

# BHUTAN AND TIBET



## The Travels of George Bogle & Alexander Hamilton 1774-1777

Volume One

Letters, Journals and Memoranda

Alastair Lamb



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**and**  
**Alexander Hamilton**  
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Edited

by

**ALASTAIR LAMB**

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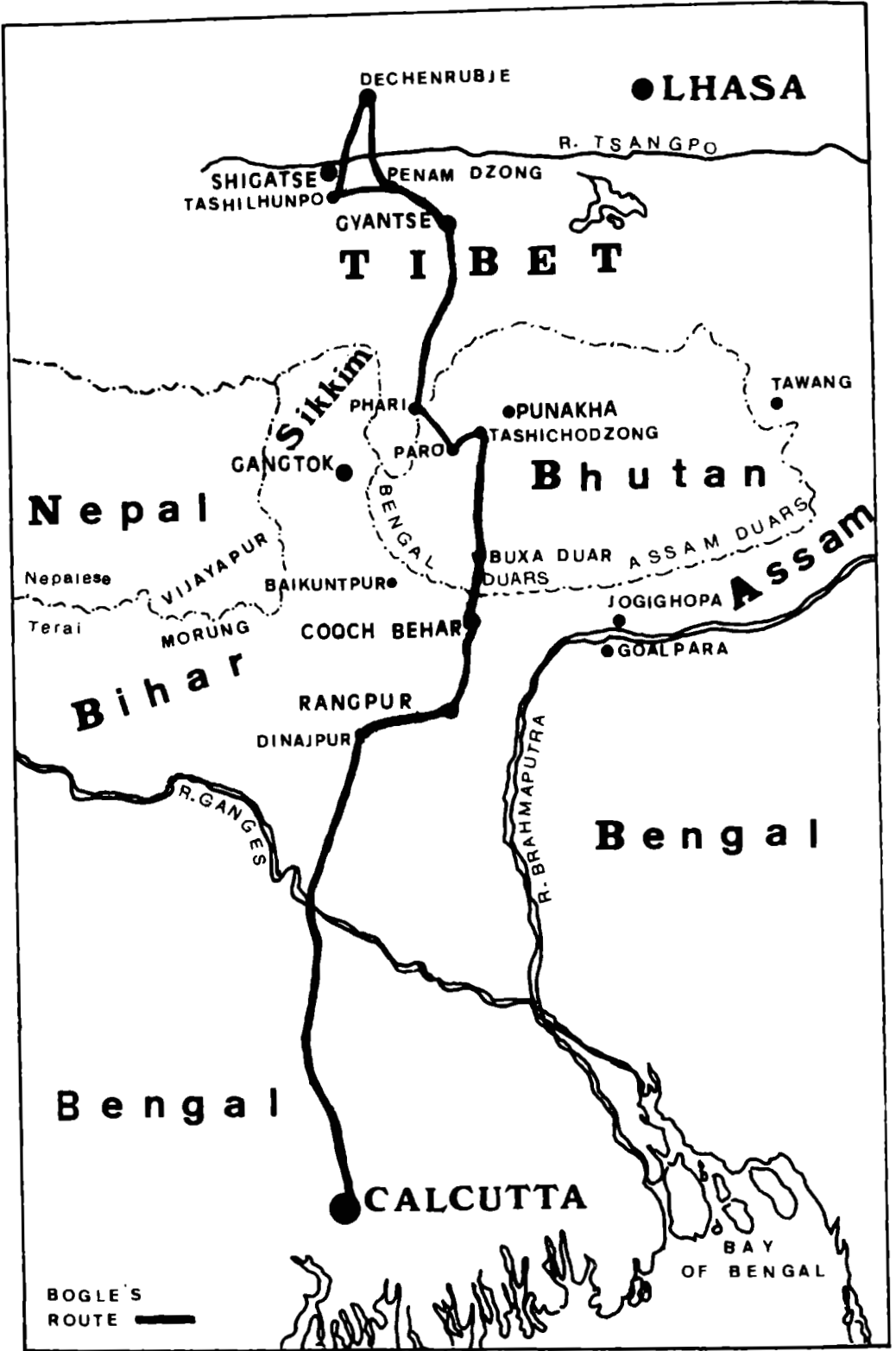
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Bogle's route between Bengal and Tibet

## PREFACE

George Bogle's mission to Tibet in 1774-75 on behalf of the first Governor-General of British India, Warren Hastings, is a fascinating episode in British diplomatic history. Bogle, a Scot in the service of the East India Company and at that time aged twenty-seven to twenty-eight, managed to spend some five months (along with his Surgeon, a fellow Scot, Alexander Hamilton) in frequent personal contact with one of the two great Incarnations of the Yellow Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, the Panchen Lama (whom Bogle knew as the Tashi Lama). Bogle established a genuinely, and uniquely, close friendship with the Lama: he may even, there is some evidence to suggest, have married (or the Tibetan equivalent of so doing) into his family. The Lama promised to use his influence with the reigning Manchu (Ch'ing or Qing) Dynasty in China to initiate a new, and more profitable, era in Anglo-Chinese relations (not least with respect to the tea trade at Canton on the South China coast). The Lama, unfortunately, died in 1780 while in China on a visit to the Imperial Court. Whatever he may have persuaded the Ch'ien-lung (Qianlong) Emperor to consider *vis á vis* the British in general and the East India Company, under the Governor-Generalship of Warren Hastings, in particular, appears to have died with him. There was to be another British mission (by Samuel Turner, a kinsman of Hastings') to the next Panchen Lama, at the time an infant, in 1783: it achieved nothing of particular significance. British diplomacy was not again to penetrate to one of the major cities of Central Tibet until the 20th century when Lhasa was reached by a large British military expedition escorting Francis Younghusband to the Tibetan capital. In one sense, therefore, the Bogle mission marks a diplomatic dead end. It has been relatively little studied.

When in 1953 I first became interested in what was then a rather obscure aspect of the history of British Asian diplomacy, there existed but one modern scholarly work on the subject, Schuyler Cammann's truly admirable *Trade Through the Himalayas. The Early British Attempts to Open Tibet* (Princeton 1951) which depended greatly for its treatment of the Bogle mission upon the various letters, reports and memoranda by George Bogle which that doyen of British geographers, Sir Clements Markham, had seen fit to make public in 1876 in his *Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet, and the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa*. Unlike Samuel Turner, whose own account of his far less interesting venture had appeared as a sumptuously illustrated quarto volume in 1800 (with a second edition in 1806 as well as contemporary French and German translations, and an

Indian reprint in 1971), George Bogle published nothing in his lifetime (despite the repeated and strong encouragement of many of his friends, Warren Hastings included, to do so). What Markham provided in 1876 was not the delayed publication of the book which George Bogle never quite got around to completing but, rather, an assemblage of material chosen from a mass of miscellaneous papers which Bogle had left behind after his early death in 1781. The compilation was presented with great ability (there could not have been a more experienced editor of narratives of travel than Markham), but for all that it was highly selective. It seemed to me in 1953, and has increasingly so in the years since, that George Bogle merited something more comprehensive than the book which Markham had sent to the press for his 1876 edition. I started at that time to collect, spasmodically and from a considerable variety of sources, Bogle material in the hope that one day it might be possible to produce a new edition to at least supplement Markham. The present book is the result of almost fifty years of intermittent effort. I commenced serious work on a definitive version in 1989: its completion, however, was delayed for more than a decade by my being diverted into other fields of activity, not least the study of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan (which resulted in a great deal of travel and three books).

I have always been an admirer of Markham both as scholar and as editor. He may sometimes have been rather ruthless; but he got the job done well enough and he avoided much that could have been irritatingly pedantic. In my analysis of what Markham did with Bogle I do not intend to criticise (indeed I have tended to follow closely in some, at least, of his footsteps) but merely to point to facts which ought not to be ignored in understanding where my present Bogle selection (for selection it certainly still is despite including about twice the amount of text which Markham edited) differs from that of Markham in 1876.

Because Bogle did not produce even the skeleton of a travel book, Markham had perforce to make do with a mass of miscellaneous writing none of which was intended by George Bogle himself for publication (though some Bogle material was worked upon in 1775 with just such an intention by, or on the orders of, Warren Hastings, and some by Alexander Dalrymple, another giant of British geographical scholarship, in the 1790s: knowledge of precisely what documents Dalrymple had and what he did with them was certainly available to Markham, and one must presume so also was the text of the compilation of Bogle papers which Hastings had initiated). Markham, in effect, worked on a kind of jigsaw puzzle in which he rejected a large number of pieces (for several reasons) so that the remainder could be fitted comfortably together. In some cases this method worked very well: in others, however, it caused problems of varying importance, of which the following are examples.

Much of the Bogle material used by Markham consists of letters from George

Bogle to Warren Hastings (and, indeed, to others, friends and relatives) and Hastings' replies, instructions and requests. The result has been a fairly clear narrative, but at the expense of detailed chronology, because Markham evidently decided not to treat each letter as a separate item and, further, tended to give to an assemblage of letters a single date, often that of the last in the set. What I have done here is to separate out the individual letters, reproducing, where possible, each under its own date. The main result has been to restore the Bogle-Hastings dialogue, so to speak, the exchange of letters (and which was also, in fact, a feature of that compilation of Bogle papers for which one must suppose that Warren Hastings was responsible).

From various sources we know that versions of Bogle's "narrative" circulated in manuscript both in Europe and in British India from not long after Bogle's return from Tibet in 1775. One such manuscript, for example was sent by Hastings to Dr. Samuel Johnson; another found its way to the Royal Society (where, I am informed by the Librarian, it is no longer to be found); no doubt others were acquired by interested persons in India and it is more than probable that one at least reached France. From what I have been able to determine, there were in fact two main versions of Bogle manuscripts, in matter and structure very different from each other, one derived from Dalrymple and the other from the compilation initiated by Warren Hastings. The Dalrymple version was based largely on Bogle's own carefully written and detailed reports on his negotiations in both Bhutan and Tibet: the Hastings version was based far more on letters between the Governor-General and his youthful envoy. I have made no effort here to separate the two traditions, as it were, but have incorporated both into my own text: this, of course, is what Markham, too, must have done. At least one of these Bogle manuscript versions was officially brought to the attention of the Government of Bengal in 1869 by Colonel Houghton, Commissioner for Cooch Behar: it was destined to play a small part in the process which eventually brought Francis Younghusband to Lhasa in 1904.

Some Bogle material Markham omitted for what might be described as political reasons. In 1875-76 there was a mood abroad in England, which Markham shared, that Tibet might prove to be a profitable area for the expansion of British trade, as a market for Indian tea, as a source of wool for the domestic British textile industry, perhaps as a place where gold might be found in abundance, and so on. These prospects depended for their realisation upon the successful opening of Tibet by means of British diplomacy both in China and, perhaps, on the Indo-Tibetan border in the Himalayas. Markham clearly did not want to exaggerate the difficulties inherent in all this: his selection of Bogle material left the reader with a somewhat more optimistic feeling than might have been derived from, for example, some of Bogle's own observations upon the nature of Sino-Tibetan

relations. Again, there were a number of Bogle comments upon the aggressive nature of the Gurkha regime then rapidly expanding in Nepal which Markham, a century later, when Nepal had been integrated to such a degree into the structure of British imperial defence, might not wish to emphasise more than absolutely necessary. Finally, there was an enormous amount of what might be called local Indian political matter, much of it concerned with Bhutanese territorial claims, which Markham considered either too tedious or politically inexpedient to publish (probably both): thus, for example, most of the account of Bogle's negotiations with the Bhutanese on his way back to Tibet, which he wrote up in considerable detail, has been omitted. Wherever I have been able to, I have reinserted this material into my text, even at the cost of complexity, obscurity or tediousness.

Some material Markham omitted simply, I suspect, because of lack of space. Bogle's account of Europe, prepared for the Panchen Lama, was a case in point, as, perhaps, were various ethnographic notes which Bogle made while in Tibet, many of them rather scrappy. Where possible, I have included this kind of thing here. Bogle's sample European drama, however, written to show the Panchen Lama what went on in an English playhouse, I have left out for, I suspect, the same reasons that Markham did, namely that it was both dull and not particularly relevant. For the same kind of reason, I imagine, I have like Markham excluded much of Bogle's private correspondence with family and friends (by no means dull) on the grounds that it does not really throw fresh light on his mission however much it might amplify our understanding of George Bogle the man.

This present book, just like Markham's 1876 work, is a kind of jigsaw puzzle. Bits have come from all sorts of places. The object is the overall result, and the provenance of individual items is usually of secondary import. It has not seemed to me necessary to comment on every word, sentence, or, even, paragraph, which Markham may have left out and I have put back. Any who wish to work this out can look at Markham's book, which is not too difficult to get hold of (it was reprinted in 1878 and again, in India, at least twice in recent years, in 1971 and 1989). Where I have felt it necessary, I have provided a critical apparatus.

Markham had no qualms about the modernisation of spelling and punctuation and the avoidance of eccentric capital letters: here I have with clear conscience followed his example. I have also used where possible modern forms for place names and, on occasion, the names of persons and the titles of office holders, and I have adopted a similar, albeit selective, approach to Indian terms for institutions, officials and the like. You can find Tashichodzong on some modern maps: you will not find Bogle's Tassisudon, yet his intention is clear enough. Only when the place cannot be identified with certainty have I, as a rule, retained the 18th century Anglo-Indian form (though I have not always used the most recent Indian form in some well known places: I have, for instance, tended to prefer Benares to Varanasi,

and, certainly, Bombay for Mumbai). When it has seemed to me to be useful in the interests of clarity, I have added my own explanations to the text in square brackets thus: [ ]. Ordinary brackets ( ) like this are generally used in the text where they were actually to be found in the original.

For some reason Markham (perhaps, once more, because of the limitations of space) decided to pay scant attention to Bogle's companion Alexander Hamilton whose various missions to Bhutan between 1775 and his death in 1777 (not 1780 as Markham reported) are of the greatest interest to the student of Himalayan history. A number of Hamilton's letters to Bogle survive, and these I have included in Chapter XIV of this book which is devoted to Hamilton.

When I first encountered Bogle in 1953 I was just starting a piece of research for a Doctoral Dissertation in the University of Cambridge: my subject was the history of British policy concerning Tibet up to 1904, the time of the Young-husband Expedition to Lhasa (and, incidentally, the year in which, more or less, the British archives were still closed under the rules still in force at that time). Given the Cambridge University regulations governing originality and length, it was clear that the existence of Schuyler Cammann's work (itself the product of a Doctoral Dissertation) precluded me from spending too much time on the earliest period of my subject which, in consequence, really began in about 1800. The result is that in the published versions of my Dissertation, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia: the Road to Lhasa*, which came out in 1960, and a second edition, *British India and Tibet 1766-1910*, which appeared in 1986, the opening Chapter, covering the period 1766 to 1792, is in my view by far the least satisfactory. I hope to have remedied some of its defects here.

Schuyler Cammann quite rightly endeavoured to place the Bogle mission to Tibet of 1774-75 in its broader historical context, both as to origins and as to immediate consequences. On the whole, given the limits of space in his book *Trade Through the Himalayas* (under 150 pages of the main text), he performed this task quite admirably. Of course, in 1951 there was a great deal that he did not know which has since come to light. While I have deliberately modelled myself in many respects upon Schuyler Cammann, yet I have found that it is just not possible to confine myself to the same limitations as to length. Indeed, I have decided to expand the current work into two volumes in order to deal in a manner which seems to me adequate both with the Bogle mission and with its general historical and political environment in the widest possible sense. The present volume contains the basic Bogle texts (as I have reconstructed them), plus some Hamilton documents, with a certain amount of explanatory material (much of it in notes) along with some account of the consequences of Bogle's efforts up to the end of the second Tibeto-Nepalese War in 1793. Maps, a number of illustrations, bibliography and index are left over for the second volume.

The second volume also deals with the following subjects.

Bogle and Hamilton were by no means the first Europeans to visit Tibet in modern times. Indeed, Jesuit missionaries had been making their way to Tibet since the beginning of the 17th century as well as a number of lay travellers such as the Dutchman van der Putte and various Armenian traders like Hovhannes Joughayetsi. Much on all this has been published in recent years, notably L. Petech's monumental *I Missionari Italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal* in 7 volumes produced in Rome between 1952 and 1956 (and, therefore, just too late for Schuyler Cammann), to which must be added H. Didier's *Les Portugais au Tibet* (Paris 1996). The second volume of this book contains a study of these pre-Bogle European travellers, of some of whom at least George Bogle was well aware.

Schuyler Cammann shows how the Bogle mission was in many respects a direct consequence of two major factors in the historical evolution of northern India, the collapse of Moghul imperial power in the Plains and the rise of the Gurkha kingdom in the Himalayas. Here, again, there has been a considerable amount of research published since Schuyler Cammann's book came out in 1951. We know now much more about the Gurkha conquest in the 1760s of the Newar Kingdoms of the Kathmandu Valley and the abortive British venture of 1767 to prevent this. There has been some recent study of the breakdown of law and order in Bengal and Bihar in this period, symbolised to a great extent by the rise of the *sanyasi* movement. Some papers of the first British Surveyor-General of Bengal, James Rennell, suggest that not only was he involved in events upon the Bengal periphery of the Tibetan world in the 1760s but that he may have actually tried to approach Tibet through Bhutan (Rennell receives no mention at all in Schuyler Cammann's book). In any case, there are good grounds for thinking that Rennell's adventures are in some manner a prelude to Bogle: they are discussed, with the appropriate documentation, in the second volume.

The second volume deals with the imperial background to the Bogle mission at two levels. First: it discusses the history of some of the local regimes involved in the trans-Himalayan lines of commercial and political contact, Nepal, Cooch Behar, Bhutan, Sikkim, Assam, and, most importantly, Tibet. Second: there is an attempt to analyse the three major imperial structures which surrounded the Tibetan world, the British in India replacing indigenous powers, the Chinese and the Russians, the last superficially remote but, as Bogle was not alone in appreciating, a party to all that went on in Central Asia and an influence which could, in all probability, only increase.

Finally, in the second volume I consider the general pattern of relations between British India and Tibet in the post-Bogle era. This is a field of study to which I have devoted many years of research: my intention here is to achieve some kind of summing up of a subject to which I do not intend to return.



As this volume was actually in the process of going to the press, I became aware of the work on George Bogle of Dr. Kate Teltscher, who has written about many aspects of Bogle's life and work including his fascinating letters to friends and family. I must thank her for sending me, among other documents, a copy of her "The sentimental ambassador: the letters of George Bogle from Bengal, Bhutan and Tibet, 1770-1781", in R. Earle, ed., *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945*, Aldershot 1999. This deals with Bogle the man and Bogle the writer in a way which I have not, and I must refer the reader to her essay for a fuller picture of this remarkable person which, I am sure, will be further amplified in her forthcoming book.

In preparing this book I was helped by a large number of people. I am particularly grateful to the staffs of the Library of the University of Cambridge, of the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, of the London Library, of the British Library and of the Mitchell Library in Glasgow. I would particularly like to thank David Blake of the India Office Library and Records (now in the British Library), who has done much for me over the years on a variety of projects, and Hamish Whyte of the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, who produced some extremely interesting Bogle material for me at a time when I was greatly distressed by the loss of my father. Unpublished Crown-copyright documents transcribed and reproduced in this book appear by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. The outline map showing the route to and from Tibet of Bogle and Hamilton was drawn by my wife, Venice. She also redrew Bogle's sketch of the arrangement of persons (including the portrait of Lady Waldegrave) at his audience with the Deb Rajah of Bhutan (see p. 77 below): unfortunately, Bogle's original (a very rare example of his attempts at draftsmanship) was not suitable for reproduction. For her assistance here, and in countless other matters connected with this book, I am truly thankful.

Alastair Lamb,  
St. Andéol de Clerguemort,  
April 2002.



# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

### 1

#### George Bogle, 1746-1781, his life and writing<sup>1</sup>

In 1774 a young Scot, George Bogle, was sent by Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of British India, on a diplomatic mission to the Panchen (whom Bogle called Tashi) Lama of Tibet. This venture, in which Bogle was accompanied as Doctor by another equally young Scot, Alexander Hamilton<sup>2</sup>, was the first official British foray into Central Asia, a region which was to see during the course of the following century the process of Anglo-Russian competition which has in recent years become the subject of much popular interest as the "Great Game" (an expression which features in Kipling's *Kim*, first published in 1901, but in fact was

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1. For George Bogle's life, see: C. Markham, *The Mission of George Bogle to Tibet and the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa*, London 1876; G. Woodcock, *Into Tibet. The Early British Explorers*, London 1971; H. Richardson, "George Bogle and his children", *The Scottish Genealogist*, xix 3, September 1982 (reprinted in: H. Richardson, *High Peaks, Pure Earth. Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture*, London 1998); entry on George Bogle in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, V, London 1886. A pioneering study of the Bogle mission to Tibet and its background is: Schuyler Cammann, *Trade Through the Himalayas. The Early British Attempts to Open Tibet*, Princeton 1951. There are some interesting, though not always convincing, remarks about Bogle's Tibetan venture (and its immediate successor) in: P. Bishop, *The Myth of Shangri-La. Tibet, Travel Writing and the Western Creation of Sacred Landscape*, London 1989. Dr. Kate Teltscher is at present (January 2002) working on a detailed study of George Bogle which promises to be of great interest.

2. For more on Alexander Hamilton, see Chapter XIV below.

virtually unused by 19th century participants<sup>3</sup>).

Bogle and Hamilton spent some five months in Tibet in the neighbourhood of Shigatse (but they were unable to visit Lhasa), during which time Bogle acquired an enormous amount of information on that country, its history, religion, government and economy at a crucial moment in its history: it was only twenty-five years since the Dalai and Panchen (Tashi) Lamas had come under what amounted to full Chinese (Manchu or Ch'ing) protection, the last Tibetan lay rulers having been removed from power (how all this came about is discussed in some detail in the second volume of this book: but see also Ch. XI below for Bogle's own account). The Chinese presence in Tibet, indeed, was of supreme interest both to Bogle and to his superior Warren Hastings because it seemed to offer the prospect of exploitation as a channel for at least some degree of contact between the centre of Chinese authority in Peking and the English East India Company, contact which was at that time denied to the Company's merchants in their highly restricted position on the China coast at Canton (or Guangzhou, see this Chapter, No. 2 below). The Bogle mission, therefore, and its proposed but abortive successor in 1779 (followed by Turner's mission of 1783), mark a major stage in the history of British attempts to "open" China which culminated in the unhappy Anglo-Chinese conflict of 1840-42 and the British acquisition of Hong Kong.

Bogle and Hamilton were by no means the first Europeans to visit Tibet. Jesuit missionaries had made their way there in the early 17th century and there had been a Catholic presence, initially Jesuit and then Capuchin, in Tibetan centres until the 1740s.<sup>4</sup> Bogle and Hamilton were not even the first European laymen to undertake

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3. The term "Great Game" to describe the process of Anglo-Russian competition in Central Asia was, it would appear, originally coined by Captain Arthur Conolly, who died tragically at the hands of the Emir of Bokhara in 1842. It was *Kim*, first published in 1901, which gave the term a wide currency; and what Rudyard Kipling understood by the "Great Game" was certainly far removed from reality. See: R.J. Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defence. British Intelligence and the Defence of the Indian Empire 1904-1924*, London 1995. See also: P. Hopkirk, *The Great Game. On Secret Service in High Asia*, London 1990; K.E. Meyer and S.B. Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows. The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia*, Washington, D.C., 1999. For a highly readable exploration of the possible historical background to *Kim*, see: P. Hopkirk, *Quest for Kim. In Search of Kipling's Great Game*, London 1996: some students of this subject would not agree with all Hopkirk's ideas, but none could fail to be impressed by his style, wit and enthusiasm.

4 The first Portuguese Jesuit to enter Tibet was A. de Andrade who visited Tsaparang in the west of the country in 1624 and 1625. In 1627-28 the Portuguese Jesuits E. Cacula and J. Cabral made their way from Bengal through Bhutan to Shigatse and then back through the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal to Patna in India. In 1631-32 the Portuguese Jesuit F. de Azevedo visited Tsaparang and other parts of the extreme west of Tibet as well as Leh, the capital of Ladakh.

such a journey: we know that the Armenian merchant Hovhannes Joughayetsi (probably associated both with commercial interests based in Persia and with Kashmiri financiers) reached Lhasa in 1688 where he resided for nearly five years with a small colony of fellow Armenians already established there, including the powerful merchant Khwaja Dawith who was to prove in the early 18th century very helpful to Catholic missionaries; and the Dutchman Samuel Van der Putte made his way to the Tibetan capital (disguised first as a Hindu and then as a Chinese official) in 1728 and 1730. These earlier ventures are described more fully in the second volume of this book. Bogle, however, unlike both Joughayetsi and Van der Putte, was to all intents and purposes a lay diplomatic officer, the first such European known to have visited Central Tibet; and, again unlike Van der Putte (who destroyed nearly all his papers), he produced a detailed record of what he saw, some of which, if not published until long after his death, yet circulated sufficiently widely from the late 1770s onwards to provide a sound basis for the knowledge in Europe as well as in British India of the nature of the institutions of Tibet and the problems posed both by its internal politics and its relationship to the Manchu (Ch'ing) Dynasty of China. Joughayetsi did leave a narrative of sorts, but its full text still remains confined to the Armenian language.<sup>5</sup>

Bogle twice visited Bhutan (on his way to and from Tibet). Again, he, along with his companion Hamilton, were not the first Europeans to see this strange little

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The first Jesuits to reach Lhasa were the German J. Grueber and Frenchman A. d'Orville who reached the Tibetan capital from Peking in 1661 and then went on to India via Kathmandu in Nepal.

The Italian Jesuit Ippolito Desideri, accompanied by the Portuguese Jesuit Freyre, reached Lhasa in 1716 and remained in Tibet until 1721. Desideri failed to persuade his superiors in Rome to replace the Capuchin Order, which had already established a foothold in Lhasa (G. da Ascoli and F.M. da Tours) between 1707 and 1711, by the Jesuits in supervision of the Tibet mission. The last of the Capuchins, including Orazio della Penna, left Lhasa in 1745. The Capuchin mission lingered on in Nepal until 1768 when the Gurkha conquests obliged it to withdraw to India.

5. For European travellers in Tibet before the Bogle mission, see: J. MacGregor, *Tibet. A Chronicle of Exploration*, London 1970; C. Wessels, S.J., *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia 1603-1721*, The Hague 1924; H. Didier, ed., *Les Portugais au Tibet. Les premières relations jésuites (1624-1635)*, Paris 1996; F. de Filippi, ed. *An Account of Tibet. The Travels of Ippolito Desideri of Pistoia, S.J., 1712-1727*, London 1932; L. Petech, ed., *Il Nuovo Ramusio II. I Missionari Italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal*, 7 vols., Rome 1952-56; Levon Khachikian, "The Ledger of the Merchant Hovannes Joughayetsi", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, VIII, 1966; L. Khachikian, "Un marchand arménien en Perse, en Inde et au Tibet", *Annales* 12, 1967; Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 193-197; F. Lequin & A. Meijer, *Samuel Van de Putte, een Mandarijn uit Vlissingen*, Middelburg 1989.

Himalayan State: the honour goes to two Portuguese Jesuits (Cacela and Cabral) in the early 17th century (see: Wessels, *op. cit.*; also Didier, *op. cit.*). The account of Bhutanese politics, government and history, which the two young Scots provided in their reports and letters, however, is unique: it is greatly to be regretted that when much Bogle material was published by Clements Markham (of whom more below) in 1876, the bulk of his narrative of his second Bhutanese visit, along with Hamilton's letters relating to subsequent Bhutanese journeys between 1775 and 1777, were omitted (and there was no mention of the intriguing possibility that Hamilton might have briefly revisited Tibet in 1777 just before his death - see below Ch. XIX, No. 23).

While in Tibet, Bogle became a close friend of the Panchen (Tashi) Lama (the 3rd incarnation according to one reckoning, the 6th according to another, the latter generally favoured by those using Chinese sources, not to mention the majority of British officials until the end of the British Indian Empire in 1947)<sup>6</sup>, with whom he had long conversations on a multitude of subjects the substance of which he faithfully recorded. He also tried, during his time in Tashlhunpo, to compile an account of the history of the Chinese Central Asia of his day which, while not as detailed as one might wish, still makes Bogle one of the major British pioneers of Central Asian studies. Once more, in the 1876 publication by Markham much of the detail of Bogle's researches has been excluded.

The intention in this book is to produce as complete a record of the Tibetan and Bhutanese journeys of Bogle and Hamilton as is practicable along with material relating both to the historical background to Hastings' decision to send an envoy to Tibet and to the immediate consequences of that decision and its impact on the subsequent pattern of British relations with the land to the north of the Himalayan mountains.<sup>7</sup>

George Bogle was born in Scotland at Daldowie, an estate in Lanarkshire on the Clyde not far from Glasgow, in 1746 (26 November). He was the youngest of nine children (two of whom died in infancy, the survivors being Martha, Robert, Mary, Elizabeth, John, Anne and George: Anne seems to have been George's favourite with whom he was to correspond most intimately). His father, George senior, was

6. See the Note to Ch. II below, No. 7.

7. Of the Bogle material surviving in various British archives and elsewhere, a significant quantity of it not published by Markham in 1876, very little relating directly to the Bhutanese and Tibetan missions has been left out in this volume. The principal omissions have been most of the letters from Bogle to members of his family in Scotland (many of which repeat what he included in his reports and letters to Warren Hastings), his letters to various friends and contemporaries, mainly fellow Scots, and the specimen drama which he wrote while in Tibet in order to show the Panchen Lama what a European play was like (which is, frankly, rather dull and uninformative).

a prosperous Glasgow merchant (as had been his father before him, Robert, who had acquired the Daldowie estate late in the 17th century). George senior, born in 1700, had been educated at Leyden in the Netherlands and had six times been elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow. His wife, George junior's mother, Anne, was the daughter of Sir John Sinclair Bt. of Stevenson and of a daughter of Sir John Lockhart who had held high legal office under King Charles II. George senior had been deeply, but not always profitably, involved in the trade in Virginia tobacco. George junior was educated in Scotland, including a short spell at the University of Edinburgh (1760-61), and then for three years at a private school in Enfield near London. In 1764, aged eighteen, he spent some months travelling in France, after which he joined his brother Robert as a trainee in an import business in London, Bogle & Scott, a partnership which was dissolved in 1769. His brother Robert then went to Grenada to run a sugar plantation (where, as in his other business ventures, he does appear to have been particularly successful); and George, through family influence, secured an appointment as a "Writer", or junior clerk, in the East India Company.<sup>8</sup>

George Bogle reached Calcutta on board the East Indiaman *Vansittart* on 19 August 1770. He was put to work in the office of the Select Committee at Fort William, the body concerned not only with the political affairs of the Company in Bengal but also with its foreign relations (and was, in effect, the Secretariat of the Bengal Governor). He would thus have been familiar both with the final stages of the Gurkha conquest of the Valley of Nepal in the late 1760s and the extinction of the old Newar Kingdoms by 1769 which so drastically interrupted the patterns of trans-Himalayan trade (which hitherto had run through the Kathmandu Valley with an Indian terminus in Bihar where it was very much influenced by Kashmiri bankers) and with the shift of Company interest to Bhutan and Assam as possible channels by which to approach not only Tibet (in the hope of reviving under its control the potentially valuable Indo-Tibetan commerce) but also the hitherto inaccessible centre of power of the vast Chinese Empire which lay beyond (on all of which subjects there is detailed discussion, along with a documentary record, in the second volume of this book). There were at this time a significant number of Scots in the Company service, many from Bogle's home ground of Glasgow and Edinburgh: with some of these men the young Bogle quickly established close friendships and professional alliances.

Bogle's potential was immediately spotted by Warren Hastings when in April 1772 he arrived from Madras to take over charge of Bengal as Governor and President of Council in succession to John Cartier. In October 1772 Hastings

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8. Notice of Bogle's appointment as Writer was communicated by the Court of Directors in London to the Fort William Council on 7 December 1769. Bogle was among no less than 45 new appointments.

appointed Bogle Assistant Secretary to the Board of Revenue. Early in the following year Bogle was made Registrar of the newly created Sadar Diwani Adalat court in Calcutta,<sup>9</sup> the main court concerned with internal Bengali civil legal matters, and shortly after he was promoted to the position of Secretary of the Select Committee. The experience gained here made him, given Hastings' approval, an obvious candidate for the mission to Tibet when the opportunity arose in 1774.<sup>10</sup>

In 1773 George Bogle's oldest brother, Robert, suffered serious commercial losses, and many of the debts which he incurred were charged to the Bogle estate still presided over by George Bogle senior. George junior felt obliged to save every penny that he could to send home to Scotland to help out his family: by the time of his death in 1781 he had remitted some £4,500 and the Bogle family fortunes were in a far healthier state.

George Bogle's mission to Tibet of 1774-75, and the subsequent adventures of his medical companion Alexander Hamilton in 1775-77, are the major subject of the rest of this book: they need not be discussed further in this Chapter beyond observing that Tibet managed to enter rather unexpectedly into the Bogle fortunes in Scotland as well as India. While he was at Tashilhunpo Bogle appears to have established a relationship with a Tibetan woman, "Tichan", possibly one of the nieces (rather than sister) of the 6th Panchen Lama, who may well have accompanied or followed him on his return to India. According to the late Hugh Richardson, on the basis of evidence which seems convincing enough, there was at least one son, George, and two daughters, Martha and Mary, from this connection. The fate of the son, or sons, is unknown: Martha and Mary were brought back to Daldowie in Scotland where they were educated and where, in due course, they married. The last of this line, Richardson tells us, was Mrs. Heathcote who died c. 1962 at a good old age (she was born in 1876): she remembered clearly enough many details of the family tradition concerning George

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9. The Sadar Diwani Adalat heard appeals in Calcutta from all over Bengal in civil cases involving more than Rs. 500. The court concerned with criminal matters was the Sadar Nizamat Adalat, situated at Murshidabad (the old Bengal capital) and presided over by an Indian official. The Sadar Diwani Adalat at Calcutta ceased to function in November 1775 but was re-established in 1780.

10. As one consequence of the changes in British Indian Government brought about by the implementation of the Regulating Act of 1773, the Select Committee was abolished in October 1774. "Political" matters (that is to say those relating to Company relations with Indian rulers and the like) were now considered by the Governor-General's Council in its Secret Department. Bogle's position as Secretary to the Select Committee, therefore, would have lasted for but a few months after his appointment to the Tibetan mission, a fact of which both he and Hastings were no doubt aware.



Bogle's Tibetan wife or mistress. Richardson, however, may have overlooked at least one more line of descent from "Tichan" which, so anecdotal evidence would have it, is still extant.

That Bogle had an Asian mistress is not open to serious doubt. There was a Bibi Bogle at the time of Bogle's death in 1781. She was left with a pension of Rs. 20 per month which she enjoyed in Calcutta until her death in 1838 aged about 80. Was she a Tibetan and a member of the family of Bogle's Tashi Lama? We will never know for sure; but the arguments of Hugh Richardson that she probably was are indeed weighty.<sup>11</sup>

While Bogle was away in Bhutan and Tibet the administration of British India, including Bengal, was in the process of radical transformation following the Regulating Act of 1773 (of which, and its consequences, there is a more detailed account in the second volume of this book). Warren Hastings, Bogle's patron, had indeed been confirmed as Governor-General; but the constitution of his new Council (as specified explicitly by the Regulating Act) meant that his position was challenged and gravely weakened by the need to secure a majority in the face of a triumvirate of hostile Council members (Clavering - eventually General Sir John, Colonel George Monson and, its implacable leader, Philip Francis, with whom, in 1780, Warren Hastings was to fight a duel) out of a total of five, himself included.<sup>12</sup> Bogle found on his return in the middle of 1775 that Warren Hastings

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11 See: Richardson, "George Bogle and his Children", *The Scottish Genealogist*, *loc. cit.* The possibility of Bogle's involvement in this way with a Tibetan has been challenged by George Woodcock. See: Woodcock, *Into Tibet*, *op. cit.* pp. 166-170.

12. John Clavering, born 1722, served in the British Army, carried out various diplomatic missions as well as participating in the capture of the French Caribbean island of Guadaloupe in 1759, appointed Lieut.-General in 1770 and knighted (KCB) in 1776. When he was made a member of the Bengal Council in 1773 he possessed no Indian experience. He died in Calcutta in 1777.

George Monson, born 1730 in London, the youngest son of the first Lord Monson. His mother was a daughter of the first Earl of Rockingham. He was educated, like Warren Hastings, at Westminster School and then served in the British Army. He became Member of Parliament for Lincoln 1754-68 and in 1756 was made a member of the household of the Prince of Wales, in 1760 King George III. He went to India as Major in the 64th (later 79th) regiment in 1758. He returned to England in 1763 where he became a firm supporter in Parliament of Lord North. He was appointed full colonel and ADC to King George III in 1769. In 1757 he married Lady Anne Vane, daughter of the Earl of Darlington and, through her mother Lady Grace Fitzroy a great-granddaughter of King Charles II: she died in Calcutta in February 1776. Monson died soon after, in September 1776.

Philip Francis was born in Dublin in 1740. With some military and diplomatic experience, in 1762 Francis became an official in the War Office and in the late 1760s and early 1770s was suspected of being the author of the politically influential, and in many eyes subversive, "Letters of Junius". It is not clear quite

was in no position to reward his protégé in the manner which the Tibetan venture clearly merited. While Hastings was supported by his only staunch ally in the Council, Richard Barwell, in proposing Bogle for some important, and remunerative, office, he was blocked by the triumvirate of the Majority, Clavering, Monson and Francis. Bogle had, it is true, received a grant of Rs. 15,000 in recognition of his services in Tibet (most of which sum went back to Scotland to help out the Bogle family finances); but he had no formal employment and occupied himself learning Persian and helping Warren Hastings in what amounted to a private capacity. For a time he had even to defend himself against charges of financial irregularities while on his mission. It was not until after the death of Colonel Monson in September 1776 that Hastings was at last able to begin to override the hostility of the remaining members of the triumvirate, notably Francis, and to promote the interests of his friends.

In November 1776 Bogle, along with David Anderson, was given the important task of preparing for a revision of the Bengal revenue structure; and in 1779 he was appointed Collector at Rangpur (in succession to Charles Purling). This was a significant post in at least two respects. First, it was well paid, so much so that Bogle hoped to send home to Daldowie out of his receipts from this position at least £1,500 every year (its value is clearly demonstrated by the offer made to him, probably by Richard Goodlad, to buy him out of this position for 100,000 Rupees

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why he was appointed to the Bengal Council (but it has been suggested that this was a device to end his suspected journalistic activities, or it may have been due to the influence of Lord Clive who, in the final years of his life, took an interest in Francis' career). In 1780 Francis fought a duel with Warren Hastings and at the end of that year he finally left India. In 1784 Francis was elected Member of Parliament for Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight and subsequently represented a variety of constituencies until his retirement from active politics in 1807. He died in December 1818.

The fourth member of the Bengal Council, and Hastings' firm ally, was Richard Barwell. Barwell, born in Calcutta in 1741, was the son of William (later Sir) Barwell, governor of the Company's settlements in Bengal in 1748 and subsequently a Director of the Company. Richard Barwell retired from the Company's service in 1780, by which time he had acquired a substantial fortune (sometimes estimated at £400,000, or even £800,000, but more probably amounting to the by no means insignificant sum of £200,000 or so (see: P.J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes. The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford 1976, p. 244; J. Bernstein, *Dawning of the Raj. The Life and Trials of Warren Hastings*, London 2000, p. 174) with which he purchased an estate in England and on the basis of which he entered Parliament in 1784. His seat on the Council was taken, eventually, by John (later Sir) Macpherson (who was to act for a short while as Governor-General after Hastings left India in early 1785. Barwell retired from Parliament in 1796 and died in 1804.

in cash - £ 10,000 or so in the values of that time.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, Rangpur was the post from which the day to day conduct of relations between the East India Company and Bhutan (and regions beyond) was carried out. It was no coincidence that Bogle's appointment here followed closely on Hastings' decision to send Bogle on a further mission to Tibet. The second Tibetan mission aborted, largely because of the death of the Tashi Lama in Peking in November 1780. Thus Bogle's major achievement in the field of Himalayan diplomacy while at Rangpur was the establishment there (or, at least, the active encouragement and expansion of an existing institution) in 1780 of an annual fair which was widely attended by Bhutanese traders.

In January 1781 Warren Hastings appointed Bogle (along with David Anderson and Charles Croftes) to a Committee of Revenue in Calcutta which was intended to carry out a major overhaul of the entire revenue system for the Company's Indian possessions. Bogle lost no time in making his way from Rangpur to Calcutta where, very soon after his arrival, he caught cholera (according to one version). He died in Calcutta on 3 April 1781, aged thirty-four. He was buried in the South Park Street Cemetery in Calcutta beneath a massive sarcophagus-shaped monument erected by his old friends David Anderson and Claud Alexander.

George Bogle was a product of the Scottish Enlightenment which had brought forth such giants of 18th century intellectual life as the historians David Hume and William Robertson, the scientist Joseph Black, and one of the founders of modern economics, Adam Smith (for an interesting account of this subject, see: A. Herman, *The Scottish Enlightenment, The Scots' Invention of the Modern World*, London 2002). He was an acute observer, he possessed a wry wit and he wrote with some style. Unfortunately, as his companion to Tibet Alexander Hamilton was to observe, he was subject to fits of depression and somehow he was never able, unlike his successor in Anglo-Tibetan diplomacy, Samuel Turner, to reduce his Tibetan and Bhutanese experiences to a single text suitable for publication despite considerable urging by his friends to do so.

There would seem to have survived but two portraits of George Bogle. One is a miniature of a very young Bogle, rather badly executed by an unknown artist, which was reproduced by Sir Francis Younghusband in 1910 in his *India and Tibet*. Shortly after his return from Tibet (c.1775) the English artist Tilly Kettle produced in Calcutta an oil painting of Bogle, accompanied by Alexander Hamilton and both wearing varieties of Bhutanese dress, presenting a ceremonial white silk scarf to the Tashi Lama at Tashilhunpo. This is certainly no masterpiece of portraiture, but it is undoubtedly based on descriptions and, perhaps, sketches provided by Bogle (who was no draftsman): it is now in the possession of Her Majesty the

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13. See: P.J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes, op. cit.*, p.198, Note 5.

Queen (it may have been presented to George III by Warren Hastings).<sup>14</sup>

There are several major categories of papers and other sources relating directly or indirectly, to Bogle's Tibetan venture and its background and consequences, of which the following are probably the most important. First: there are numerous letters, some of what would later be referred to as being of a demi-official nature, to (and from) Warren Hastings, and others rather less formal, to his sisters and his father (many of which repeat what Bogle recorded elsewhere). Second: his negotiations both with the Bhutanese on his way to and from Tibet and with the Tashi Lama in Tibet, were fully written up in the form of a number of very detailed diplomatic reports. Third: there were a series of memoranda on matters relating to Tibet and its neighbours, political, economic and social, some of which were intended for Warren Hastings and some, evidently, for his own use. Fourth: there are a number of miscellaneous documents in the East India Company records either relating to his Tibetan venture or illuminating its general background. Fifth: after his return from Tibet in 1775 there were a number of letters to him from Alexander Hamilton, who had accompanied him as surgeon and who then remained for a couple of years in the general region of Cooch Behar and Bhutan (and may, even, have made, or contemplated making, a further visit to Tibet). Apart from a single draft set of instructions, the correspondence from Bogle to Hamilton during this period does not seem to have survived. Sixth: some of Bogle's accounts of his mission, as well as contemporary comments about it, found their way into print long before Markham's publication of 1876 (of which more below). A paper which John Stewart communicated to the Royal Society in 1777 (see: Vol. XIV of *The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*), is clearly based on material which derived directly from Bogle (this document is reproduced here in Ch. XIII, No. 11, below): a French version of this was produced by F. Le Breton in Paris in 1789. An account of Tibet in Q. Craufurd, *Sketches chiefly relating to the History, Religion, Learning and Manners of the Hindoos, with a concise account of the Present State of Hindostan*, 2nd ed., 2 vols., London 1792, made use of Bogle material obtained from his brother Robert.<sup>15</sup> Seventh: there are a number of miscellaneous documents which throw some light on British contacts with Tibet in general, and the 6th Tashi Lama in particular, in a variety

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14. Both the Bogle miniature and the Tilly Kettle painting are reproduced in: M. Aris, ed., *Views of Medieval Bhutan. The Diary and Drawings of Samuel Davis 1783*, London and Washington, D.C, 1982. The Bogle miniature is also to be found in: Sir Olaf Caroe, *Englishmen in Tibet from Bogle to Gould* (Tibet Society), London 1960. For the Tilly Kettle painting, see also: M. Taylor, *Le Tibet de Marco Polo à Alexandra David-Neel*, Fribourg 1985; Diana K. Myers & Susan S. Bean, eds., *From the Land of the Thunder Dragon. Textile Arts of Bhutan*, London & Salem 1994, p.37.

15. I am indebted to Andrew Grout for this reference.

of published collections such as the *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* (produced by the Imperial Record Department of the Government of India, and subsequently the National Archives of India, between 1911 and the 1950s).<sup>16</sup>

The bulk of the publicly available Bogle manuscript material is, today, to be found either in the British Library (in what used to be the India Office Records as well as in the Additional Manuscript collections) and in the Mitchell Library in Glasgow. While Bogle never wrote up his story in a form suitable for publication, yet at least two collections of his papers were made in his lifetime or shortly after with a view to possible publication. These two collections differ considerably in their nature.

The first collection, having as its nucleus correspondence between Bogle and Warren Hastings during the course of the Tibetan and Bhutanese missions of 1774 and 1775, would seem to have been edited by Warren Hastings (or on his instructions) by August 1775 when a copy was sent to Dr. Johnson. In a letter to Johnson from Warren Hastings of 7 August 1775 (see: Ch. XIII, No. 2, below) the reference is to a "journal"; but it may well be that what was in fact involved was a compilation mainly of Bogle's letters from Bhutan and Tibet such as is to be found in the British Library (India Office Records) in MSS Eur E226/54. This is a copy made for (or even by) a M. de Lancey of Rue Royale (?Paris), and it may well represent a version of a text which was, lacking any definitive narrative by Bogle himself, being circulated from 1775 onwards. In the 1860s, for example, the British Indian records mention the existence of a Bogle manuscript which, until Markham's publication in 1876, was a major source for details of this first British embassy to Tibet and Bhutan: this document could well have been a version of MSS Eur E226/54.

