica were made and kept there he would be willing to proceed. This was done and all was well. The replica set up in the temple there, the Lha-gong Gompa in the grasslands of Menya, is still in existence. For the original a temple was built at Lhasa, the Jo Khang, to which we have already referred.

Of this Buddha, Holdich says : “ This famous image of the Buddha, known as the Jovo Rimpoche, is said to have been made in Magadha during the lifetime of the great teacher. Visvakarma is supposed to have made it under the guidance of the god Indra, of an alloy of the five precious substances, gold, silver, zinc, iron, and copper, and ‘ the five precious celestial substances,’ probably diamonds, rubies, lapis-lazuli, emeralds and ‘ indranila.’ ”

Buddhism had come to Tibet some two hundred years earlier than King Song-tsan Gam-po’s time, but had made no headway. Converted by his Chinese consort, supported by her colleague, the King’s other wife, a princess from Nepal, also a Buddhist, Song-tsan Gam-po introduced it afresh. Like the Chinese Emperor Ming Ti (A.D. 58–76) of the later Han dynasty six centuries earlier, the King sent direct to India to study the religion and procure the scriptures.

It is recorded of the King’s minister Thu-mi, who

was entrusted with this mission, that he adapted an Indian alphabet to the Tibetan language, thereby producing the written language that obtains to-day. It would seem, however, improbable that the Tibetan written language was thus introduced. It is difficult to believe that a people so highly civilized and organized as the Tibetans had long been possessed no written language prior to Song-tsan Gam-po's time. If it were so, it would have been more natural for the King to adopt Chinese characters than Indian. For the Tibetan language is more akin in its structure to Chinese than to Sanskrit. And Chinese was the language of his Queen ; the Chinese in her retinue could have done the adaptation on the spot. It is therefore reasonable to surmise that the Tibetan language was reduced to writing at some unrecorded period prior to Song-tsan Gam-po's time, the credit, however, being given to him, to add to the lustre of the greatest figure in Tibetan history.

It was at the instance also of the Princess Wen Chang that the first lamaseries were established in Tibet. Thus was introduced an innovation in the Tibetan polity, the monastic system, which was destined to play a predominant part in the political evolution of the country. For the lamaseries which with this beginning were gradually established throughout the country constituted compact bodies of men living together, artificial communities in a land without large natural centres of population. With arable lands consisting for the most part of narrow river valleys shut in by mountain walls, there were and are no great centres of agricultural population such as exist in the teeming plains of China

and India. The pastoral lands are still more sparsely populated. And there are no industrial centres, the material objects of Tibetan use being made by the people in their individual homes.

The piety of the people founded lamaseries on all sides and recruited them in such numbers, so large a proportion of the people entered them, that they became in time the chief centres of population throughout the country. They became in fact the Tibetan equivalent of our towns.

The lay princes were unable to support large bodies of men in their immediate entourage. Their vassals and followers lived necessarily over a wide expanse of country whence they had to be drawn in when required. But it was different in the case of the monasteries. They also drew their support from wide areas but their men-at-arms, the priests themselves, were on the premises. It was inevitable, therefore, that under a feudal dispensation temporal power in their various districts should gravitate to the men who controlled these communities. The abbots of the great lamaseries became in the course of time powerful feudal lords.

The Princess Wen Chang, who has long since been canonized, taking her place by her husband's side in the Tibetan pantheon, would appear to be entitled to rank as one of the leading feminine figures in history. For she gave the impulse which in determining the particular trend of the spiritual and political evolution of a great nation has ultimately contributed to the world, for what of value and instruction it may contain, a distinctive form of cultural organization.

Buddhism thus re-introduced into the country by Song-tsan Gam-po and supported by his successors, spread throughout Tibet, and from there, in the course of centuries, throughout Mongolia too, displacing the older cults of those countries largely by finding room for them within the Buddhist fold. The pre-Buddhist Bon religion of Tibet, an animistic cult, survives to-day as a component part of Tibetan Buddhism, where it is especially emphasized in the Bon sect of the Tibetan Church.

The greatest prelate of the early period, and the first great priest in a country which was destined to be ruled by the priesthood, was Padma Sambhava, who came to Tibet from India on the invitation of the then King, Ti-song De-tsen (A.D. 740-86). He belonged to the Tantric cult of Indian Buddhism and the doctrines he preached were largely instrumental in reconciling the Bonists to the new cult.

But the success of Buddhism in Tibet and in Mongolia must be mainly ascribed to the support it received from temporal authority. As the religion of King and prince and noble it had the whole weight and prestige of the State behind it. In China on the other hand, where it was, as we have seen, introduced centuries earlier than in Tibet, it came up against the age-old religion which Confucius has rooted for all time in the souls of the upper classes of his countrymen, that is, of Authority. Buddhism unable either to dislodge or to absorb the older faith, has ever had to be content in China with second place.

In the tenth century of our era, *circa* A.D. 914, a

determined effort on the part of the anti-clericals to stem the growing power of the Church dissolved the Kingdom into its component feudal parts. The last King but one, Ral-pa-chan, a great supporter of the Church, was murdered by his brother, Lang-dar-ma, who was head of the opposing faction. Lang-dar-ma ascended the throne and set himself to suppress the Faith, but was shortly afterwards himself assassinated, and with him the First Monarchy came to an end. The Church won through in the long run and Ral-pa-chan has taken his place amongst the deities, while Lang-dar-ma goes down in Tibetan history as a fiend. He is represented in religious pictures with a horn on his head.

The period of the Kingdom, from Song-tsan Gam-po until its close, represents the golden age of Tibetan history and it is interesting to note that it practically synchronized with the T'ang Dynasty of China (A.D. 618 to 907), which is regarded by the Chinese as one of the most glorious epochs of theirs. In the one as in the other were consolidated the cultural foundations of a great nation.

The period of disunion which followed upon the fall of the monarchy lasted some three centuries. The outstanding figure of this period is Atisha, the great religious reformer of the eleventh century. He also, like Padma Sambhava, came from India. But whereas the latter was a teacher of the Tantric doctrines the former endeavoured to get back to first principles, to re-state the faith of the Church in terms of the teachings of the historic Buddha.

The Sakya Line of Rulers

IN the thirteenth century Kublai (A.D. 1253 to 1295), Grand Khan of the Mongol Confederation, wrested the Chinese Empire from the Sungs and established the Yuan Dynasty (A.D. 1280 to 1368).

Kublai Khan, eclectic in religion and sensitive, like the Roman magistrate, of the use of the Church in temporal affairs invited the then leading priest of Tibetan Buddhism, the abbot of the great Sakya monastery, to his Court, to give the blessing of the greatest Church in Asia to the widest Empire then known to man. The lama on his part desired the sovereignty of Tibet. By this time the evolution of the church in that country to temporal power had progressed so far that the clerical princes were as numerous and as powerful as the lay. And the Sakya hierarch was himself the most important individual prince in the country.

Tibet however was not a part of the Khan's domains. The armies of Genghiz and of Ogotai, his predecessors in the Khanate, had swept across high Asia, conquered India, and reduced large tracts of Europe, where their devastating progress was brought to an abrupt end by the news of the death of their Khan, whereupon in accordance with their custom they returned to the capital to elect his successor. A drunken debauch at Karakoram had killed the Grand Khan and saved Europe. Tibet however had not been affected by the wave of conquest. And I think we must look for the reasons for this elsewhere than in the geographical configuration

of the country. Tibet is by no means inaccessible in herself. In spite of her great mountain buttresses she is vulnerable on all sides except the north where the Chang Tang, a vast belt of bare and wind-swept uplands, is impassable to any army.