There is a second Bogle manuscript, however, which is referred to in the Bogle entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (Vol. V, London 1886, p.302) as British Museum Add. Ms. 19283), and of which another copy is to be found in the British Library (India Office Records) as Mss Eur D532. What we have here is a set of detailed accounts of discussions between Bogle and the Bhutanese authorities in 1774 and 1775 and with the Tashi Lama both at Dechenrubje and Tashilhunpo (and probably written up after Bogle's return to India). These papers (which I have referred to below as "journals" as opposed to letters, memoranda, reports etc.) came into the possession of Bogle's brother Robert (who died in 1808), probably by way of George Bogle's friends David Anderson and Claud

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16. Tibetan sources have very little to say about the Bogle mission; and so far nothing has been detected in Chinese sources. See: L. Petech, "The Missions of Bogle and Turner According to the Tibetan Texts", T'oung Pao, XXXIX, Leiden 1950; S.C. Das, ed. Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *Tibetan Studies*, Calcutta 1984, pp. 116-141.

Alexander, who handled his affairs after his death in 1781 and saw to the return of his papers to Daldowie. Robert Bogle evidently thought about arranging these "journals" into a publishable form; but, in the end, he decided in late 1791, perhaps on the advice of Sir William Scott, to hand them over to Alexander Dalrymple, then (1779-1795) Hydrographer to the East India Company<sup>17</sup>. The documents were in due course transferred from Daldowie to Dalrymple at his London home, 52 High Street, Marylebone, in circumstances which are illuminated by the following letter.

**Robert Bogle to Alexander Dalrymple, Daldowie 28 January 1792.**

Dear Sir,

You might have good cause to accuse me of neglect, for not having replied sooner to your obliging letter of the 2nd inst. I have indeed some excuses to plead, but as they are not altogether satisfactory to myself, I can hardly expect that they will be so to you; for a month past I have had a jaunt to London in contemplation, & at the time I received your favour, I expected to be there as soon as a letter could have reached you, but I was about that time attacked with a very bad cold, which has not yet left me, & is still the obstacle to my journey.

I confess, however, that I might have written to you then as well as now, & I would have done it, if I had not daily expected to undertake the journey; but I now take up the pen, as some business has occurred which I foresee will detain me here two or three weeks, even tho' my cold should go off.

With regard to my brother's Tibet papers, I have always had it in view to publish them, and the Company gave me permission, but many circumstances have occurred, which have hitherto prevented me from executing my design, but the principal cause of delay has been a difficulty in meeting with any person qualified to correct and arrange them properly for the press; but as you have been so good as to offer me voluntarily your assistance, I propose to bring them with me, & on my arrival I shall have the pleasure of conferring with you on this point.

Dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,  
Robert Bogle.

Dalrymple did indeed do some work on this collection of "journals", as witness the various footnotes he added (which are to be found in both manuscript copies in the British Library); but he never completed the task of preparing it for

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17. Alexander Dalrymple, whose imperial and commercial theories are discussed in the second volume of this book, had for many years been interested in the extension of British diplomacy to the fringes of the Chinese Empire; and as such was a most appropriate choice of editor for the Bogle papers. See: H.T. Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple and the Expansion of British Trade*, London 1970. See also No. 2 in this Chapter.

publication and, when he moved over to the Admiralty in 1795 (a post he held until his abrupt dismissal in 1808 on the eve of his death), he apparently put the work to one side and never resumed it (but he may well have had several copies made of the principal documents then in his care). After his death his library, including the Bogle "journals", was acquired by the Irish peer Lord Valentia (1770-1844), author of *Voyages and Travels in India, Ceylon, the Red Sea, Abyssinia and Egypt, 1802-06*, 4 vols., London 1809. Valentia's library at Arley Castle was auctioned in 1853 and, by way of the dealer Boone, Bogle's "journals" passed into the hands of the British Museum. In addition to the Arley Castle acquisition the British Museum also possesses a number of items relating to Bogle in the Hastings Papers which have something to say as well about Bogle's companion Alexander Hamilton. A certain amount of Hasting and Bogle material found its way into private hands via the antiquarian book trade (and some, for a variety of reasons, has simply disappeared). Such an item from the trade, a letter from Hastings to Bogle of 19 May 1775, is printed here below as No. 7 in Chapter XII. There were reports in the 1860s of other Bogle manuscripts circulating among specialists interested in Tibetan affairs, and far more recently there have been trade rumours of the presence of a major Bogle collection - there can be no doubt that some of Bogle's letters, journals and reports were widely copied at the time and passed into many hands.

No serious attempt was made to publish Bogle's own narrative until 1876, when Clements R. Markham produced his *Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa* (Trübner and Co., London). A second edition appeared in 1879; and it has since been reprinted in India (Manjusri, New Delhi 1971).<sup>18</sup> While widely known, the original edition is now quite rare.

Clements Markham (Sir, KCB, 1896) was born in 1830. He served in the Royal Navy from 1844 until 1852, during which time he took part in an Arctic venture in search of traces of the Franklin expedition which had disappeared in quest of the Northwest Passage. In 1854 he was employed by the East India Company (which was soon to become the India Office) where in 1867-77 he was in charge of the geographical section. During these years he also travelled widely, in South America, India, Ceylon, Abyssinia (1867-68 when he was present at the storming of Magdala) and Greenland. In his later years he became to all intents and

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18. There is a German translation of Bogle's text as edited by Markham. See: Maximilian von Brandt, *Aus dem Lande des lebenden Buddhas. Die Erzählungen von der Mission George Bogle's nach Tibet und Thomas Manning's Reise nach Lhasa. Aus dem Englischen des Mr. Clements R. Markham*, Hamburg 1909. See also: Wolf-Dieter Grün, ed., *George Bogle, Im Land der lebenden Buddhas. Entdeckungsreise in das verschlossene Tibet 1774-1775. Mit einem Beitrag von Sven Hedin*, Stuttgart 1984.

purposes the doyen of British geographers, among other achievements spending twelve years, 1893-1905, as President of the Royal Geographical Society. He died in 1916.

Markham's interest in Bogle may well have been first aroused by his finding in the library established by an ancestor, William Markham, a manuscript copy of what Clements Markham called "portions of Mr. Bogle's journal." Precisely what this document was is not clear; but it may well have been closer to the de Lancey manuscript collection of letters and the like than the series of reports which Robert Bogle handed over to Dalrymple in 1792. William Markham had gone out to India in 1777-78 where he had immediately become Warren Hastings' Private Secretary. He later became Resident at Benares (Varanasi) and, finally, on his return to England he assisted Warren Hastings through most of the seven years of the ordeal of his Parliamentary trial by impeachment.

In addition to the William Markham document, Clements Markham managed to assemble a mass of Bogle material through members and associates of the Bogle family, notably Bogle's great-niece Martha Brown of Lanfine. As a result, so Clements Markham remarked, "the complete narrative of Bogle's important mission to Tibet is now presented to the world."<sup>19</sup>

The truth is that what Markham did present is far from "complete". One has only to look at the Bogle material in the India Office Records (British Library), which is very much a relic of Markham's editorial efforts, to see just how much Markham decided to omit from his publication: in some files substantial sections of most interesting papers are crossed out, presumably by Markham in his editorial capacity. In fact, in Markham's published version virtually all the detailed account of Bogle's dealings with the Bhutanese in 1775 on his return from Tibet has been omitted along with much other diplomatic material relating not only to Bhutan but also to Tibet. In addition to such omissions, Markham was guilty of considerable condensation of text in a manner which, while it might make for easier reading, was certainly a departure from the stricter canons of historiography. For example: many of Bogle's letters to Hastings, or portions of them, are simply lumped together, usually under the date of the last letter in the batch, but by no means always so. Omissions, moreover, do not always seem to have been made for simple reasons of literary felicity. One gets the impression that Markham, albeit subtly and perhaps not always consciously, left out matter which tended to emphasise the difficulties inherent in the development of Anglo-Tibetan diplomacy, notably the fact of a Chinese presence which in practice could not be ignored. Nor did he wish to burden the reader unduly with the problems presented at the end of the 18th century to the conduct of relations between the East India Company and its Himalayan neighbours by the aggressive designs of the Gurkhas, not to mention

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19. Markham, *Narratives*, *op. cit.*, p. clviii.



the territorial disputes and other squabbles between Bhutan, Sikkim, Cooch Behar and various lesser polities. These might have to a great extent become academic in 1876, at least from the point of view of the India Office in London, but they were far from unimportant in Bogle's day.

One cannot fully appreciate the significance of Markham's editorial work without placing it in the political context of 1876. The period was one of great British optimism about the commercial possibilities of Tibet. Tibet consumed enormous quantities of Chinese tea, of the poorest quality and carried over vast distances across very difficult terrain: here, surely, was a promising outlet for the rapidly expanding British controlled tea industry along the Himalayan foothills from Darjeeling to Assam which lay on the very doorstep of the major Central Tibetan centres of population. Tibet produced, or, it seemed reasonable to suppose, could be made to produce, enormous quantities of wool: this fact could not fail to be of interest to the textile manufacturers of Yorkshire.<sup>20</sup> The climax of this period was marked by the Separate Article to the Chefoo Convention of September 1876 in which the Chinese Government was obliged to agree to provide passports and otherwise assist the passage to Tibet of a British mission with political and commercial objectives. In other words, it could be argued that the diplomatic groundwork had been established for carrying on where George Bogle had left off in 1774-75, and the publication of a version Bogle's narrative at this juncture could demonstrate well enough both the merits and the practicality of such a venture. The point is made clear beyond doubt in Markham's dedicatory letter to Lord Northbrook, the Viceroy of India, which prefaces the first edition of *Narratives*. The letter is worth reproducing here.

**To the Right Hon. the Lord Northbrook, G.M.S.I., Viceroy and  
Governor-General of India, December 1875.**

My dear Lord Northbrook,

I am glad to be allowed to inscribe to you, from whom when I was your Private Secretary, in times past, I received so much kindness, my editorial labours in connection with a book which cannot, I venture to think, fail to have interest for the Viceroy of India.

The most important portion of the volume would, without doubt, have been dedicated to Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General, if untoward circumstances had not intervened to prevent its publication. A century has since elapsed, and now that the intention of Warren Hastings that it should be given to the world is fulfilled, it is appropriate that the book should be dedicated to his successor, the present Viceroy and Governor-General of India. In the long period that has intervened, since the first Governor-General retired, no greater advances have been made towards the est-

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20. For details of British hopes respecting Tibet in this period, see: A. Lamb, *British India and Tibet 1766-1910*, London 1986, Chs. V & VI.

ablishment of friendly commercial intercourse between India and the countries on the northern side of the Himalaya than in the time of your Lordship's administration. A mission has visited Kashgar, the Pamir table-land has been explored, and Mr. Edgar has held friendly converse on the Jelep-la with the Tibetan officials of Pari-jong, the prelude of further steps towards acquiring the goodwill of the Lhasa Government.<sup>21</sup>

The contents of the present volume will, I trust, prove to be useful contributions towards that knowledge which will be the means of some day re-establishing friendly intercourse between India and Tibet; and in the hope that my efforts towards that end will receive your approval,

I remain,

Dear Lord Northbrook,

Yours with much regard and respect,

Clements R. Markham,

In the event it was not so easy to follow in Bogle's footsteps. The initiatives of the early 1870s, upon which Markham touched in his letter, led in the end not so much to a peaceful expansion of trade as to the opening of Tibet in 1904 by military force through an expedition from British India commanded by Francis Younghusband. There was no spectacular gain for British commerce. This is not the place to analyse why so little emerged from these trans-Himalayan initiatives beyond observing, as George Bogle had already detected in 1774-75, that Tibet was a polity where the central administration did not lend itself to an easy intercourse with what to it were novel regions in a world outside its traditional ambiance. Such, however, was not the conclusion which many of the readers of Markham's *Narratives* drew at the time of its publication. The Bengali scholar-explorer Sarat Chandra Das, who was to play a by no means insignificant part in the process which resulted in due course in the 1904 Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa, was as a young man inspired in large part to devote himself to Tibetan studies as a result of reading Markham's edition of Bogle.<sup>22</sup> Francis Younghusband

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21. The references are to the Forsyth Mission to Kashgar in Chinese Turkestan (then under the control of Yakub Bey, who had rebelled against Chinese rule) of 1873-74 see, for example: G.J. Alder, *British India's Northern Frontier 1865-1895*, London 1963; Gerald Morgan, *Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Central Asia 1810-1895*, London 1981, Ch. 11), and to a visit to the Sikkim-Tibet border by J.W. Edgar, Deputy Commissioner for Darjeeling, in 1873 (see: J.W. Edgar, *Report on a Visit to the Thibetan Frontier in October, November, December 1873*, Calcutta 1874, reprinted in New Delhi in 1969). In the event neither the British approaches to Chinese Turkestan (because of the end of the Yakub Bey regime) nor the approaches to Tibet of which Edgar's visit was part produced any results of the slightest significance to British commerce, but in 1875-76 optimism still reigned in certain circles both in Britain and in India.

22. See: D. Waller, *The Pandits. British Exploration of Tibet & Central Asia*, Lexington, Kentucky, 1988, p.194.

himself was also impressed by Bogle's achievement and sought to emulate it. There can be no doubt that Markham's edition of Bogle was most influential.

## 2

### **British India, Warren Hastings and the Dalrymple approach to oriental diplomacy**

#### A

#### **Warren Hastings**

Up to 1757 British India consisted essentially of three main, and quite separate, trading establishments of the English East India Company on the Subcontinent, the Presidencies of Bombay, Madras and Fort William (Calcutta in Bengal), all directly responsible to the Company's Court of Directors and Court of Proprietors in London. After 1757, with the Company's establishment of *de facto* control over the vast extent of Bengal (and some adjacent tracts), still theoretically part of the old Moghul Empire, British India acquired a major territorial significance which required some kind of constitutional structure: it was something much more than a collection of trading posts. This structure eventually began to be provided after years of turmoil and experiment, as has already been noted, by the Regulating Act of 1773 which created a significant degree of unification of command over the three Presidencies through the new office of Governor-General, a post first occupied by Warren Hastings. The story of how this came about is discussed in greater detail in the second volume of this book: suffice it here to note this process of constitutional development not only had great significance for the Company's position in the Subcontinent but also for the shape of British diplomacy elsewhere in eastern Asia. British India, while still in theory (and in many respects in practice too) the domain of a trading corporation, perforce had to take on many of the functions of a state, albeit one with a political structure fraught with ambiguities not least in the field of international relations. Bogle's Tibetan venture was in fact Warren Hastings' first experiment as Governor-General in this complex diplomatic arena.

Warren Hastings was born in England in 1732 in the village of Churchill in Oxfordshire. His background was that of a country gentry which had suffered greatly through its support for the Royalist cause in the Civil War of the previous century. His father was a clergyman. He was educated at Westminster School and then, in 1749, he entered the service of the East India Company as a Writer (as later did Bogle) and arrived in Calcutta in January 1750. In India Hastings served both in Madras and in Bengal (where he acquired vast experience of the ad-

ministrative problems of this region which had fallen into the hands of the Company following Clive's victory at Plassey in 1757). In 1772 he became, on transfer from Madras, Governor of Bengal, a region now rapidly evolving into a directly administered Company province, and a year later he was made Governor-General of all the Company's Indian possessions. By this time Hastings understood full well both the theory and the practice of conducting relations between the Company and those other entities on the Subcontinent not under direct British control. He was yet, however, to turn his hand to any activity, commercial or diplomatic, beyond the Indian frontiers either by sea or through and beyond the northern mountain barrier. The sequence of events culminating in the Panchen Lama's letter of early 1774 seeking a settlement to the crisis in Anglo-Bhutanese relations (Ch. II, No. 7) presented Hastings both with challenges and opportunities of a kind of which he had no previous direct experience, but which, given the fundamental nature of the Company's position in Asia, suggested to one of his great intelligence a number of intriguing possibilities which he was to expound clearly enough on a subsequent occasion (see: Ch. XV, No. 2).<sup>23</sup>

## B

### **The Trade of the English East India Company**

As an Indian power the East India Company might have managed well enough without concerning itself unduly with the opinions of extra-Indian regimes (be they in Europe or Asia) had there been anything like an autarchic economy in which the Company's financial needs could be met entirely by trade between the Subcontinent and the home country. This, however, was not the case. The Company was driven by essentially commercial forces to develop a foreign policy with respect to regions outside its control, a process which often was to lead not to bilateral relations between equals but to the expansion of the Company's sphere of control or influence (even if official policy was directed towards the discouragement of such expansion). This fact was well understood by many of the Company's immediate neighbours who experienced a certain reluctance to open their doors to Company trade and diplomacy, in Company eyes inextricably linked. One cannot

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23. Hasting left India in early 1785. His time as Governor-General was extremely controversial. When he returned to England the many enemies that he had made initiated a process of impeachment against him in Parliament which was to last for seven years and to deprive him of virtually all his savings even though he was in the end acquitted. He died in 1818. For an admirable short life of Hastings, see: Penderell Moon, *Warren Hastings and British India*, London 1947. Many, including the author of this book, regard him as the greatest of all the Governors-General of the British India which came to an end in 1947.

understand Company diplomacy without also understanding the structure of Company trade both as it was and as it appeared in the light of contemporary economic thought.

The trading operations of the English Company in the 17th and 18th centuries were indeed complex, and they varied over time. Initially the hope had been to penetrate the great spice trade of the Indonesian archipelago (breaking a Portuguese monopoly and actively competing with the Dutch East India Company) and to establish commercial footholds further east in Japan and Indochina: Japan was particularly attractive in that it was seen as a potential source of silver (purchased, if need be, with gold at rates usual in most of the known world) which could be invested very profitably in China (where silver was far more highly valued in relation to gold than in the majority of other markets).<sup>24</sup> By the middle of the 17th century, however, the Company had been obliged (in great measure because of effective Dutch opposition in the Spice Islands) to concentrate mainly on India, a region which produced abundant textiles (particularly cottons of a bewildering variety) but which was not particularly eager to take the products of the British Isles. Thus the Company aroused opposition at home on two counts: its textile imports competed with the English staple of woollen cloth and its purchases abroad required the export from England of specie (mainly gold), a process which the current ("mercantilist") economic theory regarded as harmful to the nation's material health.

After 1757 it would appear superficially that the Company was in a potentially powerful financial position in India by virtue of its control over Bengal, and all the more so after formally acquiring in 1765 from the Moghul Empire the *Diwani* (revenue collecting power) in that extremely rich province. In the event, while individuals in the Company service, not to mention a wide range of persons authorised or unauthorised who were able to tap the trade of India and its neighbours on a personal basis, could grow rich from what observers at that period often called the fruit of the Indian "pagoda tree" (the pagoda was an Indian coin, usually gold), yet territorial possessions, direct or indirect, and this included Bengal, only added to the Company's official responsibilities and, in consequence, to its expenditure. Neither war nor administration came cheap. In fact, the Company's official trade with India by Warren Hastings' time was not, at least from the point of view both of the Government in London and the British Company shareholder, particularly profitable and certainly not sufficiently so to counter hostile arguments based on contemporary political practice and economic theory. The Company in India clearly needed to discover some means whereby its

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24. An excellent general survey of European trade in India and elsewhere in the East is: Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800*, Minneapolis 1976.

position could be turned to profit without calling upon extra resources from England. The obvious solution seemed to lie to the east of India in the China trade, whose potential had already given rise to a great deal of practical experiment and theoretical exploration (and which, eventually, helped by the exploitation of the full potential of Indian opium production, was to provide, at least in the short to medium term, a reasonable answer to many of the Company's fiscal difficulties as perceived in London).<sup>25</sup>

English trade with China dates back to the first half of the 17th century, with ventures to a number of South Chinese ports including the Portuguese enclave of Macao. The outcome was not particularly successful and in the latter part of the century the English Company, which had been granted by the English Crown a trading monopoly in this part of the world, experimented with a base in Indochina whence Chinese merchants could be contacted on soil where the English hoped they might avoid the worst consequences of both Chinese official obduracy and European competition (advantages which were not obviously available at the last English foothold in the Indonesian archipelago, Bencoolen, in Sumatra, following their forced abandonment of Bantam, in Java, under Dutch pressure in the 1680s).

The China trade soon came to be dominated by a single commodity, tea. The first Chinese tea appears to have been imported into Europe by the Dutch in 1640. By 1660 tea had begun to appear in London coffee houses, in very small quantities probably coming from Holland; it is about this time that the diarist Samuel Pepys has his first taste of the beverage. In 1664 the Company imported into England a few pounds weight of tea, just under three of which it presented to King Charles II: it was then an extremely costly and exotic substance. Within half a century English tea imports (by weight) had risen to over 100,000 pounds per year; and on the eve of the crisis in the American Colonies, which was contemporary with Bogle's Tibetan mission, this figure had risen to about 10,000,000

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25. The English East India Company obtained, along with Bengal, access to the Indian opium producing regions along the Ganges, mainly in Bihar and Oudh: Patna was a major centre for the purchase of opium, as was Benares (Varanesi). Previously this opium had been exploited by the Dutch East India Company (VOC) by way of its factory at Chinsura on the Hughli in Bengal: it was exported thence to various ports in Southeast Asia whence much of it through the local junk trade found its way to China. In other words, the foundations of the British opium trade with China had been laid by others. In 1773 the cultivation, production and sale of this Indian opium became a monopoly of the English East India Company. In Bogle's day there was a modest export of Indian opium to China, about 1,000 chests each year (a chest weighing some 130 lbs.), but this was of marginal economic significance. In 1839-40, shortly after the Company's monopoly of the China trade was ended in 1834, over 40,000 chests of Indian opium were landed at Canton. For an admirable (and recent) account of the opium trade, see: Carl A. Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy*, London 1999.

lbs. annually, a sum which the American troubles (resulting in a defiance of the Company's North American tea monopoly) reduced in the late 1770s by about 3,000,000 lbs. (if we ignore the very considerable quantities, perhaps as much as twice the weight of the officially recorded imports, which were being smuggled into England from France, Holland and elsewhere). In 1784, with the passing by the English Parliament of the Commutation Act which reduced import duties on tea from 100% to 12½%, imports of Chinese tea soared (with a significant decline in smuggling): tea rapidly became the major vehicle both for the realisation of Company trading profits for its English shareholders and for revenue from it for the English Government. In the early 1800s the English Exchequer realised annually from duties on the import of tea (generally about 30,000,000 lbs. each year) an average of £3,000,000, a very significant element in the English finances.

While at the time of the outset of Bogle's Tibetan mission the tea trade had yet to assume its eventual fiscal importance, it was already clear that it was a major, and increasingly important, component in the financial structure of the English East India Company: as such, it raised two major questions of policy which were far from easy to resolve.

First: this commodity was only obtainable by the English East India Company in China, and the Chinese, who showed a singular lack of interest in the manufactures of England, demanded payment in silver, the precious metal which was the basis of the Chinese Imperial monetary system. Direct export of bullion, be it silver or gold, from England aroused a significant measure of political opposition on the grounds that, as set out in established mercantilist economic theory, such exports represented a drain of the nation's financial life-blood. For the Company there were obvious advantages in securing access to silver supplies beyond the English coast. Silver was entering Continental Europe by various routes of which many had their origins in the Spanish mines in South America (notably Potosi, today in Bolivia). Some of this silver was also exported from America to the Spanish possessions in the Philippines whence it found its way into the economic life of East, Southeast and South Asia. By a variety of indirect means much of the Spanish silver which was carried across the Pacific each year in two huge galleons from Acapulco in Mexico to Manila in the Philippines ended up in English East India Company hands: it was extremely useful in helping finance the purchase of Chinese commodities including tea.

The Seven Years War, in which the Spanish were numbered among the enemies of Great Britain, seriously disturbed this particular trading system. In October 1762 the English actually captured the Spanish Asiatic base at Manila and held it until May 1764, when it reverted to the Spaniards. The result of this restoration, however, was not a return to the *status quo ante*: up to the end of the 18th century the English continued to experience difficulties in obtaining that access to Spanish silver which they had enjoyed in earlier years. At the same time, their possession,

albeit briefly, of Manila had demonstrated to the English Company some of the advantages of a trading outpost in or near the South China Sea far to the east of the Indian Subcontinent, advantages which, it would seem, were not secured by the Company's Sumatran establishment at Bencoolen (or Benkulen, Fort Marlborough) which was situated inconveniently on the western (Indian Ocean) coast of Sumatra.<sup>26</sup> There were strong arguments for the establishment of more centrally located Company outposts to east of India where the flourishing maritime commerce of Southeast Asia and southern China could be tapped. In this way, without putting pressure upon the bullion supplies of the British Isles, specie could be obtained for investment in such commodities as Chinese tea.

One of the pioneers in the exposition of this line of policy was Alexander Dalrymple, who, as we have already seen, late in his life would be asked to prepare some of Bogle's writings for publication.

Alexander Dalrymple was born in Scotland (at Musselburgh near Edinburgh) in 1737. In 1752, at an unusually early age, through family patronage he was appointed a Writer in the East India Company service.<sup>27</sup> Between 1758 and 1762 Dalrymple travelled extensively in Southeast Asia and on the South China Coast, as a result of which he became an extremely effective advocate of the establishment of Company outposts in this region. He personally proposed such a position in the Sulu Sultanate (between Borneo and the main Spanish Philippine island of Luzon) and actively participated in negotiations with the local ruler. The Sulu project (with a base at Balambangan) was pursued by the Company with varying degrees of enthusiasm until 1775 when its attention shifted elsewhere. In 1778, very much following the ideas set out by Dalrymple, Warren Hastings sent an envoy, Charles Chapman (like Bogle, a close friend), to Cochin China (Annam) to explore the possibility of founding a commercial outpost there for the Company's trade in the South China Sea.<sup>28</sup> Despite Chapman's optimistic report,

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26. Bencoolen's main economic importance was as a point of access to the pepper trade. In 1763 it was elevated from being subordinate to the English Company establishment in Madras to the status of a Presidency in its own right, a status which it retained until 1801 when it was reduced to being no more than a Residency. For much on Bencoolen, see: J. Bastin, ed., *The British in West Sumatra 1685-1825*, Kuala Lumpur 1965.

27. An excellent account of Dalrymple's life and ideas is: H.T. Frye, *Alexander Dalrymple and the Expansion of British Trade*, London 1970. See also: Vincent T. Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire 1763-1793*, Vol. I, *Discovery and Revolution*, London 1952.

28. The Chapman mission to Cochin China is described in detail in: A. Lamb, *The Mandarin Road to Old Hué. Narratives of Anglo-Vietnamese Diplomacy from the 17th Century to the Eve of the French Conquest*, London 1970. The English East India Company had already experimented with Indochinese trading settlements



this initiative was not pursued at the time; but what was hoped for from Cochin China appeared to be offered by another settlement, Penang in the Malay Peninsula, which was established shortly after Hastings had left India. In due course, in 1819, Penang was followed by Stamford Raffles' brilliantly successful entrepôt on Singapore island.

In 1779 Dalrymple was appointed Hydrographer to the East India Company, and in 1795 he moved on to become Hydrographer to the Admiralty, a post which he held until his dismissal (shortly before his death) in 1808.

The Dalrymple theory, as it were, embodied one approach to the problem of the East India Company's China trade, but by no means the only one. Already by the 1760s the China trade, with its supply of China tea, was becoming the major source of commercial profit for the English East India Company. It might indeed be possible to provide finance for it, without apparent drain on English specie, through the profits of intermediate oriental trading operations in eastern Asia. It was apparent, however, that access to non-British sources of silver was not enough on its own to guarantee the continuation, let alone growth, of profits for the Company. The China trade involved more than a supply of specie.

By the time that Warren Hastings became Governor-General of the Company's Indian possessions it was evident that there was another, and probably far more complex, dimension to the whole question of the China trade. Company merchants (the "Supercargoes"), after experiments with various points of entry to South China, were effectively confined to a single port, Canton, where they were obliged to operate under extremely difficult conditions. They were forced to deal with a small group (never more than sixteen members) of officially licensed Chinese traders, the Hong merchants.<sup>29</sup> Behind the Hong merchants was the

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in the 17th century, in both Annam and Tongking, but to all intents and purposes abandoned the region by 1700.

29. The Hong merchants usually operated as part of what might be termed a guild, the Co-hong; but this was effectively broken up between 1771 and 1781-82 when it was revived in a less formal and effective shape to endure until the crisis of the Opium War and the Nanking Treaty of 1842.

There is an abundant literature on the old Canton trade. The classic study is: H.B. Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China, 1635-1834*, 5 vols., Oxford 1926-29. See also: H.B. Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, Vol. I, *The Period of Conflict 1834-1860*, London 1910; E.H. Pritchard, *Anglo-Chinese Relations During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, *University of Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences*, XVII, 1929, Urbana, Illinois, 1929; E.H. Pritchard, *The Crucial Years of Early Anglo-Chinese Diplomacy, 1750-1800*, Pullman, Washington, 1936; M. Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, Cambridge 1951; Alain Peyrefitte, *Un Choc de Cultures*, Vol. II, *Le Regard des Anglais*, Paris 1998. For admirable summaries of how the old Canton trading system operated, see: J.L. Cranmer-Byng, ed., *An*

structure of Chinese local government culminating in the office of the Viceroy of Kwangtung (Guangdong) Province who, of course, was responsible to the Imperial Government in Peking (Beijing).

The foreign merchants at Canton, however, had no access at all to the authorities in Peking. Indeed, in the eyes of the Manchu (Ch'ing) Dynasty and its higher bureaucracy foreign merchants simply did not exist. Foreigners in Peking were recognised as bearers of tribute if they came from certain areas which fell within the accepted limits of Chinese world (which did not include Europe with the possible exception of Russia): they were undoubtedly not seen as representatives of sovereign entities in any way equal to the Chinese Empire. Merchants, be they Chinese or foreign, and their means of livelihood, enjoyed a very low status: merchants were certainly not the kind of people to be granted direct access to the Imperial Presence. In the official Chinese view foreign merchants should have considered themselves fortunate indeed to be allowed to trade with China at all, and it was the height of presumption for them to expect to be granted a higher social position than their Chinese equivalents. Thus it was not surprising that, as the Canton trade expanded and became increasingly subject to regulation by Peking (rather than by Provincial governments acting more or less on their own initiative), the foreign merchants in Canton, of many nationalities, English, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, French, and others, should be controlled in a manner which they found exceedingly restrictive. In 1760 an edict from Peking,<sup>30</sup> summarising the conclusions of the local Kwangtung (Guangdong) administration reached over the last few years, set out five main conditions under which foreigners could come to Canton at all.

First: foreign traders could only stay in Canton (to which port all foreign trade was now explicitly confined) during the trading season. Once their ships were loaded they should leave at once and, if they wished to remain in the neighbourhood of the Chinese Empire, it should be in the Portuguese enclave of Macao, rather than in their Canton trading establishments (factories).

Second: the members of the Chinese merchant guild (Co-hong) had the duty to keep a close watch over these foreigners when they were in Canton and make sure that they did not leave the vicinity of their factories. Only the approved

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*Embassy to China, being the journal kept by Lord Macartney during his embassy to the Emperor Ch'ien-lung 1793-1794*, London 1962; Immanuel C.Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, 3rd ed., Oxford 1983.

30. See Peyrefitte, *Anglais, op. cit.*, pp. 25-6, for the text of the Imperial Edict of 29 January 1760 which set out the five principles. It is interesting that these restrictions were very similar (if marginally less severe) than those to which Dutch traders were subjected at Deshima Island off Nagasaki in Japan by the Tokugawa Shogunate from the middle of the 17th century until the middle of the 19th century.

Chinese merchants could deal with these foreigners for whose good behaviour they were responsible to the Provincial Chinese authorities: these Chinese merchants would be punished by local magistrates should their foreign associates violate Chinese law.

Third: foreign merchants were prohibited from lending money to Chinese merchants and Chinese merchants were not to act commercially on behalf of foreigners: they could not, for example, go into the Chinese interior to buy Chinese goods as representatives of foreign merchants with money obtained from foreigners. Foreigners could only buy and sell goods within the territorial limits of the permitted Canton trading settlements.

Fourth: foreigners were prohibited from using private means to send letters into the Chinese interior.

Finally: foreign vessels entering the Canton estuary had to take on board a Chinese military official or otherwise be subjected to Chinese supervision.

These five basic rules were soon elaborated into a complex restrictive code. The number of Chinese servants that could be employed in any factory was limited to eight males. No foreign warships could enter the Canton estuary. No foreign women could reside in the factories. The movement of foreigners by land and river was strictly controlled and confined to certain specified routes on certain specified days. Foreigners could not learn the Chinese language, let alone acquire Chinese books.

In fact, of course, a few foreigners did learn Chinese. The absence of foreign women (the prohibition in this matter was strictly enforced) was to a certain extent compensated for by the availability of female company in Macao. The number of servants was often exceeded.

The Canton trade was usually extremely profitable, a fact which compensated in great measure for the confinement to the factory area. The real problems came from the underlying economics of the situation. There were two major issues here.

First: it was not in practice possible to carry out commercial operations as large as the tea trade was becoming (by the end of the 18th century the English East India Company was taking nearly 30,000,000 lbs. of tea annually from Canton) without some credit structure more sophisticated than that envisaged in the 1760 Imperial Edict. The Hong merchants had, perforce, to borrow from foreign traders, not only to finance their tea purchases from the intermediaries who brought their wares from the producing Provinces but also to pay the various sums demanded from them by the Chinese bureaucracy.<sup>31</sup> The Chinese Hong traders

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31. Tea was not produced in the immediate Canton (Guangzhou) hinterland of Kwangtung (Guangdong) Province. The main tea regions were further north, mainly in Fukien (Fujian), Anhwei (Anhui) and Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Provinces. It could take many weeks to transport the tea overland from the growing areas to Canton, thus adding greatly to costs. For an introduction to the China tea trade,

from time to time, especially after 1770, experienced difficulties in repaying such debts.

Second: if a Chinese Hong trader could not repay debts, even became bankrupt, there was no redress for the foreign creditor. Chinese law certainly could not help in that it neither recognised the position of the foreign trader nor the legitimacy of any loans he might have made to Chinese subjects. The question of Chinese jurisdiction, of course, also arose where a foreigner was involved in a major breach of the local (Chinese) law.

Were the English East India Company the only party involved in the Canton trade it is possible that these problems could have been solved easily enough by a variety of local deals and compromises. While by Hastings' day and the time of the Bogle mission to Tibet the East India Company dominated English trade at Canton, where it was represented by its agents, Supercargoes, ruled by a Select Committee with its President, and where as far British subjects were concerned it possessed a monopoly (until 1834, even after the India trade itself had largely been thrown open to private British trade in 1813), yet there were still many non-Company British merchants using non-Company ships involved in the Canton trade. About 30% of British trade at Canton at this period was either carried out by British (or British Indian) traders from India operating on their own behalf under Company license (not to mention those who had not bothered to obtain such permission). In addition, there was a considerable non-British European trade. Already, therefore, in the second half of the 18th century the Canton question was to some extent one which not only concerned British subjects outside the ranks of Company officers (and with an increasingly loud voice in political circles in London) but also it had, in a European (a term soon to include America as well) context, an international dimension.

Faced with the current nature of relations between its merchants at Canton and the Chinese state, the English East India Company was in Hastings' day inclined towards a compromise solution, that it should somehow on its own acquire more or less informal channels of contact with the in Chinese Imperial authorities Peking. It felt no great enthusiasm for a wider diplomatic settlement such as the formal establishment of direct relations between the Chinese Emperor and the British Crown which could only, if successful, tend towards the opening of the China trade to all British subjects and the loss of a monopoly which was becoming of increasing importance to its profits. We can perhaps summarise what might be termed the Dalrymple-Hastings China policy thus: on the one hand it advocated the widening of local trade between India and Southeast Asia and China, perhaps

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see: Hoh-cheung Mui & Loma H. Mui, *The Management of a Monopoly. A Study of the East India Company's Conduct of its Tea Trade 1784-1833*, Vancouver 1984.

still under the domination of a Company monopoly, through expansion of the "country trade" by way of entrepôt settlements to the east of the Bay of Bengal (as attempted by the Chapman mission to Cochin China of 1778); on the other hand it saw merit in the establishment of specifically Company links with the Chinese Imperial centre at Peking by whatever means might come to hand (such as the exploitation of the good offices of the 6th Tashi Lama which Bogle explored in 1774-75 and proposed more specifically in 1779).

Eventually, starting with the unhappy Cathcart venture of 1787-1788<sup>32</sup> and continuing with the Macartney mission of 1793 and the Amherst mission of 1816, a diplomatic solution through direct representation in Peking was sought by the English East India Company and the British Government. The results were not encouraging. The Chinese Empire was not prepared to deal with the outside world on equal terms (or, indeed, on any formal terms at all, in that a Dutch mission to Peking, which followed shortly after Macartney and complied with every humiliation, at least in European eyes, which the Chinese chose to impose on it, was no more successful than had been the protocol-conscious British envoy).<sup>33</sup> In the end the task, as the Europeans saw it, had to be carried out by war.

It was difficult enough, perhaps virtually impossible, for a European state (except, perhaps, Russia) to establish relations on anything like equal terms with the Ruler of the Chinese Empire who saw himself as the centre of a universe consisting either of tributaries or of barbarians: it was certainly far more unlikely that a trading corporation, as was the English East India Company, could do so. It is arguable, therefore, that Bogle's proposed indirect approach, of making friends of the Chinese Emperor's friends, had a great deal to recommend it. We shall never know, of course, since the opportunity was denied Bogle by his Lama's untimely death in China in 1780. Bogle's own early death shortly after this eliminated any prospect of another opportunity to exploit his undoubted diplomatic abilities, albeit in somewhat altered circumstances.

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32. In June 1788 the envoy, Lt.-Colonel Charles Cathcart, died en route for China in the Banka Straits off Sumatra in what is today Indonesia, and was buried in the Dutch East Indies. See also: Ch. XV below, No. 10.

33. The Dutch Embassy to Peking of 1795 under Isaac Titsingh and A.E. van Braam did everything that Chinese Court etiquette required of it, but it was no more successful than had been Macartney. See: J.L. Cranmer-Byng, ed., *An Embassy to China, being the journal kept by Lord Macartney during his embassy to the Emperor Ch'ien-lung 1793-1794*, London 1962, p. 34; J.J.L. Duyvendak, "The Last Dutch Embassy to the Chinese Court (1794-5)", *T'oung Pao*, XXXIV 1938.

The Macartney Embassy did in fact secure some compromises on the question of Chinese protocol though it certainly did not establish an equality between the Ch'ien-lung Emperor and King George III.

## CHAPTER II

### **Bogle's Instructions from Warren Hastings and their immediate background 1773 to 1774<sup>1</sup>**

#### **1**

**Copy of a letter from the President and Council  
of Fort William in Bengal in their Secret Department  
dated the 15th January 1773.**

**Received via ship  
*Duke of Grafton*  
the 1st July 1773.**

Some time ago the Rajah of Coss Behar [Cooch Behar] applied to us through our Collector of Rungpore [Charles Purling, the Collector at Rangpur, was a nephew of John Purling, who from 1771-1772 had been Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company] for assistance against the Boutanners [Bhutanese], a nation who inhabit the mountains to the northward of that Province, and who have of late years partly by force and partly by treachery obtained a dangerous influence in

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1. Many of the documents reproduced in this Chapter are to be found in the Home Miscellaneous series of the India Office Records, notably H 219 which also contains material relating to Samuel Turner's mission to Tibet of 1783.

As a guide to the holdings on Tibet of the old India Office Library, now in the British Library, see: Amar Kaur Jasbir Singh, *A guide to source materials in the India Office Library and Records for the history of Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan 1765-1950*, London 1988.

these parts.<sup>2</sup>

Coss Behar was formerly a Province of Bengal, and the present Rajah [a minor, Darendra Narayan] by means of the Nazir Deo, his Minister [a hereditary military office held by a member of the ruling family], offered, on condition of our lending him assistance to drive the Boutanners from his country, once more to put it under the dominion of Bengal and to pay the Company half the revenue he draws from it.

In deliberating on these offers, we had more in consideration the peace and security of our present possessions than any advantage to be derived from the new acquisition we were flattered with, for as your District at Rungpore has been frequently exposed to the incursions of the Boutanners, and the collection of the revenue drawn from a part of Coss Behar which depends upon Rungpore thereby rendered very precarious, it became a matter of direct interest to embrace any opportunity which offered of expelling those people from these countries, and confining them within the limits of their own mountains.

In this view we agreed to the proposals of the Nazir Deo, and ordered Captain [John] Jones [CO of 6Bn Sepoys, who was to die in 1773 of malaria contracted during the campaign], to proceed directly with four Companies of Sepoys and two pieces of cannon on the expedition, and as the Committee of Circuit were then in those parts, we employed them to negotiate and settle the Treaty between the Company and the Rajah.<sup>3</sup>

2. The story of the British involvement in Cooch Behar and its Bhutanese neighbour goes back to the middle 1760s. It is discussed in some detail, along with a selection of documents and bibliographical references, in the second volume of this book.

3. This is a summary of the Treaty between Cooch Behar and the East India Company signed by President and Council at Fort William on 5 April 1773, and Darendra Narain, Rajah of Cooch Behar, at Behar Fort, on 6th Maug 1179 Bengal style:

1. the Rajah to pay, by way of the Collector, Rangpur, Rs. 50,000 to defray the costs of the forces sent to aid him;
2. should the costs be greater than this sum, the Rajah to pay more, if less, he will be reimbursed by the Company;
3. the Rajah of Cooch Behar "will acknowledge subjection to the English East India Company upon his country being cleared of his enemies, and will allow the Cooch Behar country to be annexed to the Province of Bengal;"
4. the Company will retain one half of the revenues of Cooch Behar;
5. the Rajah of Cooch Behar will keep the other half "provided he is firm in his allegiance to the Honorable United East India Company;"
6. & 7. deal with technical details of revenue assessment;
8. the Company will always assist the Rajah of Cooch Behar in the

You will observe that there is a clause in the Treaty which leaves it to the ratification of your Honorable Court. In the mean time we shall endeavour to see all the conditions carried provisionally into execution. Our troops have hitherto met with all the success we could wish, Captain Jones having carried the town of [Cooch] Behar by assault with no considerable loss. Although we hope so spirited beginning will serve in a good degree to intimidate the Boutanners, we have ordered a reinforcement of Captain Jones, that he may be able to pursue with efficacy his first advantage and bring the matter to a speedy issue.

.....  
 A set of lawless banditti known under the name Sunesses [Sannyasis]<sup>4</sup>,

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defence of his country, the Rajah paying the costs of such a defence;

9. "that the Treaty shall remain in force for the space of two years, or till such time as advices may be received from the Court of Directors, empowering the President and Council to ratify the same for ever."

4. The *sannyasi* phenomenon is discussed in detail in the second volume of this book. Modern writers frequently fail to appreciate the significance of the *sannyasi* problem. Peter Collister, in his *Bhutan and the British* (London 1987), pp. 9-10, treats the *sannyasis* as if they were some kind of Indian tribe, "a lowland people who had been in league with the Bhutanese and had, at the Company's insistence, been dismissed from the service of the Raja of Cooch Behar". In fact, the *sannyasis* were in this particular context members of wandering military bodies, organised in some way on a religious basis (which could be Muslim as well as Hindu), which severely threatened the stability of rural north-eastern India in the period when the English East India Company was establishing its dominion in Bengal. The *sannyasi* movement, along with its Muslim parallel, goes back to the 16th century, but it became particularly threatening to law and order following the collapse of Mogul power during the course of the 18th century. There is not much modern literature on the *sannyasis*. See: Rai Sahib Jamini Mohan Ghosh, *Sannyasi and Fakir Raiders in Bengal*, Calcutta 1930; A.M. Chandra, *The Sannyasi Rebellion*, Calcutta 1977; Atis K. Dasgupta, *The Fakir and Sannyasi Uprisings*, Calcutta 1992. The term *sannyasi*, of course, has another meaning relating to the fourth and final stage of the religious life of a Hindu when, to quote from K. Crim, ed., *Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions*, Nashville 1981, p. 634, the devout Hindu male, "renouncing his name, caste and previous associations, ... should wander in the world free from all attachments and desires, seeking only final liberation."

Alexander Dalrymple, in c. 1792 in a note to the Bogle text which he never got round to publishing, added the following comment which explains well enough the late 18th century meaning of the term *sannyasi* (at least as it was understood by the English in Bengal):

the Sunnassis are a religious order of men who formally resided on the northern frontier of India, which they sometimes visited only as merchants, but oftener in numbers armed and lay the inhabitants under contribution



who are discussed in some detail in the first volume] or Facquirs [Fakirs] have long infested these countries, and under pretence of religious pilgrimage have been accustomed to traverse the chief part of Bengal, begging, stealing and plundering wherever they go and as best suits their convenience to practice. About a month ago intelligence was received by the Collector of Rungpore that a body of these men had come into his district and were plundering and ravaging the villages as usual. Upon this he immediately detached Captain [George] Thomas with a party of Purgunnah [Pargana, local, district or part of a Province] Sepoys, or those troops who are employed solely in the collections, to try to repress them. Captain Thomas soon came up with, and attacked them with considerable advantage, but his sepoy imprudently expending their ammunition, and getting into confusion, they were at length totally defeated, and Captain Thomas with almost the whole party cut off. This affair, although disagreeable on account of the death of a gallant officer, can have no other bad consequence, as we have taken proper steps to bring these people to a severe chastisement, and at all events to drive them from the country; and we hope from the precautions which we now find necessary to take, of stationing a more considerable force on these frontiers, effectually to put an end to the future incursions of the Sunnasses.

## 2

### **Extract from a letter from the President and Council at Fort William in Bengal in their Secret Department, dated 31st March 1773**

We have informed you in consequence of the assurances which we

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partly by the influence of their professed character. They have no women in their society, go almost naked and recruit their numbers by stealing the stoutest and healthiest children in the countries which they occasionally frequent. The chief of each band issues his general orders written in a few words with lime water on a black board affixed to the end of a long bamboo which a man carries in an elevated position and as he passes between the two lines of which their camp is composed the people read it. When the chief meditates a descent on any place he directs his band into small parties and gives to each a daily march route by different diverging lines which ultimately concentrate at the appointed termination. There all the parties reunite about the same instant and appear in formidable numbers and array as if they had fallen from the clouds. This affords them all the advantage of surprise and if they chance to light on a guarded station, they disappear as suddenly and as suddenly show themselves in another.

ourselves had received from the various parts of the Province that the Sunasses had entirely abandoned the country. We are now concerned to contradict this intelligence and to mention that they still continue in different bodies to traverse and distress the country.

Every step however has been taken to intercept and expel them, four Battalions of Sepoys are actually employed in this service, positive orders have also been issued under severe penalties to all Zemindars and farmers to send the earliest intelligence of their route and motions and we are in hopes that these measures will have some degree of success; though it is remarkable that we meet obstacles every day in the superstition of the inhabitants, who in spite of the cruelties and oppression which they undergo from these people, are so bigoted in their veneration for them as to endeavour on every occasion to screen them from the punishment they are exposed to from Government.

Captain [Timothy] Edwards who was early detached with three Companies of the Purgannah Sepoys on the first advice of Captain Thomas's defeat, after a long series of fruitless attempts to come up and engage them, unhappily underwent the same fate, and as it appears through the cowardice of the sepoy who deserted him in an action with a great body of Sunasses whom he encountered in the district of Silberres [Bogra].

By private advices lately received from Poornea [Purnea or Purnia in Bihar], we learn that parties of the people in their retreat from the country have burnt several villages in that district notwithstanding the Battalion of new raised light infantry under the command of Captain Brook, and the Battalion of Sepoys under Captain [Robert] Stewart, both active and experienced officers, were at the same time in close pursuit of them; and we fear that notwithstanding the opinion which we expressed in our last, the Revenue may suffer by their multiplied ravages and the consternation into which they have thrown the inhabitants whenever they have appeared or been expected.

Our operations in Cooch Behar have gone on with the same success with which they were begun; and we doubt not of being able soon to settle that country on a solid footing. In the mean time we have given express orders to Mr. Purling [at Rangpur] not to listen to any overtures of negotiation from the Boutanners until he has obtained entire possession of the low countries and have directed him to regard the hills as the boundaries of Bengal on that side and to pursue his operations no further.

The conduct of Captain Jones, the officer who commands the Battalion on service in Cooch Behar, merits our commendation. He has been

gallantly seconded by Lieut. [James] Dickson [1744-1829, who ended his career as a Lt.-General] and the other officers under his command; and on the spirit which they have shown as well as the earnestness which has been manifested by Mr. Purling we build the most sanguine hopes of a happy issue to this undertaking.

.....

We cannot close this letter without communicating to you the intelligence we have just received of a considerable advantage gained over the Boutanners by a small detachment under Lieutenant Dickson in Cooch Behar. It appears that he was attacked in the night by a body of near four thousand of these people and that they continued their attack with great resolution for several hours but at length by the steady courage and discipline of our party which consisted of only two hundred and twenty six brigade sepoy, they were repulsed leaving two hundred dead on the spot, besides a great many killed and wounded in the pursuit. We esteem it a justice to Lieutenant Dickson to mention our approbation of his conduct in this affair; and also take notice of Captain Martin's behaviour on this occasion, who, although an old Captain in your army, served as a volunteer in this engagement under Mr. Dickson, a young Lieutenant. Our loss in the action was only five men killed and thirty four wounded, among the latter Lieutenant Taylor, but not dangerously.

### 3

**Extract of a letter from the President and Council at Bengal in their Secret Department dated the 10th November 1773 to the Court of Directors of the East India Company and received by Ship *Latham* the 5th May 1774.**

Since your advices of March last nothing material has occurred in the affairs of Cooch Behar. The Boutanners have remained quiet without any serious offers of peace or attempting anything against that country. However, it is not improbable that they may renew their attacks this season. But from the precautions we have taken we have little reason to apprehend danger from them. We shall endeavour to bring the country to a settlement as soon as possible and we hope with some advantage to the Company.

## 4

**Articles of a Treaty of Peace between the  
Honorable East India Company and the  
Deb Rajah or Rajah of Bootan**

**Note.** The treaty was negotiated with the Bhutanese on behalf of the East India Company by Charles Purling, Collector at Rangpur, and the Bhutanese version was signed there (in March 1774) prior to ratification by the East India Company authorities in Calcutta on 25 April 1774.

1st. That the Honorable Company, wholly from consideration for the distress to which the Bootans represented themselves to be reduced, and from the desire of living in peace with their neighbours, will relinquish all the lands which belonged to the Deb Rajah before the commencement of the war with the Rajah of Cooch Behar, namely, to the eastward, the lands of Chitchacotta and Pangolagaut, and to the westward, the lands of Kyruntee, Marragaut and Luckypoor.

2nd. That for the possession of the Chitchacotta Province, the Deb Rajah shall pay an annual tribute of five Tangun Horses to the Honorable Company, which was the acknowledgement paid to the Behar Rajah.

3rd. That the Deb Rajah shall deliver up Drijindernarain [Darendra Narayan], Rajah of Cooch Behar, together with his brother the Dewan Deo [hereditary chief minister], who is confined with him [the Bhutanese capture of the Cooch Behar ruler being one of the official causes of hostilities].

4th. That the Bootans, being merchants, shall have the same privilege of trade as formerly, without the payment of duties, and their caravan shall be allowed to go to Rungpore annually.

5th. That the Deb Rajah shall never cause incursions to be made into their country, nor in any respect whatever molest the ryots [local peasants] that have come under the Honorable Company's subjection.

6th. That if any ryot or inhabitant whatever shall desert from the Honorable Company's territories, the Deb Rajah shall cause him to be delivered up immediately upon application being made for him.

7th. That in case of the Bootans, or any one under the government of the Deb Rajah, shall have any demands upon, or disputes with, any inhabitants of these or any part of the Company's Territories, they shall prosecute them only by an application to the Magistrate, who shall reside here for the administration of justice.

8th. That whereas, the Sunneeyasies are considered by the English as an enemy, the Deb Rajah shall not allow any body of them to take shelter in any part of the districts now given up, nor permit them to enter the Honorable Company's territories, or through any part of his, and if the Bootans shall not of themselves be able to drive them out, they shall give information to the Resident, on the part of the English, in Cooch Behar, and they shall not consider the English troops pursuing the Sunneeyasies into those districts any breach of this Treaty.

9th. That in case the Honorable Company shall have occasion for cutting timber from any part of the woods under the Hills, they shall do it duty free, and the people they send shall be protected.

10th. That there shall be a mutual release of prisoners.

This Treaty is signed by the Honorable President and Council of Bengal, &c., and the Honorable Company's seal to be affixed on the one part, and to be signed by the Deb Rajah on the other part.

Signed and ratified at Fort William, the 25th April 1774.

Signed

Warren Hastings,  
William Aldersey,  
P.M. Dacres,  
J. Laurel,  
Henry Goodwin,  
J. Graham,  
George Vansittart.

## 5

### **Extract from the Company's General Letter to Bengal dated 7th January 1774**

Mr. Baillie having represented the benefits that may be obtained by exploring the interior parts of Bhutan, Assam and other countries adjacent to Goalpara, having resided in those parts several years where he made himself acquainted with the trade of those countries, that a very profitable commerce may be carried on by the disposal there of large quantities of woolens and metals and returns in lakhs [units of 100,000] of all sorts, munga [Assamese native] silks, black pepper and specie, and being very desirous of availing ourselves of this valuable branch of trade, we direct that you make these matters the object of your particular and immediate

enquiry, and report specially to us in what manner and to what extent the Company may be benefitted by opening a trade to those countries; and as the proposal of Mr. Baillie appears calculated for our interest, he may be employed in that undertaking if there shall appear good reasons to prosecute it with a prospect of success and provided he shall be better qualified for it than any of our civil servants.<sup>5</sup>

## 6

### A Note on Hugh Baillie

Mr. Baillie was never appointed to any mission by Warren Hastings. However, this letter from the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London was evidently taken by Hastings to indicate authority to go ahead with the Bogle Mission to Tibet, as related below.

Hugh Baillie, a Scot and one of four brothers who served in India, first came to Bengal in 1749 as the captain of a merchant ship. In November 1765 he was appointed Factor at Goalpara (on the border of Assam) for the Society of Trade, a body founded by Clive during his second administration of Bengal as a means for compensating officers of the East India Company for the limitations placed upon them in matters of private trade and the acceptance of gifts. By 1767 the Society was effectively confined to trade in salt: it was abolished in August 1768, and Baillie returned to England early in the following year. Here he urged the Directors of the Company to revive projects for the exploitation of the Assam trade. It is to his memorandum of 21 December 1773 to which the Court of Directors are referring in their letter to Bengal of 7 January 1774 reproduced above. In the summer of 1774 Baillie returned to India. Hastings and his colleagues then gave him permission to return to Goalpara and report on the possibilities of the Assam trade. Baillie remained in Goalpara until 1779. Up till 1777, though he called himself Resident for the East India Company to the Kingdom of Assam, Baillie in fact was not in the employ of the Company at all. It was only in 1777 that he was formally appointed Writer in the Company's Bengal establishment. In 1779 he took up briefly the post of Assistant Collector in Bihar, leaving his commercial activities in Assam in the hands of a local agent. When Baillie returned to direct control of his Assamese interests in late 1779, he soon established a good working relationship with George Bogle, the newly appointed Collector at Rangpur, a harmony which did not continue under Bogle's successor in 1781, Richard Goodlad. As a result, Baillie sought and was granted the post of

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5. Another Company servant, Francis Peacock, also appears at one time to have been considered for this task.

Collector at Rangamati with special responsibility for the customs post (chowky) at Joghghopa. In 1787, following a visit to England, Baillie managed to secure for himself a new position, that of Superintendent of the Company's trade in Assam, based at Goalpara (on the south bank of the Brahmaputra opposite Joghghopa), in addition to his Collectorship at Rangamati. In 1790 both the Rangamati Collectorship and Baillie's Superintendency at Goalpara were abolished. After serving for some months as Garrison Store Keeper at Fort William, in early 1792 Baillie resigned from the Company service and returned to England.

For much on the life of Hugh Baillie, see: S.K. Bhuyan, *Anglo-Assamese Relations 1771-1826*, Gauhati 1949.

## 7

### **Letter from the Tashi (Panchen) Lama to Warren Hastings [in Persian] (Received in Calcutta on 29 March 1774)**

**Note.** The letter was brought to Calcutta by a Tibetan representative of the Tashi Lama, Padma, and a Hindu pilgrim known as Purangir Gosain. They reached the Cooch Behar-Bengal border in early March, where the Collector at Rangpur, Charles Purling, sent them on to Hastings in Calcutta. By the time that the Lama's letter reached Calcutta the conflict between the Company and Bhutan had already come to an end.

The affairs of this quarter in every respect flourish. I am night and day employed in prayers for the increase of your happiness and prosperity. Having been informed by travellers from your quarter of your exalted fame and reputation, my heart, like the blossom of spring, abounds with gaiety, gladness, and joy; praise that the star of your fortune is in its ascension, praise that happiness and ease are the surrounding attendants of myself and family. Neither to molest nor persecute is my aim; it is even the characteristic of my sect to deprive ourselves of the necessary refreshment of sleep, should an injury be done to a single individual. But in justice and humanity I am informed you far surpass us. May you ever adorn the seat of justice and power, that mankind may, under the shadow of your bosom, enjoy the blessings of happiness and ease. By your favour, I am the Rajah and Lama of this country, and rule over numbers of subjects, a particular with which you have no doubt been made acquainted by travellers from these parts. I have been repeatedly informed that you have been engaged in hostilities against the Deb Judhur [Desi Zhidar, who ruled over Bhutan as Deb Raja 1768-73 and was the immediate cause of the Cooch Behar crisis, as is related in the section on Bhutan in the second volume to this book], to which, it is said, the Deb's own criminal conduct,

in committing ravages and other outrages on your frontiers, has given rise. As he is of a rude and ignorant race (past times are not destitute of instances of the like misconduct, which his own avarice tempted him to commit), it is not unlikely that he has now renewed those instances; and the ravages and plunder which he may have committed on the skirts of the Bengal and [Cooch] Behar provinces have given you provocation to send your vindictive army against him. However, his party has been defeated, many of his people have been killed, three forts have been taken from him, and he has met with the punishment he deserved; and it is as evident as the sun your army has been victorious, and that, if you had been desirous of it, you might, in the space of two days, have entirely extirpated him, for he had not power to resist your efforts. But I now take upon me to be his mediator, and to represent to you that, as the said Deb Rajah is dependent upon the Dalai Lama, who rules in this country with unlimited sway (but on account of his being in his minority, the charge of the government and administration for the present is committed to me), should you persist in offering further molestation to the Deb's country, it will irritate both the Lama and all his subjects against you. Therefore, from a regard to our religion and customs, I request you will cease all hostilities against him, and in doing this you will confer the greatest favour and friendship upon me. I have reprimanded the Deb for his past conduct, and I have admonished him to desist from his evil practices in future, and to be submissive to you in all matters. I am persuaded that he will conform to the advice which I have given him, and it will be necessary that you treat him with compassion and clemency. As to my part, I am but a Fakir, and it is the custom of my sect, with the rosary in our hands, to pray for the welfare of mankind, and for the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of this country; and I do now, with my head uncovered, entreat that you may cease all hostilities against the Deb in future. It would be needless to add to the length of this letter, as the bearer of it, who is a Gosain [a title often given to a Hindu pilgrim of particular merit], will represent to you all particulars, and it is hoped that you will comply therewith. In this country worship of the Almighty is the profession of all. We poor creatures are in nothing equal to you. Having a few things in hand, I send them to you by way of remembrance, and hope for your acceptance of them.

#### **Note on the Panchen, or Tashi, Lama.**

The author of this letter, the Panchen Lama of Tibet, was until well into the 20th century usually known to the British official establishment as the Tashi Lama,



presumably because of his Tibetan monastic seat at Tashilhunpo. I have on occasions used term here because, first, it was that used by both Bogle and Warren Hastings, and, second, because it is a convenient way to distinguish this particular Panchen Lama from other Incarnations.

The Incarnation of the Panchen Lama, Panchen Rimpoche meaning, so Waddell tells us, "the precious great doctor, or the Great gem of learning", was, so one tradition has it, created by the Vth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) and named Abbot of the great Tashilhunpo monastery. In theological terms this new Incarnation represented the incarnation of the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha, the Dalai Lama being an incarnation of the Bodhisatva Avalokitesvara. The essential point intended, again in the theological language of Yellow Sect (Geluppa) Buddhism, was that the Panchen Lama was rather more concerned with compassion and meditation than the Dalai Lama and rather less involved with the problems of practical government. This view of the starting date for the Panchen Lamas, widely held in Lhasa, was not always shared by the authorities in Tashilhunpo where it was argued that the Incarnation brought about by the Vth Dalai Lama was but the fourth appearance of an Incarnation who had already been on earth for at least three cycles (and, therefore, in terms of antiquity the Tashilhunpo institution was more or less on an equal footing with the Lhasa one). Thus the Vth Dalai Lama's creation, Lobzang Chökyi Gyaltsen, was really not the 1st Panchen but actually the 4th. Today, Chinese sources retain this system of numbering while those influenced by current movements for Tibetan separateness from China adhere to the other. Hugh Richardson, for example, calls the Panchen Lama who wrote to Hastings the 3rd Incarnation while many other scholars (and probably the majority until the 1950s) refer to him as the 6th. I will use the term 6th here. Apart from the fact that Schuyler Cammann, a scholar for whose judgement I have the greatest respect, considers 6th to be correct, from the point of view of the history of Tibetan relations with both Britain and China this number is convenient to avoid confusion with the extremely important Panchen Lama of the first decades of the 20th century, in British sources of the time always known as the 9th, who would now become the 6th. (See: H. Richardson, *Tibet and its History*, London 1962, pp. 54-5; L. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*, London 1894, pp. 234-5; S. Cammann, *Trade Through the Himalayas. The Early British Attempts to Open Tibet*, Princeton 1951, p. 18, G. Tucci, *The Religions of Tibet*, London 1980, p. 42; E. Ludwig, *The Visit of the Teshoo Lama to Peking. Ch'ien Lung's Inscription*, Peking 1904.)

The 6th Incarnation, Lobzang Paldan Yeshe, was born in 1737. From 1757, following the death of the VIIth Dalai Lama, the 6th Panchen for many years had no adult rival in Lhasa. By the time that Bogle encountered him in 1774-75 he had become a major figure not only in Tibetan politics but also in the wider sphere of the Manchu Empire of China; and it was while visiting the Chinese Emperor in Peking in 1780 that the Lama died. Precisely what his ambitions were is not known for certain. Bogle's account leaves us, however, in no doubt both as to the extent of his international reputation and as to his interest in all sorts of political questions. It appears that the 6th Panchen had a mother who was either of Indian origin (probably with royal Ladakhi connections) or, at least, spoke Hindustani, an ability which she passed on to her son (see Ch. VII below): this was deemed sufficiently remarkable to receive explicit mention in his Tibetan autobiography. Thus it was that the 6th Panchen was able to converse directly with

George Bogle, a fact which undoubtedly contributed to the creation of an extraordinary bond of friendship and understanding between the two men. (For a version of the official Tibetan biography of the 6th Panchen Lama, see: Sarat Chandra Das, ed. Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *Tibetan Studies*, Calcutta 1984.)

## 8

### Minute by Warren Hastings, May 9, 1774

The President acquaints the Board that, since he laid before them the letter from the Tashi Lama of Tibet, he has written an answer to it, and, among other things, has proposed a general treaty of amity and commerce between the two states of Bengal and Bhutan [in this context presumably Tibet is understood]. He begs leave to observe that such a treaty has ever been a favourite object with our Honourable Masters, and that they have repeatedly recommended the establishment of an intercourse with that country. The present juncture appeared to him the most favourable which has yet occurred for pursuing these views.

The letter from the Lama invites us to friendship, and the late final arrangement of the disputes on the frontier renders the country accessible without danger either to the persons or effects of travellers. Therefore, no sooner was the treaty for the affairs of Cooch Behar signed and ratified than he thought seriously of carrying this project into execution; and conceiving it to be most proper that a European, and servant of the Company, should be entrusted with the negotiation in preference to any native, he wrote immediately for the necessary passports for such a person, which he informs the Board he has now obtained. The person he has made choice of for this trust is Mr. George Bogle, a servant of the Company, well known to this Board for his intelligence, assiduity and exactness in affairs; and the President further expects to draw much advantage in the conduct of the business from the coolness and moderation of temper which he seems to possess in an eminent degree. He proposes that Mr. Bogle should set out without loss of time, and will charge himself with furnishing him proper instructions and despatches. He hopes the Board will approve of his choice, and as Mr. Bogle undertakes this difficult and hazardous commission without any immediate prospect of advantage, and with great uncertainty as to its success, he would recommend to the Board that he be continued in possession of the appointments which he now holds at the Presidency, and permitted to act by deputy till his return, or till it shall be thought proper to dispose of him another way. The President further acquaints the Board that he has nominated Mr. Alexander Hamilton,

Assistant Surgeon on the establishment, to accompany Mr. Bogle on this expedition [for more on Hamilton's life and background, see Ch. XIV below].

The President has only further to observe that he is far from being sanguine in his hopes of success, but the present occasion appears too favourable for the attempt to be neglected. He also can assure the Board that the information which he has been able to procure of the people, the country, and government of Tibet, gives considerable encouragement to it. They are represented as a simple, well-disposed people, numerous and industrious, living under a well-regulated government, having considerable intercourse with other nations, particularly with the Chinese and northern Tatars, and possessing at home the principal means of commerce, gold and silver in great abundance. For the more particular satisfaction of the Board he subjoins to this minute the substance of this information, which, being on record, will also exhibit to our Honourable Masters the grounds of the present undertaking, whatever may be its success, and enable them to judge how far it may be advisable to prosecute it on any future occasion.

He also annexes to this an account of such goods as he has ordered Mr. Bogle to provide for presents to the Lama, or as samples of the commodities which this country is capable of supplying, and he moves that the Board should order the amount to be paid out of the treasury.

## A

### An Account of Tibet

**Note.** Much of the account of Tibet which follows is clearly based on the sometimes garbled information gleaned from Purangir Gosain and Padma, the Tashi Lama's messenger. The original version of the substance of Padma's and Purangir Gosain's information was written in Persian, and a summary of it appears in *Calendar of Persian Correspondence, being letters which passed between some of the Company's servants and Indian rulers and notables*, Imperial Record Department, Vol. IV, 1772-5, Calcutta 1925, No. 953, dated 8 April 1774. It is of interest as a contrast to the kind of data that would be available once Bogle's reports began to come in. From internal evidence there is a strong suggestion that some at least of this information was derived from Kashmiri sources: there were several important Kashmiri merchants and bankers in Bengal.

Tashi Lama traces his origin from Tang-la who was a person of great reputation, and commanded the garrison of Tisseyjee. Ankesu [Wang Cusho], was formerly Rajah of Bhutan [by which, at this date, Hastings still

means Tibet] and Hemanu Kesu [Miwang Cusho or Po-lha-nas] was his father. Dalai and Tashi were both Fakirs, and ruled over part of the country. Upon some outrages being committed on their authority by Ankesu, they applied to the Chief of the Kalmuks [Dzungar Mongols], from whose race they sprung, for assistance; which the Kalmuks accordingly granted them, and Ankesu was soon after slain [in 1750].<sup>6</sup> From that time they have ruled over the whole of Bhutan [Tibet]. They live in a state of celibacy, and believe that if one of them dies, his soul immediately transmigrates into the body of some new-born child, who succeeds him in Government. As Dalai is now a minor, Tashi has the charge of the Government and Administration, but not meddling himself with the worldly affairs, he deposes Tela Rachumboo [Rimpoché] to transact them on his behalf, for which purpose Tela has an army of 30,000 men under his command, consisting of cavalry and infantry. The dress of the Tashi Lama is this, upon his head he wears a cap of purple colour; over his loins a kind of petticoat, which reaches his feet and is tied with a girdle round his middle; over his shoulders is thrown a short jacket of silk which reaches down to his middle and leaves both arms bare.

The religion of the Bhutanese [Tibetans] is something similar to that of the Hindus. They worship Bou'anny, Narrain and Byroo [Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva], and hold the priests of their own sect in great veneration. The food of the Grand Lama is the flesh of goats, sheep, jaghry [coarse sugar], vegetables and fruits. He never touches hog's or cow's flesh, but the common people frequently eat both. Sangeah Chumdunda was the founder of their laws. If a person oppresses or commits an act of injustice upon another, and flies for protection to the Grand Lama, he is absolved from all punishment and is out of reach of the law: but should he be apprehended in the way and carried before the magistrate, he must then suffer agreeably to the written laws of Sangeah Chumdunda. Their country on the North side extends as far as the country of the Kalmuks. On the South side it is limited by Buxaduar, on the East by China; and on the West by the country of Kashmir. In this large tract of country there are only three Rajahs of any consideration. The first in the Hindostani language is called Deb Rajah, whose territories lie towards Buxaduar [in Bhutan]. The second is called Gyalloo [Gyalpo] whose place of residence is at Ladakh adjoining Kashmir. The third is called Durkee Gyalloo [Derge

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6. An apparent confusion between the events of 1717 and those of 1747-50. The history of the establishment of a Chinese protectorate over Tibet in the 18th century is discussed in detail in the second volume of this book.

Gyalpo, ruler of one of the major states in Eastern Tibet] whose territories border on China. Besides these there are other petty Zemindars [petty rulers paying revenue or tribute direct to some major Power] whose names the messenger who is now in Calcutta does not recollect. The revenues of the country are not collected in specie but in kind, half the produce of the earth being reserved for the use of the cultivators and the other half appropriated for the use of Government. The Tatars have but little communication with Bhutan [Tibet]. The Russians frequently come thither upon religious pilgrimage. The Grand Lama resides at Potala near the capital Lhasa and is at present at variance with the other states. About 10 years ago the Afghans set disturbances on foot and took possession of Ladakh but upon complaint being made thereof to the Lama, he sent his army thither, repulsed the Afghans and retook possession of the country [a consequence of the conquest of the Vale of Kashmir by the Durrani Afghans in 1752]. From that time to this he has been engaged in hostilities with no one. The arms of the Bhutanese [Tibetans] are match-locks, long knives like scimitars and bow and arrows. The sowars or horsemen also wear armour. The Kashmiri merchants have established a factory amongst them. The articles of trade which they carry thither for sale, consist of shawls and other manufactures as well as saffron, cloves, nutmegs, and other spices; and their returns are made in gold, silver, copper, tutenage [spelter or zinc ore], lead, and coarse woollen manufactures. The Chinese merchants also carry on a trade with Bhutan [Tibet] at which place they have factories established and supply the inhabitants with chinaware, tea, silk manufactures, embroideries, looking glasses, handkerchiefs and other articles; and in return purchase from them their coarse woollen manufactures, oranges, citrons, skins and gold and silver ore. The inhabitants of Nepal likewise export to Bhutan [Tibet] broadcloth, white cloth, pearl and coral, and purchase from them tangun [native ponies of Bhutan and Tibet] horses, cow-tails, gold and silver ore and tincall [borax]. The road from Kashmir to Bhutan [Tibet] lies through Ladakh, a country inhabited mostly with shepherds from whom plenty of milk, curds and ghee is to be got but very little grain.

The hills in some places are small and easy in their ascent; so that the Kashmiri merchants transport their merchandise over them with little or no difficulty upon the backs of horses, mules and oxen; but at other places they are steep and difficult to climb up. The road by which the Chinese merchants have intercourse with Bhutan [Tibet] lies through Mientuk Enkar [Mintuk Hankar in *Persian Correspondence*]. It is two months journey, seven days of which you pass through barren uncultivated

country infested with robbers so that it is impracticable to travel that way excepting in large companies. The rest of the road is even, well inhabited and has convenient serais [inns] at proper distances so that provisions may be procured in plenty. From Nepal to Bhutan [Tibet] it is eight days journey and two of these you pass over the mountains from two of three cos [in Bengal a cos, or kos, was usually reckoned to equal about two English miles] to even 6 cos high which are inaccessible for oxen, mules and camels; but provisions and water are in abundance the whole way. The road from Bengal lies through Buxaduar, but merchandise cannot be transported this way upon the backs of camels or horses or by any means than by people hired for that purpose. There is a road through Morung [and then Sikkim] which is something better than that of Buxaduar, but further about, and at the same time not passable for horses and camels: so that, in fact, the Buxaduar road is the most preferable. There is no passage by water. Gold and silver are the mediums of commerce in that country as well as in this, and their coins are in the same proportion as one anna, two annas, four annas, and eight annas. A single anna piece they call Ulwa Kagauk, a double anna piece Hermangah, an eight anna piece which they coin, of the weight of six Masha, is called Chukea. They coin no rupees of 12 Masha,<sup>7</sup> as in this country. The Rupees<sup>8</sup> of Murshidabad and Patna are current there in buying and selling but no other without a deduction from their value. They also frequently barter one commodity for another. No duties are exacted from the Chinese or Kashmiri merchants; but the Nepalese merchants pay 8 annas a man upon going and coming. The produce of the hills in Bhutan [Tibet] is wheat, barley, peas, proper mushoor [? a kind of vetch], mustard seed and toorey which last article yields an oil; and the valleys abound with every kind of grain which is produced in this country. Gold and silver are produced from the mine and not found in rivers. At the distance of about 15 days journey to the north from the place where Tashi Lama resides there is a gold mine; and at a distance of 20 days journey in the same direction there is a guard stationed in behalf of the Grand Lama. At a place called Lachee Chong, about six

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7. The masha, a unit of weight generally used by goldsmiths, varied throughout India. See: H.H. Wilson, *A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms, Useful Words Occurring in Official Documents Relating to the Administration of the Government of British India, from the Arabic, Persian, Hindustani, Sanskrit, Bengali, Uriya, Marathi, Guzarathi, Telegu, Karnata, Tamil, Malayalam, and other languages*, London 1855, p. 333.

8. For the various values of the rupee in different parts of India, see: Wilson, *loc. cit.*, p. 447.

days journey to the eastward of Tashi Lama's seat there is a mine of copper and vermilion; and in a hill called Bhosak, situated at a distance of 3 days journey to the westward there is a mine of lead; and at Sank Bory about four days journey to the northward from the same place there is a mine of tutenage [zinc ore]. The arts there are very well known. There are carpenters, smiths, masons and weavers etc., all well skilled in their professions. Their buildings are the same as in this country, but made of stone and much lower. Their women are not concealed and are allowed to marry at 12 years of age, the marriage contract being made by the parents of the parties. Festivity and rejoicing are usual upon these occasions, the same as in this country. The better kind of people burn their dead and are even at great expense in perfuming the funeral pile with sandal-wood and frankincense; but the poorer sort expose the dead carcasses of their relations upon the hills to be devoured by wild beasts.

### B

#### **Invoice of sundry articles [to be] sent to the Rajah of the Bhot [Tibet] Country [along with Bogle]:**

1 string pearls,  
 3 ditto coral,  
 1 snuff box,  
 1 pair pistols,  
 1 spying glass,  
 various cloths,  
 spices,  
 various mathematical instruments including barometer, thermometer, and hydrometer,  
 3 thermometers,  
 4 compasses,  
 a quadrant,  
 a microscope,  
 a small telescope,  
 2 spying glasses,  
 3 prisms,  
 an electrifying machine,  
 4 small mirrors,  
 a small table clock,  
 a watch,

samples of cloth, cutlery,  
4 fowling pieces,  
1 pair pistols.

Total value, Rs. 1792.1.0.

## 9

### **The Board approves the President's proposal and choice of person to be sent on this Embassy**

Agreed that Mr. Bogle continue to retain the offices which he now holds at the Presidency and be permitted to act in them by Deputy.

Ordered that the amount of the above invoice be paid from the Treasury.

## 10

### **Appointment of Mr. Bogle, Fort William, 13th May, 1774**

Sir,

Having appointed you my deputy to Tashi Lama, the sovereign of Bhutan [Tibet], I desire you will proceed to Lhasa, his capital, and deliver to him the letter and presents which I have given you in charge.<sup>9</sup>

The design of your mission is to open a mutual and equal communication of trade between the inhabitants of Bhutan [Tibet] and Bengal, and you will be guided by your own judgment in using such means of negotiation as may be most likely to effect this purpose.

You will take with you samples for a trial of such articles of commerce as may be sent from this country according to the accompanying list, marking as accurately as possible the charge of transporting them.

You will inquire what other commodities may be successfully employed in that trade. And you will diligently inform yourself of the manufactures, productions, goods, introduced by the intercourse with other countries, which are to be procured in Bhutan [Tibet], especially such as are of great value and easy transportation, such as gold, silver, precious stones, musk, rhubarb, munjit [madder, a red dye], etc.,

The following will be also proper objects of your inquiry: the nature of the road between the borders of Bengal and Lhasa, and of the countries

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9. Hastings' ignorance of both the status and situation of the Panchen (Tashi) Lama at this stage is interesting.



lying between; the communications between Lhasa and the neighbouring countries, their government, revenue, and manners.

Whatever observations you may make on these or any other subjects, whether of useful knowledge or curiosity, I desire you will communicate to me from time to time, reporting the success of your negotiations.

The period of your stay must be left to your discretion. I wish you to remain a sufficient time to fulfil the purposes of your deputation, and obtain a complete knowledge of the country and the points referred to your inquiry. If you shall judge that a residence may be usefully established at Lhasa without putting the Company to any expense, but such as may be repaid by the advantages which may be hereafter derived from it, you will take the earliest opportunity to advise me of it; and if you should find it necessary to come away before you receive my orders upon it, you may leave such persons as you shall think fit to remain as your agents till a proper resident can be appointed, and you will apply to the Lama for his permission and the necessary passports for the person who may be hereafter deputed in this character.

You will draw on me for your charges, and your drafts shall be regularly answered. To these I can fix no limitation, but empower you to act according to your discretion, knowing that I need not recommend to you to observe a strict frugality and economy where the good of the service on which you are commissioned shall not require a deviation from these rules.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,  
Warren Hastings.

P.S. I have appointed Mr. Alexander Hamilton, Assistant Surgeon, to attend you on this deputation.

## 11

### **Private Commission to Mr. Bogle. Fort William, 16th May, 1774**

1. To send one or more pair of the animals called tus, which produce the shawl wool. If by a dooley [covered litter], chairs, or any other contrivance they can be secured from the fatigues and hazards of the way, the expense is to be no objection.

2. To send one or more pair of the cattle which bear what are called cow-tails [yaks].

3. To send me carefully packed some fresh ripe walnuts for seed, or an

entire plant, if it can be transported; and any other curious or valuable seeds or plants, the rhubarb and ginseng especially.

4. Any curiosities, whether natural productions, manufactures, paintings, or what else may be acceptable to persons of taste in England. Animals only that may be useful, unless any that may be remarkably curious.

5. In your inquiries concerning the people, the form of their government, and the mode of collecting their revenue, are points principally meriting your attention.

6. To keep a diary, inserting whatever passes before your observation which shall be characteristic of the people, the country, the climate, or the road, their manners, customs, buildings, cookery, &c., or interesting to the trade of this country, carrying with you a pencil and a pocket-book for the purpose of minuting short notes of every fact or remark as it occurs, and putting them in order at your leisure while they are fresh in your memory.

7. To inquire what countries lie between Lhasa and Siberia, and what communication there is between them. The same with regard to China and Kashmir.

8. To ascertain the value of their trade with Bengal by their gold and silver coins, and to send me samples of both.

9. Every nation excels others in some particular art or science. To find out this excellence of the Bhutanese [Tibetans].

Warren Hastings

P.S.

10. To inform yourself of the course and navigation of the Brahmaputra, and of the state of the countries through which it runs.

**Note.** Maria Imhoff, who was shortly to marry Warren Hastings, also hoped, as a private commission, that Bogle would get hold of some Tibetan fox skins which she could use to edge a cape. See: Keith Feiling, *Warren Hastings*, London 1954, p.209.

## 12

### A note on *tus* and the Kashmir shawl

Hastings' reference to *tus* (item 1 in his Private Commission to Bogle, reproduced in No. 11 above) is interesting. The word *tus* (*tush*, *toosh*, etc.), which Hastings used to refer to a specific kind of wool-bearing animal, is today applied, as *shah tush* (royal wool), to a certain variety of exceptionally fine cloth which has

over the centuries, given rise to much legend and little hard fact.<sup>10</sup>

The origins of the Kashmir shawl industry, the manufacture of very high quality woollen textiles generally decorated either by a twill-tapestry technique or by embroidery, probably dates to the late 15th century. The shawls (the word is of Persian origin and simply refers to a class of fabric) were originally predominantly masculine garments, used as girdles and turbans as well as the more usual shoulder covers. By the beginning of the Moghul period in the early 16th century Kashmir shawls had become much sought after garments among the wealthier classes in India; and in the latter part of the 18th century these textiles had become widely known in Europe where officials of the various East India Companies brought them back as suitable presents (an English example of this phenomenon is recorded in 1767). By the very end of the century, largely through French influence, Kashmir shawls were absorbed into the European woman's fashion repertoire. Early in the 19th century shawls of the Kashmir type were actually being produced on a significant scale in Europe (for example at Paisley in Scotland and in France - and there is a record of experiments in such imitation being carried out in Edinburgh as early as 1777); and considerable effort was then devoted to the acquisition in India of Kashmiri designs and information about the techniques of shawl production, not least by the English traveller William Moorcroft [relating to the first decades of the 19th century. See: W. Moorcroft & G. Trebeck, ed. H.H. Wilson, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Panjab from 1819 to 1825*, 2 vols., London 1841, Vol. II, Ch. III.]

On the eve of the Bogle mission to Tibet the bulk of the export trade in Kashmir shawls (and imitations from elsewhere in India) was in the hands of Persian (or Armenian) merchants, much of it intended for the Ottoman Turkish market by way of Smyrna (Izmir) and Alexandria. There was also an important trade to Russia, and thence potentially to the rest of Europe, by way of Bokhara and Moscow. It is not surprising that someone as enterprising and well informed as Warren Hastings should be interested in penetrating this commerce on behalf of the East India Company by acquiring access to the wool raw material through the acquisition of the animals which yielded it and their breeding on Company territory.

One of the earliest detailed European accounts of the Kashmir shawl industry

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10. On the Kashmir shawl generally, see: John Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, London 1973; F. Ames, *The Kashmir Shawl*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1986; N. Askari, Liz Arthur & V. Reilly, *Uncut Cloth. Saris, Shawls and Sashes*, London 1999. See also: F. Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, trans. A. Constable, 2nd ed. revised V.A. Smith, London 1916; George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England through the Northern Part of India, Kashmere, Afghanistan, and Persia, and into Russia, by the Caspian-Sea*, 2 vols., London 1798 (reprinted New Delhi 1997).

is that of the French doctor François Bernier who visited the Valley of Kashmir in 1665. Bernier noted that there were two basic categories of Kashmiri shawl. One used "the wool of the country, finer and more delicate than that of Spain"; and the other was made from "the wool, or rather hair (called *touz*) found on the breast of a species of wild goat which inhabits Great Tibet" (that is to say Tibet proper rather than Ladakh or Baltistan, the latter often referred to as Little Tibet). The *touz* (Hastings' tus) shawls were much more valuable than the other kind, selling for as much as Rs. 150 each as opposed to Rs. 50. In other words, the *touz* cloth was a very costly textile indeed. Bernier noted that attempts were then being made to reproduce Kashmir shawls in India at Patna, Agra and Lahore; but that these copies "notwithstanding every possible care ... never have the delicate texture and softness" of the genuine Kashmiri article.<sup>11</sup>

Warren Hastings most probably was aware of Bernier's account, of which the French version was published in Paris in 1670-71 and an English translation in London in 1671-72. The first visit to the Valley of Kashmir by someone directly connected with the English East India Company, however, was not until 1783 when George Foster was able to make a first hand observation of the Kashmir

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11. Bernier's account of the Kashmir shawl industry, written in 1665, deserves to be quoted in full:

what may be considered peculiar to Kachemire, and the staple commodity, that which particularly promotes the trade of the country and fills it with wealth, is the prodigious quantity of shawls which they manufacture, and which gives occupation even to little children. These shawls are about an ell and a half long, and an ell broad, ornamented at both ends with a sort of embroidery, made in the loom, a foot in width. The Mogols and Indians, women as well as men, wear them in winter round their heads, passing them over the left shoulder as a mantle. There are two sorts manufactured: one kind with the wool of the country, finer and more delicate than that of Spain; the other kind with the wool, or rather hair (called *touz*) found on the breast of a species of wild goat which inhabits Great Tibet. The *touz* shawls are much more esteemed than those made with the native wool. I have seen some, made purposely, for the Omrahs [grandees], which cost one hundred and fifty roupies; but I cannot learn that others have ever sold for more than fifty. They are very apt, however, to be worm-eaten, unless frequently unfolded and aired. The fur of the beaver is not so soft and fine as the hair from these goats. Great pains have been taken to manufacture similar shawls in Patna, Agra and Lahor; but notwithstanding every possible care, they never have the delicate texture and softness of the Kachemire shawls, whose unrivalled excellence may be owing to certain properties of the water of that country.

shawl industry; and his narrative was not published until 1798.<sup>12</sup> Foster noted that formerly, that is to say in Bernier's day, there were some 40,000 looms in operation in the Valley of Kashmir, a number which by the late 18th century had shrunk to less than 16,000.<sup>13</sup>

In Bernier's time, as later on, that the vast bulk of the wool used in the Kashmir shawl industry did not originate in Kashmir itself but came from somewhere in the general region of the highlands of the Tibetan plateau. Details about the nature and origins of this raw material were mysterious in the 17th century and to some degree have remained so until modern times. Of particular interest in this context is the question of *tus*, if by this we understand what John Irwin calls *asli tus*.

Bernier's account makes it clear that there were two qualities of Kashmir shawl. Other sources indicate that as early as the 16th century there was a very superior quality shawl made from some strange, even improbable, substance, hair of the ibex rubbed off onto Himalayan rocks, selected eagle feathers and the like. This cloth was so fine that a full shawl could be passed through a finger ring. In recent years such a cloth has acquired a considerable popularity among the rich in Europe and America. Known as *shah tush* (the king of *tus*) and, sometimes and mis-

12. Forster's comments also deserve quotation. He noted in 1783 that:  
 the wealth and fame of Kashmire have largely arisen from the manufacture of shauls, which it holds unrivalled, and almost without participation. The wool of the shaul is not produced in the country, but brought from districts of Thibet, lying at the distance of a month's journey to the north-east. It is originally of dark grey colour, and is bleached in Kashmire by the help of a certain preparation of rice flour. The yarn of this wool is stained with such colours as may be judged the best suited for sale, and after being woven the piece is once washed. The border, which usually displays a variety of figures and colours is attached to the shauls, after fabrication; but in so nice a manner, that the junction is not discernable. ... The price, at the loom, of an ordinary shaul, is eight rupees, thence in proportional quality, it produces from fifteen to twenty; and I have seen a very fine piece sold at forty rupees the first cost. But the value of this commodity may be largely enhanced by the introduction of flowered work; and when you are informed that the sum of one hundred rupees is occasionally given for a shaul to the weaver, the half amount may be fairly ascribed to the ornaments. (Forster, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 18-19.)

13. By the 1830s the number of looms had further shrunk to between 9,000 and 6,000 according to V. Jacquemont and C.M. Wade. See: Jean-Marie Lafont, *Indika. Essays in Indo-French Relations 1630-1976*, New Delhi 2000, Ch. 11, "The Commerce of Punjab and Kashmir in 1832: C.M. Wade's Report to the East India Company".

leadingly, *pashmina* (which refers merely to the wool in the better class of ordinary Kashmir shawls), shawls of this kind, sometimes dyed but otherwise plain, fetch extremely high prices. Was it this category of textile to which Hastings was referring in his private commission to Bogle?

Of late (1999) it has been argued that *shah tush* is obtained from the Tibetan antelope, *cherou*, an animal which inhabits the territory adjacent to the extreme north-east of Tibet and, because it has to be killed to yield its precious wool, is on the verge of extinction. The sale of this textile has, accordingly, been banned under international protection of endangered species legislation. It is not entirely clear where the modern *shah tush* is woven (some certainly comes from India); but there is evidence that some at least of the raw material passes through Nepal and that the manufacture of this valuable commodity has by no means ceased.

While Bogle did manage to obtain some specimens of animals bearing shawl wool, they did not lead to the breeding of such creatures in East India Company territory; and subsequent attempts in the late 18th and early 19th centuries were no more successful.

## 13

### Memorandum on Tibet by Warren Hastings, accompanying the Instructions to Mr. Bogle

**Note.** This represented the state of Warren Hastings' information before he had received any first-hand accounts from Bogle. It was based in part on published accounts mainly derived from Catholic missionaries in China, and, no doubt, in some part on the reports of the Capuchin Mission which had been obliged to leave Lhasa in 1745 and, after a number of years in Nepal, had by 1774 established its headquarters in Chandernagore, the French settlement a few miles upstream of Calcutta. As we have already noted, Hastings probably also had access to information from Kashmiri merchants and bankers.

Tibet is a cold, high, mountainous country. The inhabitants approach more in figure to the Persians and other inhabitants of Western Asia, than to any of their neighbours, Chinese, Hindus, or Tatars.

It should seem that Tibet consisted of a great variety of tribes more or less addicted to the pastoral life. At times they appear to have united into powerful confederacies, and become formidable to their neighbours. At other times, when divided, they fell a prey to irruptions of Tatars, or to the policy and power of the Chinese. The Caucasus formed a barrier on the south that protected reciprocally both Hindustan and Tibet from any dangerous hostilities in that quarter.

In the fourth century, the Tatar confederacy of the Typa subdued the north and east of Tibet. In the eighth and ninth centuries, when the Tatar confederacy of the Turks became feeble, the power of those nations, which now acknowledge the supremacy of Dalai Lama, was very great. Sometimes they penetrated into the heart of China, but at other times the Chinese took advantage of their divisions to recover what had been lost.

In 1102, the chief of Great Tibet seems to have resided at Lhasa. He at that period found it necessary to become Lama, in order to strengthen his authority over the different tribes that had raised him to be their leader, and for the same reason, it is said, that he submitted to become a vassal of the Chinese empire in 1125.

In the thirteenth century, the Tatar confederacy of the Moghuls [Mongols] under Mangu Khan [Mongke, 1251-1259] overran Tibet, and soon after Kublai Khan [1260-1294], who was Emperor of China as well as chief of the Moghuls, divided it into provinces, and gave the title of King to the Lama of Lhasa. The Moghul princes being expelled from China, the Emperor Yonglo [1403-1424], of the dynasty of Ming, which succeeded them, gave the title of King, in 1373, to eight more Lamas in Tibet. In 1426, these took the title of Grand Lamas; and then, or some time afterwards, the Lama of Lhasa took the distinguishing title of Dalai Lama. At least, we find the Chinese Emperor Kang-hi [1662-1722] appointing, in 1705, a Dalai Lama, who is said to be the sixth in succession who had borne that title.

It was in the middle of the fifteenth century that Dalai Lama of Bhutan, or Greater Tibet, first named a Typa Lama for the administration of civil affairs. The late intercourse opened between the Presidency of Bengal and Bhutan shows that the office of Typa remains and actually engrosses the authority of the state. It is not likely that Dalai Lama retains the power of nominating to this office.

Although the Chinese historians ascribe to their emperors the power of nominating Dalai Lama, it does not follow that this nomination is more than a bare acknowledgment or confirmation of his appointment by the Lamas or Tibetan tribes. It may likewise not be improbable that the Typa Lama is chosen by the priests. It is, at least, generally said that the chiefs of the Tibetan tribes that acknowledge a sort of supremacy in Dalai Lama are all elected by the priests, or lamas, the nobility at the same time having some influence in the transaction.