Her relative poverty however would provide little incentive to the Mongol hordes and at the same time would present a serious obstacle to forces which had to live on the lands they passed through. But these considerations would not of themselves have necessarily deflected the Mongol conquerors. Probably the racial affinity of Mongol and Tibetan had something to do with it. Very likely there were Tibetans in the Mongol hosts. And the religious connection might perhaps, even at this early time, have already commenced.

However that may be, it remains that the invading Mongols left Tibet alone. And Kublai Khan himself, who conquered all China and went to war with Annam and Burma, successfully, and with Japan and Cambodia, unsuccessfully, for failing to pay him tribute, at no time either demanded or received tribute from Tibet.

It has been said that the Emperor was converted to Buddhism by his Sakya visitor but this, in view of his well-known eclecticism, would appear to be unlikely. He fell in however with the lama's ambitions and recognized him as the sovereign of all Tibet. He looked upon that country as the sovereign domain of the Church, its head as his spiritual adviser, the only equal he admitted in all Asia.

Helped by the moral support of the Empire's recognition, the Sakya hierarch was enabled to secure the

hegemony of the country and thus to establish the second Monarchy of Tibet. The nation rose from the ashes of disunion and again confronted the Chinese Empire as an equal, the equality not now of rivalry in arms, but of alliance of Church and State, the former Tibet, the latter the Empire of Kublai Khan.

The Sakya hierarch established himself as supreme temporal and spiritual ruler of Tibet, but, solicitous of preserving in the eyes of the people the sanctity of his office of Pontiff, vested the actual administration of affairs in the hands of a regent. This form of government he superimposed upon the existing feudal basis of society which was retained.

The Sakya hierarch was thus the first Priest-King of Tibet, and the line he established lasted nearly four centuries.

In the middle of the fourteenth century of our era, while the Sakyas were in power, the great religious reformer, Tsong-ka-pa, was born, A.D. 1358, at Kumbum in Amdo. He founded a new sect of Tibetan Buddhism, the Gelugpa Church, wherein a higher standard of conduct and a stricter discipline were required of the priesthood. His disciples were called upon to lead a life of simplicity and austerity in consonance with the Buddha's teachings. It is interesting to note that Tsong-ka-pa's life was coincident in point of time with that of the very different but equally famous Buddhist priest who in China seized the Empire from the last Emperor of the line founded by Kublai Khan and established the Ming Dynasty (A.D. 1368 to 1644).

Tsong-ka-pa, whom Tibetan mysticism identifies

with Chenrezi, Avalokitesvara, is the patron saint of the sect he founded, the Gelugpa, often termed the Yellow Church or the Yellow Hats. While Padma Sambhava is the tutelary deity of the older sects of Tibetan Buddhism, of which the Nyima and the Sakya are the chief, often referred to collectively as the Red Church or the Red Hats.

The Establishment of the Present Line of Rulers, the Dalai Lamas.

TOWARDS the middle of the seventeenth century Nga-wang Lob-sang, the abbot of the great Drepung lamasery, aided by Gusri, Khan of the Oelot Mongols, overthrew the Sakya line and established the Third, the present, line of Tibetan rulers, still regnant to-day. Nga-wang Lob-sang was the head of the Gelugpa church in direct line of succession from Tsong-ka-pa. And as such he bore the title of Dalai Lama, given to a predecessor of his in this line by the Khan of the Mongols. The new ruler was the fifth in the line of succession and is hence known as the Fifth Dalai Lama. This designation, which has confused some historians, refers to his place in the line, not of the rulers of Tibet, but of the Popes of the Yellow Church. The Fifth Dalai Lama is, in fact, the first of the sovereigns of the present line of Tibetan rulers.

Nga-wang Lob-sang, discovering by divine revelation that he was the incarnation, the embodiment on earth, of the Bodhisat Avalokitesvara, Chenrezi, the guardian

deity of Tibet, assumed that exalted status, thereby introducing an innovation destined to have a most far-reaching effect on the political evolution of Tibet, to draw in the end that country into the vortex of world politics.

A further, minor but still important, effect was to weaken the Government of that country by exposing it to current periods of regency through the mode of succession which was a necessary corollary of the divinity of the ruler. It was not a question of a King ruling by divine right, but of an actual Deity on earth. The successor to the throne could not be an ordinary human while waiting for the throne to be vacant and then automatically become a god. This difficulty was overcome by establishing succession by reincarnation. The ruler on death was re-born ; and the government while he was an infant was in each case carried on by a regent in his name.

This system of succession by reincarnation, necessary in the case of the supreme ruler of Tibet, became in course of time general with the great prelates of the country where there are now some hundreds of Living Buddhas. On the spiritual plane it appealed to the mystical faith of a devout people. And it afforded a practical solution of the question of succession to a celibate office.

Another element destined in the future to complicate the political situation in Tibet was introduced at the same time. The same revelation, which exalted the Dalai Lama to the status of divinity, exposed that the old lama, who was his spiritual adviser, was in like

position. The former was, as we have seen, Avalokitesvara ; the latter was similarly shown to be Amitabha, O-pa-me, one of the Five Celestial Beings. The Dalai Lama thereupon established his old teacher at the great Tashi-lumpo lamasery near Shigatse. And political intrigue of subsequent times has endeavoured on occasion to set Tashi-lumpo up against Lhasa.

The relative status of the two is, however, clear, and appears indeed in their Tibetan titles. The Dalai Lama's title is the "Kyam-gon Rimpoche," which may be translated "His Holiness the Protector," and the "Gye-wa Rimpoche," or "His Holiness the Ruler." The title of the great prelate of Tashi-lumpo is the "Pan-chen Rimpoche," or "His Holiness the Great Teacher." Outside Tibet the former is usually termed the Dalai Lama or, alternatively, the Grand Lama ; and the latter the Panchen Lama, or the Tashi Lama from the name of his great monastery.

In metaphysics Amitabha as a Celestial Being is himself exalted above all mundane affairs, spiritual as well as temporal, with which he is in contact solely through his active attribute, the Bodhisat Avalokitesvara. O-pa-me and Chenrezi are in fact one and the same person, the one the passive, the other the active, element of the Godhead. Translated into practical life, it is seen that the Panchen Lama is concerned entirely with the other world, passing his days in communion with Heaven, and constituting, for the guidance of the people, the representation on earth of Buddha in Nirvana ; while the Dalai Lama deals, as Buddha's Vice-regent on earth, with worldly affairs, temporal and spiritual.

Having established himself as supreme ruler of Tibet, the Dalai Lama set forth for Peking where the Manchus had just succeeded in wresting the Empire from the Mings and in establishing the Ch'ing Dynasty (A.D. 1644 to 1912). He desired from the new Emperor the recognition which Kublai Khan had accorded to the founder of the Sakya line. The moral support of such recognition would assist him in overcoming any opposition in Tibet and in consolidating the exalted status he had attained. The Emperor on his part desired the influence of the Dalai Lama to assist him in bringing the Mongols within his sway.