A curious enough precaution against hereditary succession in the chiefship is ascribed to these tribes. No sooner, it is said, is a new chief chosen, than his wife and children are for ever separated from him. I have

never heard what is done with *them*, nor whether the chief is, after his elevation, debarred the use of women. If the institution is true, it seems to indicate a very high advance in political establishments. Rude men have no apprehension of losing their independence; people only become jealous of their liberty when they grow doubtful of their resolution to retain it.

The religion and hierarchy established in Tibet is, however, a matter of much greater curiosity. We are told that Dalai Lama is held to be an incarnation of the legislator prophet, or god Buddha or Fo, who over all Hindustan gives his name (like Thanth or Mercury, the prophet legislator and god of the Egyptians) to the planet Mercury, and to the fourth day of the week. When Dalai Lama dies, a child is said to be pitched on as possessing certain marks which show that the soul of the deceased has been transmigrated into him; and the divinity and identity of the new manifestation of the god is of course acknowledged.

Among the different Tatar tribes which are of this religion, there are persons called Ku-tchuck-tus [Hutukhtus], who are likewise esteemed living Fos [Buddhas]. It is, however, said that though each tribe pays a particular respect to its own Ku-tchuck-tu, the divinity of those of other tribes is not the less acknowledged, and it is even pretended that the Ku-tchuck-tus admit a superiority in Dalai Lama, so that his excrements are sold as charms at a great price among all the Tatar tribes of this religion. I have already mentioned that no less than eight Lamas in Tibet, besides the Lama of Lhasa, have the title of King, and are called Grand Lamas. But I do not know whether these, too, are esteemed incarnations of the divinity, or what subjection, if any, they pay to Dalai Lama.

Any information with regard to the antiquity and to the creed of this religion, as well as to the authority, civil and ecclesiastical, of the Lamas, could not fail to be extremely interesting.

It would also be desirable to have any facts relative to the state of Tibet with respect to China and Tatar. I have been told that a large river forms a boundary between China and Tibet, which was carefully guarded by the troops of both countries; and that Tibet received European commodities by the valley of Kashmir. But I have learned nothing satisfactory on these subjects, not so much as whether Kashmir and Lesser Tibet are at present dependent on Bhutan or Greater Tibet, or whether Dalai Lama is still a vassal to China.

It is said that in Tibet it is very common for one lady to have several husbands. I should wish much to know if this practice obtains in all the ranks of society, and whether those husbands who all have intercourse with one woman have not likewise other women that are their wives, with whom



likewise they hold an intercourse in common. We have instances in other countries where, though each man in a family had a wife that was properly his own, all the men in the family had likewise an intercourse with all the women in it. Perhaps this may be the case also in Tibet; and if we knew anything of the laws of succession in Tibet, or to whom the children of a wife with several husbands were understood to belong, one might be able to discover how the fact stood, though we had no direct information with regard to it.

The history, government, and religion of Tibet are no doubt more interesting objects of inquiry than its climate or topographical and physical characters; yet these, too, are highly curious. The great rivers of the south and east of Asia appear to issue from its mountains. It is probably, therefore, the highest land in the old continent, and this circumstance, together with the difficulty of access to it, give it a striking analogy to the valley of Quito, in South America, which is the highest land in the new continent, and whose climate and situation M. de la Condamine has exhibited in so interesting a point of view<sup>14</sup>. Though Lhasa is situated in a more southern latitude than Alexandria, in Egypt, we are told that people sent by Colonel Cumming [see Note below at the end of this section] had to travel to it through snow so late as the month of April. Any observations made in such a country by a thermometer would, therefore, be valuable.

I have preferred stating what I know of the subject to putting mere interrogatories. By this means I flatter myself it will be better perceived what information I want, and what information is desirable.

#### Notes.

1. Colonel (Sir John after 1780) Cumming was in command of the East India Company troops in the service of the Nawab of Oudh (Awadh), a post which he had held since 1771. He died at St. Helena in 1786 on his way back to England. This reference to his contact with Tibet is intriguing. Perhaps it relates to one of the missions headed by the monk Lobsang Tsering which the Tashi Lama sent to Bodhgaya and Benares in 1771-72 and 1773-74. Did Colonel Cumming manage to send some agent back to Tashilhunpo with one of these missions? As the Tashi Lama was to reveal in conversation with Bogle, Lobsang Tsering probably met Colonel Cumming, and certainly came sufficiently close to him to observe his style of dress as well as to discover his name. See Chapter X below, n.15.

2. Lobsang Tsering travelled in the company of a Gosain variously referred to as Suk-Debu (see Chapter X below), Sukhdeogiri (see Chapter XIII below, No. 9), Sukhadevagari, or Su-ka-debo-ge-ri, who brought back to Tibet as a present for

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14. C.M. de la Condamine, who headed a French commission despatched to Quito (today in Ecuador) in 1735-42 as part of a project to obtain exact measurements of the Earth's shape and size.

the Tashi Lama a pair of European spectacles. These two men either reinforced or initiated contacts between Benares, under Chait Singh (then still nominally subordinate to Oudh), and Tashilhunpo (where Bogle was to encounter representatives from Chait Singh). See: L. Petch, "The Missions of Bogle and Turner according to the Tibetan Texts", *T'oung Pao*, XXXIX 1950.

## 14

**The East India Company's Advices from Bengal  
received by the ship *British King* the 24th June 1775:  
extract from a letter from the President and Council  
in their Secret Department, dated the 17th October 1774**

We advised you in our letter by the *Resolution* of the conclusion of the Cooch Behar business by the Treaty of Peace agreed between us and the Deb Rajah [of Bhutan]. This Treaty has since been ratified on both sides and we are left in the quiet possession of that part of the country to which they agreed to cede their pretensions.

Soon after this the President received a letter from Tashi Lama, who is the guardian and minister of Dalai Lama or the sovereign and high priest of all Tibet. The letter itself is a curiosity of no common sort and is replete with sentiments that do credit to both his ecclesiastical and political character. The President on receipt of this thought it a fit opportunity of attempting to open an intercourse between these countries and Bengal which you have often recommended to our attention and which we think may be of considerable advantage in a national view.

In pursuance of these ideas the President laid before us such lights as he has been able to acquire into the state of that country from the report of the persons who brought this letter from Tashi Lama and others who had penetrated in the way of trade into that country and proposed that a Company's servant should be sent with a letter in answer to Tashi Lama and with particular instructions to inform himself of the nature and state of the country and the advantages which a communication and a free trade with these people offer to the Company or to the nation and also to make overtures for establishing such a communication with them.

He further recommended for this arduous and important charge Mr. George Bogle, one of your servants whose merits and abilities we have already had occasion to notice to you and who by his patience and exactitude and intelligence seemed particularly fitted for it. We assented entirely to the President's propositions and Mr. Bogle was accordingly dispatched in June last to Tashi Lama with a letter and suitable presents

for him and was also provided with various samples of goods to ascertain what are the most probable to become the objects of that commerce and we allowed Mr. Hamilton, Assistant Surgeon, to accompany him in the expedition. The great length of the journey and the natural difficulties which Mr. Bogle has to encounter from the severity of the climate and the rudeness of the country through which he is to pass will necessarily make it a considerable time before we receive any accounts of the success of his mission, but we have the greatest reason to believe that he will meet no obstruction from the people nor incur any personal danger from them. The President tells us that he has received accounts of him from some of the stages of his journey, but nothing which he deems consequential or conclusive enough yet to lay before the Board.

## CHAPTER III

### From Cooch Behar to Tashichodzung May to August 1774

#### 1

#### The Journey to Tashichodzung

**Note.** This section consists of portions of Bogle's journals interspersed with extracts from letters to his sisters. This was a device adopted by Markham; and it has been continued here. The journals were often written in little more than note form: Markham, in many such cases, added verbs and created proper sentence structures. Markham's approach has also been adopted here.

Both Bogle and Samuel Turner, who was sent by Warren Hastings on a similar mission to Tibet in 1783, called this place, the residence of the Deb Rajah of Bhutan, Tassissudon, a perfectly reasonable way of writing Tashichodzung, the spelling adopted here. The great palace-fortress of Tashichodzung was built where now, at Thimphu, is situated the seat of modern Bhutanese government. Very little of the building seen by Bogle in 1774 and 1775, and by Samuel Turner in 1783, survives today. For illustrations of this structure, produced by Samuel Davis, Turner's companion to Bhutan, see: S. Turner, *An Account of an Embassy to the Court of the Teshoo Lama of Tibet, containing a Narrative of a Journey through Bootan and Part of Tibet*, London 1800, Pl. VI; M. Aris, *Views of Medieval Bhutan. The Diary and Drawings of Samuel Davis 1783*, London and Washington, D.C., 1982, pp.83-87. The palace-fortress was originally built in 1642 on the orders of the Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the unifier of Bhutan. It was destroyed by fire (common in such structures with so much timber) in 1772 and rapidly rebuilt. When Bogle and Hamilton visited it in 1774-75 it was virtually brand new. It was much damaged both by fire and by earthquake in the 19th century. The bulk of the building which J.C. White saw in 1905 had only been reconstructed in 1902. See: J.C. White, *Sikkim and Bhutan*, London 1909, p. 135.

The Governor [Warren Hastings] having occasion to send a person with some despatches to the Lama of Tibet, thought proper to pitch upon me, and I readily accepted of the commission. I was glad of the opportunity which this journey through a country hitherto unfrequented by Europeans would give me of showing my zeal for the Governor's service, at the same time that it gratified a fondness I always had for travelling, and would afford me some respite from that close and sedentary business in which I had for some years been engaged. I was to be continued in my offices at the Presidency, and allowed to act by deputy during my absence; and Mr. Hastings was also pleased to assure me that whatever might be the issue of this commission, I might depend on the continuance of his favour.

I was detained in Calcutta till the middle of May, 1774, when I set out with Mr. Hamilton, the surgeon, who was appointed to attend me. It was then the hottest season of the year; the thermometer was often above the degree of blood heat, and the sun being almost vertical, it was necessary to travel chiefly during the night time. I passed through Murshidabad [the old capital of Bengal] and the provinces of Dinajpur and Rangpur, and reached [Cooch] Behar, the north-east boundary of Bengal, on the last of May. As the rains were ready to set in, I stayed there only a few days; and having made the necessary preparations, I hastened to proceed on the journey.

The country about Cooch Behar is low. Two cos [a measure of distance which, in Bengal, was generally understood to be the equivalent of two English miles] beyond Cooch Behar we entered a thicket formed of reeds, brushwood, and long grass closely interwoven, with frogs, watery insects, and dank air: one could hardly breathe. This continued five cos; towards the end there were sal<sup>1</sup> and large forest trees. Two miles farther on we crossed the river which separates the Cooch Behar country from that of the Deb Rajah, in sal [wood] canoes fastened together. I was now arrived at the foot of that chain of hills which stretches along the northern frontier of Bengal and separates it from Tibet. In old maps, I believe, they are called the Nagracut [Nagorkote], in late ones the Tibet or Bod-la mountains. As none of the Company's servants, and I might almost say no European,<sup>2</sup> had ever visited the country which I was about to enter, I was

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1. Saul-wood, a hardwood much valued for building. It was of great interest to the Company at this time as a possible alternative to teak for ship-building.

2. Perhaps Bogle was ignorant of the journey through Bhutan of the Jesuits Cabral and Cacella in 1627, who entered Tibet by much the same route as did Bogle and Hamilton (see, for example: H. Didier, ed., and trans., *Les Portugais*

equally in the dark as to the road, the climate, or the people; and the imperfect account of some religious mendicants, who had travelled through it, however unsatisfactory, was the only information I could collect. We passed the forts of Bowaniganj, and Chichakotta, lately destroyed [in the recent war between the East India Company and the Bhutanese], and arrived at some new houses, in one of which we were accommodated.

The house was thatched, the floor of lath of bamboo, and raised four feet from the ground; the walls of reeds, tied together with slips of bamboo; and the stair a stump of a tree, with notches cut in it. It had much the look of a bird cage, and the space below being turned into a hog sty contributed little to its pleasantness. There was not a bit of iron or rope about it. The houses for the three next stages were in the same style. The head man of the village and some of the neighbours got tipsy with a bottle of rum. A female peddler sojourned with him: she had good features and shape, fine teeth, and Rubens' wife's eyes; and her whole dress was one blanket wrapped round her, and fastened over the shoulders with a silver skewer. She drank rum too. Men, women, and children sleep higgledy-piggledy together. The country at the foot of the hills, subject to the Deb Rajah, is in general inhabited by a people who, although they associate and intermix with the natives of Bhutan, are plainly of a different race, and resemble the Bengalis in colour, in shape, and features.

Set out early [from Chichakotta]. The chain of mountains which stretches along the northern frontier of Bengal, 18 miles distant, seemed over our heads. As we approached the hills there were strong marks of a

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*au Tibet. Les premières relations jésuites (1624-1635)*, Paris 1996. James Rennell, the first Surveyor-General of Bengal, had reached the borders of Bhutan, if not further, in the period 1766-68. There is no evidence in the records that either Bogle or Warren Hastings was aware of this fact despite the existence of Rennell's excellent map dated 1773. See: F.C. Hirst, *The Surveys of Bengal by J. Rennell, 1764-1777*, Calcutta 1917, 1 vol. & 3 vols. of maps, Vol. III, Map 44, dated 1773 and surveyed by Rennell, Martin and, probably, Richards. This map represents work carried out from 1766 onwards. These earlier journeys to Bhutan are discussed in greater detail in the first volume.

This country in Bengal through which Bogle passed on his way to Bhutan was also the site of a major famine which raged in 1769-73. By 1772, so Warren Hastings noted, in some areas at least perhaps as many as a third of the rural Bengali population had died. Much land, hitherto cultivated, was now abandoned. Of all this one must note that Bogle makes no mention at all. See, for example: H.P. Ghose, *The Famine of 1770*, Calcutta 1944; H. Hossain, *The Company Weavers of Bengal. The East India Company and the Organization of Textile Production in Bengal 1750-1813*, Delhi 1988.

change in the climate and face of the country, the forests crowded with sals, pines, and trees different from and more robust than those in Bengal, and rivulets clear, and running on sand, pebbles, and stones. The road became uneven; and we reached the foot of the hills at about two o'clock. We walked. The ascent was at first easy, the way through a wood with some fine groves of first-rate trees. It grew steep, a narrow path zigzag up the hill. What a road for troops! There were about four miles to climb, with many little springs to drink at. From the bottom to the summit the hills were covered with wood, varieties of well-grown trees of the largest size. There were some grand natural amphitheatres, with the noise of waterfalls. We arrived at Buxaduar towards evening; situated on a hill, with much higher ones above it, glens under it, and a 3 feet wall of loose stones about it; a fine old banyan tree; that's all.

The commander (Pasang Katam, *vulgo* Buxa Subah) being at [Cooch] Behar, I was visited by his Dewan [Chief Minister] with presents, a white pelong handkerchief (the general nazir [ceremonial offering] throughout Bhutan), butter, rice, milk, and some coarse tea. We were detained a day for want of coolies.

Having on the 9th of June entered the hills, and being now out of Bengal and beyond the Company's jurisdiction, I was furnished with a passport from the Deb Rajah, who is the chief of the country. The following part of the journey was a perfect contrast to the former.

We had hitherto travelled through a country the most level I believe in the world and were now got into the most mountainous. The road through it was a narrow path, and generally so steep and hanging over such precipices that we were obliged to walk a great part of the way. The hills were covered with the loftiest trees. The people, instead of the black feeble race that inhabit Bengal, were the most robust and brawny, and of the Tatar breed. Nor was the change in the climate less sudden and perceptible. On the third day's journey the thermometer was down at 58°, which is many degrees below the summer's heat in England, so that we were now obliged to fortify ourselves against the cold with as much precaution as we had formerly used to preserve ourselves from the heat. My Bengal servants who, from the character I was in [as envoy of the Company], were more numerous than I could have wished, being unaccustomed to this kind of travelling often fell sick, or pretended to be so, and on this account as well as the difficulty of the road, I was forced to proceed by so short stages that the journey from Behar to this place took above a fortnight though the distance is not 200 miles. But the alteration in the weather however unfavourable to the natives of Bengal was far from

being so to an European constitution. For (thank God) I never enjoyed better health than I have done since I came among these hills; and as the Deb Rajah's orders procured us ever assistance and accommodation, I have no less reason to be satisfied with the people, than with the climate.

I am sensible from my short residence in this country, and other disadvantages which I labour under, I am little qualified to pursue this account any further, being liable to form an erroneous judgement and to expose myself to the imputation of presumption. But while with all diffidence I may lay before you the information I have been able to gather, concerning the people and the nature of the Government; and while I am prompted to this from a desire of affording you some entertainment, I flatter myself you will receive it with indulgence which on these accounts it may deserve.

The only way of transporting goods in this hilly country is by coolies. The roads are too narrow, steep, and rugged for any other conveyance, and the rivers too stony and rapid for boats. There is no particular class of people who follow this profession. The carriers are pressed from among the inhabitants, receive an allowance for victuals at the pleasure of the person on whose service they are employed, and are relieved by others procured in the same manner at the next village by order of the head man, without which not a coolie is to be had. This is a service so well established that the people submit to it without murmuring. Neither sex, nor youth, nor age exempt them from it. The burden is fastened under the arms upon their backs, with a short stick to support it while they rest themselves. Naturally strong, and accustomed to this kind of labour, it is astonishing what loads they will carry. A girl of eighteen travelled one day 15 or 16 miles, with a burden of 70 or 75 pounds weight. We could hardly do it without any weight at all.

We were provided with two tangun [local] ponies of a mean appearance, and were prejudiced against them unjustly. On better acquaintance they turned out patient, sure-footed, and could climb the [1666 Fire of London] monument. Many a time afterwards, when, on the edge of a precipice, I was mounted on a skittish young horse, with a man holding him by the head and another steering him by the tail, have I thought of them. We had to cross the mountain Pichakonum, which hangs over Buxaduar. The way was a narrow path, extremely steep, which went winding round the side of it: the upper part was paved with stones of bastard marble, put together like ill-formed steps. Midday was cold and chilly. There were very high precipices, but they were not frightful because they were covered with trees. I indulged in the pleasure of tumbling down stones.



The road led almost to the top of the mountain, and before we crossed it I turned to take another look at Bengal. It is impossible to conceive any change of country more abrupt, or any contrast more striking. To the southward the atmosphere was clear. The eye stretched over a vast tract of land, and the view was bounded only by the circular horizon. This part of the view, however, is striking only because it is extensive. There are no hills, spires, or other objects to distinguish it. The country, which continued flat, is marked only by its being cleared or woody, by the course of the rivers, or by some smoking villages. Whether it be that I am partial to hills or not, I beheld the opposite part of the prospect with much greater pleasure. The rapid descent, the deep glens, the hills covered with trees the most lofty and luxuriant, the town of Buxaduar immediately below at a great distance, and behind nothing but mountains with their tops hid in the clouds. It was lucky for them, as I fancied them much higher than they really are. We were then on the top of one of the highest. What fine, baseless fabrics might not a cosmographer build on this situation, who, from a peat or an oyster shell, can determine the different changes which volcanoes, inundations, and earthquakes have produced on the face of this globe. He would discover that the sea must once have covered Bengal, and washed the bottom of these mountains, which were placed as a barrier against its encroachments.

But instead of following out these antediluvian reveries, which make the head giddy, one had better see to what uses nature now puts them, and how she fits the inhabitants for their respective situations. The natives of Bengal, weak and thin-skinned, are ill suited to bear fatigue or cold. Their country is cut through with rivers and creeks to carry their goods for them. The earth produces its fruits with an ease almost spontaneous, and every puddle is full of fish. The Bhutanese, of a constitution more robust and hardy, inhabit a country where strength is required. They have everything to transport on their backs. They are obliged to make terraces, and conduct little streams of water into them, in order to cover their rice fields, and to build houses with thick stone walls, to secure themselves from the cold. The one cannot endure heat, the other cannot suffer cold; and so these mountains are set up as a screen between them. They shelter Bengal from the northerly winds which blow over Tatory, all the way from Novaya Zemlya, and give them moderate winters; and they serve to keep off the hot southerly monsoon from the Bhutanese, and preserve them cool when the sun is within six degrees of them. The climate accordingly changes in the most rapid manner, and Murijong, which is not above two days' journey from the entrance into the hills, produces apricots, peaches,

apples, pears, mulberries, and even oaks. But I am getting into the clouds.

At the place where the road crosses the mountain, standards or banners are set up, of white cloth, with sentences written upon them. They denote something religious, and are common at the tops of hills. The prospect within the hills is confined, not above 25 miles; and the country is all equally clad with wood. There were not above six or eight villages to be seen on the brow of the mountain, with little patches of wheat, barley, or Indian corn. The road was all down hill. We went down much against the grain, for we must climb it all up again. The first place we came to was Jaigagu.

There were only three bird cage houses, and two Nepal dogs. I planted ten potatoes [following Hastings' instructions to try and introduce this useful crop to Bhutan]. Through these hills, and about a mile below Jaigagu, runs Pachu-Chinchu [combined streams making the river sometimes shown on maps as the Wang Chu] to the south-east. From all the laws of hydrostatics it seems a plain deduction that a more level road might be made by following the course of this river than by going over the mountains. If the last is done to render the entrance into the country difficult it is very politic. A branch of this river was near us all the way to Tashichodzong: it runs so fast, and dashes so over stones, that it is half a cascade. The road to Murijong consists of steep descents and ascents the whole way. There were a few distant villages. There had been a heavy shower of rain. Three or four fine waterfalls were passed: one fell perpendicular about 40 feet from the top of a rock. Another stream ran foaming and tumbling over large stones, and yet another was embosomed in a fine grove, with arches formed by the trees and rocks. There were wooden bridges over all the rivulets which ran into them.

We arrived at Murijong as they were beating the evening tom-tom. It consisted of twenty houses, some of them stone. There were many inscribed banners and a good deal of arable land and cattle. I planted fifteen potatoes.

To Chuka [16 June]: a long stage, and difficult road. There was a good deal of rain - it does not fall from the clouds, but comes up to you. The villages increase in number. There is a grand cascade on the opposite side of the river. We climbed a rock that hangs over Pachu-Chinchu by steps, almost perpendicular; the horses scrambled up too. We passed through a passage cut in a small rock near the top, and came in sight of Chuka, with its iron bridge, situated in a valley - the first we had seen. This village is in a different district from Buxaduar.

From Chuka for the rest of the way to Tashichodzong the country opens

gradually. The mountains are still very high, but being more sloped have more arable land, and being at a greater distance from one another, leave room for villages in the hollows between them. On the former part of the journey there were nothing but glens, now there are valleys. But the sides of the mountains are more bare; there are few large trees, mostly fir; the road is more level, except at two or three places; and we could ride the greatest part. The country seems populous, and well cultivated. The houses, of stone and clay, were two and three stories high. There were temples; and on the two last stages rice fields.

It would be tedious to mention every stage. A list of them is subjoined. There are about ten, fifteen, or twenty large houses at each.

It grew colder every stage till we reached Kepta. There the thermometer was at 58° morning and evening, and would creep to 64° in the heat of the day. Thus it was during the three days we stayed there. At Tashichodzung it was about 61° in the morning, and 68° to 70° at midday.

There has been no very heavy rain since we left Kepta; and we seem to have got out of its reach. At Tashichodzung there were showers every day, but they were not heavy.

Most of the trees and plants are unknown to me. Bengal trees are chiefly met with on the other side of Chuka - plantain, jack, bamboo thick and crabbed, blackwood. European trees and plants are mostly on this side; some I have already mentioned, others are walnut, elderberry, holly, willow, ash, aspen-leaf, sweet brier, roses, brambles, juniper, wormwood, sage, thistles, southern-wood, strawberries, primroses, ground ivy. The people cultivate turnips, leeks, shallots, water melons, musk melons, cucumbers, and brinjal [egg-plant].

After the variety of uses to which the bamboo is applied in Bengal, one would hardly think it possible to discover any other; but the people in that part of the country where it grows have discovered two more. It answers as a vessel to hold anything in, and as a pot to boil anything. This last operation is performed by covering the bottom with clay, and then putting on the fire.

The bridges are either entirely of wood or entirely of iron. The wooden bridges are very common, and are from 30 to 70 feet long. On each side of the river four or six piles are built slopingly into piers of bare stones, so as each to project about a third of the way over. The centre beams rest upon the tops of these, which are first joined together with a cross beam dovetailed, and this forms the support of the planks. When it is necessary to make a bridge very strong, short piles are placed under the others, like the spring of a chaise. All the parts are fastened together with wooden

pins, so that there is not a bit of iron about them. At Chuka the river is very rapid and broad, and an iron bridge is hung over it. Five chains are stretched from one side to the other, and covered with laths and mats of bamboo, which form the floor. Two other chains are extended across the river at about seven feet perpendicular above the outermost of those on each side, and joined to them with twisted rattans. It is 147 feet long, and 6 feet broad. As soon as one steps upon it, it bobs from one end to the other. Near Lumbolong there is a bridge for foot passengers formed with two chains.

There is another way of passing rivers, by means of two ropes stretched across, with two hoops hung upon them, which serve to support the feet or knees, while the hands hauling on the ropes slide the hoops along. The ropes are of one piece of rattan, and are often 60 or 70 feet in length.

**Note.** Bogle and Hamilton reached Tashichodzong on 28 June 1774. Between Cooch Behar and Tashichodzong there were in all ten stages, the total distance amounting to about 76 cos so Bogle estimated. The stages were:

Cooch Behar to Chichakotta	10	cos;
Chichakotta to Buxaduar	3	cos;
Buxaduar to Jaigagu	8	cos;
Jaigagu to Murijong	10	cos;
Murijong to Chuka	10	cos;
Chuka to Kepta	9	cos;
Kepta to Paku	5	cos;
Paku to Lumbalong	4	cos;
Lumbalong to Wangoka	4	cos;
Wangoka to Tashichodzong	3	cos.

Samuel Turner, who followed this route in 1783, estimated the total distance to be 129 miles.

## 2

### Tashichodzong, the Capital of Bhutan<sup>3</sup>

**Note.** Based on Bogle's journals. Bogle's first encounter with the Deb Rajah is also described in the letter to one of his sisters which is reproduced in the next Chapter.

We were accommodated in a good house near the palace; and soon found it so cold that I was glad to hang my room, which was a wooden

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3. At this time Tashichodzong was effectively the summer capital of Bhutan. In the winter the Court moved to Punakha.

balcony, with Bhutan blankets. The window looked to the river, and commanded the best prospect.

The palace of Tashichodzong is situated in a valley about five miles long and one broad, entirely surrounded with high mountains. The river Chinchu gallops by; the low grounds near it being covered with rice, and well inhabited. Villages are scattered on the brow of the hills. The least steep places produce wheat. Immediately behind Tashichodzong there is a very high mountain, rising into two turrets, which are clad with wood almost to the top; and some solitary cottages, the retreat of dervishes, are here and there dropped as from the clouds. In these airy abodes they pass their days in counting their beads, and look down with indifference on all the business and bustle of the world, from which they are entirely excluded.

The character of a fakir is held in great estimation in this country. It is not confined, however, to these self-denying sons of abstinence. The statesmen and the provincial governors, when weary of power or dismissed from office, assume the name and garb of a fakir. They retire to their houses, or to a castle they have built on the top of some mountain; but instead of that poverty and those acts of mortification which are the proper characteristics of the hermit's life, they are surrounded by their families and servants; they indulge themselves in the daintiest victuals under the salvo of killing no living creature, and eating no animal food on the day on which it was slain, and being generally allowed to carry their effects along with them, may be considered among the most opulent class of inhabitants. Deb Seklu, after a prosperous reign of eighteen years, named his successor, and spent the rest of his days in this peaceful retirement.<sup>4</sup>

One day we ascended the high mountain. We set out early in the morning, and reached the summit at about three o'clock. The palace of Tashichodzong with its gilded turrets, the windings of the Chinchu with its wooden bridges, the fields below covered with rice and with villages, the tops of distant mountains, and the lofty castles of fakirs, formed the

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4. By Deb Seklu, one presumes, Bogle means Sherub Wangchuk, who held the office of Druk Desi, or Deb Rajah, from 1744 to 1763 or 1764. The Deb Rajah (an Indian rather than Bhutanese term) was appointed by a council (*Lhungye Tshokdu*), in Bogle's day dominated by high monastic officials but with a constitution which changed significantly with time to increase the power of the great lay administrative officers, in theory for a term of three years but often in practice for longer (nearly two decades in the case of the 13th Drub Desi, Shrub Wangchuk). The duties of the Druk Desi or Deb Rajah were those usually associated with a lay monarchy such as leadership in war. See: Thierry Mathou, *Bhoutan, dernier royaume bouddhiste de l'Himalaya*, Paris 1998, pp. 53-55.

prospect. We met with some wild cherries and one currant bush, and got down after it was dark.

The Deb Rajah [Künga Rinchen 1773-1776] was absent on our arrival. His return to Tashichodzong [on 3 July 1774] was in this wise. At about ten o'clock the balconies of the palace were covered with priests, who are all clad in red cloth, the manufacture of Bhutan; and four long brass trumpets, six castanets, four tabors, and four fifes were sounded at intervals. At eleven, thirty matchlocks were fired on the road he was to pass, and the salute was repeated when he came up to them. The procession consisted of twelve led horses; one hundred and twenty men dressed in red, with blue solitaires; thirty matchlock men; thirty archers; thirty horses laden with cloths and other furniture; forty men on horseback, some of them with bushy caps; the Chief Dewan, with a bushy standard; six musicians; the Deb Rajah on horseback, covered with a scarlet cloak, a large yellow hat like a cardinal's, a choura burdar [a man carrying a cow-tail fly whisk] on each side of him, and behind a man carrying a small white silk umbrella with different coloured fringes. As they came near the palace everybody except the Rajah alighted. The men with bushy caps pulled them off, and walked up to the gate. At different parts of the road which he had to pass, fires were lighted, and the people prostrated themselves before him. In the whole cavalcade there were about four hundred persons.

Two days afterwards [5 July] the Deb Rajah sent for me. If there is any satisfaction in being gazed at, I had enough of it. I dare to say there were three thousand spectators. I was led through three courts, and after climbing two iron-plated ladders, which serve for stairs in this part of the world, arrived in an antechamber hung round with arms. Here I waited some time before I was conducted into the presence chamber, through a dark entry and down two steps. The Rajah was seated on his throne or pulpit (for that is what it is like), raised about two feet above the floor. He was dressed in the festival habit of a gylong or priest, being covered with a scarlet satin cloak, and a gilded mitre on his head. A man kept twirling the umbrella over him. The pulpit was gilded, and surrounded with silver ewers and vases, and the floor was covered with carpets. His officers to the number of twelve were seated on cushions close to the wall. After making my bows, which, according to the ceremonial of this country, ought to have been prostrations, and laying my presents before him, I was conducted to a cushion prepared for me in the middle of the apartment. Several copper platters with rice, butter, treacle, tea, walnuts, Kashmiri dates, apricots, cucumbers, and other fruits were set before me, together with a little

wooden stool. All this passed in silence. Then a man entered with a silver kettle full of buttered tea, and having poured a little into his palm and drunk it off, filled a dish for the Rajah, and went round to all his officers. Now every Bhutanese carries a little wooden cup for such occasions, black glazed in the inside, wrapped in a bit of cloth, and lodged within the tunic, opposite to the heart and next the skin; but not being so well provided, I got a china cup. After all the dishes were filled, the Deb Rajah said a grace, in which he was joined by all the company; and then he opened his mouth and spoke to me. When we had finished our tea, and every man had well licked his cup and deposited it in his bosom, a flowered satin gown was brought me. I was dressed in it as a khilat [ceremonial robe]; a red pelong handkerchief was tied round me for a girdle, and I was carried to the Rajah, who bound my head with another, and squeezing my temples, put something on my head, which I afterwards found to be the image of the god Sandia [Sakya, or Sakyamuni, the Buddha], and muttered some prayers over me. He then tied two silk handkerchiefs together, and threw them over my shoulders. I was conducted to my cushion. We had two or three more dishes of tea, as many graces, a cup or two of whisky, and betel-nut. I then retired. The walls of the presence chamber were hung round with Chinese landscapes mixed with their deities painted on satin. The ceiling and pillars were covered with the same devices, and at the lower end of the room, behind where I sat, there were three or four images placed in niches. Before them were censers burning with incense, and lamps with butter, also little silver pagodas and urns, elephants' teeth, flowers, etc., the whole ornamented with silks, ribbons, and other gewgaws. Among these I must not omit to mention a solitary print of Lady Waldegrave, whom I was the means of rescuing out of the hands of these idols; for it happening to strike some of the household that she would make a pretty companion to a looking-glass I had given the Deb Rajah, she was hung up on one of the pillars next the throne, and the mirror on the other.<sup>5</sup>

The palace is a very large building, and contains near three thousand

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5. The Lady Waldegrave in question was probably Maria, granddaughter of Robert Walpole (1676-1745, 1st Earl of Orford), who, as Dowager Countess Waldegrave (widow of the 2nd Earl Waldegrave) married in 1766 the Duke of Gloucester, brother of King George III. There were many contemporary engravings of her portraits, notably those by Sir Joshua Reynolds; and it was probably one of these which found its way to Bhutan. I am grateful to Lord Waldegrave (formerly William Waldegrave, MP) for information about Lady Waldegrave. One imagines the print of Lady Waldegrave came from the Calcutta bazaar where it had taken the fancy of someone trading with Bhutan.

men, and not one woman. Of these about one thousand may be gylongs [priests or monks], some of the former chief's adherents, who are kept in a kind of imprisonment, and the rest the Rajah and Lama's officers, and all their train of servants. A tower, about five or six stories high, rises in the middle, and is appropriated to Lama Rimpoché<sup>6</sup> [Je Khenpo, the chief religious official]. He dwells near the top; and his apartments are furnished in the style of the Rajah's, but better. In the former Chief's days nobody could see him, but times are altered. His reception was like the Rajah's, only no khilat or whisky. On our arrival he lived in a castle on a little mount behind the palace. His apartments were finished while we were there, and a large image of Sandia was gilded and set up in his presence chamber. When he came down the Rajah went out to meet him. After the first visit he used to receive us without any ceremony, and appeared to have more curiosity than any man I have seen in the country. One day Mr. Hamilton was showing him a microscope, and went to catch a fly; the whole room was in confusion, and the Lama frightened out of his wits lest he should have killed it. We used to get dinners at the Lama's: boiled rice, with sugar and butter, and a stew of bits of kid, with slices of cucumbers, and well seasoned with red pepper (it is called giagu). He partook of the dessert, which consisted of fruits and sour curds cut like pieces of leather, and fried with butter and honey. He has got a little lap-dog and a mongoose, which he is very fond of. He is a thin sickly looking man of about thirty-five years' of age.

The palace is divided into four courts, flagged, with galleries supported on wooden pillars running round them, like the inns in England. The different officers have each their apartments. The gylongs live in a large church, besides which there is a smaller one where they officiate, and where the larger images are kept. These images are mostly decent and well proportioned figures, sitting cross-legged. There is a large gallery above the church, painted with festoons of death's heads and bones, where folks go to see the ceremonies. I went once or twice myself; and the Rajah, thinking I was fond of it, used to send for me to church by break of day and at all hours, and congratulated me greatly on my good fortune in happening to be at Tashichodzong during the grand festival. All the

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6. Markham, *op. cit.*, p. 26 n.2, calls this person the Dharma Rajah. There is some confusion in the literature about that figure known in India as the Dharma Rajah. Strictly speaking he was one of the Incarnations of the Shabdrung. What we have here is the Je Khenpo, an official elected by the Bhutanese clergy, theoretically for a three year term (but often longer), to serve as the executive head of the clerical establishment. The Dharma Raja at this time, that is to say the relevant Incarnation of the Shabdrung, was a young boy.



governors of provinces repaired there to the presence, and there were dances every day in one of the courts of the palace. About twenty gylongs, dressed in various coloured satin cloaks and gilded mitres, were seated on a bench, with each a large tabor or drum, resting on a stick which they held in one hand, and in the other a crooked rod of iron, with a knob at the end of it, with which they beat time to a priest, who was placed in the midst of them, with two silver cups which he struck against each other. A yellow satin curtain was drawn before the door of the lesser church, from behind which run out six, eight, ten, and sometimes a score of priests in masquerade dresses, with visors like horses' heads, like beaks of birds, or other grotesque figures. They danced and capered with whimsical gestures, the burden of which was to throw down their heads till the red tuft of hair touched the ground, and then suddenly toss it up again. Between the acts we had singing by the peasants, and abundance of antic tricks by two or three merry Andrews.

The walls of the palace are between two and three stories high, and built, as all walls in this country are, inclining inwards. What with stairs, pillars, galleries, and roofs, there is an immense quantity of timber about it. The building of it stripped naked several mountains. The roofs are of planks two or three deep, and kept down by stones; and the load of beams and open wooden work which is used to support them gives the upper parts of the palace the look of the centres of Blackfriars Bridge. The roof of the Lama's tower is entirely gilt, is ornamented with dragons, etc., and rises like the top of a Chinese temple.

The palace gates are shut in the dusk of the evening, after which nobody is allowed to go out or in. The inhabitants seldom stir out, except once in eight or ten days, in a string of five hundred or six hundred, to bathe in the Chinchu. They seem to lead a joyless, and, I think, an idle life; for so much authority is given into the hands of the provincial governors that very little is done at the Sadar [Court]. They have little connection with foreign states, Tashi Lama excepted, and less intercourse with strangers. An insurrection in favour of the exiled chief [Deb Judhur, Deb Zhidar or Desi Shidariva, in power c. 1769-1773] found them some employment.

Among a people where there is no pre-eminence of birth, and no finery in dress, there cannot well be much pride. The Bhutanese seem to have none of it, and live among their servants and dependents on the most familiar footing. One day the Governor [Dzongpön] of Tashichodzong asked me to a match at quoits. All his own people were of the party. They are very dexterous at it, and I soon gave over a diversion where I could get

no credit, and betook myself to shooting wild pigeons. After it was over we sat down upon the ground to dinner. When we had drunk a dish of tea, and eaten three hard-boiled eggs apiece, a basket full of boiled rice was brought, and distributed in handfuls, together with boiled pork cut into steaks, hogs' hearts, and giagu. We ate off cloths, and with our fingers, and when the repast was finished had a cup of whisky and some fruit.

They say there is little ceremony at the Bhutanese marriages. The parties satisfied with each other have no occasion for the sacerdotal benediction, and the priests, condemned to celibacy themselves, will not be instrumental in breaking it in others. Polygamy is not allowed; divorces are, where there are no children. But these are jurisprudential subjects.

The Bhutanese, like their neighbours in Bengal, burn their dead. One of the priests in the palace happening to die, I went to see the ceremony. It was the third day after his death. I found about forty priests assembled in a tent on the side of a rivulet which runs by the palace, and employed in chanting their prayers, while some workmen were cutting timber and forming the funeral pile. As they objected to my remaining near the tent, I crossed the brook, and ascended a little bank which overlooked the place where the obsequies were to be performed. At about twenty yards from the pile a temporary booth was erected, from which tea was occasionally distributed to the clergy, and some large pots that were boiling on the fire seemed to promise a more solid repast. The priests continued at different intervals to recite their offices in a low voice, accompanying them with the tinkling of bells and the sound of tabors and trumpets, and some old women, placed at a distance, were counting their beads and repeating their *Om mani padme hums*. When night came on, the body, wrapped in a linen sheet, was silently brought, and at the same instant that it was laid on the pile a shrill pipe, like a cat-call, was sounded. All this passed in the dark. Then a relation of the deceased came with a lighted brand in his hand, and set fire to the pile. Two of the priests fed it with fresh wood; another, dressed in white, threw in from time to time spices, salt, butter, oil, betel leaf, and twenty other articles, and the rest joined in a flourish with trumpets, bells, and tabors, while each of these different rites were performing. The fire burned slowly, a heavy shower of rain came on, and I returned home without waiting till the conclusion of the ceremony. It is usual, I am told, to collect the ashes on the third day after the funeral, and carrying them in solemn procession to throw them into the river Chinchu.

The barbarous Gentoo<sup>7</sup> [Hindu] custom of women burning themselves

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7. Derived from the Portuguese *Gentio*, *Gentile*, meaning heathen or infidel and, hence, native of India, a Hindu.

with their husbands is unknown in this country. The Bhutanese wives never give such heroic proofs of their fortitude and affection, and this difference in their conduct naturally arises from the manners peculiar to each country.

The practice of burning has been considered by some as a political institution to deter women from poisoning their husbands, and by others as proceeding solely from excessive love. The first opinion seems as groundless as it is ungenerous, and the last is, perhaps, too refined for this iron age. Mankind are neither so good nor so bad as they are generally represented. Human life is a stream formed and impelled by a variety of passions, and its actions seldom flow from single and unmixed sources.

A Hindu woman, married at an early age, and immured within the walls of a zenana, is unacquainted with all those pleasures and avocations to which a liberal education or the free intercourse of society gives birth. A fondness for dress and the management of her family occupy her whole attention, and the solaces of conjugal and maternal affection are the only source of her enjoyments. She lives but for her husband and her children, and every passion of her soul, heightened by the force of the climate, is centered in them. On the death of her husband, by devoting herself to the flames she performs an action meritorious in the highest degree, and which reflects the greatest honour on herself and her family. If she survives him she is confined to her room, condemned to perpetual widowhood, obliged to lay aside all gaudy apparel, and to feed on the most abstemious diet. "Alas!" says she, "a life so gloomy and joyless is not worth preserving - is not to be supported." Her heart sinks in despair, and is overwhelmed with grief and affection for her husband. Now zeal for the honour of her children and the desire of distinguishing herself combine with this indifference for life. She forms the fatal resolution while under the first impression of these different passions, and mounts the funeral pile before they have had time to spend their force.

But the institution of castes and every other hereditary distinction being unknown in Bhutan, the elevated sentiments which spring from a consciousness of superiority are never felt. The women in particular are degraded by this levelling system. As the Rajah, the priests, and all the officers of government lead a life of celibacy, they are married only to landholders or husbandmen. They are employed in the most labourious offices, they are dirty in their persons, they use strong liquors, they are bred up in the greatest liberty, and they mix with the lowest class of people. They are allowed to enter into a second marriage; and the death of a husband opens to them no such dismal prospect.

At Tashichodzong a peasant came to visit me who had been taken prisoner in [Cooch] Behar Fort, and after being kept some months had been sent back safe and sound to his own country. He had come two days' journey to tell me the story, and to present me with a goat, a roll of butter, and some rice as a mark of his gratitude. He paid me several visits afterwards, and gave me a bow and arrows. It would be a pity to omit his name, it was Uchong; nor the officer's, who released him, it was Captain Jones.

Harkaras [trusted messengers, usually brahmins and members of a hereditary profession] and servants are so much used to usurp a degree of authority in Bengal that it was difficult to restrain them from assuming it towards the Bhutanese. But what threatenings and even punishments could not do was brought about by an old woman. On some difference with one of my people, she took up a stone and offered to knock a servant down. After this there were no more complaints.

Some stages from Tashichodzong we were joined by a servant sent by the Deb Rajah to facilitate our journey. He was like a jemadar [officer] of harkaras. Having a dispute about my horse with the head man of a small village, he wanted to strike him, and in endeavouring to wrest a bow from one of the bystanders he hit him a blow in the scuffle. In a moment half-a-dozen arrows were pointed at his breast, and he escaped the fate of St. Sebastian only by getting out of the way.

Whenever a Bhutanese offers anything to eat or drink he first tastes it himself, or makes one of his people do so, to remove mistrust. This suggests a bad idea. But forms and customs often outlive the state of society which gave birth to them.

Every man in the palace is dressed in a darkish red woollen cloth. They are remarkably dirty in their persons, even to the Rajah's dewans. He himself is an exception.

The horses are unshod tanguns, with hoofs as hard as iron; all stallions, extremely vicious when young, and ill broke in. The saddle is of wood, with a peak eight or nine inches high, which the rider holds on by, and which keeps him from slipping off in descents. The stirrups are remarkably short. The bridle is generally tied round the nose, and the horses led. They use mules for very steep or difficult paths. They are brought from Tashi Lama's country.

In about the middle of August droves of cow-tailed cattle [yaks] were brought to Tashichodzong. During the hot months they are kept among the coldest mountains. All the butter is made of their milk, and is very rich and good. Their beef is lean and coarse. The Bhutanese hang it up to dry,

and often eat it when one would think the smell sufficient. Their principal food, however, is pork and dried fish from Bengal mixed with their rice. Their bread is made of unsifted flour. They use a great deal of butter, and I got as much in presents as would have set me up for a tallow-chandler.

There are numbers of temples on all the roads. One kind is a long wall, with stones inscribed *Om mani padme hum* ! all round, and small basso-relievo figures, with gilt faces cut in black marble, and placed in the middle and at each end. Sometimes they have *Om mani padme hum* written on a barrel and turned round by water. Another kind of temple is a house about fifteen feet square, and they take a most effectual way to preserve it unpolluted by giving it no doors or windows. In every house there is a small altar for the household gods, which they set out with chanks [conch shells] and flowers, and daily offer up their devotions to them.

## CHAPTER IV

### **Bhutan: Negotiations July to August 1774 and Memoranda on Bhutan**

#### 1

##### **Interview with the Deb Rajah on 5 July 1774**

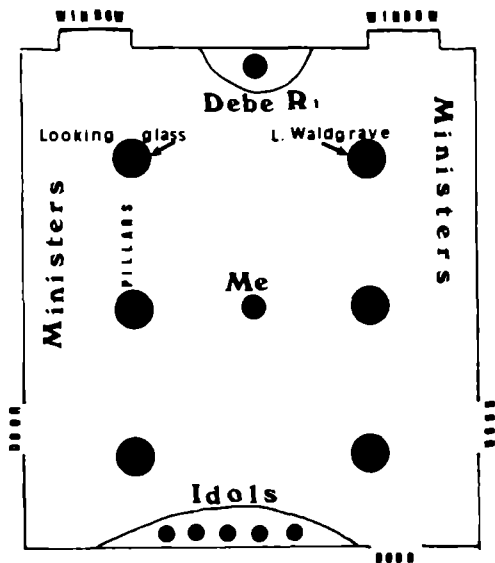
**Note.** Based on a letter from Bogle to one of his sisters, written from Tashichodzong.

I wish you could have the honour of seeing my moustaches which I have been fostering and nursing with so much care ever since I came among these hills. I assure you when well sleeked down with pomatum, they cut a very respectable figure. But the most favourite opportunity of exercising your risible faculties would have been at my first audience with the Deb Rajah. I arrived at Tashichodzong during the night, and was lodged in a house two gun shots from the Palace.

On the day fixed to receive me I walked to the palace of the Deb Rajah. If there is any pleasure in being gazed at, I had enough of it. Being the first European they had ever seen in these parts, the windows of the palace and the road that led to it were crowded with spectators. I dare say there were three thousand. After passing through three courts, and climbing two iron-plated ladders, I was carried into an antechamber hung round with bows and arrows, swords, matchlocks, cane-coiled targets, and other implements of war, and filled with a number of priests, servants, etc., squatted down in different places. Having waited here about half an hour, I was conducted to the Rajah. He was seated upon a throne, or pulpit, if you

please (for that is what it is like), raised about two feet from the ground. At entering I made him three low bows, instead of as many prostrations, with which, according to the etiquette of this court, I ought to have approached him. I then walked up and gave him a white satin handkerchief, while my servants laid my presents of spices, cloths, cutlery, &c., before him; after which I was conducted to a cushion prepared for me at the opposite end of the room. As all this passed in a profound silence, I had now time to get over a kind of flurry which it had occasioned. In the meantime several copper trays, with rice, butter, treacle, tea, walnuts, apricots, cucumbers, and other fruits, were set before me, together with a little stool and a china cup. But it is time I should make you acquainted with the company, and let you know where you are.

In order to get a clear idea of the Deb Rajah's presence chamber you have only to look at the very elegant plan of it annexed.



The Deb Rajah was dressed in his sacerdotal habit of scarlet cotton, with gilded mitre on his head, and an umbrella with fringes twirling over him. He is a pleasant-looking old man with a smirking countenance. On each side of him his principal officers and ministers to the number of a dozen were seated upon cushions close to the wall, and the rest of the company stood in the area or among the pillars. The panels of the room and also the ceiling were covered with Chinese sewed [embroidered] landscapes and different coloured satins; the pulpit was gilded, and many silver and gilt vases about it; and the floor all around was laid with carpets. At the opposite end of the apartment, and behind where I sat, several large Chinese images were placed in a kind of niche or alcove, with lamps of butter burning before them, and ornamented with elephants' teeth, little silver temples, china-ware, silks, ribbons, and other gewgaws. Among these

I must not forget a solitary print of Lady Waldegrave, whom I had afterwards the good fortune to be the means of rescuing out of the hands of these idols; for it happening to strike some of the courtiers - whether the upholsterer, the chamberlain, or a page, I cannot pretend to say - that Lady Waldegrave would make a pretty companion to a looking-glass I had given the Rajah, she was hung up on one of the pillars next the throne, and the mirror on the other; and as I would wish to give you the best and latest accounts, you may depend upon it that things continue still in that posture, agreeable to the arrangement I found at my second visit.<sup>1</sup>

In came a man carrying a large silver kettle, with tea made with butter and spices, and having poured a little into his hand and drank it, he filled the Deb Rajah a cup, then went round to all the ministers, who, as well as every other Bhutanese, are always provided with a little wooden cup, black glazed in the inside, wrapped in a bit of cloth, and lodged within their tunic, opposite to their heart and next their skin, which keeps it warm and comfortable; and last of all the cup-bearer filled my dish. The Rajah then said a grace, in which he was joined by all the company. When we had finished our tea, and every man had well licked his cup, and deposited it in his bosom, a water tabby gown, like what Aunt Katty used to wear, with well-plated haunches, was brought and put on me; a red satin handkerchief was tied round me for a girdle. I was conducted to the throne, where the Deb Rajah bound my temples with another satin handkerchief, and squeezing them hard betwixt his hands, muttered some prayers over me, after which I was led back to my cushion. We had next a cup of whisky fresh and hot out of the still, which was served round in the same manner as the tea, of which we had also two more dishes, and as many graces; and last of all betel nut.

During these different refreshments a great deal of complimentary conversation passed between me and the Deb Rajah through the means of an interpreter, which, however brilliant and witty, I will not here set down. At taking leave the Deb Rajah tied two handkerchiefs together, and threw them over my shoulders by way of a sash. Thus attired, I paid two or three visits to some of the officers in the palace, and walked home, like Mordecai, in great state to my lodgings.

Oh that you had been but there to have seen me. I believe I would have sent my robes by you to Jenny Gilchrist, but being without this opportunity, I have converted them into a night gown in which I now have the honour to write to you.

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1. On the picture of Lady Waldegrave, see Chapter III above, note 4.



## 2

**Bogle's report on the negotiations, Tashichodzong,  
5 to 14 July 1774**

**Note.** This report was sent to Hastings along with Bogle's letter of 17 July 1774, which also contained Bogle's journal for the journey from Cooch Behar to Tashichodzong. See Ch. V, No. 5, below.

The substance of the different conversations I had with the Deb Rajah and his officers at Tashichodzong is contained in the following sheets. I took them down immediately after they happened, and this circumstance, while it renders the account more faithful, will also serve as an excuse for its incorrectness. As an interpreter was employed on those occasions, I can only give the scope of what passed; I cannot answer for the particular expressions. In the course of the conversation, I was often obliged to use circumlocutions and figures which the mind seizes whilst heated with the subject and afterwards throws aside. I aimed only at making myself clearly understood and showing respect to the Rajah. But I ought rather to apologize for prolixity.

It is necessary I should mention that many of the different points of the discourse are not set down in the order in which they arose. The second conversation is more difficult in this respect than any other, being then more solicitous to explain what I had to say than attentive in listening to the Deb Rajah.

*1st visit (5 July 1774)*

I omit here to mention the ceremonies that passed. The Deb Rajah expressed his satisfaction at seeing me; said that I was the first Englishman who had been so far into his country; that I had suffered many hardships in coming so long a journey; that he hoped his people had according to his orders given me assistance on the road; that he was sorry that his absence from Tashichodzong had prevented an earlier interview; and concluded with his desire of making everything agreeable to me. I made the best return I could to his compliments; assured him of the attention and ready assistance I had received from his officers and thanked him for the favour and civilities he had shown me. The chamber was full of his people and what passed being entirely compliment is needless to mention. I had told him that I would take another opportunity of speaking upon business; and after receiving his blessing I retired.

At all the different visits I paid the Deb Rajah, and his Dewans, the

compliments which passed had so little fancy or originality that I have omitted to set them down. Excluded by the policy, as well as the situation of their country, from intercourse with strangers, and accustomed only to converse with their inferiors, a high degree of urbanity can hardly be expected among the Deb Rajah's courtiers. Its place however is fully supplied by a decency and propriety of behaviour which is more pleasing because more natural. Although the Deb Rajah's durbar is frequently much crowded, a dead silence is always observed: not a voice is to be heard but the Deb Rajah's or the person who speaks to him. His principal officers, to the number of about twelve, are seated upon carpets close to the wall. They rise up and acquit themselves with a fluency of language, a firm accent, and in an easy and respectful attitude.

*2nd visit*

Some holidays and other circumstances prevented me from waiting upon the Deb Rajah for some days.

After the usual compliments he introduced the subject of Tashi Lama. He said he was his religious superior, but their governments were distinct; that his people had met me on the road with a letter and some presents for the Governor, and also for myself, and asked me if I had not received a letter from him. I showed it to him and told him that being deputed by the Governor to deliver a letter and presents to Tashi Lama, not to receive them, I could not determine on a matter so unexpected before I had waited on him and received his advice. But he was taken up looking at the letter, and so I stopped. Tashi Lama, he said, had also set a letter written in the Bhutan language, and showing it desired me to compare the two seals together. There was no occasion, I replied. The silks etc. which Tashi Lama had sent were lying beside the Deb Rajah, and his people went to bring them to me, upon which I told him that being sent by the Governor, and not upon my own business, it was necessary I should do nothing without due consideration and begged therefore that they might remain until I had explained to him all the circumstances and consulted with him on what was proper to be done. He proposed to read the Bhutanese letter, to which I readily assented.

The novelty of the scene, and the part I had to act in it, I must confess had flurried me; and the reading of the letter, with the annotation of the interpreter, gave me a breathing to collect myself. The Deb Rajah then asked me to explain the Persian [widely used as the formal diplomatic language of Moghul India] letter which none of his people could read. They were both to the same purpose. He observed that Tashi Lama was only independent in point of religion; that he was subject to the Emperor

of China, who upon knowing that two Fringies [Europeans, the term derived ultimately from Frank] had been admitted into the country, would be extremely displeased with; that he had therefore, immediately on hearing of my coming, sent his servants with these despatches. He then expatiated on the hardships I would undergo if I prosecuted my journey, and advised me to return. But this was ripening the conversation too fast: I wanted to keep it back, and begged his permission to inform him of the circumstances of my being sent. I said he was no doubt well acquainted with the letter which Tashi Lama some months ago wrote to the Governor, and the favourable attention he had paid to it; that pleased with the friendship of a man of his holy character, and desirous of showing him every mark of respect, the Governor had sent me, one of his servants, to deliver an answer and presents to the Lama, and to give him assurances of his desire of cultivating his friendship; that the Lama's servants who were down in Calcutta gave me no reason to expect any obstacle; that besides the Governor had desired Mr. Purling [Collector at Rangpur] to write to him on the subjects, who in his answer told the Governor that the Deb Rajah had sent him a passport and engaged to conduct the person he might depute safe to Lhasa; that on these assurances the Governor had ordered me to set out; and after many difficulties I was happy at length in having reached his presence. As the Company and he were united in friendship, I depended upon his good offices to remove the obstacles which now stopped my journey. What would the world say if, after being sent from the Governor with tokens of his friendship to Tashi Lama, I should be refused admittance to his country and obliged to return with them to Calcutta. My own character as well as the Governor's honour were concerned. From his connection and acquaintance with Tashi Lama his representations would have much stronger weight than mine who am at present a stranger to him, and I made no doubt would procure me the necessary passports to proceed on my journey. The hardships he mentioned were no consideration with me, and would be fully compensated by the pleasure of seeing the Lama and delivering to him the Governor's despatches

In answer he mentioned the Lama's first letter (which was about the peace) but slightly and formally. He said that Mr. Purling must have mistaken him; that he only promised a ready passage through his own country, which would appear by his letter; that he had no authority over the Lama nor in his country; that if I chose to proceed he would conduct me to the borders of Tashi Lama's territories, but at the same time he would dissuade me from such a step; that if I returned to Calcutta, I had

always seen one Rajah; that although he wished to do everything in his power, yet having no command over Tashi Lama, why should he regard his letter. The Gosain (whose name I had mentioned to him) might proceed to Lhasa without obstruction, but there were objections against a Fringy. I asked on what account. The answer was evasive, but meant that they were jealous of them. I repeated to him his connection with Tashi Lama; and that, besides, the Chief of one country always pays attention to the representations of that of another, in the same manner as the Governor had to those of Tashi Lama. As he was himself a Sirdar [chief or military commander], and the ruler over a country, he knew what regard was due to a person in that character. I begged therefore that he would send for Tashi Lama's people and favourably explain to them what I had said; and concluded with my confidence in his advice and assistance.

These discourses, intermixed with the ceremonies of the imposition of hands, etc., twice beetle-nut, two cups of whisky, four dishes of tea, and as many graces, spun out the time. The sun was almost down and the priests beginning to repeat their vespers I took my leave and retired.

In the course of the conversation I avoided the subject of China as much as possible, and touched upon it but slightly because what I had to say was not proper to be mentioned in a place where many of the Deb Rajah's servants were present.

#### *Interpreter*

I had soon afterwards a visit from the interpreter.

I repeated to him a good part of what I had said to the Deb Rajah, and with further explanations I observed to him that if the objections to my journey, which Tashi Lama now stated, had been made before my departure, the Governor might have set it aside; that it was of no such consequence to the English, it was a compliment which the Governor returned to the Lama: for although the Lama's principal servant was prevented by sickness from proceeding to Calcutta, yet he considered the report intended him, in the same light as if he had actually arrived and thought it incumbent on him to return it; that the Lama's servants had been admitted into Bengal, furnished with passports, and every attention paid to them, as well as to the business on which they were sent; that suppose the Deb Rajah, who in the same manner had received me into his country, and treated me with friendship and attention, wanted to send one of his people to Calcutta, what would he think were the Governor to refuse to allow him to proceed to his presence, or to enter Bengal; that the cases were similar; that as the Governor's connection with Tashi Lama had begun by the Deb Rajah's business, and as I was charged with an answer

to the letter which was written on that subject, he would no doubt exert himself on this occasion. I was convinced Tashi Lama must have been misinformed or ill advised with regard to my journey, which was of no such consequence as to attract the notice, or incur the resentment, of the Court of China; that his objections must surely spring from some other cause; for, I begged him particularly to remark, that Tashi Lama in his letter said, that the order of the Emperor of China prohibited admittance to all Hindustanis, Mughals and Pathans [Afghans] as well as Fringies; yet that everybody knew that members of the first three people actually resided with him, and were entertained in his service, while I was prohibited from entering his country on pretence of being of the last. Why should the Emperor's orders be extended to me more than to the others? I wished only to know the occasion of Tashi Lama's particular exceptions against me and I was ready to give him every satisfaction. I was sorry to be obliged to give the Rajah as well as himself so much trouble, but I must confess it was a matter in which I myself was much interested, for the Governor would be apt to ascribe Tashi Lama's conduct, rather to some impropriety of mine, than to suppose that he had of his own accord, and without any reason, rejected the returns he intended to make to his offer of friendship.

The interpreter replied that, as a servant of the Deb Rajah, he would faithfully report to him what I had said; but he of himself could give no answer. Although Moghuls etc. might reside with the Rajah, they being people of no consequence they were overlooked and knowledge of it went not to the Court of China, but that an Englishman, sent from Calcutta, would no doubt make a noise, and an account of it be transmitted to the Emperor; that showing Tashi Lama's letter to the Governor would be sufficient justification of my conduct. Little else passed to be written. The Palace gates were ready to be shut, and so the interpreter took his leave.

*Head Dewan* [whom Bogle would in 1775, on his second visit to Bhutan, call the Donyer]

I had taken up so much of the Deb Rajah's time at my last visit, that I chose rather to apply to his Chief Officer.

I resumed the subject of Tashi Lama, and employed arguments to show the propriety of the Deb Rajah's interesting himself to procure me the necessary passports: the substance of these, however, was in general the same with what I had before used, through dressed up perhaps in another form. I enlarged upon the satisfaction it would give the Governor to preserve and cultivate a strict friendship and good correspondence with the Deb Rajah; that the Governor had not received any letter from him

since his accession to the Government of Bhutan; that he (the Governor) was loaded with cares and management of a large kingdom; and besides that it was not the custom of the English to write, unless either in answer to letters or on business; the Deb Rajah therefore would not be surprised at not having received any letter from the Governor; that he wished much to hear of his welfare, and had charged me to wait upon him and acquaint him with his friendly dispositions; that the Deb Rajah being the Chief in this country, as the Governor is in Bengal, he may depend on a ready attention to any application he may make to the Governor, who in like manner would in future apply directly to the Deb Rajah.

I next turned the conversation to the late disputes; that it gave the Governor satisfaction that they were happily ended; that the English being entrusted with the management and protection of Bengal and Bihar confined their views to that object, that these countries are so considerable in point of revenue, manufactures and inhabitants as fully to employ their attention; that increase of territory was therefore contrary to their policy, which plainly appeared, in so much as during 12 or 15 years they had added nothing to their possessions; that about 10 years ago, being attacked by Sujah Dowlah [Shuja-ud-daulah, Nawab of Oudh or Awadh], they reduced his country, afterwards restored it to him, and concluded a peace which has always been preserved inviolate; that in the same manner the lands at the foot of the mountains have now been yielded up to the Deb Rajah, and that the Treaty which has been entered into will by the blessing of God continue for ever in force.<sup>2</sup>

The Dewan laid the blame of the late disputes on the precipitate and choleric temper of the former Deb Rajah, which had before led him into hostilities with some of his neighbours. He expressed his satisfaction at the peace which was now concluded; but his answers were short and reserved. What I had said was intended to remove that latent jealousy of conquest which opposes itself to my peaceful and commercial mission.

### *3rd Visit*

The Deb Rajah had laid aside his mitre and was dressed in a plain blue turban. He was seated however in his pulpit with the umbrella over his head. Nobody was present but his principal officers, and less ceremony was observed than at the two former visits.

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2. Bogle is referring here to the events surrounding the battle of Buxar of October 1764 which confirmed the East India Company's position in Bengal and Bihar and extended a protectorate over Oudh (Awadh). Buxar is discussed in the second volume of this book.

He asked me what resolution I had come to regarding Tashi Lama's people, and as they were then in waiting desired they might be called in. After they had prostrated themselves three times before him, they sat down and the conversation was immediately transferred to them, the Head Dewan reporting to the Deb Rajah what passed.

The messenger whom Tashi Lama had sent repeated his request, that I would receive the letter for the Governor and the presents; and I returned the same answer as I had done before, that as it was impossible for the Governor to foresee the objections which Tashi Lama made to my journey, I had received no instructions in that event. As a servant of the Governor's I could not act in a situation so unexpected without orders; that I would write to Calcutta and, if they thought proper, would also forward Tashi Lama's letter to the Governor, and in the mean time the presents might remain here until I received his orders concerning them.

They informed me that they had just received another letter from Tashi Lama confirming his former despatches and desiring them to return immediately; that they would certainly send a person in two months from Tashi Lama, and that they expected my final answer next day; but the proposal of forwarding the letter to the Governor was not agreeable to them. They withdrew.

Had Tashi Lama admitted me into his Presence and, after receiving the letter and presents from the Governor, charged me with despatches in return, I would not have hesitated to accept of them. But in the present situation I was influenced by two considerations to decline. The first and principal was that by these means I protracted the negotiation and gave an opening for the Gosain on his arrival with Tashi Lama to use his interest in my favour. The second was that as the letter contained nothing of business, it was on that account of no consequence whether the Governor should receive it now or three months hence: the delay at the same time might afford an opportunity of renewing a negotiation in a different manner in case the present one should fail; and likewise give me time to receive an answer from Calcutta.

As soon as Tashi Lama's people were gone, I resumed my request to the Deb Rajah that he would apply to Tashi Lama in my favour. He told me (for the first time) that he had formerly written to Tashi Lama on this subject and had received an answer to the same effect as contained in my letter, which was confirmed by another letter which he had just received; that from Tashi Lama's religious character I might depend upon what he said, and that addressing him again was to no purpose. God forbid, I said, that I should doubt the truth of what Tashi Lama had written; but at the same

time I had reason to apprehend that, independent of China, he had conceived some unfavourable impression of me or my errand. I noticed to him the circumstances of the Emperor's orders extending equally to the Moghuls etc. I gave him the strongest assurances that my mission had not the remotest connection with any thing but what was friendly; and I only requested that he would apply to Tashi Lama about the Governor's business in the same manner as Tashi Lama had applied to the Governor about his, and I had great hopes the issue would be equally favourable. I begged pardon for the freedom with which I addressed him which proceeded not from want of respect but from the openness and plain dealing which is the character of the English. He told me that if I desired it, he would conduct me to the borders of his country, beyond which he could be of no service to me; that if I chose to return to Calcutta or [Cooch] Behar, it would make him very happy as he was anxious about my health, and that he would immediately order every thing to be provided for my accommodation. The point at which all this was aimed was very evident; but many considerations prevented me from pursuing it.

I could not bear the thoughts of returning to Calcutta without fulfilling any of the ends of my commission and before I was finished with the Governor's orders. Nothing but necessity could justify it. The obstacles which Tashi Lama threw in my way served only to encourage my curiosity and my desire to surmount them. His answer was sure to be discouraging; yet as I was persuaded his scruples arose more from himself than from the Emperor's commands, they might perhaps be removed by proper representations. In that event, by remaining at Tashichodzong I was ready to proceed on my journey; but if I returned to Behar I would like Sisyphus have the whole to climb over again. Meanwhile I could employ my time here to good purpose by obtaining informations which might be serviceable if I should get to Lhasa, and at any rate would render my mission less useless.

These reasons regarded chiefly myself: there were others which respected the Deb Rajah; but as the day was far spent, I delayed to mention them. I satisfied myself with telling him that I would write to the Governor for his orders, and in the meantime would with his permission send off the greatest part of my servants to [Cooch] Behar and keep only a few that were absolutely necessary. In answer the Deb Rajah seemed not to put so much dependence on the circumstance of two months mentioned by Tashi Lama's people; and as to what I proposed about my servants, he would be sorry that I should leave his country with a smaller retinue or fewer attendants than I had entered into it. I took my leave.



I had found out that I was wrong in the article of servants and had nothing for it but to get right as soon as possible. I had brought up with me a swarry [suwarry, a cavalcade], more God knows from a consideration of the Company's honour than from any vanity of my own. I expected too that it would facilitate my views; but I soon discovered that it had quite the contrary effect. I must endeavour to account for this, although in doing it I may happen to get out of my depth.

Where a point is to be carried by dint of authority and power, a man cannot look too big. I am in a very different predicament, however, with respect to the people of this country. The peace which has been concluded leaves them at present little to hope or fear; but having so lately felt the might of the English arms, they look upon them with that suspicion with which a small state naturally eyes its more powerful neighbours. This jealousy has, I believe, been greatly inflamed by Goork [Gurkha] Cawn [Khan], the Rajah of Nepal [Prithvi Narayan, conqueror of the Newar regimes of the Kathmandu Valley and founder of the modern Nepalese state, died in January 1775], who is endowed with superior abilities and a mind more enlarged than any of his neighbours. The unsuccessful attempt which was made upon his country furnishes an instance of the enterprising spirit of the English which has never been forgotten [a clear reference to the unsuccessful Kinlock expedition to Nepal of 1767, discussed in the second volume of this book]. The Deb Rajah has less cause of apprehension than any of his neighbours. His country is poor, naturally strong, and the road (at least that by which I came) extremely difficult. Tashi Lama's territory, by all accounts is in a very different situation. Its trade with China, and its production, hold out temptations to an invader; while the openness of the country would render it more difficult to withstand his attacks. This I believe is the real cause of Tashi Lama's obstacles to my journey. The Emperor's order is only the veil that covers it. Parade certainly excites their jealousy and awakens attention: it serves to increase Tashi Lama's apprehensions of China, if serious, or to give them a plausibility, if pretended.

But to consider it in another point of view. An acquaintance with the people and their manners is a principal object of my journey. In a polite and luxurious nation, parade may be compatible with unreserved and familiar communication. It was not so among a simple and unpolished people. If I am to acquire knowledge I must lay aside the Governor's Deputy and mix with the people on a more equal footing. Add to this, that as there are no public markets, my servants are supported from the Deb Rajah's granaries; and an unusual expense being incurred contributes to

render my stay irksome. These reasons will I hope justify me in dismissing my suite.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Lama's Servants*

When I got home I sent for the Gosain [Purangir]; and he came attended by Tashi Lama's messenger and Padma who was down in Calcutta. The messenger repeated what he had on some former occasion told me in regard to the influence of the Chinese in Tashi Lama's country; that two persons appointed from Peking resided at Lhasa on the part of that Court, to transmit intelligence of every thing that passed. When any Turks or Russians arrived, a guard of five Chinese was placed over each; that there was a guard of a thousand Chinese at Lhasa; and that Tashi Lama's country was held under and protected by that Court.

I could not enter the lists with him on this subject, and confined myself to the little importance my journey was of to China; that I was ready to proceed to Tashi Lama in whatever manner he might advise me, and to comply with the customs and usages of the country; that, ignorant of the state of Bhutan, I had brought a number of servants with me, whom I now found to be useless and an incumbrance; that I intended therefore to send them down to (Cooch) Behar and retain only a few that were absolutely necessary; that as I could come to no resolution before I knew the Governor's pleasure, I proposed to remain here till then; and that I hoped from his good offices with Tashi Lama to obtain a speedy admission to his presence. He assured me that I might depend on an answer in two months by one of Tashi Lama's people, and in the meantime that he proposed to set out in a few days.

#### *Head Dewan*

The next meeting I had was with the Chief Dewan. His conversation was almost a counterpart of the Deb Rajah's, and gave me some broad hints about my departure; that Tashi Lama's people were ready to set out, and asked me about my final resolution. I answered that I desired to follow the Deb Rajah's advice as far as in my power, but that as to my returning I would write to the Governor, without whose orders I could no more act than a vakil sent by the Deb Rajah to Calcutta could leave it without his; that I still hoped the Rajah would write to Tashi Lama by the return of his

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3. Bogle brought with him to Tashichodzong, according to his accounts preserved in the India Office Records, at least thirty-five servants as well as some twenty-two porters to carry his baggage there. Twelve servants were retained, who accompanied Bogle all the way to Tibet and back. The remainder were sent back to India: they arrived in Cooch Behar by 17 August 1774 (see: letter from Lt. D. Williams to Bogle, reproduced as No.5 below).

people; that from their assurances, the vicinity of Tashi Lama's country, and the tenor of his letter to me, I might depend on receiving an answer in less than two months, and I had great hopes it would be favourable and call me to his presence; that in passing through a part of the Deb Rajah's country thinly inhabited, I had put his people to great inconvenience, which I would be sorry needlessly to repeat; I mentioned also the difficulty of passing the hills and of entering Bengal during the height of the rains, and that I wished therefore to remain at Tashichodzung in order to proceed to the Lama, if such was his pleasure, or to receive his letter etc., and follow such other instructions as the Governor might give me. He promised to report everything to the Deb Rajah. The rest of the conversation was on indifferent subjects. He wanted to look at my sword, so I left my seat and went and sat down besides him on the same carpet. In trying to buckle on the sword he broke the belt, and, immediately calling for a needle and thread, he sewed the two pieces very neatly together.

#### *4th Visit*

The Deb Rajah sent for me. Tashi Lama's people were present.

The Rajah again asked me to take charge of Tashi Lama's despatches; that the presents were trifling and, in coming from a man of his holy character, ought to be respected. The messenger at the same time read over to me a Bhutanese copy of the Lama's letter to the Governor, the original being in Persian and sealed, and the Gosain interpreted it. It contained his satisfaction at the peace which had restored tranquillity and happiness to the country; his having heard that the Governor intended to send a person to him; the pleasure this would give him; his subjection to the Emperor of China and the prohibition in regard to Fringies; that there was a body of Chinese at Lhasa, and that Turks, Russians and other people (whose name I forgot) were never admitted without a guard; his being therefore helpless; his concern, and a list of the number of pieces of silk, some gold dust and silver which he sent as a token of remembrance. I have already put down the reasons that led me to decline taking charge of them. The one upon which I excused myself was the want of the Governor's orders; but I did it with as much respect to Tashi Lama as possible. Tashi Lama's people immediately after took leave, and I followed them as soon as I had got my temples bound with a red silk handkerchief and received the Deb Rajah's blessing.

#### *Dewans*

Before I left the palace I paid visits to the different Dewans. There are four. The conversations on those occasions is seldom much to the purpose. I must except the youngest Dewan, whose name is Cuttung. His questions

are extremely shrewd and pertinent in regard to England, Bengal and the Company. The last they cannot understand. Some of them look upon the Company as a great Rajah; others say it is a woman; and the greatest part don't know what to make of it. As it is no business of mine to teach them, I tell them it is the Sircar, or Government, or Power, that holds Bengal. I have waged war with the word Fringy, which is the name the people here continue to give the English, take every opportunity of attacking it and substituting Engreze in its place. The very sound is pitiful; and by comprehending the English along with every other European nation, makes them answerable for what the Portuguese did two centuries ago. It is enough if we can answer for ourselves.

Next morning about seven o'clock I was sent for to the apartments of the Commander of Tashichodzong, where I found him, the Head Dewan and the two inferior ones, waiting for me. We canvassed all the story of the letter over again, and I at last got them to consent to write in my favour to Tashi Lama. I was glad to carry a point that had cost me so much trouble. The letter was shown to me next day before it was closed.

*Gosain* [Purangir]

However instant I had been to obtain the Deb Rajah's letter to Tashi Lama, I must confess I do not expect any immediate advantage from it; but it will probably have collateral ones. My hopes of success are founded on the Gosain, and I think I can depend on his exerting himself on my behalf. We had many conversations on the subject and consulted on the means of removing Tashi Lama's objections. I shall only mention them in gross.

If there really should be any thing in the affair of China (which he knew nothing of), I told him by all means dissuade Tashi Lama from appealing to Peking for their consent. It would be giving me and my journey an air of consequence, which would certainly alarm the jealousy of that provident Court. Unable to distinguish objects at 2,000 miles distance, their imagination might magnify them, and foresee a thousand evils: their trade ruined or diverted into new channels; their country drained of its wealth; the Empire perhaps even invaded. An express prohibition would probably be the consequence. For it can hardly be expected that they, who refuse to admit a European into Canton in the heart of their Government, would allow him to approach their distant frontier. I told the Gosain therefore that it would occasion a long delay; that my proceeding to Tashi Lama being a matter of no importance to China could never occasion their displeasure; that Tashi Lama's residence being many days journey from Lhasa, where the Chinese were, my first visit would probably not even be

known to them; and at any rate it was much easier to gain their concurrence than to send to Peking.

But if, which I had reason to suspect, Tashi Lama's refusal arose from some prejudice against me, I must leave it to him to use such means to overcome it as he should think most effectual. That he might therefore assure Tashi Lama that the Governor did not entertain a thought about him or his country but what was friendly; that indeed, the nature of Bhutan considered, any other was impossible. The road to it through passes and mountains, the country inhabited by a hardy people, and the climate so cold, that Bengal sepoys, could they get to it, would perish. I repeated to him what I had said to the Dewan about the English, and furnished him with every other argument I could think of. I told him that an intimate friendship between the Governor and Tashi Lama might be productive of many advantages; that, in case of any attempts of the hill people to create disturbances, Tashi Lama, from his holy and pacific character, and the respect which was everywhere paid to him, might by his mediation accommodate matters without coming to extremities. I mentioned that the manners and customs of the country, as well as the plants and animals, were matters of curiosity to the Governor, and he had directed me to attend to them; but I protested to him that the force and number of the troops, or the strength of the country, were points so totally indifferent that the Governor had desired me not to make the smallest enquiry about them; considering, from the distance of the countries, the opposition of the climate, and other circumstances, that Bengal had as little to fear from Tibet as Tibet had from Bengal. I told him to represent strongly to Tashi Lama the slight he unmeritedly threw upon the Governor by refusing me admittance into his country; and with all the different arguments I used I endeavoured to interweave his own interest as the best stimulus to his zeal.

I wrote to Tashi Lama by the return of his people. Having no munshi [secretary and translator, in this context capable of writing in Persian], I was obliged to do it in Bhutanese; and as I was ignorant of his temper and real disposition, I thought it best to make the letter as short as possible. It was to the following effect:

I was honoured with your letter on my way to Tashichodzung, and my heart was rejoiced with the accounts of your welfare. Your servants, who now return to your presence, will inform you of the satisfaction which the Governor, my Master, received from your letter, and that by your interposition a peace was concluded between the English and the Deb Rajah which will last for ever. In this time of general satisfaction, I am arrived thus

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far with an answer from the Governor, and some tokens of his regard. He is desirous of cultivating the friendship of a man whose prayers are offered for the good of mankind and whose offices are employed in accommodating their differences. For this purpose am I sent. If I am refused admittance into your Presence, my heart will be cast down and the head of the Governor will be covered with shame. Being without a munshi I am unable to write further particulars; but the Gosain will represent them to your enlightened mind.

By the advice of the Gosain, I desired him and the messenger to apply for only three or four servants in my passport. After drinking a cordial dram together, we parted; and the messenger, the Gosain and Padma set out on their journey, while I remain quietly at Tashichodzong, waiting for their answer.

Although it is foreign to the purpose, I cannot help mentioning a circumstance which the Gosain told me in one of our conversations. The Deb Rajah, in the war with the English, applied to his neighbours for assistance, representing it as a common cause that "the English attacked him today and would attack them tomorrow". The Nepal Rajah accordingly offered to invade the country towards Patna, but the Deb Rajah wanted the assistance to be given on the side of [Cooch] Behar, in consequence of which Gorka (the title of the Rajah of Nepal) sent 7,000 men. Mistrustful, however, of his power and ambitious character, they were not allowed to enter the Bhutan territories. The King of Assam promised also to contribute his aid; and a Rajah near Sylhet actually commenced hostilities. Tashi Lama was also solicited, but being averse from war and bloodshed he refused his assistance, and employed his mediation to bring about the peace.

About a month after the departure of Tashi Lama's servants the Deb Rajah received a letter from Chanzo Cusho, who has the executive administration under Tashi Lama, informing him that he had despatched a messenger to Lhasa on the subject of my journey, and would acquaint him of an answer as early as possible, and recommending in the meantime that I should remain at Tashichodzong.

I some time after this received a letter from Tashi Lama. This letter may be found in the book of Persian correspondence of 1774<sup>4</sup> [and, also, in No. 4 below].

The Deb Rajah afterwards received another letter from Chanzo Cusho

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4. The reference to the Persian correspondence letter book was probably inserted by Alexander Dalrymple when he had this Bogle material in his hands in the 1790s.

acquainting him that the Government of Lhasa having consented to my proceeding into Tibet provided I came only with a few attendants. Tashi Lama was in consequence to send Padma, who had been down in Calcutta, and some other of his servants to wait for me at Pharidzong which is the frontier of Tibet.

I had experienced so many inconveniences from the want of a person acquainted with the country and the language that I had some time before written to Calcutta on this subject and determined to wait the arrival of a Kashmiri merchant from Rangpur [Mirza Settar], who was on his way to join me in obedience to the Governor's orders. He did not reach Tashichodzong until towards the end of September. I then prepared for my journey, took leave of the Deb Rajah and was next day to have taken leave of Lama Rimpoché when an insurrection in favour of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], the former Chief, obliged me to delay my departure.

During the latter part of my stay at Tashichodzong I had some conversations with respect to trade, and represented the Governor's desire to extend the commercial intercourse between Bengal and the northern countries of Asia through the channel of the Deb Rajah's kingdom; but as I could bring them to no final point, and as my negotiations with Tashi Lama must lead the way and regulate my conduct with respect to the Deb Rajah, I considered it unnecessary to put down what passed, reserving it until my return when I shall have to renew my application to the same effect and be able to obtain more determinable answers.

I set out from Tashichodzong on the 13th of October and arrived with Tashi Lama on the 9th of November.

### 3

#### **Deb Rajah of Bhutan to Hastings, received Calcutta, 5 August 1774<sup>5</sup>**

From the Rajah of Bhutan. Has been placed on the masnad [throne] on the death of the Rajah Dharma. His country is in a flourishing state and he is anxious to cultivate the friendship of the English. Has accommodated the two English gentlemen who were sent to the Tashi Lama. The latter is not a Rajah but a priest and has therefore no authority in the government of the country. His region is under the suzerainty of the King of China,

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5. Imperial Record Department, *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. IV, 1772-5, Calcutta 1925, p. 217, No. 1199.

who keeps two harkarahs with the Tashi Lama. No person is admitted to the country without a passport from the King. In reply to his letter the Tashi Lama wrote to him that he was unable to permit these gentlemen to enter the country without a passport either from the King or the Rajah of the province. Requests the Governor to recall them. The climate of his own country is not good and they may suffer illness if they remain there for a long time. Sends a piece of cloth for the Governor.

4

**Substance of a letter from Tashi Lama to Bogle, who received it at Tashichodzong and sent it on to Calcutta, where it arrived on 8 August 1774<sup>6</sup>**

The Tashi Lama to Mr. Bogle. Is glad to hear that he has arrived at Cooch Behar and intends to proceed to him. His country is under the dominion of the King of China who has ordered that no Indian, Mughal, Pathan or European should be admitted into it. Regrets his inability to see him and requests him therefore to go back to Calcutta. Letters etc., if he has any for him, may be made over to some one travelling this way. Will send a representative to his (the addressee's) country when the summer season is over.

5

**Lt. D. Williams to Bogle, 17 August 1774, Cooch Behar<sup>7</sup>**

**Note.** Lt. Williams was in command of the Company's troops in Cooch Behar.

I have received your favour of the 27th of July. All your servants are arrived, and I have stationed them agreeable to your desire. I am really much concerned to hear the account your servants give of your situation; that you can hardly procure any provisions whatever that's eatable; and likewise that your cook has left you. I now take the liberty of sending you a maund of biscuits, and likewise two dozen of Madeira, which I beg you acceptance of. I have likewise sent you a cook and a washerman, with soap

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6. *Ibid.*, p. 218, No. 1205.

7. Among the Bogle papers in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.



etc., as your servants acquaint me that you cannot procure anybody to wash your clothes, which must be very disagreeable. I am sorry that you did not acquaint me of your situation, as I have a baker, buttermilk etc., and would take a pleasure in supplying you with biscuit or any thing else that you might be in want of. I send you this small supply for the present, and beg that you will command me in any thing you have occasion for, as my situation will enable me to send you things much sooner, and with less trouble, than your friends at Dinajpur. Your servants complained to me of want of pay. I have advanced them thirty rupees which they say is sufficient. Inclosed I send you some Europe news, which is all that I have as yet received. Make my compliments to Mr. Hamilton. I remain with wishing you health, success and a safe return.

## 6

### History and Government of Bhutan

**Note.** This section combines Bogle's journals with portions of a letter to one of Bogle's sisters, undated, from Tashichodzong. It is based on Bogle's experiences during his first visit to Bhutan, in 1774; and it was probably written during or just after that visit.

So far from being barbarian which with transalpine arrogance is too often considered as the lot of every native unknown to Europeans, I found a little state governed by a regular and strict police, independent by the situation of the country, and subject to an elective government which though absolute was checked by the free spirit of the people, unawed by mercenary troops, and apt to rebel when treated with oppression. The inhabitants living in a country where a subsistence is with difficulty obtained, with little money, with less ambition, and bartering the different necessaries of life by trade, or an intercourse with strangers and under a very strong sense of religion, are industrious, faithful, hospitable, honest, grateful, and brave. This last quality they showed in some engagements with the English forces into which they were drawn by the ambitions of the former Rajah, and for which they expelled him from the country. An instance of this kind, however, seldom occurs. The Chief raised to the Government, often at an advanced age, and destitute of any forces but the inhabitants of the villages, has few inducements, and as few means to disturb that tranquillity of his territories by schemes of war and conquest, the fruits of which he himself could enjoy but for a short life without being able to transmit them to his posterity.

The three great sources of expense in Government, a standing army, a splendid court, and the salaries of officers, are inconsiderable in Bhutan. The first is unknown, the genius of the people, and their policy, being little turned towards foreign operations, and the country naturally almost inaccessible, being defended only by the inhabitants who are trained to the use of the bow, and bound to follow the standard of their Chief. The simplicity of the manners, and the sequestered situation of the country unresorted to by strangers leaves little room for the second; and the same causes, if they do not altogether prevent the third, serve at least greatly to confine it. The principal drains on the public treasury, then, are an annual payment made by the Deb Rajah to the Lama of Tibet, which the one styles a donative, the other a tribute, and the establishment of a numerous body of priests, whom it is much in the interest of the Chief to gratify.

As the charges of the Government are small, the revenue raised by the people is proportionally moderate. The taxes are levied by a certain rate upon each family; and this simple mode of collection however repugnant to the refined principles of our English Constitution, leaves them unencumbered with a heavy expense of officers, and precludes the necessity of employing a numerous body of subjects in a profession so useless to the state and so vexatious to the people.

In ancient times this hilly country was parcelled out among a number of independent chieftains. A Lama from the north united them under one government, and introduced his religion among them. His death gave birth to three lamas. His body fell to the share of one; his heart to another; and his mouth or word to a third. Upon the death of these holy men, their souls pass into the bodies of children, who, after a strict examination into their identity, are recognized; and thus a succession of saints under various forms, but animated by the same spirit, have continued, at different intervals, to enlighten this corner of the world. The periodical return of the Lamas to the earth is undeterminate. At present there are only two, viz. the body and the heart. The word died about twelve years ago, and having never since appeared, it is uncertain whether his soul may not be swallowed up in that ineffable spirit, of which it is only an emanation.<sup>8</sup>

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8. The reference here is to the creation of the Bhutanese state in the 17th century by Ngawang Namgyal who took the title Shabdrung. The Shabdrung's death, probably in the middle of the 17th century, was followed by a fifty year period when it was held in Bhutan that the Shabdrung was not dead but in a state of retreat. Recognition of the Shabdrung's death was accompanied by the doctrine of multiple of reincarnation, leading to at least two distinct lines of incarnation, the "mental" and the "verbal", the former being known in the British records as

The Lamas are first in rank, and nominally first in power. They enjoy a joint and coequal authority; and in all their deliberations are assisted by the clergy.

The apparent wisdom of this system is evident. In other governments, to qualify a person for the supreme administration requires a course of study and observation too long for human life; and after all, the waywardness of subjects will dispute his commands; but in Bhutan the chief magistrate is instructed by the experience of ages, and his orders carry with them all the weight which on this account they deserve.

But the time and attention of these holy men being engaged in the duties of religion, the executive part of government is entrusted to a person styled Cusho Depon.

The various occupations to which the wants of a refined and luxurious people give rise, are little known in this country. The number of mechanics is inconsiderable; there is hardly any distinction of professions. The same arm which at one time is employed in tilling the ground, at another is lifted up in its defence; and the arrow which has killed the wild goat or the musk deer, is now pointed against the breast of an enemy. Every family is acquainted with most of the useful arts, and contains within itself almost all the necessaries of life. Even clothes, which is a considerable article in so rude a climate, are generally the produce of the husbandman's industry. At one season he and his sons carry the fruits of their ground, and barter them for the wool of Tashi Lama's country. This is spun, dyed, and wove into cloth, by his wife and daughters; the family are clad; and what remains is either disposed of to his neighbours, or transported, at a different season, with his musk and horses, to Rangpur, and exchanged for hogs, salt fish, coarse linen; or for dyes, spices, broadcloth, and other articles which may enable him to carry on his trade to Tibet with greater advantage.

The inhabitants, therefore, may properly be divided into three classes:

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the Dharma Rajahs, in theory (and sometimes in practice) superior to the Deb Rajahs. There was also a religious chief in the person of the Je Khenpo, appointed usually for a three year term to preside over Bhutanese religious life and in some ways the equal of the Deb (Desi). Bogle knew this official as the Lama Rimpoché. There may well have been some confusion in Indian-based accounts of Bhutan between the Dharma Rajah and the Je Khenpo (possibly by Markham, for one). One of the Shabdrung Incarnations in 1774 was the Shabdrung Lama, according to Bogle a child of seven years of age. A third Incarnation, whom Turner and his companion Davis called Lam-Geysey, had reappeared by 1783. For an excellent brief summary of the complexities of Bhutanese government in Bogle's day, see: Leo E. Rose, *The Politics of Bhutan*, Cornell 1977, Ch. I.

the priests, the servants or officers of government, and the landholders and husbandmen. The priests are formed from among the body of the people. They are received at an early age; instructed in the arts, and initiated in the mysteries of the profession for which they are destined. When admitted into orders, they take a vow to live chaste, to kill no living creature, and to abstain from eating animal food on the day on which it is killed. The second class comprehends ministers, governors of provinces, collectors, and all their train of dependents. These, though not absolutely prohibited from marriage, yet, finding it a bar to their preferment, seldom enter into that state. They are taken, like the priests, from families in the country; are bred up in the palaces under the patronage of some man in office, by whom they are fed and clothed, but receive no wages; they seldom arrive at places of trust or consequence till far advanced in life; and having passed through all the different gradations of service, it is no uncommon thing to see a minister as expert in mending a shoe or making a tunic, as in settling the business of the nation. The landholders and husbandmen, although by far the most numerous class, and that which gives birth to the other two, are entirely excluded from any share in the administration. They live at home, cultivate their lands, pay taxes, serve in the wars, and beget children who succeed to honours to which they themselves could never aspire.

Among these different classes, the priests, in point of political importance, hold the first place; and independent of that influence which their holy character and superior learning give them over the minds of a superstitious people, enjoy privileges so extensive that the chief power appears in fact to reside in their order. The Lamas, though nominally supreme in the government, yet, as they owe their appointment to the priests, are tutored by them from their earliest infancy, and, deriving all their knowledge of public affairs from them, are entirely under their management. The right of electing the Deb Rajah is vested in the superiors of their order, jointly with the Lamas. He is bound to consult with them as to peace or war, and in general to take no measure of consequence without their advice and approbation. He is accountable to them for the exercise of his power, and holds it only during their pleasure. Their sacred profession, so far from disqualifying them from the conduct of civil affairs, is the means of advancing them to it. They are often appointed to the government of provinces, employed as ministers, or entrusted with other offices of the first consideration in the state. The Chief is frequently chosen from the sacerdotal order, or if from among the lay officers is immediately received into it. As the priests are taken from among the subjects at large,

and keep up an intercourse with their respective families, they naturally retain an influence in every part of the country, and in all their measures are sure to be supported by the people. The late revolution in the government affords a striking proof of their authority; and by accustoming the people to look up to them for the redress of their grievances, serves also to confirm it. The institution of castes and every other hereditary distinction being unknown in this country, offices of power are the only source, of preeminence; and this system of equality, while it prevents the violent commotions to which the rivalry of pride and ambition gives rise, leaves no competitor to dispute the dominion of the priests. Thus the power of the clergy, founded on deep-rooted prejudices and pretensions of divine origin, interwoven in the nature of the constitution, and supported by the uniform spirit of an order that never dies, is likely to be as permanent as it is considerable.

At the head of the clergy are three Lamas styled in Bengal holy Rajahs. They are said to have been originally sent down from heaven, and in order to render their character as sacred as possible, the priests have fallen on a device more ingenious than any which the infallible succession to St. Peter could invent. As the transmigration of souls is taught by their religion, that of a Lama upon his death is supposed to animate the body of a child then born. Some years pass before he discovers himself. At length a boy whom the clergy have pitched upon, and previously tutored, appears, and declares that he is this Lama. To prevent any appearance of imposition, some trinkets belonging to his predecessors, being mixed with others, are shown to him, which if he can distinguish he is immediately recognised, invested with all the honours that belong to the character he has assumed, and initiated in all the mysteries of that religion over which, as soon as he come of age, he is jointly to preside. These holy men, however, appear seldom in public, and being entirely under the influence of the superiors of the clergy, enjoy all the ensigns of dominion without the reality. In this Government the nominal power is given to the Lamas; the executive is entrusted to the Deb Rajah.