By this time Tibetan Buddhism had already become the religion of Mongolia, helped to that end alike by the racial affinity of Mongol and Tibetan and by the support given to it by the temporal authorities in Mongolia. The Tibetans and the Mongols are cognate races differentiated mainly in result of the operation of a difference in environment. Moreover there was much in common between the pre-Buddhist cults of Tibet and Mongolia. The form of Buddhism which the Tibetans evolved thus commended itself to the Mongols and when temporal authority gave the impetus and led the way the spread of the faith was assured.

We have seen that the Grand Khan Kublai gave the highest countenance to the Tibetan Church, that his moral support, the prestige of his recognition, had contributed to the success of the Sakya hierarch in securing the sovereignty of Tibet. And now the new ruler had been actively assisted thereto by the intervention in arms of a Mongol khan. Meanwhile Tibetan

priests had long since been preaching the faith throughout Mongolia under the direct patronage of the various princes of that country.

The Emperor received the Dalai Lama as an independent sovereign, as an equal. It is recorded that he went out of his capital to meet his visitor, and that he had an inclined pathway built over the city wall so that the Dalai Lama could pass into the city without going through a gate in the wall, for pedestrians use the walls of Peking and it was felt to be unfitting that His Holiness should pass beneath a place trodden by people's feet. The Emperor and the Dalai Lama joined forces and the combination was irresistible. The Mongols whom, as we have seen, had already accepted Tibetan Buddhism as their religion found at its head a Pontiff whom the Emperor recognized not only as the Head of the Church, but as a Divinity on earth. They accepted him. The Dalai Lama on his part deployed the influence of the church on behalf of the Emperor and the Mongols acknowledged his sway.

But henceforth, a new element entered into the relations of China, Mongolia and Tibet. The conduct and the fate of the politico-religious potentate whom Tibet had evolved and enshrined in her midst became a matter of great moment to China as to Mongolia. So long as he was complacent and no one interfered with him, he and Tibet could be left alone by the Empire. But the successive Emperors found themselves compelled constantly to intervene, now to protect and now to discipline the supreme pontiff. And the next phase of Tibetan history is the record of this intervention and its consequences.

The Building-up of the Chinese Connection

NO developments occurred so long as Nga-wang Lob-sang lived. He was a strong ruler who put down opposition with an iron hand. The institution of Divine Sovereign was not in itself a new departure in Tibetan history, for the lay kings of the First Monarchy had been considered divinities. And no doubt this old tradition and the mystic faith of the people, their veneration for the great trio of prelates, Padma Sambhava, Atisha and Tsong-ka-pa, and the rule of the Sakya hierarchs, had paved the way for the general acceptance of the development from the Pontiff-Sovereign of the Sakya line to the Divine Ruler of Nga-wang Lob-sang. But still there were recalcitrants who had to be persuaded. And a European observer of the Dalai Lama's methods, the Jesuit Johannes Grueber who with his companion, Albert de Dorville, was at Lhasa in the year 1661, calls him "devilish God the Father who puts to death such as refuse to adore him." But we must remember the beam in our own eye, the Inquisition. The methods of the one as of the other were ruthless.

The Dalai Lama succeeded in consolidating his position, both temporal and spiritual, throughout Tibet. Though he had retained the form of government of his Sakya predecessors, associating a regent with himself in the administration of affairs, he was not prevented by this concession to the past from ruling in fact as well as in name.

But when his strong personality was removed by death, the clouds gathered and broke. His successor was quite unsuited by temperament either to represent the Godhead or to administer the government. He was of the type we term Bohemian, and his conduct scandalized his people and led to his death and to the intervention of the Dzungarian Mongols, who swept across Tibet and occupied Lhasa. Whereupon, in A.D. 1718, the Emperor of China, K'ang Hsi, sent an army, ejected the invaders, established the Dalai Lama's successor on the throne, and put in a Manchu Resident and a garrison of troops at his capital.

It would appear that the Resident's position was merely that of the Emperor's Envoy at the Court of the Dalai Lama, and that the garrison was intended rather for the protection of the Dalai Lama than as a bodyguard to the Resident.

The line of communications between Lhasa and China was at the same time secured by the posting of small detachments of Chinese troops along the Tachienlu-Batang-Chamdo-Lhasa road.

Further, K'ang Hsi put in his own nominee as Regent.

A few years later the latter was murdered, and the Empire again intervened. The then Emperor, Yung Cheng, having sent an army and restored order, introduced, in A.D. 1727, changes designed to put the Empire in a position to prevent further trouble arising.

The Emperor dealt with the situation as it then obtained. We have seen that the Sakya rulers retained the feudal system and established a form of government

wherein the Pontiff held aloof from the administration of affairs, vesting the latter in the hands of a regent. The tendency under such a system was for the great feudal barons to recognize the spiritual authority of the Pontiff to the prejudice of his temporal power. Jealous of their own prerogatives they would brook little interference from the Regent, who necessarily carried less weight than the Pontiff himself. They considered their obligations discharged in obeying the spiritual mandates of the Pontiff.

The weakness inherent in the system itself was greatly accentuated by the subsequent exaltation of the ruler to the position of deity. The idea behind this form of government, which obtained for centuries in Japan and persists to-day in Nepal and Bhutan, is that the head of the Church, God's Vice-Regent on earth, is too holy to take part in the sordid realm which is the world of affairs. It embodies, indeed, a political truth which has found expression with us in the exaltation of the Throne above the sphere of politics. But stability under it can only be attained by the virtual assumption on the part of the Regent, with the general consent, of all the prerogatives of a monarch, or by a complicated system of constitutional government such as we have.

No doubt under the strong rulership of the Fifth Dalai Lama the defect in the form of government was not immediately apparent. He was a law unto himself. He could over-ride what he had himself ordained, and whatever he did was accepted without question. But the same latitude was not granted his successors, and the present Dalai Lama, whom political exigencies have

compelled to follow in his footsteps, has to contend against a bulk of tradition and opinion which considers that it is not meet that he should be soiled by contact with mundane affairs. And he himself preserves the time-honoured principle, in that though directing all the other affairs of the nation, he has delegated to his Prime Minister supreme control in the highly important but necessarily sordid sphere which is the administration of the criminal law.

Even under Nga-wang Lob-sang it appears that the feudal princes preserved to a large extent their independence of temporal control. By Yung Cheng's time they were virtually independent in temporal matters, though they still acknowledged the ultimate sovereignty therein of the Dalai Lama. In spiritual matters, on the other hand, the authority of the Pontiff had gained, not lost, with the passage of time. All Tibet and Mongolia worshipped him as their God.

Yung Cheng now charged his Resident at Lhasa with the general surveillance of the temporal affairs of the Dalai Lama. It does not appear that the Resident was given any definite authority or powers ; he seems merely to have been put in the position of adviser to the Pontiff, the latter no doubt being enjoined to seek his counsel.

Further, the Emperor brought the feudal princes of Tibet into direct individual contact with the Imperial Throne by granting them seals of office. And he allotted them severally, according to their geographical location, to the general supervision of various officers of the Empire, namely, the Resident at Lhasa and the Viceroys of Szechuen, Yunnan and Kansu. Practically all the

important princes were thus given seals of office, and most of the great prelates, the Living Buddhas, even those who had no temporal principalities under them.

The leading princes, lay and cleric, thus dealt with were : the Lama princes of Riwochi, Chamdo, Draya and Mili ; the Kings of Derge, Chala, Lintsung, Nangchen and Hlato ; the Banner chieftains of Jyade ; the Princes of Batang and Litang, and the five Horpa princes, Kangsar, Mazur, Beri, Drio and Drango ; and some of the Giarong princes on the north-west frontier of Szechuen. Quite a number of chieftains, lay and cleric—for instance, those of the Nyarong, Golok, Sangen and Amdo regions—were overlooked, as their importance was not apparent at that particular time.