Enquiries into the religion of pagan natives are generally unavailing as they are difficult. In the affairs of life where mankind act from reason and experience, or even from passion, an account of their conduct and opinions in whatever age or region they are placed exhibits a lesson curious and instructive. But when Human Reason with its limited faculties attempts to investigate the ways of God, and form systems of theology, it serves only to expose its own weakness, in vain imaginations and childish conceits. The opinions of a Socrates or a Plato may be an exception; these

are the ideas of a philosopher not a natural religion.

The Bhutanese, like their neighbours the Hindus, believe in a multitude of deities whom they represent under the most grotesque shapes, and with heads and hands innumerable. Their features bespeak them of a Chinese extraction. To examine into their different powers and characters is a task which I am unwilling to undertake. They believe, however, in the existence of one supreme Being who created the world; in a place of happiness to which extraordinary holiness admits a man after death; and in a place of misery to which the abandoned by wicked are condemned for a longer or shorter period according to degree of their depravity. The soul of the rest of mankind whose activities neither entitle them to so great rewards nor deserve such punishments are supposed to pass through the bodies of different animals. Yet they refrain not from eating flesh, although they are thereby liable to feed upon the body of a relation or a friend. They use beads for their prayers like Roman Catholics; they say Grace at their meals and even when they drink a dish of tea; their sacrifices are offerings of fruits, milk, oil, etc.; and with all their absurd mythology, and whimsical ceremonies, they fail not to inculcate many important points of morality.

But although the Deb Rajah is liable to be deposed by the clergy, instances of this seldom occur; and his authority in the internal government of the country appears to be very complete. The appointment to offices, the collection and management of the revenue, the command and direction of the military force, and the power of life and death, are vested in him. The scantiness, however, of his revenue, which it is difficult to increase, the want of mercenary troops, the nature of the country, the free spirit of the people, and his own advanced age when he is raised to the government, are strong obstacles to his becoming independent.

The provincial governors are entrusted with a very ample jurisdiction. The police of the country, the levying of taxes, and the administration of justice, are committed to them. Complaints against them are seldom preferred or attended to; and their judgments are revised by the Chief only in capital cases, or others of great consequence. They are not continued long at one station. They live in a large palace, are surrounded by priests and officers, and their durbar is an epitome of the court of the Chief.

As the public revenue is small, the expenses of government are proportionally moderate. The officers receive no salaries; the troops, composed of the inhabitants trained to the use of the bow, and bound to follow the standard of their Chief, are supported at a trifling charge; and pomp and luxury being unknown, the expenses of the court are inconsiderable.

The principal drains, then, upon the public treasury, are an annual payment to Tashi Lama, and the establishment of a numerous body of priests, whom it is much the interest of the Chief to gratify.

The taxes, moderate in themselves, are rendered still less oppressive by the simple manner of gathering them. Every family, according to its substance, is rated at a particular sum, which is often received in produce; and this mode of collection, however repugnant to the refined ideas of European policy, leaves them unencumbered with a heavy expense for tax-gatherers, and precludes the necessity of employing a numerous body of subjects in a vocation so useless to the state and so vexatious to the people.

The simplicity of their manners and their little ambition concur with the precepts of religion in preserving the Bhutanese from many vices to which many polished nations are exposed. Theft and every other species of dishonesty to which lust of riches gives birth, are generally hardly known; and murder, which in this country proceeds generally from a sudden quarrel or burst of passion, and in general is the effect of anger, not of covetousness, is also uncommon. The punishment for this last crime is drowning; and as in quarrels both parties are commonly at fault, it is usual to tie the body of the person killed to that of the murderer and throw them into the river together, that being deprived of those general rites which are performed over such as die a natural death, a more striking example may be given to others. The manner of punishing suicide in England is in great measure similar to this. The celibacy of a large part of the people, however, is naturally productive of many irregularities, and the coldness of the climate inclines them to an excessive use of spirituous liquors.

The nature of the Government, as well as the religion and language of this state is I understand much the same in the country to which I am going [Tibet].

Deb Judhur [Zhidar] was raised to the government about seven years ago. Having been employed in different enterprises against the neighbouring chiefs, and having filled the highest offices in the country, he acquired a considerable degree of wealth and importance before his succession to the Chiefship, and owed his election more to intrigue and a dread of his power than to the free choice of the clergy. A rooted enmity, founded on a natural opposition of interest, took place between him and Lama Rimpoché. The executive power was in his hands; the supreme authority and control were claimed by the other. His bold and restless spirit was unable to brook the cautious maxims of priests, and he endeavoured by every means to render himself independent of their authority. With this view he strengthened his connection with Tashi Lama

and the Rajah of Nepal; he endeavoured to secure the friendship and protection of the Emperor of China, by circulating his seal in the country; he kept Lama Rimpoché in a state almost of imprisonment; he transacted the most important business without the advice of the priests and seldom employed them in any of the departments of government; and he engaged in wars with his neighbours, and filled his coffers with the booty which he thereby procured. But his administration, although more spirited than that of most of his predecessors, was far from being popular. The inhabitants, obliged by the custom of the country to serve without pay, were harassed with his military enterprises, from which he alone reaped advantage: the law by which upon the death of an officer of government his money and effects escheat to the Rajah was by him carried rigidly into execution; and the clergy, excluded from all share in public affairs, and treated with neglect, encouraged the general discontent, which was kept from breaking out only by the boldness and activity of his measures.

At length he attempted the conquest of Cooch Behar. His undisciplined militia was unable to cope with regular troops; but being unaccustomed to ill fortune, he continued the war in opposition to the remonstrances of the clergy and his most experienced counsellors, and exerted every effort to render it more successful. The burdens which these extraordinary services imposed upon the inhabitants were rendered still more insupportable by an unforeseen accident. The palace of Tashichodzong was burned to ashes; and Deb Judhur [Zhidar], in order to render himself famous by rebuilding it in one year, pushed on the work with a severity little suited to the distressed situation of the country. The people everywhere gave vent to their complaints; and Lama Rimpoché and his party, seizing the opportunity of his being absent with the army, deprived him of the government, issued orders to seize his person, and elected the present Chief in his stead. He received the news of this revolution while at Buxaduar with Tashi Lama's messengers, and immediately betaking himself to flight, escaped by a bye road to the neighbourhood of Lhasa. One or two of his principal officers were taken and put to death. The rest of those who were most obnoxious followed their master's fortunes.

By this revolution Lama Rimpoché and his party regained that influence in the government to which, by the constitution, they consider themselves entitled. The Chief, whom they had raised and supported, submitted implicitly to their pleasure; the Emperor of China's seal was suppressed, and the war in [Cooch] Behar immediately discontinued. Many of the priests, however, continued attached to Deb Judhur [Zhidar], who, though jealous of the power of their order, was often liberal to individuals; and



they were dissatisfied with an administration that was parsimonious as well from the genius of the persons who conducted it as the situation of their affairs. For the wealth and effects of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], either from the fear of driving him to extremity, or of giving offence to Tashi Lama, under whose protection he had taken refuge, remained untouched; while the public treasury has been exhausted by the war, and the country from the same cause was little able to replenish it. Such as had held offices under the former government were equally disaffected. At first several of them had been continued in their employments by the Lama Rimpoché; but afterwards, either from a suspicion of their fidelity, or in order to provide for his own friends, they were dismissed, and allowed to retire to their houses. There they carried on a secret correspondence with the exiled Chief and the priests in his interest, and concerted the plan of an insurrection.

Lama Rimpoché, though ignorant of the circumstances of this conspiracy, was no stranger to Deb Judhur's [Zhidar's] pretensions to the government. He had received letters from him asserting his claim, warning him upon no account to touch his property, and desiring him to quit the house which he had built, as he intended to return to take possession of it, and to cut down his corn as soon as the harvest was ready. The Rajah of Nepal had refused to acknowledge the present Chief; and Lama Shabdong [one of the multiple reincarnations of the Shabdrung], a child of seven years old, who had been received by Tashi Lama about twelve months before as a check upon Lama Rimpoché, was tutored to declare for Deb Judhur's [Zhidar's] restoration, and to refuse all sustenance unless it was agreed to. Everything, however, was still quiet in the country, when the Deb Rajah set out for a castle about a day's journey from Tashichodzung, accompanied by Lama Shabdong,<sup>9</sup> whom he was afraid to leave in the palace surrounded by the malcontent priests.

The night after his departure was pitched upon by the conspirators for executing their designs; and they hoped, by surprising the palace and getting possession of Lama Rimpoché and the superiors of the clergy, to strike at once a decisive blow. The former governors of Tashichodzung and Tongsa, with about 250 men, were to have made the attack from without, while their associates within set open the gates, and otherwise

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9. The Lama Shabdrung was at this time a boy aged about seven. The Lama Rimpoché (the Je Khenpo), head of the clerical establishment, was about 35 years of age. The Je Khenpo, during his term of office, seems to have acted as a kind of Regent for a Shabdrung Incarnation when he was a minor.

facilitated the attempt. But their scheme being discovered, and several of the priests immediately put to death, they hastened to Simtoka, a castle about five miles from Tashichodzong, and made themselves masters of it without resistance. Here they found arms, ammunition, provisions, and some treasure; and being next day joined by about sixty priests, who found means to escape from Tashichodzong, they had the boldness to advance almost to the gates of the palace.

As soon as the Deb Rajah was informed of these particulars he returned to Tashichodzong and prepared to oppose the insurgents. He has assembled men from every part of the country; he has collected in the palace a large magazine of stores; he has burnt some villages which were favourable to the enemy; and his principal officers, with a considerable body of troops, are now endeavouring to reduce Simtoka. This enterprise, however, may cost him some trouble; for the place, although not fortified, is strong by its situation, and may stand out for some time against an attack carried on with swords, bows and arrows, and a few matchlocks.

But while each party thus has recourse to arms in support of their cause, they neglect not to urge their respective titles by dint of argument. The friends of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], after expatiating on his great abilities, contend that the government of this country is held for life; that the instances of a Chief being deposed are so few, and attended with such peculiar circumstances, that they cannot be construed into a precedent; that besides, supposing such a power is really vested in the clergy, it is in the whole body, but that Deb Judhur [Zhidar] was expelled by only one of the Lamas and a junto of the priests, without being heard in his defence, while he was absent, and upon unjust pretences; that the rebuilding of the palace is a service which the subjects are undoubtedly bound to perform; and its being expeditiously finished was equally convenient to Lama Rimpoché and the priests as to the Chief; that so far from his persisting in the war, he had applied to Tashi Lama for his mediation to bring about a peace, and was actually employed for that purpose at the time of the revolution.

Lama Rimpoché's party, on the contrary, insist that as the privilege of electing the Chief resides in Lama Rimpoché and the clergy, they certainly have a right to control his conduct and to remove him for maladministration; and that the history of this country furnishes examples of their having opposed and even put the Chief to death. They enlarge upon the severity and oppression of Deb Judhur's [Zhidar's] government, his disregard of their advice, and, to crown all, they urge that he endeavoured, by introducing a foreign seal into the country, to render this

state, naturally free and independent, a province of the Chinese Empire.

## 7

### **Suggestions Respecting Bhutan and Assam, (written before Bogle's arrival in Tibet)**

The country that has been the scene of our military operations against the Bhutanese [in 1773] extends over a distance, as troops march, of about 85 miles. A great part of this tract consists of almost impenetrable jungles and immense forests of sal trees, and, taken at the rate of 9 cos from the mountains, forms that strip that by the treaty is ceded to the Bhutanese. This country is intersected by numerous nullahs and small rivers, deep and rapid. The great rivers are the Tista, Manshi, Tursa, and Baidak. All these rivers, the Tista excepted, run in a south-eastern direction into the Brahmaputra, and are navigable for six months of the year as high as within 10 cos of the foot of the mountains; but their not communicating with the Ganges renders the fine timber on their banks but of little value. The produce of this strip, where cultivated, consists of rice, mustard seed, tobacco, some opium, and about 40,000 maunds<sup>10</sup> of fine cotton annually; to the eastward it yields some black pepper and munga silk. The country, however, is extremely populous. The trade carried on with the Bhutanese is by way of barter. They pay little or no revenue to the Deb Rajah, and living easy under his government, are much attached to the Bhutan interest; and, indeed, from the nature of their situation, they can never be independent of it.

Our troops having acted in this tract of country was the reason of their having suffered so much, as it is low and unhealthy through the whole year. The water, however, is in general very good; but the great moisture of the air, and the great and sudden changes of the weather, occasion the frequency of intermittent fevers of the most obstinate kind. It is to be remarked that the Bhutanese are as subject to them as our troops, and never, if they can avoid it, remain in the low country during the rains.

I would beg leave to recommend, should there ever be occasion again to employ troops against the Bhutanese, a different mode of carrying on

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10. In Bogle's day the Bengal maund, containing 40 sers, weighed about 82 lbs. Avoirdupois. In 1787 the East India Company introduced another maund, the Factory maund, of slightly lesser weight, 74 lbs. 10 oz., 3 Factory maunds making exactly 2 cwt. Elsewhere in India there were other maunds in use, in some cases weighing half the Bengal maund.

the service to that which was followed. Acting on the defensive serves only to protract the service, and from the number of small detachments necessary to form the chain of posts for covering so extensive a frontier, such a course occasions great expense to Government, extreme fatigue to the troops, and gives the enemy every advantage they could wish, especially as they can depend on ample supplies from the country between their posts and the hills, and have always a secure retreat in them.

For these reasons acting offensively is to be preferred. There are two ways in which this may be done; either by penetrating into their country at once, or else by seizing and garrisoning the passes of Chichakotta, Buxaduar, and Repuduar; for though they reckon eighteen passes, these are the principal ones.<sup>11</sup> Three companies would be sufficient to garrison each of them, and a flying detachment of five companies would answer the purpose of supplying provisions or exchanging the garrisons if necessary. The passes of the Chamurchi and Repu duars are the most practicable, although that of the Buxaduar is the most frequented, owing to its central situation, and being opposite to Bulrampur and the nearest to Rangpur. The troops should be ready early in November to take possession of these posts; and I am firmly of opinion the Bhutanese would submit to any measures we should think proper to dictate to them; but in case they proved obstinate, there would be time to follow the other alternative, by entering their country and finishing the expedition before the rains set in. If there were two complete battalions employed on this service, I think it would be best to act separately, entering the two passes I have mentioned above. There would be no occasion for troops in [Cooch] Behar whilst they were in Bhutan, as they would draw the whole force and attention of the Bhutanese. The Bhutanese have only six hundred men in pay as soldiers; but though their government is elective, they hold their lands by military service, and every man in their country is a soldier when called on. In short, the feudal system prevails amongst them in its full force. One custom amongst them is remarkable, and, I believe, peculiar to them. When they rise to any post of honour and trust in their country they are separated from their families, and never after permitted to hold any intercourse with them, lest their attachment to their children should induce them to attempt rendering the government hereditary in their families.

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11. The reference here is to the Bhutanese Duars (the word meaning literally door or entrance), of which there were eighteen, eleven adjacent to Bengal and seven adjacent to Assam.

Should an expedition against them ever take place, everything necessary should be provided before the troops enter the jungles, that they might not contract those diseases incidental to that climate, and which they would not fail to do if they remained any time in it.

The greatest difficulty that would attend an expedition of this nature would be the carriage of provisions and ammunition. Twenty-five or thirty days is as little as they could think of entering the hills with, and from the nature of the service a larger supply of ammunition would be required than the same number of troops would require for any other service. If guns could be carried they would be of great use. This would be difficult, and if at all done must be by elephants.

But supposing all the success that could be expected should attend, an expedition into Bhutan, I can see no great advantage that could redound from it to the Company further than what they now enjoy - possession of [Cooch] Behar and quiet from the Bhutanese. The trade carried on is scarce an object to the Company; as for keeping possession of any part of it if conquered, or forming a settlement there, I consider it as impracticable unless done with the consent of the Bhutanese, which I believe will never be obtained. Attempting it by force will never answer. The difficulties are insurmountable, at least without a force and expense much greater than the object is worth. This does not arise from the power of the Bhutanese. Two battalions, I think, would reduce their country, but two brigades would not keep the communication open, and if that is cut off the conquest could be of no use. In all the schemes that I have heard of for an expedition to Nepal this has been overlooked, on a supposition that if a conquest was effected, all the rest would follow of course; but that, I am convinced, would not be the case, and when the natural strength of the country is considered this will appear still more forcibly. For those reasons I am no advocate for an expedition into these countries unless the people should commence hostilities, and then it should be done only with a view to reduce them to peace on such terms as should appear honourable and advantageous to the Company; and this would be easily effected by acting vigorously for one season.

The objections I have made against an expedition into Bhutan hold good with respect to Nepal and Lhasa, for this sole reason, that a communication cannot be kept open; and should our troops march into these countries, they must consider all communication with the low country out of the question till they return.

With regard to our treaty with the Bhutanese, I am of opinion they will adhere firmly to it, as they are, I believe, fully convinced of their inability

to carry on a war against the Company; and I am of opinion the battalions in [Cooch] Behar may be withdrawn if wanted for other service, because while the Bhutanese continue quiet they are not wanted. Should they recommence hostilities, our battalions would not be sufficient to reduce them. It would not, however, be amiss to keep two subalterns with two companies in [Cooch] Behar fort for another season, when, if the Bhutanese strictly observe the treaty, they may be recalled.

An open trade with Bhutan, Nepal, and Lhasa has been considered as an object worthy the attention of Government, but the jealousy of the nation prevents this being obtained on pacific terms, and the natural strength and situation of these countries render it extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to do it by force. An open and unrestrained trade and intercourse with Assam, considered separately, is an object of much greater consequence; but when it is known that it will include all the advantages attending the other, it must of course become a much more desirable object. The Bhutanese, the inhabitants of the Gorkha Rajah's country, the natives of Lhasa, and of many other countries lying north-west of the Brahmaputra, carry on a constant trade to Assam. A settlement formed on the banks of the Brahmaputra, near the capital, would become the mart for supplying all the countries lying north-west of the Brahmaputra as well as those countries to the eastward of that river; it would open an ample field for commerce in general, and, considering its northern situation, would greatly increase the demand for European commodities, and particularly for broadcloths. Assam produces numerous and valuable articles for exportation; the jealousy of the government has, however, restricted the trade in such a manner that it is of little advantage to Bengal, the whole amount not exceeding six or seven lakhs per annum, and this mostly by way of barter; and when a balance arises we pay it in silver. By this means the trade is rather disadvantageous to the countries under the government of the Company, especially as most of what we receive of them is for home consumption. The natives of Assam are permitted to trade in the Company's territories without let or molestation; the same liberty may therefore be demanded in return from their government, and, if refused, insisted on with justice. Their jealousy of foreigners, however, would probably induce them either to refuse or evade this request; but it might be easily enforced, without the risk of failure that would attend the hill expeditions.

Assam itself is an open country of great extent, and by all accounts well cultivated and inhabited; the road into it either by land or the Brahmaputra lies open. The communication can always be preserved. The

advantages of a river navigable the whole year, whether considered with regard to commerce or war, are obvious, as the great objection against entering Nepal, etc., arises from the difficulty of keeping open the communications; so, on the other hand, the easy access to Assam, whether by land or water, invites us to the attempt. The distance of a settlement near the capital would not be more, or but very little more, from the Presidency than it is from there to Patna; the trade would be carried on entirely by water, and as the banks of the Brahmaputra are covered with fine timber, all the boats and vessels necessary for carrying on the trade might be built on the spot, by what I learnt from the people who had been permitted to trade to that country. The river known to us by the name of Brahmaputra is but a branch of that great river. It divides above the capital of Assam. The body of the river runs in an eastern direction; and it is said the banks of it are well furnished with teak timber of great size. This would prove highly advantageous, whether for importation, building of vessels either for trade or for pursuing our discoveries down that great river; and if pursued would open a trade and intercourse with countries unexplored by Europeans. I think there is little reason to apprehend a failure if the attempt is made, for should unforeseen difficulties arise with regard to supply of provisions on our first entering the country, this might easily be remedied by drawing them from Bengal for a short time; and I have not a doubt but our troops would meet with ample supplies after they had once passed the frontiers of Assam. The stores necessary for the expedition would be conveyed by water, and the boats so employed would be sufficient to procure any provisions that might be wanted on our setting out.

Assam, as I have already observed, yields many valuable articles for exportation. Gold is a considerable article of inland trade; Bhutan, Lhasa, and Nepal supply them both with gold and silver, and when the restrictions against exportation are taken off, it must give the balance of trade greatly in our favour. Supposing it should not turn out so great an object as I have represented, still it cannot with reason be doubted that it would more than reimburse the Company, by the advantageous terms they would be glad to give us in point of trade, setting all acquisition of territory out of the question; and I make no doubt but that, a few months after our entering Assam, the troops might be paid and provisioned without making any demands on the Company's treasury. It may be objected that a great part of what I have advanced is unsupported by proofs; but it ought to be remembered that in all the valuable discoveries and acquisitions that have been made these have always at first been wanting. We have, however, the

reports of those that have visited that country, and that is more than is usual in cases of this nature. Probable conjecture has been found sufficient to stimulate enterprising spirits, and success has generally justified their undertakings of this kind when conducted with spirit, resolution, and prudence.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **Bogle-Hastings Correspondence on Bhutan June 1774 to January 1775**

#### **1**

##### **Bogle to Hastings 4 June 1774, Cooch Behar**

Nothing occurred on my journey from Calcutta worthy of your attention. I arrived here on the 1st of this month, and found the Bhutanese [representative at Cooch Behar] and his associate with Mr. Purling [Charles Purling, Collector at Rangpur]. We propose setting out tomorrow for Buxaduar, and to proceed from thence to the Fort where the Deb Rajah resides, which is reckoned thirteen days journey from Bengal. As far as I can collect from the people here, the rains will not be any obstacle to my journey. I conceive the best channel for conveying letters will be through the hands of the officer in command here [Lt. Williams], who will send them to Buxaduar, and I shall endeavour to settle with the hill people the method of forwarding them to Lhasa. In this manner I expect to receive such commands as you may be pleased to honour me with.

#### **2**

##### **Bogle to Hastings, 4 June 1774, Cooch Behar**

As I shall have no opportunity of being supplied with money after my entrance into the hills, I have, by the advice of Mr. Purling, taken currency

to the amount of Sicca<sup>1</sup> Rupees 8807.5.6, for which I have given him a draft upon you.

### 3

#### **Bogle to Hastings, 17 June 1774, Chuka, five days journey from [Cooch] Behar**

I was prevented by some heavy showers of rain from setting out on the day proposed; and did not leave [Cooch] Behar till the 8th instant.

The great difficulty of procuring coolies among the hills nearest Bengal, which are very thinly inhabited, has detained me several days on the road. At Buxaduar Mr. Hamilton and I were furnished with tangun horses [native hill horses]; but the steepness of the mountains seldom permitted us to use them. The rains although pretty severe have been no hindrance to us: the road becomes dry immediately after it, and the bridges thrown across the rivulets, now greatly swelled, preserve the communications open. The natives have behaved to us with great hospitality, and have furnished everything which the wild state of their country could afford.

The place where the Deb Rajah resides is only four days journey from hence. I intend to stay there some days and to do myself the honour of addressing you again.

### 4

#### **Bogle to Hastings, 16 July 1774, Tashichodzung**

As my former letters would acquaint you merely with the progress of my journey, I have delayed again addressing you, until an interview with the Deb Rajah should enable me to convey intelligence of more importance. I wished also, at the same time that I transmitted an account of some unexpected obstacles which have occurred, to accompany it with such lights, as might give you full information of my views, and of the measures which I judged it necessary to follow.

Some days before I reached Tashichodzung a messenger from Tashi Lama arrived, and delivering a Persian letter, informed me that he had

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1. The Sicca Rupee was, originally, a coinage stamped with the seal or insignia of the Moghul Emperors in Delhi. It was adopted by the English East India Company and, in Bogle's day, had come to refer to the coinage in use by the Company in Bengal.

charge of another from his master to you, and of some presents which would arrive in the evening. [See: Chapter IV above, No. 4, for an abstract].

Being without a munshi [Indian secretary or scribe capable of handling official diplomatic correspondence, including that in Persian], and little accustomed to the character in which it was written, Tashi Lama's letter cost me some pains to decipher.

He begins with his having heard of my arrival at Cooch Behar on my way to him, and, after some formal expressions of satisfaction, informs me that his country being subject to the Emperor of China, whose order it is that he shall admit no Moghul, Hindustani, Pathan [Afghan], or Fringy [European], he is without remedy, and China being at the distance of a year's journey prevents his writing to the Emperor for permission; desires me therefore to return to Calcutta, and if I have any effects (*mál*) to carry them with me, but to retain the letter in my hands, and that he will afterwards send a person to Calcutta.

As I cannot make out some of the words at the end of the letter, I beg leave to refer you to the original, which I have now the honour to enclose [the text is missing]. The Gosain [Purangir], who was down in Calcutta, received also a letter from Tashi Lama, in which the reason assigned for delaying my journey was, as he told me, the great distress his country was in on account of the smallpox, which had obliged him to quit his usual place of residence and retire to the northward.

These two objections, however different, admitted of the same interpretation. Tashi Lama was averse to my visit, and the violence of the smallpox, or an order of the Emperor of China, served for a pretence as well as any other. But from what cause this proceeded I could not then discover. The messenger could give me no information. He was one of the people who had been sent by Tashi Lama to Cooch Behar. He had gone from thence to Patna and Gaya, and as he was returning home said he was met by some of Tashi Lama's people, who delivered to him the despatches to convey to me. The account he gave of the remainder of his journey was equally unsatisfactory, and he reported the place of Tashi Lama's residence to be at a much greater distance than was consistent with the receipt of his letter, written after the news of my arrival at Cooch Behar had reached him. I determined to come to no resolution before I had seen the Deb Rajah.

In the evening Tashi Lama's people pressed me much to receive the silks, etc., which he had sent as presents, and to take charge of his letter to you. But as this would have been giving up the point, and would have left

me little room to combat those difficulties which I must endeavour to overcome, I excused myself, and begged they would accompany me to Tashichodzong.

The Deb Rajah was then about 15 miles from this place, employed in the performance of some religious duties. I wrote to him with the news of my arrival, and waited two days for his answer. He mentioned the occasion of his absence; that he would be glad to see me, and had given orders for my accommodation. I entered Tashichodzong next day; but his confidential people being with him, all business was suspended until his return, which was not before the 4th instant.

When I considered the situation in which the Deb Rajah stood with respect to the Company, I built great hopes on his ready assistance to remove the objections to my journey, and that his connection with Tashi Lama would render it effectual. But I was soon undeceived; for the Deb Rajah, at my second visit, adopted and even magnified the affair of China; advised me to lay aside all thoughts of prosecuting my journey; and seconded Tashi Lama's desire that I would return to Calcutta. This produced many remonstrances on my part. I had frequent conversations with him and his officers, and left nothing undone to interest him in my behalf; but I could succeed no further than to obtain a letter from him to Tashi Lama, which was given with so much reluctance that I am not sanguine about its good effects.

In this situation my hopes of seeing Tashi Lama were chiefly founded on the Gosain. As my journey had been undertaken upon his assurances, he was engaged in honour to see it accomplished, and I endeavoured to strengthen this principle by more powerful motives. While he remained at Tashichodzong he could be of no service, and I readily consented to his proceeding to Tashi Lama.

The messenger renewed his solicitations that I would take charge of his master's despatches, and I advised him to proceed to Calcutta. He could not, he said, without orders. I excused myself from receiving them on the same grounds, and they are to remain with the Deb Rajah until I am favoured with your commands. Tashi Lama's letter to you, from a Bhutanese copy which was read to me, contains nothing more than the prohibition of the Court of China with respect to Fringies. By declining to receive it I preserve a stronger hold upon Tashi Lama, keep the negotiation open, and leave you at liberty to act as you may think proper.

The Gosain set out yesterday, in company with the messenger and the Bhutanese, who was down in Calcutta, and carried the Rajah's letter, with a few lines from me to Tashi Lama. They are obliged, they say, to travel by

an indirect road on account of the smallpox, and may be twenty days before they arrive with Tashi Lama; but they assure me of an answer in less than two months.

The Deb Rajah urged my return to Bengal as strongly as he decently could, but the expectation of answers from Tashi Lama and from Calcutta afforded me reasons to prolong my stay.

I beg therefore to be informed of your pleasure in the event of Tashi Lama persisting to refuse me admittance into his country, as well as in regard to his letter and presents.

## 5

### Bogle to Hastings, 17 July 1774, Tashichodzong

From a separate address, and an account of my negotiations which accompany this letter, you will be able to judge fully of my situation.<sup>2</sup>

I wish it was in my power to explain with more certainty Tashi Lama's motives for refusing me admittance into his country. I am persuaded it proceeds from a suspicion of Europeans. I can perceive this disposition in the Deb Rajah. On the journey I was sometimes led over rocks and mountains, with a plain road running parallel on the side of the river. The Gosain and his baggage were once carried the one way, I the other. My servants are not suffered to purchase the smallest article but through the Deb Rajah's people. Some persons who visited me before his arrival have been forbidden since. His extreme solicitude about my departure, besides other circumstances too trifling to mention, are all strong symptoms of this jealousy. Now, as Tashi Lama's country and this are contiguous, the language and faith the same, the Deb Rajah acknowledges Tashi Lama to be his religious superior, and sends him annually money and produce, which the one styles a donative, the other a tribute. In accounting for the conduct of two persons so intimately connected, one may almost venture to decide from analogy. One day in conversing with the interpreter he said to me, I believe unwittingly, that he did not imagine Tashi Lama would allow me to enter his country, as the neighbouring Rajahs would advise him against it.

It once occurred to me, that the word *mâl* in Tashi Lama's letter might

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2. See Ch. IV above, No. 2.

mean [trade] goods.<sup>3</sup> I could not think that he would apply it without some other epithet to your presents; and as to my cloths, there surely was no occasion to desire me to carry them to Calcutta. He might have been told that I was bringing up a large trade and therefore objected to my entering the country. But the whole letter being so loosely expressed and never being able to meet with anything to strengthen this opinion except the following circumstances, I think the other much more probable. A servant of the messenger's applied to me, on the day after his arrival, to purchase some broadcloths on the part of his master. I gave him a strong answer, and that I was surprised that he should come to me on such an errand. The messenger afterwards disowned his servant's acting by his orders; but I thought it was intended to sound me; for the Gosain and his associates had plenty of cloth, and, if he really wanted it, he would naturally have applied to them. Should there be any foundation for this conjecture, the Gosain can give Tashi Lama full satisfaction on this head, as neither I nor my companion have a Rupee worth of anything for sale.

I have been obliged, on account of this jealous eye with which all my actions are viewed, to pursue a conduct very inconsistent with the purposes of my mission, and to appear little inquisitive, particularly about the country or its trade, lest it should have raised up fresh obstacles to my journey to Tashi Lama. His servants, however, being now gone, and my continuance here for two months certain, I am no longer under the necessity of following the same plan. But this place is very little favourable to my commercial inquiries. It is monkish to the greatest degree. The Deb Rajah, his priests, his officers, and his servants, are all immured like state prisoners in an immense large palace, and there are not above a dozen other houses in the town.

In order to counterbalance in some measure the disadvantages, and to enable me to make the most of my short stay here, I would wish to have some person, independent of the Deb Rajah, and acquainted with the Bhutanese and their language, to assist me in my enquiries and in my negotiations with the people of this country who appear to be stiff necked, and averse from innovations. When I left Bengal, I expected to proceed without obstruction to Lhasa, and I depended on the Gosain to act as my

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3. According to Wilson, *Glossary, op. cit.*, p. 322, *mal* had the rather specific Indian meaning of government revenue, which would certainly have puzzled Bogle. It could also, however, Wilson goes on, mean "wealth, goods, effects, property of any description", with, in traditional Muslim law at least, the implication of being cash and goods rather than land. Bogle was probably correct, therefore, to read into the word, as used in the Tashi Lama's letter, the concept of trade goods.

agent and interpreter. But things have taken a different turn; and I must confess, I am diffident of making out my journey. The Deb Rajah, uneasy at my remaining in his territories, will press my return, and I see few advantages in my present situation, that would attend my sojourning in this narrow and sequestered country; and as few pretences upon which I could urge such a request. In this event you may perhaps think proper to employ a deputy of a different colour, and I would wish, before my departure, to take such preparatory steps, and to be able to follow such orders, as you may be pleased to give me.

Upon my leaving Dinajpur, Mr. Lambert [then supervising the East India Company's Factory at Dinajpur] gave me a letter to Muhammad Taki, the Dewan at Rangpur, who came to visit me.<sup>4</sup> In speaking about Bhutan, he sent for a merchant who had been all over the country as far as Lhasa, spoke the language, and who, he said, would go with me if I chose it. I put a good many questions to him, and he seemed an intelligent man; but afraid of hampering myself with the Gosain, I did not ask him to accompany me. It has since occurred to me that this person may be a useful agent. His residence in Bengal will serve to secure his fidelity, and in any scheme for extending the communication and intercourse between that country and Bhutan, it would be easy to give him such encouragement as would make it his interest to promote it. The trade between Lhasa and the low country is, as I am informed, principally carried on by the way of Patna and Nepal through the means of Mughals and Kashmiris, in which, as he can have no concern, he would have no scruples in endeavouring to discover new sources; and the narrow traffic in which he himself is now engaged must lie very wide of those distant and extensive channels which you wish to open.<sup>5</sup>

Should this proposal meet with your approbation, might I request you

4. The Dewan of Rangpur was the leading Indian (as opposed to European) civil financial official in this important Bengali town, now acting on behalf of the East India Company but formerly on behalf of the Moghul Empire. At this period the chief Company political officer of this region, the Collector (in 1774 Charles Purling) was stationed at Rangpur while the main Company trading outpost, or Factory, in this part of up-country Bengal was at Dinajpur (at this time headed by Mr. Lambert), some 40 miles to the east.

5. Bogle's remarks about the disinterestedness of this merchant, Mirza Settar, are strange in that Mirza Settar *was* a Kashmiri who had acquired considerable experience of the Indo-Tibetan trade: he certainly knew other major Kashmiri players in this game, notably Kashmiri Mal who was the chief official of Chait Singh, Rajah of Benares, who was at this time (though Bogle may not yet have known this) himself represented by an agent at the Tashi Lama's court.

would be pleased to issue your orders to Muhammad Taki [Dewan of Rangpur] to encourage this person to proceed to me, and to despatch him without delay. I have taken the liberty to write to Taki on the subject, but have no reason to think that either he or the merchant will enter heartily into it unless they know that it is your pleasure.

A letter from the Deb Rajah accompanies this address. His orders have procured me every assistance and accommodation since I came into his country; and he has given me a very gracious reception. In case you approve of my ideas about employing the merchant, I beg to suggest to you the propriety of transmitting an answer to the Deb Rajah, through him to me. It will obviate any objections, and will facilitate his journey through this country, where no stranger can travel but by special leave. Such commands however as you may honour me with, you will please recommend directly to Lieutenant Williams [commanding the East India Company troops] at [Cooch] Behar.

I will not lengthen this letter, nor intrude upon your time, with my acknowledgements for the many favours which you have heaped upon me. You will do me the justice however to believe that I am filled with the warmest sentiments of gratitude, and of zeal for your service.

## 6

### **Hastings to Bogle, 10 August 1774, 1st letter, Fort William (Calcutta)<sup>6</sup>**

Your letters have relieved me from a state of great anxiety. I shall be happy to learn that you are allowed to proceed, but entertain small hopes of it. If it is true that you cannot pass without an order from the Emperor of China, perhaps you might be allowed to leave some persons with the [Deb] Rajah till such a licence could be obtained. Or I should be well pleased to obtain a footing even at Tashichodzong and make that a central point of communication with Lhasa. The [Deb] Rajah would find his account in it. Having engaged in this business, I do not like to give it up. We should both acquire reputation from its success. The well-judging world will be ready to class it with other wild and ill-concerted projects if

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6. See: G.R. Gleig, *Memoirs of the Life of the Right Hon. Warren Hastings, First Governor-General of Bengal*, 2 Vols., London 1841, Vol. I, p. 415. The spelling has been modified as in the other letters in this Chapter. It is interesting that many of the documents reproduced by Gleig are not to be found in the archives. Perhaps Gleig sent the originals off to the printer; and they were never returned?



it fail. Make what promises or engagements you please with your Rajah; I will ratify them. Leave no means untried but hazard neither your person nor your health by an obstinate perseverance. If you cannot proceed, return; but, if you can, leave some one for one of the purposes which I have above recommended. Do not return without something to show where you have been, though it be but a contraband walnut, a pilfered slip of sweet briar, or the seeds of a Bhutanese turnip, taken in payment for the potatoes you have given them gratis.

## 7

**Hastings to Bogle, 10 August 1774, 2nd letter, Fort William<sup>7</sup>**

Your despatches of the 16th and 17th ultimo arrived yesterday, two days after I had received a letter on the same subject from the Deb Rajah.

Last night I wrote to Mr. Lambert and Mohammad Taki to send their merchant [the Kashmiri Mirza Settar] to you without delay [from Rangpur], but it appears uncertain that he will be able to reach you before your departure.<sup>8</sup> If, however, he should arrive in time enough to be employed in the manner you proposed, I leave him entirely to your disposal, trusting to your wisdom and discretion for the line which must be laid down for him.

The letter which I wrote to the [Deb] Rajah on receipt of his will probably determine your departure before this can reach you, but in the case of its finding you still at Tashichodzong, your conduct will be regulated by another letter to the [Deb] Rajah which accompanies this, and of which I enclose a copy, and by the ideas which I herein express the whole meaning and extent of which you will easily comprehend. In your conversation with the [Deb] Rajah you will endeavour to improve my sentiments and in decent respectable language represent to him the affront to my name and authority in sending back my messenger without suffering

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7. BM Add Mss 29,117, Hastings Papers.

8. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. IV, No. 1472, has the following entry under the date 13 December 1774:

From Taqi Khan [at Rangpur]. Has received Governor-General's letter desiring him to send the merchant named Khwajah Sattar, who is well versed in the Bhutanese language, to Mr. Bogle. Agreeably to his orders sent for the said merchant and took him to Mr. Lambert who appointed him on Rs. 100 a month and having furnished him with servants etc., sent him to Mr. Bogle. Is confident that the merchant will be of great service to that gentleman.

him to arrive in the Presence of Tashi Lama to whom he bears letters and presents in return for the like received from him. You will also urge the unfriendly aspect that this conduct bears so soon after a cessation of hostilities which evinced to all the world that my desire was only to live in peace and amity with him instead of pursuing those advantages in war which my superiority in troops and in arms put in my power. Tell him that his country offers no temptation to me, but in its commerce and the means of extending through it an intercourse with distant nations; that this alone is what my nation desires of his; that a free trade and intercourse of this sort would be of mutual benefit and of more value to the English nation than the possession of mountains and rocks. If the [Deb] Rajah should take up this argument and endeavour in his turn to urge the impracticability of the English ever succeeding in the conquest of his country and magnify the dangers from the cold air, the mountains, the rains and the ice, you may tell him fairly that these are no danger for us, that we live in a cold climate and are accustomed to mountains and woods, that our troops who languish in the heats of Bengal recover in the cold and piercing airs of his country, that this was seen in the late campaign of Cooch Behar, that they who were sick and dying in the jungles at the foot of the mountains recovered their health and strength the moment they had passed them and begun to ascend the high ground.

If after all the argument which you can employ the [Deb] Rajah should remain obstinately determined for your return, you will then take leave and come down to Cooch Behar with all convenient speed, bringing your letters, presents, etc., along with you; and by no means must you charge yourself with those of Tashi Lama, telling him you dare not carry to me the letters of one who has refused to receive mine. It is possible you may have set out before this letter could arrive at Tashichodzong and that it may meet you on the road: in that case you may judge how far it may be expedient to return thither or to stop where you are, advising the [Deb] Rajah of the despatch you have received, and waiting his answer.

In all this business I do not mean that my orders shall be understood as absolute and peremptory. I trust everything to your prudence and conduct, and above all enjoin you in no shape to endanger your personal safety in executing any of the orders I now give; but if you have any apprehensions of any sort, you are by temporising and yielding to necessity to secure your retreat in the easiest and quietest manner possible, reserving for me to pursue such measures afterwards with the [Deb] Rajah as I shall judge necessary.

## 8

**Bogle to Hastings, 20 August 1774, Tashichodzong**

In my former advices I did myself the honour to acquaint you with the obstacles which Tashi Lama raised to my journey, on pretence of an order from the Emperor of China forbidding the admittance of Fringies into his country. I am now happy to inform you that he has at length consented to my proceeding, and I propose to continue my journey as soon as I have the pleasure of hearing from you. On this occasion I have no letters from the Lama myself, but the Deb Rajah informs me that the Gosain and the Bhutanese who were down in Calcutta are sent by Tashi Lama to wait my arrival on the borders of his country. Having received no letters from Calcutta except immediately upon my arrival, I am afraid of some miscarriage, and therefore forward these few lines by a harkara.<sup>9</sup>

## 9

**Bogle to Hastings, 25 August 1774, Tashichodzong**

I have been favoured with your commands of the 6th [?10th]<sup>10</sup> instant accompanying a translation of your letter to the Deb Rajah. As I did myself the honour to address you fully on the 17th ultimo, along with the Deb Rajah's letter I am extremely mortified to find that it had not reached you; at a loss to account for this miscarriage, and heartily concerned at the trouble which it has occasioned.

A few days before the receipt of your orders the Deb Rajah read to me a letter from Tashi Lama, informing him that he had written to Lhasa, the residence of Dalai Lama, on the subject of my passports, and had obtained their consent to my proceeding on the journey, provided I came with only a few attendants; and that he (Tashi Lama) had therefore sent back the Gosain, who had been down in Calcutta, to wait for me on the borders of

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9. Harkaras (as has already been noted on p. 62 above) were specially trusted messengers employed on confidential diplomatic or commercial business (as opposed to dak runners, mere message carriers). In most parts of India harkaras belonged to a particular Brahmin caste. There are various spelling for the word in Anglo-Indian English, such as Hurcarra, Hircarra, and the like.

10. A confusion as to dates of particular letters may well have arisen from the fact that more than one copy was sent by different hands and different routes at different dates.

his country.

Of these circumstances I had the pleasure to advise you in my letter of the 20th instant.

I propose therefore to set out in a few days, and have accordingly written to Tashi Lama's people; but before I get to the northward I am anxious to know the cause of the miscarriage of my letters that I may guard against it in future. This is a subject however with which I will not trouble you, and intend forwarding copies of my former letters and addressing you fully by a different conveyance.

The Deb Rajah's former solicitude about my return to Calcutta has occasioned his unfavourable report of this climate in which I have enjoyed uninterrupted good health.

## 10

### Hastings to Bogle, 8 September 1774, Fort William<sup>11</sup>

I have just received yours of the 20th ultimo and read in it with infinite pleasure that you had surmounted all your difficulties, and were preparing to proceed to Lhasa.<sup>12</sup> I feel myself more interested in the success of your mission than in reason perhaps I ought to be; but there are thousands of men in England whose good will is worth seeking, and who will listen to the story of such enterprises in search of knowledge with ten times more avidity than they would read accounts that brought crores to the national credit, or descriptions of victories that slaughtered thousands of the national enemies. Go on and prosper. Your journal has travelled as much as you, and is confessed to contain more than [John] Hawkesworth's three volumes [a reference to the three volume edition of papers relating to Captain Cook's first voyage, which appeared in 1773]. Remember that everything you see is of importance. I have found out a better road to Lhasa, by way of Deggerchen and Coolhee [?]. If I can find it I will send it to you.

Be not an economist if you can bring home splendid vouchers of the land which you have visited.

The superior council and judges are not yet come; I expect them about November. You shall not suffer by your absence; I am your wakil, and will

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11. Gleig, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 415-416. Spelling modified.

12. Here is a clear indication that Lhasa was Bogle's original objective. It is unlikely that at this point Hastings appreciated the distinction between Lhasa and Tashilhunpo.

take care to seize every occasion for your advantage. Your fellow-traveller [Hamilton] has my good wishes, and God bless you.

## 11

### Bogle to Hastings, 18 September 1774, Tashichodzong

I have been made excessively happy by the letter which you did me the honour to write of the 10th ultimo. Mr. Lambert [at Dinajpur] informs me that he was to despatch the man from Rangpur with your commands of the same date. Intend therefore to await his arrival, and will delay addressing you fully until the receipt of your letter. How I shall succeed I cannot yet pretend to foresee, but you will be pleased to be assured that I will exert myself to the utmost and endeavour to show myself worthy of the confidence which you have placed in me. At present the Deb Rajah puts off answering your letter till the arrival of the Buxa Subah who is soon expected; and on pretence of this, and the great annual festival, declines all business. I confess I am not sorry at this delay, both from my expectation of lights and assistance from the Rangpur man, and that I may perhaps be able to avail myself of some points which I understand the Deb Rajah has much at heart and has been pressing through the Buxa Subah, though he has never mentioned them to me.

From several circumstances I am persuaded the former objections to my journey took their rise, or at least were cherished by the Deb Rajah. Even after Tashi Lama's permission he endeavoured to dissuade me from proceeding. I believe there is no great cordiality between the two. Tashi Lama's mediation in regard to the peace was procured during the government of his predecessor, who, upon his expulsion in February last, fled to him, and is now in his country.<sup>13</sup> The present Chief is jealous of this, as well as apprehensive of the Nepal Rajah taking him by the hand, and would be glad if Tashi Lama would give him up, when I imagine there would be little scruple of throwing him into the Pachu-Chinchu, as was done with a Chief who was deposed about forty or fifty years ago.