It appears that the princes and prelates received their seals as a compliment from the Emperor and in no sense as a mark of vassalage. Indeed, Nga-wang Lob-sang himself had received a seal of office from the first Manchu Emperor, between whom and himself there was, of course, no question of any relationship but that of equal allies. True, the princes were now enjoined to send periodical tribute missions to the Emperor, but equal or even superior presents were bestowed in return, and the tribute mission itself afforded profit through the trading facilities it provided. For instance, Nepal and Burma continued to send such missions to Peking even after they had come under our wing. It would in general appear that the tribute mission of the East was fundamentally a mark of respect from a small potentate to a greater rather than a sign of tutelage. It was often considered a valued privilege.

However that may be, it is apparent that the princes of Tibet did not consider that any change had occurred in their status, for they continued to recognize, then and thereafter, the spiritual and temporal overlordship of the Dalai Lama while each ruling his own realm in virtual independence.

And lastly Yung Cheng reorganized the line of communications between Lhasa and China, linking up K'ang Hsi's garrisons by a line of post-stations, and establishing, at the principal places on the road, commissariat officers responsible for the maintenance of the route, the forwarding of supplies and the provision of transport.

The Emperor Yung Cheng no doubt felt that, with his Resident at Lhasa in the position of adviser to the Dalai Lama, with all the major chieftains of the country directly recognized by himself, and with his line of communications secured, the situation was stable and the Empire would be saved any further specific and costly intervention in the affairs of the Buddhist Pontiff.

But barely a score of years passed when, in A.D. 1749, the Empire had again to intervene. This time it was the Chinese Resident who put to death the Tibetan Regent. The Tibetans retaliated by massacring the Chinese at Lhasa. The Emperor, now Ch'ien Lung, sent an army and restored order. A definite measure of control was now at long last sought to be established, in that the Emperor decreed that all the major appointments, lay and cleric, throughout the country should henceforth be made by himself on the recommendation of his Resident at Lhasa.

Less than half a century later, in A.D. 1792, the Empire once more intervened, this time to free Tibet from an alien invader. The trouble arose out of the succession to the prelacy of Tashi-lumpo on the death of the Panchen Lama on his visit to Peking in 1780. Dissension occurred at Tashi-lumpo and one party called in the armed assistance of the Gurkhas, a tribe of Rajputs who had succeeded a decade earlier in conquering Nepal and establishing themselves as sovereign of that country. The Gurkhas accepting the invitation advanced across the frontier.

The Chinese Resident was in a difficult position. Under the Manchu system of absolute responsibility it was no protection to him to plead that he had not the military strength to oppose the invasion. He should have prevented the trouble, and if he could not, and also could not deal with it effectively when it arose, so much the worse for him. He was responsible and would have to pay, at least with his position, probably with his life.

So he took the bull by the horns, bought off the Gurkhas by promising them on behalf of Tashi-lumpo an annual subsidy of ten thousand ounces of gold, and reported to the Emperor that he had subdued them and secured their submission to the Throne. Recourse, it is to be feared, was by no means rarely had to this sort of stratagem in the days of the Manchus. So pronounced was it in after days in Tibet, that, Bell tells us, the Emperor of China was known at Lhasa as "The bag of lies," so many were the false reports the Residents sent him.

When the time arrived for the subsidy to be paid, the Resident put the Gurkhas off with further promises, until, finally losing patience with him, they crossed the frontier and sacked the rich town of Shigatse which adjoins the Tashi-lumpo monastery. Whereupon the Dalai Lama appealed to the Emperor for assistance and exposed the true state of affairs.

The Emperor, still Ch'ien Lung, sent an army which, supported by Tibetan levies, defeated the Gurkhas, drove them back into Nepal, and dictated peace at their capital, the Gurkhas tendering their submission to the Throne and agreeing to send a tribute mission every five years to Peking through Tibet.

The Chinese-Tibetan victory was recorded by the Resident in an Address which he caused to be engraved on a stone tablet and set up in Lhasa. Sir Charles Bell gives a full translation of this inscription in his book *Tibet Past and Present*. It is interesting to note from this Address that the Tibetans were so devoted to learning that the Resident feels impelled to expostulate with them on that score. "If a people abandon military pursuits and make literature their chief object, they become unable to safeguard their former position." Coming from the representative of a nation the most devoted of all to literature this constitutes an eloquent tribute to the civilization of Tibet. It was, however, somewhat ungracious on the part of the Resident in this particular connection, seeing that there were more Tibetan troops than Chinese in the victorious army. And lest the impression be conveyed that the Tibetans are a nation lacking in martial vigour, I would mention that an

equally eloquent tribute to their fighting qualities is paid by General Fu Sung-mu who fought against them in Chao Erh-feng's campaigns.

The Emperor now set up a Resident and an Associate Resident in the place of the single Resident at Lhasa, and made them jointly responsible for the superintendence of affairs in Tibet. He decreed that the Dalai Lama should communicate with the Throne only through the Residents ; his memorials, that is his despatches, were to be handed to them for transmission, the idea being to prevent him ignoring their existence in his relations with the Emperor.

Further, Ch'ien Lung decreed a change in the method of determining the identity on re-birth of the reincarnations of the Pontiff and the major prelates of the Lama Church in Tibet as well as in Mongolia. He designed to place the succession to these high offices beyond the reach of family ambition and political intrigue. A golden urn was sent to Lhasa from Peking. When the time came for a re-birth to be determined, the names of the infants held to satisfy the mystical requirements were to be put into the urn, a religious ceremony was to be held, and then a name extracted at random from the urn in the presence of the Residents and in full view of the public. The Dalai Lama himself was to officiate at these ceremonies ; but in the case of succession to the supreme pontificate he would of course not be available, and the Panchen Lama was then to officiate.

The settlement of Ch'ien Lung remained the nominal basis of the relations of China with Tibet until the year

1910, when the Tibetan Government was forcibly overturned by the then Resident.

Under it there was no interference in the actual administration of the country, and even the measure of Chinese authority laid down was frequently set aside by Tibet without difficulty or protest. The Imperial authority was disregarded on occasion even in the paramount matter of the succession to the supreme pontificate. In the case of the Ninth Dalai Lama and of the present, the golden urn was not used, the Tibetans selecting the Pontiff through their own process of divination.

The essential sovereignty of Tibet was further shown in her dealings with Nepal in 1856, when a treaty was made between these two countries without the intervention of China. Sir Charles Bell gives this treaty in full in his book. The connection of Tibet and Nepal with China was not severed but expressly maintained, in that both nations agreed "to regard the Chinese Emperor as heretofore with respect, in accordance with what has been written." And Nepal shouldered, in return for an annual subsidy of ten thousand rupees and other advantages, the age-old burden of the layman towards the priest, the essence indeed of the nexus between China and Tibet. "Tibet being the country of monasteries, hermits and celibates, devoted to religion, the Gurkha Government have agreed henceforth to afford help and protection to it as far as they can, if any foreign country attacks it."

In the internal affairs of Tibet the authority of the Pontiff over his vast domain was notably illustrated in

his intervention in the war which broke out in Eastern Tibet in the middle of the nineteenth century (A.D. 1860 to 1863) between the paramount chieftain of Nyarong on the one side and the King of Derge and the Horpa princes on the other. The Dalai Lama sent an army, crushed the Nyarong chief, whose invasion of his neighbours was the cause of the trouble, and set up a Lhasa Governor in his place, charging him with the general supervision of the affairs of Derge and the Horpa principalities.

Tibet in World Politics

SUCH was the political status of Tibet when she entered upon the modern phase of her history which is the record of her evolution under the impact of the West upon the East. She was called upon to adjust herself to new conditions and has hitherto succeeded, weathering like a stout ship an unexpected storm.

The general factor which determined the trend of events and the political development of Tibet in this phase was the pressure upon her eventuating from the interaction of three great Empires, China, Britain and Russia. And the outstanding figure of the period is the present Dalai Lama, who succeeded to the Pontifical Throne in 1875 and took over the direction of affairs twenty years later on attaining his majority.

Great Britain first came upon the scene in the year 1772 when the Bhutanese, who were then vassals of the

Dalai Lama, overran the State of Kuch Behar, which, though not then within the confines of our Indian domain, ran conterminously with Bengal, being separated therefrom only by a small stream. Kuch Behar appealed to Bengal, and Warren Hastings, fearing that the Bhutanese, encouraged by their success in Kuch Behar, might invade Bengal, sent an army which drove them back into Bhutan. The Panchen Lama, on behalf of Tibet, then wrote to Warren Hastings asking him to stay his hand ; the Bhutanese had been defeated and punished, and he, the Panchen Lama, had reprimanded the Rajah of Bhutan ; he trusted therefore that Warren Hastings would cease hostilities which if persisted in would arouse the hostility of Lhasa. Warren Hastings fell in with the Panchen Lama's wishes and in return secured his consent to receiving an envoy to discuss the establishment of trading facilities between Tibet and Bengal.

Warren Hastings' emissary, Bogle, was well received by the Panchen Lama, but his mission was a failure. The latter would appear to have done his best, but the Lhasa Government to whom the matter was referred politely shelved it by referring it in their turn to far-distant Peking. What appeared to Warren Hastings, the agent of a great trading corporation, the East India Company, a simple and mutually advantageous proposal, the opening up of trade relations, would seem to have presented itself to the Lhasa Government and to the Manchu Resident and the Imperial Throne in the light of the lowering of the portcullis to an armed foe.

Further, it was thus revealed at the very outset of our

relations with Tibet that, in dealing with that country, we had to reckon with China in the background. We were not, however, at that time in diplomatic and treaty contact with China, though our traders had already been established for upwards of a century at Canton.

In 1783 Warren Hastings returned to the charge, sending Turner to renew with the Panchen Lama on his reincarnation after his death, already noted, at Peking, the friendly personal relations Bogle had had with his predecessor, that is with himself in his former mortal husk. Turner was also well received, and secured the right of Indian traders to visit Tibet. This concession, however, was withdrawn a few years later in result of the Gurkha invasion of Tibet of 1792 already mentioned. We had in that year entered into a commercial treaty with Nepal and had established a Resident at her capital. And the Tibetans would appear to have thought that we ought to have restrained the Gurkhas and prevented their aggression.

Bogle in his time had indeed mentioned the respect in which the Gurkhas held our power and had suggested that if Tibet came into relations with us we might be able to dissuade this warlike nation should she feel disposed to try conclusions with her Tibetan neighbours. In 1792, however, we were not in a position to restrain the Gurkhas. Two years later we withdrew our Resident, and in 1814 we were ourselves attacked by them. We were successful in the resultant campaign and concluded with them in 1816 the Treaty of Segowlie since when our relations with this race of warriors have been close and friendly.

Our commercial tentative towards Tibet lapsed for nearly a century until, diplomatic relations having in the meantime been established with China, it was timidly renewed through this channel. In the Chefoo Agreement of 1876, with China, we secured the right of sending a mission of exploration into Tibet. The Chinese later, however, propounded various difficulties in the way of such a mission, and we formally abandoned the idea in our treaty with China in the matter of Burma, the Burma-Thibet Convention of 1886, wherein, however, we expressed our general desire for trade facilities between India and Tibet.

The Tibetans now, in 1886, took action on their own part against us. It would appear that they considered Sikkim to be feudatory to Lhasa though this State had in fact accrued to us in result of our war with Nepal of 1814-16. And they took the unusual course of proffering this claim by sending armed forces across the frontier and occupying a post there.

Great Britain, unwilling to use force if it could be avoided, took the matter up with China, to whom we were now accustomed to look in regard to Tibetan affairs. The Chinese had persuaded us, by their assumption of the rôle, that they exercised a valid suzerainty over Tibet. We desired them, therefore, to secure the withdrawal of the Tibetan invaders from Sikkim. The Tibetans, however, were not amenable to China's instructions or advice, and we had in the end, after giving the Chinese a whole year wherein to deploy their authority, to take action ourselves and eject the Tibetan troops from Sikkim by force.

Thereupon the Chinese came forward with the proposal that we negotiate a treaty with them to put the relations of India and Tibet on a clear footing. This resulted in the Convention of 1890 between Great Britain and China relating to Sikkim and Tibet, followed in 1893 by Regulations regarding Trade, Communication and Pasturage to be thereto appended. By these instruments our protectorate over Sikkim was recognized, the Sikkim-Tibet frontier was defined and we were given the right to trade with Tibet, Yatung in that country being opened to this purpose as a trade mart. They constituted the first breach in the wall of Tibetan exclusiveness.

We did not know at the time, but found out long afterwards when they bore fruit in act and consequence that these agreements were repudiated by the Tibetans *in toto* as being concluded by China above their heads without their authority and as being in direct conflict with their national policy.

A minor point was that the Tibetans considered that the frontier itself had been, in one section of it, wrongly defined, placing within Sikkim the Giagong pasturelands which they claimed belonged to Tibet. It transpired in due course that the Chinese Resident had defined the frontier without consulting the Tibetans.

The Chinese in coming forward and offering negotiations and making these agreements on behalf of Tibet would appear to have been actuated by the fear that we might take direct action in that country to the peril of their position there. They knew of course that the concessions they gave undermined the traditional

policy of Tibet, but that was in their eyes the lesser of two evils. And diplomacy might recover what diplomacy had given. It had done so on occasion before, and might do so again.

And so our relations with Tibet entered upon a new phase. We now had definite rights, conceded on behalf of the country, by the Authority which claimed to guide its destinies.

But we found these rights rendered illusory by obstruction. Followed diplomatic discussion on this point and that. We were prepared to rectify the frontier ; we desired that our traders be really allowed to trade. But nothing came of it all. Years passed while the truth slowly dawned on us that Chinese authority was nebulous in Tibet, whereupon we decided to take up the whole question with the Tibetan authorities direct.

The Viceroy of India wrote a letter to the Dalai Lama in 1900 ; it was returned, seals broken, six months later by the Tibetan frontier officials, with the message that they dared not forward it. The Viceroy wrote again, in 1901 ; and the letter was actually delivered to the Dalai Lama, who, however, refused to accept it, and it came back seals intact. It appears that the Dalai Lama was not at that time prepared to set aside an agreement which had been made by his predecessor, that is by himself in his previous incarnation, to the effect that he would not enter into correspondence with foreign governments except in consultation with his Council of State and the Chinese Resident.