The question you are pleased to ask about the Dharma Rajah has emboldened me to send you the enclosed account and I will afterwards beg leave to lay before you a more particular one. But on this and such like occasions I must crave your indulgence being liable on many accounts to

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13. It is clear from Bogle's account that Deb Zhidar, following his overthrow and deposition as Deb Rajah (as described in p. 90 above), still at this point retained some support from the Tashi Lama.

form an erroneous judgement. I am at a loss to discover Aga Deo unless it means the former Deb Rajah who is represented by the reigning party as a man cruel, fond of wars and wedded to his own opinion. The present Chief is of a very different character. He is about 55 years of age, and having been bred a priest, continues, now that he is raised to the Government, to pass a great part of his time performing religious ceremonies, in counting his beads, and repeating his offices.

I beg to inform you that there is no person with the Deb Rajah who understands Persian.

I will not neglect the sweet briar and walnuts; but they stand the better chance of succeeding the farther the season is advanced.

## 12

### **Bogle to Hastings, 8 October 1774, Tashichodzong**

I have been honoured with the receipt of your commands of the 9th [? 10th] August<sup>14</sup> by the merchant from Rangpur [Mirza Settar].

In several conversations with the Deb Rajah and his officers I represented to them your wish to extend the intercourse between Bengal and the northern nations, and the advantages which would thence arise to this state; that Bhutan, being the channel of communication, would naturally share in the benefits of an extensive commerce; that on your part you would be ready to afford all encouragement and protection to the trade from this; and that a mutual intercourse between the two countries would serve to strengthen and cement that amity and good understanding which is now happily established. In answer, I received assurances of the Deb Rajah's wish to cultivate your friendship; that I was now on my way to Tashi Lama, and that on my return he would listen favourably to any proposal from you.

From the information I have been able to gather concerning the trade between these countries and Bengal, I am led to think that Tashi Lama will be more disposed to promote its extension than the Deb Rajah; and that if I can succeed in gaining the former's consent, he may be brought to exert his influence, which is very considerable, with the latter; that as my deputation is immediately to Tashi Lama, who is undoubtedly the religious superior and pretends to a paramount authority also in the temporal

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14. Hastings wrote two letters to Bogle on 10 August 1774. Perhaps this is one of them, the other being referred to in Bogle's letter to Hastings of 18 September 1774.

affairs of this state, he will naturally expect that he should be considered as the principal in these negotiations; and the present unsettled state of this country is abundantly unfavourable for concluding them here. For these reasons I intend to try my success at Tashi Lama's court before I push the Deb Rajah any further.

The adherents of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], the former Chief, have made an insurrection in his favour, which, although at present not formidable, occupies fully the attention of the Deb Rajah and his officers. I have therefore taken leave, and propose to continue my journey northwards tomorrow.

I have been solicited here to request that you would be pleased to issue your order that the annual caravan from this country to Rangpur may meet with every assistance and protection, and have free liberty to trade according to ancient custom. As the peace has been so lately concluded, it would be a satisfaction to the Rajah to receive your parwana to this purpose before the departure of the caravan.

I beg you will be pleased to lodge a credit in my favour with Mr. Lambert, lest I should have occasion to use it in the country to which I am going.

I cannot conclude this address without mentioning the Deb Rajah's ready assistance and civilities to me of late.

## 13

### **Bogle to Hastings, 11 October 1774, Tashichodzong**

The merchant from Rangpur [the Kashmiri Mirza Settar] arrived here a few days after my address of the 18th [September]. I hope to benefit considerably by his knowledge of the language and commerce of these countries.

You will be pleased to excuse me for not furnishing you at present with full information concerning the trade of Bhutan, as I expect to pick up much more certain intelligence when I get to the northwards. I will beg leave, however, in this letter to mention some points which appear immediately necessary.

The annual caravan from this [country, Bhutan] to Rangpur is principally an adventure of the Deb Rajah, his ministers, and provincial governors. Each of them sends an agent, with his tanguns, musk, cow-tails, coarse red blankets, or striped woollen cloth half-yard wide. The other Bhutanese go under their protection. The returns from thence, consisting

chiefly of broadcloth, spices, dyes, Malda cloths,<sup>15</sup> go almost wholly into Tashi Lama's country either as tribute or in trade. In the last case they are converted into pelong handkerchiefs, flowered satins, tea, salt, wool, etc.

This traffic is very beneficial to the Deb Rajah and his people, and they are jealous of it. One can show them the advantages their country may receive from an extension of commerce; but it is more difficult to make their own interest appear in it. But Tashi Lama, I believe, has no such warp. His territories, being the heart, ought to benefit by a large circulation of trade and the resort of strangers; and unless his dependence upon China should stand in the way, I would fain hope for some success with him. As to what you were pleased to propose about making Tashichodzung the central point of communication with Lhasa, I consider it only as a *dernier ressort*, and as my way is now open, I have not mentioned it until I can see what is to be done otherwise.

By means of the letter you were pleased to write to the Deb Rajah, I have been able to get a little into the good graces of these people. Before that they considered me merely as a messenger to Tashi Lama. I feel however that I shall stand in need of some more credit with them to enable me to treat to any advantage on my return, and while you are pleased to place so much confidence in men I confess I would wish the Deb Rajah to know, that next to a direct application to yourself he has no better channel to solicit through than your servant and deputy.

I understand that the Deb Rajah from his apprehensions of Gorkha has been applying to you on that subject. Neither he nor his ministers however have ever mentioned a syllable of the matter to me. But you will excuse me if I suggest to you, the opening which this application, in whatever light you receive it, may give to promote your views in regard to trade. For as Nepal is the principal channel for the trade between Bengal and the Northern Countries, and as any strengthening of your connection with the Deb Rajah must naturally give umbrage to Gorkha, you may think it necessary to secure a communication through the former country, before you run a risk of obstructing it in the latter; and the knowledge of this from you ought naturally to induce the Deb Rajah to grant it. I beg leave also to mention to you the circumstance of Gorkha's exactions upon

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15. Malda was a major centre for cloth production and distribution in Bengal, situated to the east of the Ganges just on the Indian side of what is today the Bangladesh border (Rajshai District) near the modern town appropriately named English Bazar. The English East India Company possessed, in Bogle's day, a factory there, and it was visited by traders from far afield including Armenians based on Isphahan, Pathans from Kabul and Bhutanese.



merchants which is notorious and of which perhaps you may choose to make some use.

The Deb Rajah and his principal officers are so much interested in the success of the caravan, a favourable reception and encouragement to it, and some little attention to their agents, in consequence of your parwana, will be a great means of gaining their good opinion and creating a dependence immediately upon you, without which I can do nothing.

I submit to you therefore the propriety of transmitting to the Deb Rajah a parwana, as mentioned in my address of the 8th instant and informing him, in answer to this letter, of your desire of expanding the trade between his country and Bengal, and that you have empowered me to act with him on this subject.

I am sensible that I ought to make many apologies for the liberty I have now taken; but my heart tells me that I am actuated only by zeal for your service, and the confidence that you are pleased to repose in me makes me flatter myself that you will view my representations in that light.

In order to give you some insight into the grounds of the present despatches in this country, I beg leave to lay before you the enclosed account. I hear of no insurrection but the one at Simtoka [a few miles south of Tashichodzung and dominating the main route from Tashichodzung to Punakha]. The Deb Rajah makes light of it, and says he expects it will soon be obliged to surrender for want of water, there being no wells in this part of the world. As to any opinion I can form it is that unless Deb Judhur [Zhidar] gets foreign assistance he will not be able to make good his point; for it is difficult to raise a country where there is no pre-eminence but in offices. China is at a great distance. Tashi Lama, although I believe he would be glad to serve him peaceably, will hardly go to war on his account. As to Gorka, I can say nothing. The insurgents were very bold for some days, till the Deb Rajah's troops assembled. We had a sight of two or three skirmishes from our windows, and Mr. Hamilton has had plenty of patients, among is the present Governor of Tashichodzung. I have encouraged their applying to him as much as possible, and the Lama, who I believe intends to practice during his absence, has also requested some medicines of him. I am therefore obliged to beg a supply by an indent which Elliot [Alexander Elliot, who was not only Bogle's friend but also acting as his Deputy in his various Bengal posts while he was away on his travels] will present to you. This civil war has detained me longer than I intended, and the Deb Rajah would wish me still to remain here; but Tashi Lama's man is now arrived and I intend to set out tomorrow. As to me, I have no apprehensions. I consider your name, and

that of Tashi Lama, as a sufficient shield.

The more I see of the Bhutanese, the more I am pleased with them. The common people are good-humoured, downright, and, I think, thoroughly trusty. The statesmen have some of the art which belongs to their profession. They are the best-built race of men I ever saw; many of them very handsome, with complexions as fair as the French. I have sometimes been tempted to wish I could substitute their portrait in the place of my friend Padma's.

The Deb Rajah, with all his court and the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, in imitation, I suppose, of their Scythian ancestors, migrate from this place in about two months hence. Their winter quarters are at Punakha [the Bhutanese winter capital], two days' journey to the south-east, and the climate there is so much hotter that it produces mangos, pine-apples, etc., and they say cassia. The palace, I am told, is larger than the one here, and well finished. I am to see it on my return.

There are few trees in this part of the country; but I have abundance of promises from the great men of getting me seeds, and have employed a Bhutanese on purpose. As to plants, I leave them till my return, when the sap will be down, except a slip of sweet brier which goes by this opportunity. There are plenty of cow-tailed cows, but the weather is too hot for them to go into Bengal. I have not been able to get a live musk goat, but have sent a skin, likewise a sentimental cup, or the skull of a Lama guru.

The weather is growing very cold; the thermometer under 50° in the mornings. I have had great benefit from the shawl cloth you were so good as to give me. Lama Rimpoché has now presented me with his yellow satin gown, lined with lambskins, and the Deb Rajah with about a dozen of blankets, so that I am well fortified.

As I am sensible of having already given you too much trouble, I have sent a memorandum of some articles to Mr. Stewart<sup>16</sup> which he will lay before you.

This letter goes under guard. I will do myself the pleasure to address you again from Paro two days journey from this, as the road is more open. [Bogle left Tashichodzung on 13 October 1774].

## 14

### Bogle to Hastings, 16 October 1774, Paro

I did myself the honour to address you on the 11th instant. On the 13th

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16. See below, Ch. XIII, No. 11, for more on John Stewart.

the insurgents at Simtoka, seeing no prospect of any assistance, abandoned it during the night, and took the road over the hills towards Tashi Lama's country. Some of them were taken, but the Chiefs have escaped. Everything is now quiet again. I understand Tashi Lama, although he treats Deb Judhur kindly, absolutely refuses to give him any aid in the prosecution of his claims upon this Government. As to Gorkha, I don't find that he has made any attempts in his favour. During the war in Cooch Behar he took possession of some districts which used to pay a tribute to this State. When the present Deb Rajah claimed them he returned for answer that they were ceded to him by Deb Judhur [Zhidar]. The Bhutanese in return mentioned, I am told, his dependance on the English supporting him and repeated his claim. To this there has been no reply. This is a subject however on which I can afford you no certain information, as all the Deb Rajah's people have avoided mentioning it to me.

I took the liberty of recommending the Deb Rajah's desire to have your parwana for the caravan proceeding to Rangpur, and I have been applied to here by the Paro Penlop that his agent may go to Dinajpur, according to ancient custom. I am aware that some of the Bhutanese would wish to proceed farther, and even to Calcutta. The late war has enlarged their minds. They hope to purchase many articles of trade on better terms there, and I believe also they would be glad to get some firearms. As it is my duty to lay before you whatever occurs to me on the business upon which I am deputed, I beg leave to submit to you that, although you allow their caravan to proceed to Rangpur and Dinajpur as formerly, as a proof of your inclination to protect their trade, that any new concessions ought to be on stipulation; and I confess the privilege of sending their agents into the interior parts of Bengal is one engine I hope to avail myself of with some advantage. I shall have need of them all to bring me to a point in which their own particular interest is concerned.

The trade between Rangpur and Bhutan may extend to about two or two and a half lakhs a year; that through Nepal amounts, I am told, to three or four times that sum. Such husbandmen as join the caravan for Rangpur pay for this permission. There are two or three houses at Rangpur which carry on a trade through this country to Lhasa: the merchant who has joined me [Mirza Settar] is one of them. They are restricted from broadcloth and some other articles. Their dealings may yearly amount to about a lakh of the above sum.

I beg leave to submit the enclosed account to your indulgence, and at the same time to forward some flower seeds with Mr. Hamilton's botanical description of them.

## 15

**Bogle to Hastings, 26 October 1774, Pharidzong**

I had the honour to address you from Paro, and have only at present to inform you of my being safely arrived at the frontier of Tashi Lama's Country.

I take the liberty to enclose some anomalous seeds.

## 16

**Hastings to the Deb Rajah of Bhutan, 28 November 1774**

I have repeatedly heard from Mr. Bogle the news of your welfare, which gave me the greatest pleasure. That gentleman also informs me in the strongest terms of gratitude of the many kindnesses and civilities you have shown to him. This also calls on me for my acknowledgments, as I consider every assistance you have given to Mr. Bogle as an obligation conferred on myself. Accept, therefore, of my sincerest thanks. Agreeably to your desire communicated to me through Mr. Bogle, I enclose you a parwana for the encouragement of any of your subjects who may wish to travel with caravans to Rangpur and other districts under the Company's authority for the purposes of trade. It is my earnest desire that the friendship between you and the Company may be strengthened daily. I have directed Mr. Bogle to settle on his return such articles between your subjects and the Company's as may be most agreeable to you and for your benefit. I shall write you more fully on all these subjects by the return of the caravan.

I send you a piece of cloth as a token of friendship, and request that you will frequently make me happy by the news of your welfare.

Parwana enclosed in the foregoing.<sup>17</sup>

Notice is hereby given to all the merchants of Bhutan, that the strictest orders have been issued to the officers at Rangpur and Ghoraghat dependent on the Subah of Bengal (the paradise of nations), that they do not obstruct the passage of the Bhutan merchants to those places for the purpose of carrying on their trade as formerly, but that they afford every assistance to their caravans. They are therefore required not to entertain the

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17. A parwana, according to Wilson, *Glossary, op. cit.*, p. 404, is "an order, a written precept or command, a letter from a man in power to a dependent, a custom-house permit or pass, an order for the possession of an estate or an assignment of revenue" and the like.

least apprehension, but with the greatest security and confidence to come into Bengal and carry on their traffic as formerly. Placing an entire reliance on this, let them act agreeably thereto.

## 17

### Hastings to the Deb Rajah of Bhutan, 6 January 1775

I have received your letter and understand the contents. It is my most earnest desire to increase and establish the friendship between you and this government on the firmest footing. Nothing shall be wanting on my part to promote this end. I am particularly desirous that your subjects should be encouraged to come into Bengal for the purposes of trade, in consequence of which, at Mr. Bogle's desire, I sent you a parwana for their encouragement. I have lately heard, from report only, that some obstructions have been made to the trade in cotton between your subjects and those of this government, in consequence of which I have written the strongest injunctions to have them removed: by this you will be convinced of my desire to promote your advantage to the utmost, not only on this but on every other occasion. With respect to the accounts, I will take another opportunity of writing to you concerning them. As the distance between us is so great that many obstructions to the trade of your subjects, and causes of complaint may arise, of which I may be wholly ignorant, and as I wish to prevent any such, it would be proper that a vakil should reside here on your part to deliver your letters to me, and to lay before me any representations you may have to make to me.

I send you a pair of shawls, as a token of friendship, of which I beg your acceptance.

## CHAPTER VI

### **The Journey to Tibet: Tashichodzong to Pharidzong, and Pharidzong to Dechenrubje' October to November 1774**

#### **Bogle's Journal**

While I was at Tashichodzong an insurrection broke [out which] was made in favour of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], the former chief; and the disturbances which this occasioned protracted my stay. The malcontents, after a fruitless attempt on the palace of Tashichodzong, seized Simtoka, a castle in its neighbourhood, in which they found arms and ammunition.

There are no cannon in this country. The castles are built on eminences, with lofty and thick walls which have loopholes; the windows are high, project out, and are provided with heaps of stones to throw upon assailants. The doors are strong and secured by bars of iron; the entrance to some of them is by a covered way defended by towers; and they want but the moat and the bridge to resemble the Gothic castles of our ancestors. There are only two ways of reducing them, by fire or by famine. The first appears easy enough, for as there are no arches, the roofs and floors are all of wood. But Simtoka having been built by Deb Seklu,<sup>2</sup> a very popular Rajah, and being full of furniture and effects belonging to the government, it was resolved to blockade it. Troops were accordingly

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1. As transliterated by S. Cammann. Bogle called it Desheripgay, and some modern writers use Dechen Rabgya.

2. Perhaps the reference here is to the 13th Deb (Druk Desi), Chhoegyal Sherub Wangchuk, who held this office from 1744 to 1764.

collected from the distant provinces, and three of the roads were stopped up. The fourth, however, was still open. The Deb Rajah's force increased every day. Deb Judhur's [Zhidar's] party saw no prospect of assistance; and after a siege of ten days they abandoned Simtoka, and being favoured by moonlight, escaped over the mountains into Tashi Lama's country.

I left Tashichodzong on the 13th of October, 1774, the day of their retreat, in company with Mr. Hamilton, Mirza Settar, a native of Kashmir, who had joined me from Rangpur, and spoke the language of this country, the Tibetan Padma, a messenger of Tashi Lama, who had been sent for me, and a servant of the Deb Rajah, who was to attend me to the borders of his country.

Our way was by Rinjipu, commonly called Paro. The direct road is over the mountains, and we were to have gone over it escorted by a guard. This, however, was now unnecessary, and we took the low road along the banks of the Chinchu. It was the same by which we had come from Buxaduar. We passed Simtoka, and came up with a party of the Deb Rajah's men. They halted at a little village, and, their leader sent for us. He had formerly been Kalon, or secretary, to the Deb Rajah, and had been lately promoted to the office of Donyer [Drönyer], or Head Dewan. He enjoys the first place in the Chief's favour, and his sagacity and superior abilities entitle him to it. In anything that relates to the government of his own country, he might be pitted against many a politic minister. As a philosopher, he would twist him round his finger. Of a truth, an ounce of mother-wit is worth a pound of clergy.

The Donyer was sitting on the ground surrounded by his men. He gave me part of his carpet. We had a dram of whisky. He told me of the escape of the insurgents from Simtoka; that he was in pursuit of them by the foot of the mountains, while another detachment had taken the upper road. As soon as we left him, I saw a village on the top of the mountain in flames: it was a punishment for its attachment to the Deb Judhur [Zhidar].

A soldier in Bhutan has not a distinct profession. Every man is girt with a sword, and trained to the use of the bow. The hall of every public officer is hung round with matchlocks, with swords and shields. In times of war or danger his servants and retainers are armed with these. The inhabitants, assembled from the different villages, are put under his command, and he marches in person against the enemy. The common weapons are a broad-sword of a good temper with shagreen handle; a cane-coiled target [shield] painted with streaks of red; a bow formed of a piece of bamboo; a quiver of a trunk of the same tree, the arrows of reeds, barbed, and often covered with a poison said to be so subtle that the slightest wound becomes

mortal in a few hours. Some few are armed with a pike. They put great confidence in firearms; but are not so cunning in the use of the matchlock as of their ancient weapons, the sword and the bow. Their warlike garb is various and not uniform. Some wear a cap quilted, or of cane and sugar-loaf shape, with a tuft of horse-hair stained; others, an iron-netted hood, or a helmet with the like ornament: under these they often put false locks to supply the want of their own hair, which among this tribe of Bhutanese is worn short. Sometimes a coat of mail is to be seen. In peace as well as in war, they are dressed in short trousers, like the Highland philabeg; woollen hose, soled with leather and gartered under the knee; a jacket or tunic, and over all two or three striped blankets. Their leaders only are on horseback, and are covered with a cap, rough with red-dyed cow-tails. They sleep in the open air, and keep themselves warm with their plaids and their whisky. When they go to war or to an engagement, they whoop and howl to encourage each other and intimidate the enemy. They are fond of attacking in the night time. As to their courage in battle, those can best speak who have tried it. I saw only some skirmishes.

We arrived at Lumbolong towards night, the 14th of October. Our room was like a large warehouse, supported by posts. A fire was lighted upon a stone in the middle, and as there are no vents, we suffered as much from its smoke as we benefited by its heat. For want of a more polite entertainment, I sent for some women who had come with the baggage, and had a Bhutan song. There is no giving a description of it; and as I know nothing of music, I could not take it down. It is more like church chimes than anything else. Some of the notes are lengthened out as long as the breath will last; and people used to climbing mountains are far from being short-winded. A battle with fists between our guide and the landlord, the second I have seen here. What a contentious place is Lumbolong!

We left it the next morning, and continued to descend the Chinchu, till it is joined by the Pachu, near Paku. Here we crossed it, and entered the narrow valley through which this last runs rapidly. The mountains along which we passed are bare and rocky, and there are no houses to be seen except the dwellings of some fakirs. On the opposite side is a village, and some wheat fields.

A heavy shower of snow had fallen two days before we left Tashichodzong, and the tops of all the mountains were white with it. The Bengalis, when they got up in the morning, were much surprised at the sight of it. They inquired of the Bhutanese, who told them it was white cloths which God Almighty sent down to cover the mountains and keep them warm. This solution required, to be sure, some faith; but it was to



them just as probable as that it was rain, or that they were afterwards to meet with water hard as glass, and be able to walk across a river. When different climes exhibit such incredible phenomena to the inhabitants of other countries, why should not the accounts of travellers be treated with indulgence, and even the adventures of Sinbad the Sailor be read with some grains of allowance?

We arrived at Essana after midday on the 15th of October. This is a village situated in a small but fruitful valley. Everybody was busy with the harvest. As soon as a field of rice is ripe the water is drained off, and the stream that supplied it diverted into a different channel. It is then cut down with toothless sickles, and is either placed against the narrow ridges which surround the fields and separate them from each other, or it is laid flat upon the stubble-ground. In a few days it is built up in little ricks, regularly, but without being bound. From these it is taken down; a beam is raised breast high, and supported upon two posts; under it a large mat is spread, and the men and women, leaning upon it, tread out the rice with their feet. A different method is used with the wheat, which is bearded. It is tied up in small sheaves. In some places (Kepta) they separate the grain from the straw by burning it; in others (Tashichodzong) they thrash it out with flails. The wheat is reaped in the beginning of June.

In all these different occupations of husbandry the heavy burden lies upon the fair sex: they have a hard lot of it. Besides all this, the economy of the family falls to their share. They have to dress the victuals and feed the swine. They are not much troubled indeed with washing or scrubbing: the fashion of the country renders this quite unnecessary. But not infrequently one sees them with a child at the breast, staggering up a hill with a heavy load, or knocking corn, a labour scarcely less arduous. And with all this bitter draught they appear to have few of those sweetenings which might render it more palatable. They have none of the markets, fairs, churches, and weddings of England; they have none of the skipping and dancing of France; they have none of the devotion of the lower people in other Roman Catholic countries; they have none of the bathings, bracelets, etc., of the Bengali; and yet I know not how it comes to pass, but they seem to bear it all without murmuring; and, having nothing else to deck themselves with, they plait their hair with garlands of leaves or twigs of trees. The resources of a light heart and a sound constitution are infinite.

Proceeding up the Pachu, we arrived at Rinjipu [Paro], the capital of the province, on the 16th of October. I was lodged in a long hall adjoining the temple. The palace is a miniature of Tashichodzong. The valley is large, well cultivated, and filled with detached villages. In one of these there is a

bazaar, the only one I believe in the country, and two Kashmiri houses; but there is no calling it a town.

The government of Paro is the most important under the Deb Rajah. The person who now holds it is a cousin of Lama Rimpoché, who, upon the late revolution, laid aside the habit of a fakir, which he had assumed under the former administration, and returned to worldly affairs. His jurisdiction is very extensive. Besides the districts from which he takes his title of Paro Penlop, the governments of Dellamkotta, Lakhiduar, Chamurchiduar, and all the districts towards Morung<sup>3</sup> are under him. He has the power of life and death in his hands. He repairs once a year to Tashichodzung, and pays a fixed annual revenue to the Deb Rajah; but delivers in no account of his administration. He retains, however, his office only during pleasure, and a mandate from the presence reduces him to the level of other subjects.

The revenue of Paro, as well as of most of the interior districts, is paid chiefly in grain, horses, blankets, etc., and the money comes principally from Lakhiduar, Buxaduar, and other Duars or outlets into the low country. But I must not here pretend to give particulars.

I was waked in the morning with the firing of guns and the war whoop. I thought we had not yet done with our fighting; but it turned out to be only the head of a rebel, which they were carrying into the palace in procession, with a white handkerchief as a flag before it. The two detachments we had met with on the road were now here. The insurgents had mostly got out of their reach; and they were on their return to Tashichodzung. I had a visit from the Donyer and the other commander before their departure. A number of peasants who were concerned in the insurrection had been taken at Paro. The principal ones were plunged into the river. Others compounded for their crimes and were either set at liberty or remained in confinement.

I stayed two or three days at Paro. I visited the Penlop, received a reinforcement of blankets from him, and continued my journey on the 20th October.

We were obliged to make short journeys on account of the coolies. We stopped at Dukodzung on the night of the 21st, and were lodged in the castle, romantically enough situated on the top of a mount. Under most of the windows are hives of bees in the open air. They have cold quarters of it.

Our next stage was Chanon, which we reached on the 22nd. It consists

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3. Morung, the lowland forest tract, or terai, at the foot of the hills of Sikkim and the extreme east of Nepal.

of four or five houses on the banks of the Pachu, surrounded with turnip fields, for which alone this place is famous.

The road all the way from Tashichodzong had been pretty level; we could ride most part of the way. Our next stage was extremely steep; and keeping close to the Pachu, which dashes over rocks, was wet with its spray. One place was very picturesque. High perpendicular rocks were overhead. The Pachu, now reduced to a large stream, running rapidly by: on the other side a high round mountain, covered with silver firs and pines, intermixed with other trees, red, yellow, and all those colours with which a natural wood is variegated towards the close of autumn. The summits of the hills were white with snow. When we got up to the highest part of the road, we found the sides of the mountains entirely bare, owing, I suppose, to their being exposed to the north wind. We met a flock of sheep, the first we had seen; small, with good wool. We met also droves of cow-tailed cattle; they are used as beasts of burden, and were then carrying skins, with the wool upon them, to Paro, where the coarse blankets are mostly manufactured. They were almost all black, very rough, uncouth make, a large hump, short legs, and the large bushy tail for which they are noted.

There are no inhabitants at Gaissar, a place we arrived at on the 23rd of October. There is only a low house, like a stable without doors. We were obliged to bring our provisions and fuel from the last stage. We required it all to keep us warm. The hills all about were covered with snow; and to mend the matter, a heavy shower of it came on in the night time.

This was all frozen in the morning, and most of our road to Pharidzong [Pagri or P'a-li] was covered with snow. When we got down the hill to the Pachu, we found the stones and bridges hanging with icicles. There were no houses to be seen, and only some herds of cattle feeding on the sides of the valley, which was bounded on the north-west by a hill between two moderate mountains. On reaching the top we found six heaps of stones with banners. They serve to mark the boundary between the Deb Rajah's country and that of Tashi Lama, which now lay before us; plain and open to the north; hilly to the west; behind, to the east and south, mountains. I arrived at Pharidzong on October the 24th.

I found the Bhutanese, who was down in Calcutta, waiting for me. I have dismissed the Deb Rajah's servant, and am to proceed towards Shigatse in a day or two.

The first object that strikes you as you go down the hill into Tibet is a mount in the middle of the plain. It is where the people of Pharidzong expose their dead. It happened, I hope not ominously, that they were carrying a body thither as we came down. Eagles, hawks, ravens, and other

carnivorous birds were soaring about in expectation of their prey. Every village has a place set apart for this purpose. There are only two exceptions to it. The Lamas are burnt with sandalwood; and such as die of the smallpox are buried, to smother the infection: so that three of the five kinds of funerals (and I know no more) which the inhabitants of this world use are known to the people of Tibet.

As we advanced a little farther, we came in sight of the castle of Pharidzong, which cuts a good figure from without. It rises into several towers with balconies, and having few windows, it has the look of strength: it is surrounded by the town. The houses are of two low stories, flat-roofed, covered with bundles of straw, and so huddled together that one may chance to overlook them. There is little to be said for them. The ceilings are so low that I have more than once been indebted to the thickness of my skull; and the beams being very short, are supported by a number of posts, which are little favourable to chamber-walking. In the middle of the roof is a hole to let out the smoke, which, however, departs not without making the whole room as black as a chimney: this opening serves also to let in the light. The doors are full of holes and crevices, through which the women and children keep peeping. I used to give them sugar-candy, and sometimes ribbons; but I brought all the children of the parish upon my back by it. The straw upon the top keeps the house warm. The same style of architecture prevails in the villages upon the road. It has a mean look after the lofty buildings in the Deb Rajah's country; but having neither wood nor arches, how can they help it?

There is no walking out after it is dark, on account of the number of dogs which are then let loose: they are of the shepherd breed, the same kind with those called Nepal dogs, large size, often shagged like a lion, and extremely fierce.

The two Lhasa officers who have the government of Pharidzong sent me some butter, tea, etc., the day after my arrival; and, letting me know that they expected a visit from me, I went. The inside of the castle did not answer the notion I had formed of it. The stairs are ladders worn to the bone, and the rooms are little better than garrets. The governor was dressed in a russet coloured tunic of coarse woollen, and a linen cloth folded and laid upon his bare head. The other, who I understand is a sort of judge, was clad in coarse black cloth. They were seated beside one another upon carpets. The etiquette is much the same as with the Dewans at Tashichodzong.

Four score of Deb Judhur's [Zhidar's] people had taken refuge in this fort. The Deb Rajah sent to demand them, but they were not given up.

The conversation which passed on that occasion was, I am told, as full of the principles of government and the law of nations, as if it had been conducted by Grotius and Puffendorf<sup>4</sup>.

Pharidzong stands in a confined plain, entirely surrounded by hills and mountains, except to the north-east, which allows that ruffian wind free entrance. It is on every account abundantly bleak, and bare and uncomfortable.

My friend Padma was considered here as a great man, and all Tashi Lama's vassals endeavoured by their presents and attention to secure his interest at court. His levees were crowded with suitors; and the night before our departure he invited all his friends, and gave them a grand entertainment. I knew nothing of this, and sent for him to play a game at chess. My servant found him dressed out in the governor's khilat [dress of honour or office], seated under a piece of green silk for a canopy, surrounded by all the peasants and peasants' wives, singing, dancing, and drinking, and as great as a prince.

[On 26 October 1774 Bogle transmitted to Hastings in Calcutta the above account of his journey from Tashichodzong to Pharidzong.]

It was, therefore, the morning of October 27th, 1774, before we set out. Our party was now considerably increased by the accession of Padma and six other of Tashi Lama's servants. Everybody was mounted on horseback, the horses being all geldings, low sized, and quiet, hardy, ill-dressed, unshod. Having got clear of all the dogs and of all the beggars at Phari-dzong, we journeyed slowly over the plain.

One of Padma's servants carried a branch of a tree with a white handkerchief tied to it. Imagining it to be a mark of respect to me and my embassy, I set myself upright in my saddle; but I was soon undeceived, for after stopping at a tent to drink tea with the abbot of a monastery in the neighbourhood of Pharidzong, subject to Tashi Lama, we rode over the plain till we came to a heap of stones opposite to a high rock covered with snow. Here we halted, and the servants gathering together a parcel of dried cow-dung, one of them struck fire with his tinder-box, and, lighted it. We sat down about it, and the day being cold, I found it very comfortable. When the fire was well kindled, Padma took out a book of prayers; one brought a copper cup, another filled it with a kind of

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4. Hugo Grotius, 1583-1645, a Dutch pioneer of the concept of international law; and Samuel Puffendorf, 1632-1694, German jurist who built on the ideas of Grotius.

fermented liquor out of a new-killed sheep's paunch, mixing in some rice and flour, and after throwing some dried herbs and flour into the flame, they began their rites. Padma acted as chaplain. He chanted the prayers in a loud voice, the others accompanying him, and every now and then the little cup was emptied towards the rock. About eight or ten of these libations being poured forth, the ceremony was finished by placing upon the heap of stones the little ensign, which my fond imagination had before offered up to my own vanity. The mountain to which this sacrifice was made is named Chumalhari [Jomo Lhari, alt. 7314m.]. It stands between Tibet and Bhutan, and is generally white with snow. It rises almost perpendicular like a wall, and is attended with a string of smaller rocks, which obtain the name of Chumalhari's sons and daughters.

As the water of the Ganges, or of some refreshing brook, is considered holy among the sun-scorched Hindus, so rocks and mountains are the objects of veneration among Tashi Lama's votaries. They erect written standards upon the tops of them, they cover the sides of them with prayers formed of pebbles, in characters so large "that those that run may read," and like the Jews of old, when they went a whoring after strange gods of the heathen, they get themselves up into high places.

The plain over which we had to ride is covered with gravelly sand. It produced nothing but some tufts of withered grass, which afforded a scanty subsistence to the herds of cattle. The sides of the hills to the westward are perfectly bare: they appear like rocks over which the sand and stones had been heaped, leaving here and there the sharp points jutting out; beyond these you see the high mountains in the Demo Jong [Sikkim] country, among which, I imagine, is the snowy hill seen from Dinajpur and other plains in Bengal. For several days the country bore the same bleak and barren aspect, answering to Churchill's description:<sup>5</sup>

*Far as the eye can reach no tree is seen,*

*Earth clad in russet scorns the lively green.*

The plain cause of this poverty of soil is that God Almighty has so ordered it; but a much more ingenious reason may be drawn from the following circumstances. The coldness of the climate renders fuel a very essential article, and as no wood is to be had, the Tibetans are obliged to use cow-dung, which is carefully gathered from the fields. This is built up in a circular form, or put into a pot with a hole in the bottom. It makes a cheerful and ardent fire when well kindled, and the people are abundantly skilful in the art of managing it, which my own ill success has often shown

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5. Charles Churchill, 1731-1764, poet and satirist who was a contemporary of Warren Hastings at Westminster School.

me to be a very difficult science.

We arrived at Tuna, our next stage, about three o'clock. Some of my servants who walked were so tired that they were brought home on peasants' backs, as I had not been able to find horses for them all. I next day got cow-tailed bullocks, but the Hindus would not ride on them, because if any accident should happen to the beast while they were on him, they would be obliged, they said, according to the tenets of the Shaster [Sastra or Shastra, Hindu sacred law books, e.g. laws of Manu], to beg their bread during twelve years as an expiation for the crime. Memo: inconvenient carrying Hindu servants into foreign parts.

Our road next day [October 28] led us along the banks of the lake called Sham-chu Pelling. It is fed by a large mineral stream, which issues out of the side of a mountain, and extends about eighteen miles from the north to south. It was half frozen over, and well stocked with wild ducks and geese. We also met with some hares, and a flock of antelopes, besides a herd of wild animals called kyangs, resembling an ass, and which I shall afterwards have occasion to describe more particularly.

We should have had excellent sport, but for my friend Padma's scruples. He strongly opposed our shooting, insisting that it was a great crime, would give much scandal to the inhabitants, and was particularly unlawful within the liberties of Chumalhari. We had many long debates upon the subject, which were supported on his side by plain commonsense reasons drawn from his religion and customs; on mine, by those fine-spun European arguments, which serve rather to perplex than convince. I gained nothing by them, and at length we compromised the matter. I engaged not to shoot till we were fairly out of sight of the holy mountain, and Padma agreed to suspend the authority of the game laws in solitary and sequestered places.

The religion of the Lamas is somehow connected with that of the Hindus, though I will not pretend to say how. Many of their deities are the same; the Shaster is translated into their language, and they hold in veneration the holy places of Hindustan. In short, if the religion of Tibet is not the offspring of the Gentoos [Hindus], it is at least influenced by them. The humane maxims of the Hindu faith are taught in Tibet. To deprive any living creature of life is regarded as a crime, and one of the vows taken by the clergy is to that effect. But mankind in every part of the world too easily accommodate their consciences to their passions, and the Tibetans find no difficulty in yielding obedience to this doctrine. They employ a low and wicked class of people to kill their cattle, and thus evade the commandment. The severe prohibition of the Hindus in regard to

eating beef is likewise easily got over. The cows of Tibet are mostly of the bushy-tailed kind [yaks], and having therefore set them down as animals of a species different from the cow of the Shaster, they "eat, asking no questions for conscience's sake." The general principle by which they determine the degree of culpability in depriving an animal of life is very ingenious. According to the doctrine of transmigration, there is a perpetual fluctuation of life among the different animals of this world, and the spirit which now animates a man may pass after his death into a fly or an elephant. They reckon, therefore, the life of every creature upon an equal footing, and to take it away is considered as a greater or smaller crime, in proportion to the benefit which thereby accrues to mankind. According to this doctrine, "the ox who clothes the ground in all the pomp of harvest, the sheep who lends them his own coat, and yields them milk in luscious streams," are slaughtered without mercy; while the partridge and wild duck enjoy the protection of government, and the trout lives secure and unmolested to a goodly old age. The musk goat is condemned, on account of its perfume. The deer and the hare are tried on a double charge, and suffer for their skin as well as their flesh. But I am following out disquisitions foreign from my journey.

A stream of water falls from the Sham-chu into the Kalatso Lake [Gala Tso], which extends about ten miles east and west. A large village, named Kalashur [Kalapangka or Gala], stands upon the bank of it, and another stream runs from it northwards. We kept close to this stream for several days: it falls into the Tsangpo near Shigatse [Xigaze], turning many mills on its way. These are constructed on the simplest plan: a duct is cut in the same manner as in Europe; but the wheel, instead of being perpendicular, is horizontal, and turns the upper millstone, which is fixed to its axle, without any other machinery. There are also several bridges on this river, but very different from the wooden ones we met with among the mountains [in Bhutan]. They are walls, with breaks or openings to let the water through, which are covered with planks or large flags. In the Deb Rajah's country they choose the narrowest part of the river to throw over a bridge: here they take the broadest.

Our route continued almost due north through valleys little cultivated and bounded by bleak and barren hills, between whose openings we saw distant mountains covered with snow. Here and there we saw a few houses, with some spots of rushy ground, or of brown pasture, but not a tree or a plant was to be seen, and the number of ruinous houses and deserted villages rendered the prospect more uncomfortable. At Khangma a few willows were planted round the village. We were lodged in the temple at



the top of the house, which is generally the best apartment. Towards evening we had a visit from a priest who resides at Gyantse [Gyangze or Chiang-tzu], on the part of Tashi Lama, and began an acquaintance which we had afterwards abundance of opportunity to improve. He was dressed in a lay habit, consisting of a red broadcloth tunic, with a cap turned up with furs. He sat about an hour with us, and applied to Mr. Hamilton about medicines.

This village is subject to Lhasa. The house in which we lodged had lately changed its inhabitants. Of fifteen persons who formerly lived in it every one had died last year of the smallpox.

As we generally set out by sunrise, we arrived early at our stages. Dudukpai, the next village, which belongs to Tashi Lama, had also a good many willows about it. The people were all busy building and stacking their straw, and were singing at their work. Our landlords' family seemed to be one of the happiest in Tibet. The house belongs to two brothers, who are married to a very handsome wife, and have three of the prettiest children I ever saw. They all came to drink tea and eat sugar-candy. After night came on, the whole family assembled in a room to dance to their own singing, and spent two hours in this manner with abundance of mirth and glee. I would stop to describe, but I shall have an opportunity afterwards, and am now going to discuss a philosophical and much more important subject.

The inhabitants of Tibet seem to be of a distinct race from those in the Deb Rajah's country. It struck me on my arrival at Pharidzong, and every day's journey has served to confirm it. The latter were the most robust and well-built race I ever saw. I cannot say so much for the former. Their strength, too, is in the same proportion; any burden with which the one will climb the steepest mountains, must be diminished fully a third to be carried by the other on level ground. One might seek for the cause of this in the difference of soil and climate. I will endeavour to account for it on another principle, because it may throw some light on the way of life among each people.

Labour certainly renders a man strong: *caeteris paribus*, a blacksmith or a carpenter will be stronger than a tailor or a barber. I have already mentioned the toilsome life of the Deb Rajah's subjects. The nature of this country [Tibet] exposes its inhabitants to no such hardships. The hills, although in many places abundantly steep and high, are so bare and sterile that they are left in a state of nature. The valleys only are cultivated, and the roads lead through them, which cuts off all climbing of mountains. Goods are chiefly carried on bullocks and asses; the corn is trod out by

cattle, and ground by water-mills; and the country producing no forests, the inhabitants are freed from the hard labour of hewing down trees, and transporting them from the tops of mountains.

But however this easy life may contribute to render the men less robust, it has evidently a very favourable effect upon the women, who are certainly more delicate and joyous than their neighbours; and this freedom from intense labour gives likewise to the whole body of the people more time for gossiping and other sociable amusements, which soften the heart and cheer the temper. This also, together with other causes which it is needless to mention, renders the Tibetans much better bred and more affable than their southern neighbours; and the women are treated with greater attention. In the Deb Rajah's country, whatever a countryman saves from his labour is laid out in adorning his sword with silver filigree work, or buying a square box which contains a little gilt image, and is buckled to his back. Here it is bestowed on purchasing coral and amber beads, to adorn the head of his wife. The head-dress of the women is extremely neat and becoming. I have elsewhere described it. But the dirtiness of their hands and faces (many of which deserve a better fate) is a point which, as I cannot attempt to excuse, my partiality to the Tibetans will not allow me to enlarge upon.

I must except, however, our landlady, who kept herself and her family as neat as a Dutch woman, and, saving her black eyes, she had something the look of one.

The first part of our ride next day, the 2nd of November, was through the same bleak country we had hitherto met with; but the valley in which Gyantse stands is extensive, well cultivated, and full of whitened villages. The hills on each side draw close towards the north; between them rises a high and almost perpendicular rock, upon the top of which stands Gyantse Castle. It is formed of many walls and turrets. The tower is built at the foot of the rock on the east side; on the west, it is washed by the river, beyond which a monastery and village are built on the declivity of a mountain. Altogether it makes a fine prospect.

Towards evening we arrived at our quarters, about three miles short of Gyantse. They belong to the priest who paid us a visit on the road. The house is surrounded with willows and other trees. It has a number of small windows, and the roof is adorned with little ensigns and written banners. We were lodged in the temple, which was full of painted chests, matchlocks, bows, cushions, and other lumber. One corner was hung with mythological paintings, and below a parcel of little gilt cross-legged images, with a lamp burning before them, from which, as all the family are gone

to bed, I have taken the liberty to steal some oil in order to finish this account, hoping that it will not be imputed to me as a sacrilege.

This evening the Gosain [Purangir], who was down in Calcutta, arrived with three of the Lama's servants. Our host arrived in the morning. He had applied to Mr. Hamilton about an inveterate complaint, and I tarried a day on purpose. He is an elderly man, of gentle and modest manners. He sat with me most of the afternoon, and I am sure I drank above twenty cups of tea. As I had waited upon the Lhasa officers at Pharidzong, I offered a visit to those at Gyantse, but it was declined on the pretence of one of them being absent.

On our journey next day we passed through the town of Gyantse, and under the castle. The streets are narrow, and the houses as I have before described them. Crowds of people assembled to look at us. These exhibitions were very irksome at first, but I have grown to be accustomed to them. I have remarked that we are much more stared at and run after in towns than in villages, and in villages than in solitary houses. Curiosity, perhaps, although natural to mankind, and however the seeds of it may be implanted in them, requires, like music, to be cultivated. It gathers strength from being exercised; it languishes and lies asleep when there are no objects to engage its attention.

We met with no more ruinous houses. The villages came now to be more numerous; and the low lands in the valleys, though light and sandy, were covered with barley stubble. We arrived at our stage in good time; and having nothing else to fill up my paper with, will beg leave to give a description of a Tibetan churn. I have often admired the construction of the Bengal ones. I think in this country, however, they have improved on them. The barrel which contains the milk is put on the ground; the strap has two cross boards at bottom. It is put into the barrel, and the lid, with a hole for it to pass through, is fastened on; a thong of leather is then put twice round the staff, and the ends being brought over a small roller (which is supported horizontally by, and turns round between, two posts) are tied to two foot-boards, one end of them raised about six or eight inches from the ground, the other resting upon it. On this a man stands, and moving his feet alternately up and down, twists about the staff in the churn with great velocity and much satisfaction. If I could draw I would give a plan of it, but I cannot.

I met here also with a machine for cutting straw for cattle, but it is not worthy of description. As I remember what a great discovery the cutting of straw was considered in England, I mention it only to show that nations undervalued by Europeans can, without the assistance of Royal Societies,

find out the useful arts of life, and for the rest, whether they be of advantage to mankind or otherwise is a question above my reach.

We proceeded next morning, November 5, along the banks of the river, now considerably increased. We saw a good many villages at a distance, and at length came in sight of Penamdzung, a castle built on a rock. The situation is a good deal similar to that of Gyantse, but I think finer; the towers are more regular. Under the rock there is only a village. Deb Judhur [Zhidar] passed the night in our neighbourhood, on his way to Gyantse, where he was afterwards confined.

The valley to the north of Penamdzung was by far the most populous I had yet seen. The villages stand very thick. A small town called Ghadong is built on the side of one of the hills, and the houses being all whitened make a good appearance. We had hitherto kept in the road towards Shigatse, but we now turned to the east, and took that of Namlingdzong (Chamnamring), in the neighbourhood of which Tashi Lama has for some years resided, on account of the smallpox which lately raged in Tibet. After passing the valley we had to ascend some hills by a difficult and stony path, then to descend, and then ascend again, after which we had a view of the Tsangpo, running eastwards. When we had got half-way down the hill we stopped at a single house, where we took up our quarters for the night.

On our way over these hills we met with a flock of sheep, which had come from the Dokpo [nomad] country (Tushkhind) with a cargo of salt, and were then returning from Gyantse, loaded with barley and wheat. They were of a large breed, with horns extended horizontally. There were about twelve hundred of them, and each sheep carried two bags of grain, which might be about twenty or twenty-five pounds. They were very obedient to their drivers' whistles, and if any of them happened to get out of the road were easily brought back by the shepherds' dogs.

There are a great many rushy fields in the neighbourhood of the place where we stopped. Mr. Hamilton had good shots at four hares, but his fowling-piece was bent and he missed them.