In the meantime a new factor, Russia, had entered

upon the situation. The Dalai Lama, while refusing all intercourse with India, sent in 1900 and again in 1901, a Mission to the Emperor of Russia composed of a Russian Siberian subject, the Buriat Dorjieff, known to the Tibetans as the Tsani Khempo, supported by the Chief Secretary to His Holiness. Dorjieff, himself a lama and a Mongol by race, had been some twenty years in residence at Lhasa where his personal qualities and religious erudition had advanced him to the notice and favour of the Dalai Lama, who gave him a position in his immediate entourage.

The Mission was on each occasion duly received by the Emperor, but the Russian Government, in reply to the inquiry of Great Britain, stated categorically that it was of a religious nature only, similar to those sent abroad from time to time by the Pope, and that no diplomatic or political significance attached to it.

It was apparent, however, that this interchange of letters and presents between the Dalai Lama and the Russian Emperor was regarded by the Tibetans themselves in a different light. They saw in Russia a possible counterpoise to British pressure.

Dorjieff had even sought to identify Russia with the Shambala of Tibetan prophecy, which affirms that Buddhism would gradually be overcome by alien religions until Shambala, a great State to the north of Tibet, would take up arms and restore the Faith throughout the world. This was revealed to O-pa-me meditating in his second reincarnation, that is some two centuries ago. I gather from my Tibetan friends that Shambala, which is unknown to our geography,

does not necessarily exist in the material plane, though it is encircled by walls of solid copper. From some such mystic realm, incomprehensible to the ordinary mind, but presenting no difficulties of belief to Tibetan mysticism or to our modern spiritualism, came perhaps the angels of Mons.

It does not appear that the Tibetans were persuaded of the identity of Russia with Shambala. But there is good ground for believing that they thought Russia would support them against Great Britain. China had failed to give effect to their traditional policy of seclusion. She had made agreements incompatible with the fixed resolve of the nation to keep the foreigner out at all costs.

This attitude, so astonishing to us, was a matter of instinct with the Tibetans, and hence not open to argument. They did not want us. They did not wish to have anything to do with our ideas of progress and social organization. Above all, they dreaded the introduction of our religion. At that time they looked upon our civilization much as the average Englishman looks upon Bolshevism, as something subversive of the very basis of society. They believed their own civilization could be preserved on no other basis than the complete exclusion of ours. They believed that if they gave us an inch we would take an ell, that once we got in it would be the beginning of the end of the social culture which was the foundation of their polity.

China had failed them. They would try Russia. They did not envisage the same menace from this quarter. Russia has thousands of Asiatic subjects,

even some European, who are adherents of the Tibetan Church and look upon the Dalai Lama as their divinity on earth. It was even said that the Emperor himself was about to embrace the Faith. And anyway, we were the immediate menace. Russia was separated from Tibet by hundreds of miles of difficult terrain ; our domain was conterminous.

The star of Russia was in the ascendant in Asia. It was before the Russo-Japanese War. The Tibetans believed that Russia was a greater power than Britain, that a hint from her and we would collapse. The Dalai Lama had not as yet been abroad and learnt the intricacies of international politics. It was his first essay in that realm, a plunge into an unfamiliar maze.

The entrance of Russia upon the scene caused Great Britain to bestir herself. We could not tolerate on the part of Tibet a one-sided exclusiveness directed against ourselves, that kept us out and let Russian influence in. If the Tibetans had maintained a complete seclusion, we would have put up with the position of impasse we had reached in our relations with them. It was uncomfortable and disadvantageous, but it did not constitute an immediate danger. But we could not allow Tibet to fall under the influence of a rival Power, to the detriment of our prestige throughout Asia and the peril of our position in India.

We therefore took up with Russia the question of the Dalai Lama's overtures and secured from her the declaration already noted. We then consolidated our position within our own frontier by ejecting from the grass-lands of Giagong the Tibetan posts still in

occupation thereof in contravention of the Sikkim-Tibet Convention.

This latter action caused the Chinese to come forward once more and offer negotiations for the settlement of the differences between us and Tibet. Their reaction to our measures in Sikkim was, in fact, identical in 1902 as in 1888, and was motived by the same considerations.

And though our action took place entirely within our own frontier it drew an inquiry from Russia couched in a distinctly threatening tone. The new champion of Tibet was in fact giving the hint which it was hoped would call a halt to the pressure from the South.

The Russian bluff was sternly called and we discovered that their point of view was in essence that if we asserted ourselves in Tibet, they would assert themselves in some vague elsewhere, the latter turning out in the event to be Mongolia. The interest of Russia was by no means gratuitous, nor was it based on any deep-laid scheme for the invasion of India. It was in general connected with her prestige and hence her influence in Asia, and in particular with her dominion in Siberia and her ambitions in Mongolia. Thousands of her subjects, as we have noted, worshipped the Tibetan Pontiff as their God, and all Mongolia was in like condition. The fate and conduct of the Dalai Lama was therefore of great importance to her for the same reason that it was, as we have seen, to China. And she could not view with indifference the establishment by a rival Power in Asia of a predominant influence over the Pontiff. It was indeed more than just the negative

attitude that would imply. It was, that if she could not herself dominate the Pontiff, she would have to realize her Mongolian ambitions in some other way. She realized them a few years later in a virtual protectorate over that country, which she later lost and has now regained, Russia under the Soviets being as imperialistic in Asia as Russia in the old unregenerate days of the Empire.

As on the former occasion which led to the Convention of 1890, so now we accepted the Chinese invitation to negotiate, but, warned by the repudiation by the Tibetans of the agreements then arrived at, we insisted that a Tibetan plenipotentiary take full part in the negotiations now proposed. The Chinese agreed and directed the Lhasa Government to depute Tibetan officials to negotiate with the Chinese and British delegates ; and Khamba Jong, on the Tibetan side of the frontier in the region of Giagong, was agreed upon as the venue of the negotiations. Such was the genesis of the British Mission to Lhasa of 1903-4, a full account of which is given by its leader, Sir Francis Younghusband in his book, *India and Tibet*.

We found the Tibetans had no intention of negotiating anything, either at Khamba Jong or anywhere else. All they did was to protest at our entering their country, and to demand that we go back home. They were not prepared to discuss either the past or the future, and, in their ignorance of our strength, were convinced of their ability to throw us out by force if necessary, and they made preparations to this end. They would not listen to the Chinese ; the latter had

lowered the portcullis in 1890; they would not be allowed to do it again.

The Chinese were in a difficult position. They knew our strength ; they knew we were in earnest and that our case was unimpeachable ; and they feared the possibility of drastic action on our part in Tibet if we were further aggravated, above all if the Tibetans opposed us with military action. The attitude, however, of the Tibetans closed the field to the deployment of their diplomacy ; so they could only play for time, hoping something would turn up.

It was not originally intended by Great Britain that the Mission should go to Lhasa. It was hoped that the negotiations would take place as arranged at Khamba Jong. The impasse there decided us to move the Mission forward to Gyantse ; this was done, and though our progress was opposed by force, we were still prepared to negotiate at that place ; a similar impasse there, however, caused the mission to be moved to Lhasa itself.

At Lhasa we found the Tibetans had " a convention of all the people " to exclude foreigners from Tibet and no one dared to go against it. His Holiness himself escaped responsibility by the simple method of departing on a visit to the Faithful in Mongolia. Another impasse threatened. But the personal qualities of the British Commissioner and the way the Mission had been conducted throughout now bore fruit.

Colonel Younghusband had from the outset treated the Tibetans with the greatest courtesy, consideration and patience. Every Tibetan official who came near him

was welcomed. Our case and our attitude was explained to them at great length, Colonel Younghusband repeating himself with endless patience. And what was of equal value, he had been willing to listen to their views for hours on end. The Tibetans in getting rid of Bogle had said that "much conversation was not a custom of their country," but it now appeared it was. Younghusband talked and listened all his way to Lhasa. He explained himself lucidly. His sincerity was transparent. The Tibetans liked him.

Throughout we only fought when fighting was thrust upon us. On the first occasion, when Tibetan troops blocked the road ahead, the British Commissioner and General Macdonald, in their desire to avoid hostilities, risked military disaster by advancing the small British force right up to the Tibetan position without firing a shot. If military considerations had predominated, we would and could easily have shelled the Tibetans out of that position. But Younghusband took the risk and the Lhasa commander fired the shot which opened hostilities and set at nought our desire to carry through the Mission without bloodshed.

The strictest discipline was maintained throughout and prices above the market rates were paid for supplies. And by the time we arrived at Lhasa the Tibetan people were favourably disposed towards us. They contrasted, Bell tells us, our attitude towards them with that of their own officials, making in this connection one of the popular sayings they so delight in.

With the help of the Chinese Resident, whose prognostications the Tibetans now recognized to have

been accurate, and of the Nepalese Minister and of the Tongsa Penlop, since Maharajah of Bhutan, Young-husband got the Tibetans together, spread over them all the responsibility they individually feared, and got their assent to his terms.

Much of the treaty which was thus concluded, the Lhasa Convention of 1904, commended itself to the Tibetans as being in support of their traditional policy of seclusion. For we were, as we have seen, anxious to exclude from Tibet the possibility of an alien domination hostile to ourselves. As far as this part of the Treaty was concerned it was like calling upon a convinced teetotaler to sign the pledge. The increased facilities for commercial intercourse, though in conflict with that policy, were of equal and mutual advantage to the Tibetans as to ourselves. There remained the indemnity and its sanctions. The latter, the temporary occupation of the Chumbi Valley, ended with the payment of the former which, in the Treaty less than half our actual expenditure, we reduced to, in fact, an almost nominal sum.

The Struggle for Autonomy

THE British Mission had come and gone, and Tibet had emerged with her sovereignty and her territory intact. We on our part had secured direct from the Tibetans a formal covenant which gave us the trading facilities we desired, and closed the door to foreign influence in their country.

We did not consider China to fall within the latter category. Recognizing her special position in Tibet and desiring her adhesion to the Lhasa Convention we entered into negotiations with her, which resulted in the Convention of 1906, followed by the Trade Regulations of 1908.

And Russia also re-appeared on the scene concluding with us, in the general convention of 1907, dealing with our respective interests in Asia, an agreement with regard to Tibet, the object of which was, in brief : on our part, to preclude Russia from trying to get a footing in Tibet, and on Russia's part, to limit our influence there to the trading facilities we had acquired.

China, the white-haired boy of the world's diplomacy, had come through these events and agreements with her position in Tibet securer than ever before. Openly professing her inability to influence the Tibetans she had looked on, a mere bystander, while a foreign power asserted the rights she had conceded on their behalf.

Nevertheless we, and Russia, now recognized in formal covenant the suzerainty she claimed over Tibet, though the Tibetans themselves had emphatically shown by word and deed that they repudiated her claim to that status, and though she had signally failed to carry out the duties appertaining thereto.

Our recognition of China's suzerainty did not of course bind the Tibetans. They were not party to our treaties with China and Russia, and accordingly, in consonance with the attitude they have maintained throughout, they refused to recognize those instruments.

China had failed just as completely in Tibetan eyes.

The layman who, in the days of K'ang Hsi and of Ch'ien Lung, had taken up the cudgels with vigour and success in defence of his priest had stood aside in 1904 while his priest was becudgeled. In result China's prestige should have been zero in Tibet. But it was not. And that it was not was our doing.

Though Great Britain had been compelled to take direct action in Tibet, she had preserved throughout what she conceived to be China's status in that country. And at Lhasa Younghusband had treated the Chinese Resident with marked consideration, insisting on his position in spite of the Tibetans and keeping him to the fore in his negotiations with them.

The Mission left the Tibetans in a chastened mood. Russia had proved a broken reed. China was recognized by us, and China had advised them all along not to fight. It was a favourable situation for the deployment of Chinese diplomacy. And the Chinese commenced well.

They earned the good-will of the Tibetans by paying the indemnity for them and by making special grants towards the upkeep of the great lamaseries and even of the Tibetan army. And, by construing in the narrowest possible terms the extension of intercourse conceded us by the Lhasa Convention, they re-affirmed the traditional policy of seclusion to which the Tibetans were as attached as ever.

But then a new factor, in the person of Chao Erh-feng, entered upon the situation and flung the historic relations of China and Tibet into the melting pot, out of which there emerged in due course, an autonomous

Tibet prepared to defend by force of arms her essential sovereignty.

The history of this phase is the record of Chao Erh-feng's actions, and the Tibetan reaction thereto. Chinese diplomacy, represented by T'ang Shao-yi, Chang Yin-t'ang and Wen Tsung-yao, gave way, with deplorable results for China, to Chinese force represented by Chao Erh-feng and Chung Ying.

Chao Erh-feng, who originally came upon the scene in 1905 in joint command of a military expedition to revenge the Associate Resident Feng Ch'uan, whose proceedings at Batang in Eastern Tibet had caused hostilities there resulting in his death, conceived an entirely new policy towards Tibet and succeeded, step by step and in the teeth of considerable opposition from his own countrymen, in getting it accepted by the Empire.

Chao Erh-feng would appear to have construed our Mission of 1904 as the shadow of an ultimate annexation, in spite of the fact that we had left the territorial integrity and the administrative independence of Tibet unimpaired, and had entered into treaties with China and Russia which demonstrated beyond cavil the absence of any political ambition on our part in that country.

To meet this imaginary danger, he designed to convert Tibet into a Chinese province by establishing throughout the country, under Chinese officials, the form of political and administrative organization that obtains in China. The status of the Dalai Lama under this project was to be that of a Pontiff only ; he was to be shorn of his temporal powers and left in his Potala, like the Pope in the Vatican.

The new policy, which was in conflict with China's engagements towards us, unfolded itself stage by stage in execution under the able hands of Chao Erh-feng. He first deposed *vi et armis* the territorial princes, lay and cleric, of Eastern Tibet, recovering from them the seals they had been given by the Emperor Yung Cheng, and cutting up their territories into Chinese administrative units or Hsien, under Chinese officials. He then sent an army to Lhasa under General Chung Ying to subvert the Tibetan Government and make possible the introduction of the same system into the rest of Tibet.

The Dalai Lama had been back in Tibet a few months only. He had been away five years since he left Lhasa to avoid our Mission. At Peking he had come into contact with a wider world and had acquired a new vista in international affairs, and above all he had learnt, by personal experience, the light in which the Imperial Court regarded him.

They had endeavoured to prevail upon him to "kowitz" to the Emperor, a ceremony which implies vassalage. The Chinese had indeed, and with the same object, urged this ceremony upon our early envoys, Lord Macartney in 1795 and Lord Amherst in 1816, who had taken up the attitude that they would perform the kowitz provided Chinese officials of equal rank made the same obeissance before a portrait of our King-Emperor. It was not the ceremony itself, however undignified the posture it necessarily involves, that was the objection but its implications. A touch of humour, however, was added by the American Minister

when he likewise was asked to kowtow. He replied that he could prostrate himself only before God. The Chinese replied that the Emperor as the Son of Heaven was the same as God. "Not so you could notice it" said Mr. Ward. In the case of the Dalai Lama, the objections were far stronger in that he was no envoy, but the Sovereign himself, more, he was Deity. The very suggestion was in Tibetan eyes a sacrilege. His Holiness stood out against the ceremony successfully, but the Chinese insisted he at least kneel, otherwise no Audience would take place. He had to comply. And many Tibetans believe that the Emperor and the Empress Dowager died then and there at the Audience in result of this affront to Heaven. History, however, records their deaths, which were indeed extraordinarily sudden and unexpected, as having occurred, the Emperor's on November 14th, 1908, and the Dowager Empress' on the following day; whereas the Audience took place in the previous month.

The subordinate status of the Dalai Lama in the eyes of the Throne was further emphasized in an Imperial Decree of November 3rd, 1908 which, under the guise of an added honour, attached the prefix of "The Loyally Submissive Vice-regent" to his title of "The Great, Good, Self-Existent Buddha of Heaven," and instructed him to return to Tibet and there comport himself in obedience to the orders of Peking.

The Chinese attitude towards the Supreme Pontiff taken in conjunction with the proceedings of Chao Erh-feng in Eastern Tibet and the preparations for the Chinese advance on Lhasa revealed to the Tibetans the

designs China had upon the integrity of their country. His Holiness on his arrival in his own country appealed, on the one hand to the Chinese Government to call a halt to Chao Erh-feng's forward movement, and on the other to Great Britain and the world generally to intervene on Tibet's behalf. "Big worms are eating and secretly injuring small worms," as he put it succinctly in his telegrams.

On the arrival of General Chung Ying's troops at Lhasa His Holiness and his Ministers fled to India. The Chinese authorities in Tibet made a desperate effort to intercept him, sending Chinese troops in pursuit and offering rewards for his capture. But they failed. The Dalai Lama, closely pursued, crossed the Brahmaputra, and there left his bodyguard who succeeded in holding up the pursuing Chinese troops. The Tibetans rallied to their God-King and armed bands of his own people saw him safely across the frontier. And the Buddhists of Darjiling, in solemn conclave, passed a resolution, which they telegraphed to the Emperor of China, condemning China's treatment of the Pontiff.

The Chinese then sought to depose the Dalai Lama by Imperial Decree. The latter, dated February 25th, 1910, purported, by attacking His Holiness' public and private character, to show he was not the right incarnation, and directed the Resident to select, through the process of the Golden Urn, a successor to his predecessor. The only effect of this Decree was to weaken the position of China throughout high Asia by affronting the millions who looked upon the Dalai Lama as Deity on earth. So would, to take the nearest analogy available, the

Catholics of the world be incensed if some European monarch presumed to depose the Pope. And with the Tibetans the adverse effect of the Decree on the position of China was further enhanced by national considerations, the denunciation of their Ruler by an alien authority.

The Dalai Lama and his Ministers appealed to us to save their country from China. They desired to enter into the relationship with us which existed between Nepal and ourselves. They saw that we did not interfere in the internal affairs of Nepal, that that country while exercising to the full her administrative sovereignty, enjoyed, by virtue of her treaty with us, immunity from external attack and interference.

But we were not prepared to accede to their request. We re-asseverated our attitude of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Tibet ; and we met the situation by, in brief, pointing out to the Chinese Government that we would hold them to their treaty obligations and that we would not tolerate any action of theirs in Tibet to the prejudice of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim.

The Chinese proceeded with their policy. The large numbers of Chinese troops now in Tibet enabled the Resident to reduce Tibetan officialdom to subordination to his dictates. Further Hsien units were mapped out and were in process of establishment when the Dynasty fell under the Chinese Revolution of 1911, and its great Viceroy Chao-Erh-feng, the fount, prop and instrument of its policy in Tibet, paid at the hands of his own countrymen the ultimate penalty of his masterful personality.

On the news of the Revolution reaching Lhasa, the considerable Chinese army there, suffering from various grievances and incensed at their own authorities, took the opportunity to revolt. They first looted their own countrymen at Lhasa and then attacked the Tibetans. The latter took up arms in self-defence and drove the Chinese into their head-quarters and there beleaguered them. The new ruler of China, President Yuan Shih-k'ai, hoping to save the situation, on the one hand urged upon Szechuen, the frontier province of China traditionally charged by reason of its geographical location with providing the troops and funds required by China in Tibet, to send an immediate expedition to General Chung Ying's relief, and on the other endeavoured to placate the Tibetans with a Presidential Mandate which purported to reinstate His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The Tibetans were not impressed by this act of tardy repentance. In their eyes the Dalai Lama had never been deposed ; to throw down or set up their God-King was not a prerogative of China, indeed, not a power that vested in any human authority.

General Chung Ying held on as long as he could but ultimately, accepting the inevitable, evacuated the country in result of negotiations with the Tibetans through the intermediary of the Nepalese Minister. And the Republic in due course executed him.

The Chinese Revolution thus enabled the Tibetan Government to re-establish itself, and His Holiness, returned from India, resumed the sovereignty of his country.

In Eastern Tibet, however, China had succeeded in maintaining her position, the Szechuen relief expedition having arrived in time to the support of Chao Erh-feng's garrisons.

In due course the Government of the Republic evolved a tentative policy towards Tibet. They receded from the standpoint of their Imperial predecessors in so far that they were prepared to recognize the autonomy of that portion of the Dalai Lama's domains which had not actually been cut up by Chao Erh-feng into Hsien districts. But to these latter they clung, and they were in occupation of nearly all of them. At the abortive Simla Conference of 1913-14, the Tibetan Government had proved, by a mass of administrative records, what is indeed self-evident, that all this country was an integral part of the Dalai Lama's realm. All Eastern Tibet is inhabited by Tibetans, and the Eastern Tibetan is as much a Tibetan as a Yorkshireman is an Englishman. The Tibetans are a homogeneous nation, bound together by the ties of race, of historical tradition and of a distinctive social, political and material civilization held in common. Neither the Emperor Yung Cheng nor even Chao Erh-feng had sought to dismember Tibet. The former desired merely to bring all its component political parts into direct relationship with the Throne; the latter aimed to dominate the whole country, to convert it as a unit into a province of China.

A military clash on a large scale was avoided until the end of the year 1917, when it was provoked by General P'eng Jih-sheng, a veteran of Chao Erh-feng's days, who, in result of a minor frontier incident, took

matters into his own hands, made war and was defeated, the Tibetan armies recovering a large portion of the territory which had been severed from the domains of the Dalai Lama. A detailed and lucid account of this incident in the history of China's relations with Tibet is given, in his book *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet*, by Mr. Eric Teichman, our then Consul on the frontier, through whose mediation peace was restored.

And so we close our story, with Tibet resurgent and claiming as of right the recognition of her political individuality. And I would hazard the view that China, when she has found her Republican feet, will spontaneously accord it to her.

This booklet was originally written as a Historical Introduction to the book "We Tibetans" by the Tibetan woman writer, Rinchen Lhamo, published in London, 1926. The carbon-rubbing design on the front is taken from a coin of the Tibetan currency system in use until the Chinese occupation in 1959.



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