On the 7th of November, after descending an easy hill, we arrived on the banks of the Tsangpo [Zangbo Jiang]. It is here about the breadth of the Thames at Putney. The channel is not fordable. Having drunk some of its water, washed my hands and face, and thrown a rupee into it, we embarked in the ferry-boat, of which there are several in this place. They are in the shape of an oblong square, about twenty-five feet long and broad. The bottom is a float of thick planks, closed in by perpendicular walls to the height of about four feet, with an opening on each side, cut down to about two feet, which serves for the entrance. The whole is bound

together with bars of iron, and painted white. At each end of the boat is a white ensign about a foot square. This large hulk is moved by an oar on each side, which are pulled by two men, pushed by another standing opposite to them, and drawn by a woman, who holds a rope fastened to the end of the oar which is in the water. It is managed at the stern by one man with a large headed oar. In our boat there were twenty-three persons, seven horses, one cow-tailed bullock, and fourteen asses, besides baggage. As the river is far from being rapid, we crossed it without losing much ground. Large herds of bullocks and flocks of sheep were waiting on each side for a passage. There is another kind of boat used in the summer time for transporting goods. It is made of hides, about eight feet long, four broad, and two deep, the ribs of willow poles. There were none afloat, but we saw many of them upon the bank keel up, and one end being raised a little they thus serve for a habitation.

After crossing the river, we rode northwards over a large sandy bank, which is overflowed in the rainy season, and entered a valley which opens upon the Tsangpo. We had fine sandy roads here, and I ran some races with Purangir [see also: Ch. VII below, No. 9, p.168]. The Tibet ponies are much swifter and better blood than I expected. We took up our quarters at a monastery in a small village. The abbot was a short, sickly-looking man, but courteous and hospitable. His dinner was just ready, and he sent us a couple of joints of most excellent mutton.

In the afternoon we walked out, and sat down on the banks of the rivulet which runs through the valley, and while we were looking at some dromedaries, a gylong or priest came up to us, and sat down beside us. The few words of the language which I was master of were little able to support a varied and entertaining conversation. I understood, however, the priest's caution against sitting on the ground and in the sun. He was dressed in the habit peculiar to his order, which I have already described; but it had seen many years' service, and was now threadbare. He had thrown off his hose to wade the river, when our snuff-box attracted his notice. Upon this, he loosened a wallet which hung at his back, and after turning over some books of prayers, a yellow cloth coat lined with lambskin, a small parcel of tobacco, and another of tea, he came to a bundle of incense papers, and having presented four of them to Mr. Hamilton, claimed some snuff in return. This exchange being made, and having taken leave by a salutation of thumbs, which is the sign of the superlative degree of comparison, he laid his bundle and hose upon his back, and, wading the river, continued his journey.

The lower gylongs here are not so well off as in the Deb Rajah's country;

they are a much more numerous body, and the Lamas having engrossed all authority into their own hands, the priests, particularly the inferior ones, are without the political consequence enjoyed by the clergy in the neighbouring kingdom.

We set out early in the morning, and travelled northwards along the banks of the rivulet. We passed opposite to Tashitzay, where Tashi Lama received his birth, and at length came in sight of Namlingdzong, a castle belonging to Lhasa, situated upon the top of a hill, with a small town under it, built in the form of a square and enclosed within walls. Having forded the river, we entered a little cross valley, where we stopped to drink tea at some tents prepared for us, and having received white handkerchiefs from a Gosain sent with inquiries by Tashi Lama, we proceeded to Dechenrubje [which Bogle called Desheripgay], a small palace in which Tashi Lama resided.

## CHAPTER VII

### At Dechenrubje (Desheripgay) and the Return to Tashilhunpo November 1774 to December 1775

#### 1

##### Bogle's Journal

On the 8th of November, 1774, we rode up to the gate of the palace, and walking into the court, went up the ladders to our apartments.

Dechenrubje is situated in a narrow valley, and at the foot of an abrupt and rocky hill. The palace is small; it is only two stories high, and is surrounded on three sides by rows of small apartments with a wooden gallery running round them, which altogether form a small court, flagged with stone. All the stairs are broad ladders. The roofs are adorned with copper-gilt ornaments; and on the front of the house there are three round brass plates, emblems of *Om*, *Han*, *Hoong*. Tashi Lama's apartment is at the top; it is small, and hung round with different coloured silks, views of Potala, Tashilhunpo, etc. About two miles from Dechenrubje is the castle of Namlingdzong.

Immediately after our arrival, Tashi Lama sent us a pot of ready-made tea, boiled rice, four or five sacks of flour and of rice, three or four dried sheep's carcasses, and some whisky. I had also compliments of tea from several of his officers, and many visitors whom curiosity brought to see me.

My room was small, but neatly furnished; it was immediately above the church, and I was entertained with the never-ceasing noise of "cymballines

and timballines" from morning to night. But as soon as it grows dark everything is still as death, and the gates are shut about an hour after sunset. The night of my arrival they were kept open on account of my supper, as my servants were lodged without; but I took care there should be no occasion for this afterwards.

A number of Khampas, who are natives of a country about a month's journey to the north-east of Lhasa, came to pay their devotions to Tashi Lama. They were clad in yellow cloth gowns, and their heads shaven. On these occasions nobody goes empty-handed. Some of them carried bundles of tea, some parcels of gold dust, others china, and silver talents. They are a hard-featured race, and I cannot help fancying they have some of the Malay features.

In the afternoon [of 9 November 1774], I had my first audience of Tashi Lama. I have elsewhere [see Chapter VIII below] put down the conversation that passed, and will here only mention the ceremonies.

Tashi Lama was upon his throne, formed of wood, carved and gilt, with some cushions above it, upon which he sat cross legged. He was dressed in a mitre-shaped cap of yellow broadcloth, with ears lined with red satin; a yellow cloth jacket without sleeves, and a satin mantle of the same colour thrown over his shoulders. On one side of him stood his physician with a bundle of perfumed sandal-wood rods burning in his hand; on the other stood his Sapon Chumbo, or cup-bearer. I laid the Governor's presents before him, delivering the letter and pearl necklace into his own hands, together with a white pelong handkerchief on my own part, according to the custom of the country.

He received me in the most engaging manner. I was seated on a high stool covered with a carpet. Plates of boiled mutton, boiled rice, dried fruits, sweetmeats, sugar, bundles of tea, sheep's carcasses dried, etc., were set before me and my companion, Mr. Hamilton.

Tashi Lama drank two or three dishes of tea along with us, but without saying any grace; asked us once or twice to eat, and threw white pelong<sup>1</sup> handkerchiefs over our necks at retiring. After two or three visits, Tashi Lama used, except on holidays, to receive me without any ceremony, his head uncovered, dressed only in the large red petticoat which is worn by all the gylongs, red Bulgar hide boots, a yellow cloth vest, with his arms bare, and a piece of coarse yellow cloth thrown across his shoulders. He sat

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1. The term, which may perhaps have been derived from Feringy, indicated in Tibet a textile with an origin from or by way of India from, perhaps, China. See: H. Yule & A.C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson. A glossary of Anglo-India colloquial words and phrases*, 2nd ed., London 1903, p. 354.



sometimes, in a chair, sometimes on a bench covered with tiger skins, and nobody but the Sapon Chumbo present. Sometimes he would walk with me about the room, explain to me the pictures, make remarks upon the colour of my eyes, etc. For, although venerated as God's Vicegerent through all the eastern countries of Asia, endowed with a portion of omniscience, and with many other divine attributes, he throws aside, in conversation, all the awful part of his character, accommodates himself to the weakness of mortals, endeavours to make himself loved rather than feared, and behaves with the greatest affability to everybody, particularly to strangers.

Tashi Lama is about forty years of age, of low stature, and though not corpulent, rather inclining to be fat. His complexion is fairer than that of most of the Tibetans, and his arms are as white as those of a European; his hair, which is jet black, is cut very short; his beard and whiskers never above a month long; his eyes are small and black. The expression of his countenance is smiling and good-humoured. His father was a Tibetan; his mother a near relation of the Rajahs of Ladakh. From her he learned the Hindustani language, of which he has a moderate knowledge, and is fond of speaking it. His disposition is open, candid, and generous. He is extremely merry and entertaining in conversation, and tells a pleasant story with a great deal of humour and action. I endeavoured to find out in his character those defects which are inseparable from humanity, but he is so universally beloved that I had no success, and not a man could find in his heart to speak ill of him.

Being the first European they had ever seen, I had crowds of Tibetans coming to look at me, as people go to look at the lions in the Tower [of London]. My room was always full of them from morning till night. Tashi Lama, afraid that I might be incommoded, sent me word, if I chose, not to admit them; but when I could gratify the curiosity of others at so easy a rate, why should I have refused it? I always received them, sometimes exchanging a pinch of snuff, at others picking up a word or two of the language.

On the 12th of November a vast crowd of people came to pay their respects, and to be blessed by Tashi Lama. He was seated under a canopy in the court of the palace. They were all ranged in a circle. First came the lay folks. Every one, according to his circumstances, brought some offering. One gave a horse, another a cow; some gave dried sheep's carcasses, sacks of flour, pieces of cloth, etc.; and those who had nothing else presented a white pelong handkerchief. All these offerings were received by Tashi Lama's servants, who put a bit of silk with a knot upon it, tied, or

supposed to be tied, with Tashi Lama's own hands, about the necks of the votaries. After this they advanced up to Tashi Lama, who sat cross legged upon a throne formed with seven cushions, and he touched their heads with his hands, or with a tassel hung from a stick, according to their rank and character. The ceremonial is this: upon the gylongs or laymen of very high rank he lays his palm; the nuns (annis) and inferior laymen have a cloth interposed between his hand and their heads; and the lower class of people are touched, as they pass by, with the tassel which he holds in his hand. I have often admired his dexterity in distinguishing the different orders of people, particularly in knowing the young priests from the nuns, both being dressed in the same habit, and it sometimes happening that they were crowded and jumbled together. There might be about three thousand people - men, women, and children - at this ceremony. Such as had children upon their backs were particularly solicitous that the child's head should also be touched with the tassel. There were a good many boys, and some girls devoted to the monastic order, by having a lock of hair on the crown of the head cropped by Tashi Lama with a knife. This knife came down from heaven in a flash of lightning. The age at which these children are thus consecrated to religion and chastity is usually about seven or eight years. After Tashi Lama retired, many people stayed behind that they might kiss the cushions upon which he had sat. We had two or three of these exhibitions while I was at Dechenrubje; but having given a description of one, I will forbear mentioning the rest.

Among all offerings, dried sheep's carcasses always form a principal article. They are as stiff as a poker, are set up on end, and make, to a stranger, a very droll appearance. I was at some pains to inquire about the method of preserving them, as it is a practice common to Tatar as well as Tibet; but I could discover no mystery in it. The sheep is killed, is beheaded, is skinned, is cleaned; the four feet are then put together in such a manner as may keep the carcass most open. During a fortnight it is every night exposed on the top of the house, or in some other airy situation, and in the heat of the day it is kept in a cool room. After it is fully dried it may be kept anywhere. In this way they preserve mutton all the year round. The end of autumn, when the sheep are fattened with the summer's grass, is the usual time for killing them; and the difficulty of supporting the flocks in the winter time is, I believe, the reason for adopting this method. In the hot and rainy season it is necessary to use a small quantity of salt; but few carcasses are then dried. I found the dried mutton generally more tender than that fresh killed, but not so juicy and high flavoured. The Tibetans often eat it raw, and I once followed their example; it had much

the taste of dried fish. The facility with which meat is preserved from putrefaction in this country may be owing partly to the coldness of the climate, partly to the uncommon dryness of a gravelly and sandy soil, and partly to the scarcity of flies and other maggot-breeding insects.

Mirza Settar, the Kashmiri who accompanied me, was lodged outside the palace. A fakir had arrived from Lhasa, and having brought him tidings of his brother, the Kashmiri could not do less than give him a share of his quarters. This morning [November 19], before I got up, Mirza came into my room, and fell a skipping and dancing in a manner very unbecoming his years and gravity. He then lay down and rolled himself on the floor, and at length, falling upon me, overwhelmed me with embraces. I concluded him mad, and starting up, called for my servants to carry him downstairs. His solicitude to get rid of an intermittent fever had, it seems, induced him to take a nostrum from his guest, which had operated in this extraordinary way. However, what by means of a vomit, which Mr. Hamilton gave him, and what from some charmed water which Tashi Lama sent him, he soon recovered. But the fakir was thrown into prison, and it cost me some entreaties to procure his release. I think he will be cautious of acting again in a medical capacity.

The palace was illuminated on account of its being Dalai Lama's birthday. Lamps were placed all around the balustrades of the terrace. The illuminations at the houses of some nuns, who live at the top of the hill which hangs over the palace, had a good effect. We had music and kettle-drums, but no fireworks. They have them at Lhasa.

Among the other good qualities which Tashi Lama possesses is that of charity, and he has plenty of opportunities of exercising it. The country swarms with beggars who follow this profession from generation to generation, and Tashi Lama entertains besides a number of fakirs who resort hither from India. As he speaks their language tolerably well, he every day converses with them from his windows, and picks up by this means a knowledge of the different countries and governments of Hindustan. Many of them come on commercial schemes; but although very opulent, they continue to wear a homely dress, and to receive charity from Tashi Lama. Others come on pretence of pilgrimages to Tashi Lama; their real object, however, being to share his bounty. He gives them a monthly allowance of tea, butter, and flour, besides money, and often bestows something considerable upon them at their departure. The Gosains, who are thus supported at Tashi Lama's expense, may be in number about one hundred and fifty, besides about thirty Mussulman fakirs. For, although the genius of the religion of Muhammad is hostile to

that of Tashi Lama, yet he is possessed of much Christian charity, and is free from those narrow prejudices which, next to ambition and avarice, have opened the most copious source of human misery. This charity to the pilgrims flows, I imagine, partly from the generosity of Tashi Lama's temper, partly from the desire of acquiring information, and satisfying his curiosity about Hindustan, the school of the religion of Tibet. But the fakirs, in their return to their own country, or in their rambles through other kingdoms of Asia, naturally extol the bounty of their benefactor, and thus serve to spread wide the fame of his character.

The Gentoo [Hindu] fakirs, as far as I can judge, are in general a very worthless set of people, devoid of principle, and being separated by their profession from all those ties of kindred and family which serve to bind the rest of mankind, they have no object but their own interest, and, covered with the cloak of religion, are regardless of their caste, of their character, and of everything else which is held sacred among the Hindus. Their victuals are dressed by Tibet servants; there is no kind of meat, beef excepted, which they do not eat. They drink plentifully of spirituous liquors, and although directly contrary to their vows and to the rules of their order, above one half of them keep women. In their deportment they mix, by a strange combination, the most fawning and flattering servility with the most clamorous insolence. They intrude into every company, give their opinion in every conversation, and convey what they have to say in a voice like thunder. They are universally disliked by the Tibetans, have no protector but Tashi Lama, and if he were to die tomorrow they would next day be driven from the palace. It may appear strange, after giving them this character, that I should have bestowed a good deal of money among the fakirs. But I will confess I did it from worldly motives, and am far from expecting that it will draw down the favour of heaven upon my constituents, or serve to cover the multitude of my sins.

Tashi Lama used to send a priest to me early every morning with some bread and tea, or some boiled rice and chopped mutton; of which last, as I always like to do at Rome as they do at Rome, I used to eat very heartily. This practice was continued till my departure for Bengal.

The weather was very cold; the water in my room used to freeze even in the day time; and I seldom stirred out of the house, where nothing was to be seen but bare hills, a few leafless trees, and a bleak and comfortless country. Some days after my arrival Tashi Lama had given me a Tibetan dress, consisting of a purple satin tunic, lined with Siberian fox skins; a yellow satin cap, faced round with sable and crowned with a red silk tassel, and a pair of red silk Bulgar hide boots. In this I equipped myself, glad to

abandon my European habit, which was both uncomfortable and exposed me to abundance of that troublesome curiosity which the Tibetans possess in a degree inferior to no other people.

Tashi Lama now prepared to return to his palace at Tashilhunpo, which he had been obliged, about three years ago, to quit on account of the smallpox.

## 2

### **Bogle to Hastings (letter no. 1), 5 December 1774, Dechenrubje**

I had the honour to advise you of my arrival on the frontiers of Tibet in a short address of the 26th ultimo.

Tashi Lama received your letter and presents very graciously and I have reason to be satisfied with his reception.

Having represented to him your desire of opening a free intercourse of trade between the inhabitants of Bengal and this country, he has give me assurances of his ready endeavour to bring it about; but as he intends in a few days to return to Tashilhunpo his capital, where he will have an opportunity of consulting with the merchants, he delays coming to any determination at present.

Tashi Lama's character and abilities, his having discovered and placed the present Dalai Lama in the chair of Potala, his being favoured by the Emperor of China, and his having obtained from him the appointment of Gesub Rimpoché [Demo Hutukhtu, Regent during the minority of the VIIIth Dalai Lama]<sup>2</sup> the present Chief give him great influence. The seat of Government is at Lhasa. The Emperor of China is paramount sovereign, and is represented by two Chinese officers [the Ambans] who are changed every three years. These men are to report to their Court the state of the country, but I am told seldom interfere in the management of it which during Dalai Lama's minority is entrusted to Gesub and four Ministers.<sup>3</sup> Tashi Lama has a number of villages and monasteries belonging to him which are scattered over Tibet, and intermixes with those of the Dalai Lama. To attempt to explain the nature of Government here where so many interests are blended together would oblige me to enter

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2. Gesub is Bogle's version of Gyal-tsap (rGyal-tshab). The holder of this office in Bogle's day was Demo Trulku Jampel Delek, a high monastic official from Drepung monastery.

3. This body, the Dalai Lama's Cabinet, was the Kashag. The four ministers were the Kalons, of whom one was always a Lama.

into details which as my imperfect knowledge of the country might hardly justify. I would rather wish to avoid.

I take the liberty of enclosing a memorandum on the Trade of Tibet.

### 3

#### A Memorandum on the Trade of Tibet<sup>4</sup>

The foreign trade of Tibet is very considerable. Being mountainous, naturally barren, and but thinly peopled, it requires large supplies from other countries, and its valuable productions furnish it with the means of procuring them. It yields gold, musk, cow-tails, wool, and salt. Coarse woollen cloth and narrow serge are almost its only manufactures. It produces no iron, nor fruit, nor spices. The nature of the soil and of the climate prevents the culture of silk, rice, and tobacco, of all which articles there is a great consumption. But the wants of the country will best appear from an account of its trade. In this sketch, however, I propose only to give the outlines, which I will beg leave afterwards to fill up and correct.

The genius of this Government, like that of most of the ancient kingdoms in Hindustan, is favourable to commerce. No duties are levied on goods, and trade is protected and free from exactions. Many foreign merchants, encouraged by these indulgences, or allured by the prospect of gain, have settled in Tibet. The natives of Kashmir, who, like the Jews in Europe, or the Armenians in the Turkish empire,<sup>5</sup> scatter themselves over the eastern kingdoms of Asia, and carry on an extensive traffic between the distant parts of it, have formed establishments at Lhasa and all the principal towns in this country. Their agents, stationed on the coast of Coromandel, in Bengal, Benares, Nepal, and Kashmir, furnish them with the commodities of these different countries, which they dispose of in Tibet, or forward to their associates at Seling [Sining or Xining, today in Qinghai Province of China], a town on the borders of China. The Gosains, the trading pilgrims of India, resort hither in great numbers. Their humble deportment and holy character, heightened by the merit of distant pilgrimages, their accounts of unknown countries and remote regions, and, above all, their professions of high veneration for Tashi Lama, procure them not only a ready admittance, but great favour. Though clad

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4. Written on or before 5 December 1774.

5. Bogle seems to have been unaware of the existence of an Armenian presence in Tibet in the early 18th century.

in the garb of poverty, there are many of them possessed of considerable wealth. Their trade is confined chiefly to articles of great value and small bulk. It is carried on without noise or ostentation, and often by paths unfrequented by other merchants. The Kalmuks [Mongols] who, with their wives and families, annually repair in numerous tribes to pay their devotions at Tashi Lama's shrines, bring their camels loaded with furs and other Siberian goods. The Bhutanese and the other inhabitants of the mountains, which form the southern frontier of Tibet, are enabled by their situation to supply it as well with the commodities of Bengal as with the productions of their own states. The people of Assam furnish it with the coarse manufactures of their kingdom. The Chinese, to whose empire the country is subject, have established themselves in great numbers at the capital; and by introducing the curious manufactures and merchandise of China, are engaged in an extended and lucrative commerce. And thus Lhasa, being at the same time the seat of government and the place of Dalai Lama's residence, is the resort of strangers, and the centre of communication between distant parts of the world.

The most considerable branch of commerce is with China. It is carried on by the natives of that kingdom, by Kashmiris, and by Tashi Lama's agents, who proceed to Seling, and sometimes even to Peking. The imports are coarse tea, of which the consumption is immense; flowered and brocaded satins of various kinds, pelong handkerchiefs, silk, thread, furs, porcelain cups, glass, snuff-boxes, knives and other cutlery, talents of silver, and some tobacco. The returns are made in gold, pearls, coral, chanks,<sup>6</sup> broadcloth, and a trifling quantity of Bengal cloths. The productions of Siberia are imported chiefly by the Kalmuks, or by the way of Seling. They consist of furs, red and black Bulgar hides, cow-tails, some dromedaries, bastard pearls, and silver, and are bartered for broad-cloth, coral and amber beads, spices, and gold. The Kashmiris naturally engross the trade with their country. It is not considerable. The imports are chiefly

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6. Conch shells, often used in India for the manufacture of bracelets, and valued in Tibet (as, indeed, in India) for a variety of ritual purposes: with its pointed end removed, the chank could be used as a kind of musical instrument both in war (as the equivalent of a bugle) and in worship. The major chank fisheries were off Ceylon and in the Bay of Bengal. The main centre for the chank industry in Bengal was Dacca, while Rangpur was an important market for the manufacture and sale of chank bracelets. See: James Hornell, "The Chank Bangle Industry: its Antiquity and Present Condition", *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. III, Calcutta 1914; Wilson, *Glossary, op. cit.*, p. 103. Yule and Burnell noted that "the abnormal *chank*, with its spiral opening to the right, is of exceptional value, and has sometimes been priced, it is said, at a lakh of rupees". See: Yule & Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson, op. cit.*, p. 184.

sugar, dried raisins, and other fruits. The exports are goat's wool and gold. The imports from Assam are spices and timber, munga [Assamese raw silk] dhoties, and other coarse manufactures of silk and linen. The native productions of the Deb Rajah's country brought into Tibet are rice, wrought iron, coarse woollen cloth, and some munjit [madder, a red dye], which are exchanged for tea and other Chinese commodities, rock salt, wool, sheep's skins, and narrow friezes for their home consumption. The productions imported from Nepal are chiefly iron and rice. But as these two countries have been the principal channels of communication between Bengal and Tibet, it is necessary to give a more particular account of them.

While [that is to say before 1768-9] Nepal was divided among the different states of Kathmandu, Patan [Lalipur], Bhatgaon [Bhaktapur], and Gorkha, and remained under the government of Rajahs, independent of each other's authority, every encouragement was given to trade. A very moderate duty was levied on goods; the country, populous and well cultivated, easily furnished the means of transporting them, and the merchants, free from spoil or exactions, settled in Nepal, and contributed to enrich it at the same time that they improved their own fortunes. Some dispute arose among these petty chiefs; they went to war, and Prithvinarayan, the Gorkhali Rajah, was called in to take part in the quarrel. Having subdued the enemy, he turned his arms against his ally; and partly by treachery, partly by the exertion of superior abilities, has, after a war of twenty-five years, made himself master of the whole of the country, and united it under one government.<sup>7</sup>

But although the wealth of Nepal furnished the Gorkha Rajah with the means by which he rose, he neglected to cherish the source from whence it flowed. Mistrustful of subjects disaffected to his government, he entertained a number of troops on regular pay. He disciplined them, he furnished them with firearms, he formed an artillery, and left nothing undone to render himself formidable. The ordinary revenue of countries where a standing army had hitherto been unknown, was unequal to these extraordinary expenses; and the Gorkha Rajah, among other expedients, had recourse to imposing high duties on trade in order to defray them. The merchants, subject to heavy and arbitrary fines upon the most frivolous pretences, and obliged to purchase the protection of a tyrannical government by presents scarcely less oppressive, quitted a country where they could no longer enjoy that freedom and security which are the life of

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7. The history of the Gurkha conquest of Nepal is discussed in the second volume of this book. See also Ch. XI below, section H, for Bogle's own detailed comments on Nepalese history.



commerce. The Gosains, who had formerly very extensive establishments in Nepal, having incurred the Gorkha Rajah's resentment by the assistance which they afforded his adversaries, were driven out of the kingdom; and many of the most wealthy inhabitants being stripped of their possessions, or exposed to the exactions of a conqueror, likewise deserted it. Only two Kashmiri houses remain, and the Rajah, afraid of their also abandoning him, obliges them to give security for the return of such agents as they have occasion to send beyond the boundaries of his dominions.

The trade between Bengal and Tibet, through the Deb Rajah's country, used formerly to be engrossed wholly by the Bhutanese. Two of the Kashmiri houses, however, who fled from Nepal, being unwilling to forego the gainful commerce in which they had hitherto been concerned, settled at Lhasa, and having obtained permission from the Deb Rajah to transport their goods through his territories, established agents in Bengal. But as they are prohibited from trading in broadcloth and some other considerable articles, and as their traffic is carried on to no great extent, and all other merchants are excluded, it by no means compensates the loss which Bengal has sustained by the interruption of its commerce through Nepal.

The commodities of Bengal used also to be conveyed into Tibet through the Morung, and a province adjoining to it which is subject to Lhasa, and governed by a chief styled Demo Jong [ruler of Sikkim]. The fakirs, when expelled from Nepal, generally frequented this road; but being esteemed unhealthy, it was not adopted by any creditable merchants. The Gorkha Rajah, however, having extended his conquests over the first of these countries, and having lately invaded the other, all intercourse is at present interrupted.

Besides these different communications, there is a road leading from Benares and Mirzapur through the Mustang country,<sup>8</sup> and the hills to the northward of Bulwant Singh's territories [Benares or Varanasi],<sup>9</sup> which are

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8. Mustang is situated right on the Nepal-Tibet border some 140 miles as the crow flies to the north-west of Kathmandu. The route from Benares ran through Pokhara by way of Butwal and then northwards to Tibet, skirting the western side of the Anapurana Himalaya. The Mustang route was an alternative to that from Patna and Bettiah through the Kathmandu valley. The Gurkhas did not establish a complete control over this route until the late 1780s.

9. Bulwant Singh built up the jagir, or zamindari, of Benares from a small cluster of villages into one of the major districts in what in Bogle's day was still the Province (Subah) of Oudh (Awadh). Bulwant Singh, who at certain key moments had proved a useful friend of the English, died in 1770: he was succeeded by his son Chait Singh, whose representatives Bogle was to encounter in Tibet and who Warren Hastings was to depose in 1781, with the active assistance of William

subject to Rajahs who still preserve their independence. The more valuable sorts of Bengal goods are sometimes imported into Tibet by this channel. But although the merchants travel in perfect security, and receive every assistance from these petty chiefs, the length of the way, the difficulty of the road, through a mountainous and, in several places, uninhabited country, and the many intermediate tolls upon the goods, render it far from eligible. Of late years it has become more frequented, on account of its being almost the only means of communication.

The principal articles of merchandise between Bengal and Tibet are broadcloth, otter skins, nil [indigo], pearls, coral, amber, and other beads; chank shells, spices, tobacco, sugar, Mulda striped satins, and a few white cloths, chiefly coarse. The returns are made in gold dust, musk, and cow-tails.

A knowledge of the current specie, and of the proportionate value of money in a country, is of capital importance towards understanding the nature of its trade. But the intricacy of the subject, and the variety of circumstances requisite in forming a just notion of it, oblige me at present to mention it only briefly. There are no mints in Tibet. Payments are made in talents of China and Tatory, in small bulses [bags] of gold dust, or in the coin of the former Rajahs of Kathmandu and Patan, which is the established specie of the kingdom. The circulation of their rupees, which were of a base standard, proved very beneficial to these chiefs, and Gorkha, as soon as he had firmly established his authority in Nepal, endeavoured to introduce his coin into Tibet. For this purpose, he sent a deputation to Lhasa with a large sum in rupees struck in his name, and desired the sanction of government to circulate them through the country. The merchants, aware of the Gorkha Rajah's ill faith, refused to accept them, and the government returned him this artful answer: "we are willing to receive your coin, provided that you take back all the money of Nepal which is now in circulation." This condition was neither for the Gorkha Rajah's interest nor in his power to comply with. Nothing has since been done in this important affair. The old specie continues to pass; but the channel by which it was introduced having been long stopped up, it has risen greatly above its former value, as well in proportion to the talents of silver as to the gold dust.<sup>10</sup>

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Markham, Sir C. Markham's ancestor: William Markham was then aged 22.

See also Ch. VIII below, notes 1 and 3.

10 For more on this feature of Tibeto-Nepalese economic relations, see below Ch. XIII, No. 4, and Ch. XV, No. 10..

## 4

**Bogle to Hastings (letter no. 2), 5 December 1774, Dechenrubje**

The desire of obeying your commands, and the hopes of being able to give you certain information concerning the state of my commission, have hitherto prevented me from addressing you.

Since my arrival here, I find that my conjectures as to the cause of Tashi Lama's at first refusing me admittance, were well founded. The Government at Lhasa had received from some evil minded persons such accounts of the power and ambition of the English, that the restoring of the Deb Rajah's Country, and all the mountains which separate Bengal from Tibet, were not sufficient to prevent their suspicions. I have been at great pains to remove these unjust prejudices, and have reason to think that I have in some measure succeeded.

I formerly represented to you that the Rajah of Nepal has sent seven thousand men to assist the Deb Rajah against the English. They applied for liberty to march through the territories of Demo Jong [Sikkim], a Rajah tributary to Lhasa, which are bounded by Nepal, Pharidzong, the Deb Rajah's dominions, and stretch southwards towards Morung and Purnea. But Demo Jong having been formerly at variance with the Bhutanese, and the Government of this country being suspicious of Gorkha's treacherous character, refused them a passage. Gorkha, although he had often promised never to encroach upon the territories subject to Lhasa, has in consequence invaded Demo Jong's country, and has made some advances towards conquering it, in which if he succeeds, it opens his way into that of the Deb Rajah. These hostilities, added to Gorkha's oppression and ill faith, leave no room for any negotiations for extending the trade between Tibet and Bengal through Nepal. There remains then only the Deb Rajah's Country, or Demo Jong's. The last is deemed unhealthy, and is at present the seat of war. Tashi Lama proposes the channel through the first, and it is this which I am endeavouring to push, at the same time that I am aware of the difficulties which I will have to encounter, from circumstances which I had the honour to mention to you in my letter of the 11th October.

The executive parts of Government being carried on at such a distance, and by persons with whom I am unacquainted, subjects me also to great disadvantages in my negotiations. But Tashi Lama's candour and good sense, and the regard which is paid to his opinion, will, I expect, in some

measure serve to counterbalance them. Until my arrival however at Tashilhunpo, and the receipt of an answer from Lhasa, I can give you no certain information how affairs are likely to turn out.

You will observe, from the sketch which I have taken the liberty to lay before you in my separate address, how much the trade with Bengal has declined of late years. Tashi Lama is fully sensible of this. He says formerly corals, pearls, diamonds and broadcloth, used to be brought hither in abundance, which is not the case nowadays. The civil wars in Nepal and the conquest in which they ended, have affected chiefly the introduction of the more valuable articles of commerce. The effects of the war in Demojong's country, are felt principally on the more coarse and bulky commodities such as tobacco, sugar and spices. But the consumption of these being more general, the interruption of this branch of commerce is not only a considerable loss to Bengal, but proves a real inconvenience to the inhabitants of this country.

There is one part of your instructions which I have hitherto declined mentioning to Tashi Lama; because you are pleased to leave it to my discretion; because I consider it as a natural consequence of a friendship being established between you and him, and because I flatter myself that his prejudices against the English are wearing off more and more every day. These reasons will, I hope, serve to justify me in your eyes.

Tashi Lama, on his part, seems very desirous of cultivating your friendship. The attention which he is pleased to pay to me, on all public occasions, as your Deputy, and the confidence with which he treats me in private, serve fully to make up for his having restricted me in point of retinue. His religion is intimately connected with that of the Hindus, and he holds the same places in veneration that are resorted to by them. He has mentioned to me his desire of founding and endowing a religious temple, somewhere on the banks of the Ganges; and I have ventured to assure him of your granting his request.

I can depend, I think, on Tashi Lama's strongly seconding my application to the Deb Rajah on the terms of trade, which, as he confines Deb Judhur [Zhidar] at Gyantse, ought to have considerable weight.

Tashi Lama, about four years ago, was obliged to quit his capital, on account of the violence of the smallpox; and has lived ever since in this sequestered valley. He is universally beloved in the country; and is one of the most affable and agreeable men I ever met with. He has a moderate knowledge of Hindustan, and always speaks to me in that language. I am

lodged in good apartments in his palace, and treated with every kindness and attention.

I have applied to him for some goats, and other animals of this country; he has given orders for their being sent as far as [Cooch] Behar, and you will be pleased to consider them as a present from him. They are to accompany this letter, agreeable to the enclosed list. As the season of the year is favourable, I hope they will arrive safe. The tus [the source of the most valued shawl wool: see Ch. II above, No. 12] is not a native of Tibet, and during the winter there is no communication with Gartok and Ladakh, in the neighbourhood of which it is found.

Having taken the liberty to lay before you an account of such circumstances, as seem immediately necessary, I will not increase your present trouble, in the hopes of afterwards submitting to your judgement, a particular report of the course of my negotiations.

## 5

### **List of animals sent by Tashi Lama to the Governor and commended to the care of Lieutenant Williams at Cooch Behar [in command of the Company troops there]**

8 goats which produce the shawl wool,  
8 cow-tailed cattle,  
8 sheep,  
8 dogs.

NB. The wool of these goats grows under the long hair with which they are covered. It is exported to Kashmir from the adjacent provinces of Tibet, and the whole shawls are manufactured of it.

The sheep's wool is made into narrow coarse cloth of a variety of kinds. They are also used in carrying burdens; one meets flocks of them from Deb Rajah's country with two bags hung across their backs containing each 10 or 12 lb. of rice.

The cattle that produce cow-tails are the natives of Tatory and are everywhere employed in transporting goods; for there are no wheel carriages in Tibet.

## 6

**List of seeds forwarded to Lieutenant Williams to be  
transmitted to the Governor**

2 papers of pot herbs,  
 1 paper of *Galambeni*,  
 1 paper of *Gullala*,  
 1 paper of *Nasuman* [? *Nafimian* or *Nasumian*],  
 1 paper of Marigold,  
 1 paper of Tibet flower,  
 1 paper of sunflower,  
 6 papers of Tibet flowers,  
 2 papers of [?] *Tamirin*.

NB. There is no country more barren of trees and of all sorts of vegetables than Tibet. The Kashmiris cultivate a few flowers, the seeds of which are brought from this kingdom. The Chinese had likewise introduced pot herbs and other plants. The Bhutanese themselves satisfied with the most simple cookery, and often eating their meat raw, pay no attention to gardening.

I shall endeavour to procure some other seeds from Lhasa, and have written to the person whom I employed to gather the seeds in the Deb Rajah's country to forward them by Mr. Williams care.

## 7

**An Account of Tibet**

**Note.** This memorandum, from internal evidence, was written by Bogle before he had left Dechenrubje for Tashilhunpo: and it may well have been a companion to the report on the trade of Tibet reproduced here above.

This country, from Ladakh to the frontier of China, is called by the natives Pu, pronounced as the French do *Dominus*, or as the Scotch do the Greek *upsilon*. It is full of hills: they might be called mountains if they were not so near to those in the Deb Rajah's kingdom; however, one has few of them to climb, the road leading through the valleys. Save here and there a monastery or a nunnery, they are left to the musk goats and other

wild animals. The country is bare, stony, and unsheltered; hardly a tree is to be seen, except in the neighbourhood of villages, and even there in no great numbers. On the road from Pharidzong there are a great many ruinous houses, occasioned by a war with the Bhutanese about sixty years ago.

The valleys produce wheat and barley, and peas. The first are ground by water-mills of a very simple construction; the last is food only for cattle. The peasants and the bulk of the inhabitants live on flour made into dough, or baked with oil produced in the country; on mutton or the flesh of the cow-tailed cattle. The higher class of people eat rice brought from the Deb Rajah's country, unleavened bread made into twisted rolls with butter, mutton soup thickened with pounded rice, mutton boiled in joints or cut in pieces; beef, not much; sweetmeats and fruits brought from China and Kashmir. As to pork, so much used for food in the neighbouring kingdom, there are few swine in the country. All the world drink tea made in the same manner as in Tatar. Among the great people there is a drinking of tea from morning till night. The lower class of people and the laymen will smoke eighty or a hundred pipes of tobacco in a day; and they hold this but a small quantity indeed. They also drink brandy distilled from wheat, though seldom to excess. The priests are forbidden the use of both. They often trespass, however, in smoking, not in drinking.

The servants and peasants wear horizontal caps made of locks of sheep's wool dyed yellow. They are like the Scotch bonnets, but much larger. I never saw one above three feet in diameter. The women, in the winter time, cover their heads with small rough caps of the same materials. Sometimes they dye them a deep blood red. It has a droll appearance. Padma's dress may serve as a specimen of that of the inferior class of men. The higher laymen wear tunics of satin, brocaded or plain, lined with sheep and lamb skins, or Siberian furs; a round cap faced with fur, and crowned with a silk tassel, and Bulgar hide boots. Red broad-cloth tunics are also far from uncommon. The women wear a jacket, and petticoat reaching a little below the knee, of coarse blanket, of serge striped or plain, or of Chinese satin, according to their condition; Tatar stockings soled with leather, and gartered under the knee. When dressed they have a piece of cloth thrown cloak-like over their shoulders. All ranks of them are at great pains in adorning their heads; plaiting their hair neatly enough with coral and amber beads, bugles, or pearls; they wear also necklaces of them, where the pieces of amber are sometimes as large as a hen's egg. The quantity of the two first kinds of beads that is on the head, even of a

peasant's wife or daughter, is amazing. The two last sorts fall to the share only of the ladies.

It is not only uncomfortable in this cold climate of Tibet, but directly contrary to the custom of the country for the inhabitants, whether male or female, high or low, ever to wash their hands or face. It is, therefore, difficult to determine with precision the complexion of the Tibetans. They are in general, I think, much darker than the Deb Rajah's subjects. Padma's hue, however, is among the blackest I have seen. They are also far from being so handsome or well made as their neighbour Bhutanese. Here they are seldom above the middle size; in the Deb Rajah's country they are seldom under it. Many causes might be given for this difference; but they are perhaps only theoretical, and, at any rate, this is not the place for them.

The gylongs, or priests, are a separate class of people. Their vows and their dress are the same as in the Deb Rajah's kingdom, but they are much more numerous; they have less political power, and the inferior ones are therefore worse clad, and fare worse. Besides the four thousand at Tashilhunpo, and near three times that number at Lhasa, the gylongs are scattered over the country in monasteries with land annexed for their support. The annis, or nuns, have their heads shaven, and are dressed in red woollen; they take the same vows of chastity as the priests, and live in nunneries. Their number is not great. The gylongs and the annis, owing to a custom which I shall afterwards mention, contribute little towards increasing the population of the state.

The people in general are downright and good-humoured, not addicted to fawning, as in Bengal; but fond of laughing, dancing, singing, and taking snuff. In Tashi Lama's palace, however, women and, of course, merriment are excluded.

The horses seldom rise above fourteen or fourteen and a half hands. They are mostly white; seldom piebald; strong, hardy, and not vicious, but ill treated. They run into the opposite extreme from the Bengalis. One man will feed, I cannot say take care of, twenty or five-and-twenty horses. The goats, sheep, dogs, and cattle, which go down to Bengal, will give an account of themselves.

There are plenty of wild ducks and geese, which, being unmolested, are very tame, and numbers of hares; but I have seen only one covey of partridges.

Some of the houses are of stone; others of brick, whitewashed or painted. The stairs are ladders; from the difficulty of getting long beams, the rooms are full of posts. They have no vents, but let out the smoke of



their cow-dung fires by a hole in the roof, which answers also to give light. The whole room is abundantly dirty. Tashi Lama's present habitation is small. His palace at Tashilhunpo is, I am told, princely. The ascent to the apartments here is also by ladders; but the apartments themselves are well painted, gilded, and finished: they want but windows and stoves. The first are only boards like the frames of a green-house; the last are unknown, and pots with charcoal are used in their stead.

I will mention only the two customs that appear most singular.

As there is little wood in the country, they cannot afford to burn their dead; but they take an equally effectual way of destroying them. The body is carried to a neighbouring mountain, and being cut and beat in pieces, is left to be devoured by the wild beasts. I went to visit one of these sepulchral mounts, and expected to find it like a charnel-house. Eagles, ravens, and hawks hovered over us; but not a vestige of mortality could I see. At length I was shown the spot where the body is laid, and could observe some fresh splinters. On the top of this gloomy hill, an aged virgin had fixed her solitary abode. I wanted much to see the inside of it. At last, after much rhetoric, I got her to open the only window of her hovel, and show her wrinkled face and dismal habitation. Having given us a kind of liquor made of wheat to drink, and muttered over many prayers for our safety, we took our leave. This female hermit subsists entirely on alms, and is held in general veneration throughout the country.

I am at a loss for a name to the other custom, unless I call it polyandry. In most Eastern countries polygamy is allowed. The advocates for it compare mankind to the deer; its enemies liken them to turtle-doves. Montesquieu and other political writers insist that it is destructive of population; and the women cry out that it is unjust and unreasonable that so many of their sex should be subjected to the pleasures of one man. But in this country they have their revenge. The elder brother marries a woman, and she becomes the wife of the whole family. They club together in matrimony as merchants do in trade. Nor is this joint concern often productive of jealousy among the partners. They are little addicted to jealousy. Disputes, indeed, sometimes arise about the children of the marriage; but they are settled either by a comparison of the features of the child with those of its several fathers, or left to the determination of the mother.

## 8

**Extract of Bengal Secret Consultations,  
24th February 1775**

**Note.** The two letters from Bogle to Hastings of 5 December 1774, the first news of Bogle's discussions with the Tashi Lama, were sent on to London by Hastings immediately upon their arrival in Calcutta, as related below.

The Governor-General further lays before the board the following advices which he has received from Mr. George Bogle and as they contain the first information of his meeting with the Taishua Lama he proposes, as they will not be included in the Proceedings sent by this dispatch, that copies of them should be sent in the packet of the *Bute* for the satisfaction of the Court of Directors.

Agreed that copies accordingly be transmitted by the *Bute*.

## 9

**Bogle's Journal  
From Dechenrubje to Tashilhunpo**

At length the 7th of December, the day of our departure from Dechenrubje, arrived. Tashi Lama sent to me to know whether I chose to accompany him, or to go on before, as he had heard we were fond of riding fast, and it might be irksome travelling in his slow way. This question arose, I believe, from the race I had run with Purangir [Gosain] upon the road [to Tibet, see p. 147 above]. There was nothing ill-natured in it. I returned him for answer that I wished to attend his stirrup.

We were wakened long before day, and before sunrise Tashi Lama set out on his journey. The road was covered with cloth from his apartments to the steps by which he was to get on horseback. He was dressed, as usual, in a yellow broad cloth jacket without sleeves. When he came to the steps he pulled off his cap, and his Sapon [gsol-dpon, cup-bearer] put on him one lined with fur, together with a black silk flap with fringes to keep off the sun's rays. He then got upon horseback, and a yellow satin cloak lined with fur was thrown over him. Two men held his horse's head and two others his saddle. Tashi Lama once got a fall, and is a very timorous rider.

Our line of march was as follows:<sup>11</sup>

A Yellow Silk Standard, bound up in two or three places with white handkerchiefs, carried by a man on horseback.

Eight Kettledrums on horseback.

Four Trumpeters on horseback.

A Set of Bells in a frame on horseback.

About Fifty Horsemen, some with large yellow sheepskin bonnets and red broadcloth coats, others with fur caps and satin gowns.

Four Lamas, or High Priests, in yellow tunics, with brown serge thrown over, and yellow picked caps.

Sopon Chumbo, the Cup-bearer, or Favourite.

TASHI LAMA.

A Yellow Satin Umbrella, with strings of coral, carried on horseback.

The Chanzo Cusho.

His Cup-bearer.

The Treasurer.

Mr. Bogle.

Mr. Hamilton

Chait Singh's and other Hindu vakils.

The Pung Cushos, nephews of the Lama.

About a Hundred Horsemen  
of different ranks and in various dresses.

The sun was not yet up and the cold was excessive. I thought I should have lost my fingers. When we had gone about half a mile the people gave three huzzahs, at each of which we turned our horses' heads towards the palace. Crowds of people were assembled to see and pay their adorations to the Lama. The horsemen, however, kept them off, and they were obliged to perform their three prostrations at a great distance. Only such as had erected little altars with fires were allowed to remain, and the smoke of these, however disagreeable, served to render the cold less intense. In this way we proceeded along the western banks of the Namling rivulet [Shang Chu].

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11. It seems probable that Bogle derived this typographic approach to the description of processions from his fellow Scot, John Bell of Antermony. See: John Bell, *Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia, to Various Parts of Asia, in 1716, 1719, 1722, &c.*, 2 vols., Glasgow 1763. This work is reproduced in: John Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in all Parts of the World; many of which are now first translated into English*, Vol. VII, London 1811. In describing the manner of entry of the Russian Embassy into Peking in 1720, of which he was a member, Bell employed this typographical device to set out the the order of procession, and it is retained in Pinkerton.

At sunrise we stopped at some tents and drank tea. That of Tashi Lama was about the size of a captain's, and shut in with walls. The Chanzo Cusho's was rather less<sup>12</sup>. The form of the tents was the same as in Europe. They were of white Assam canvas, with blue flowers and fringes. I was not in them, a separate tent being provided for me. Having halted about an hour, we continued our journey in the same order as before, and with the same crowds of people. After passing the different cross valleys which open into that of Namling Chu, we entered that of Tashitzay, and arrived at the road which leads up to a monastery built on the top of a hill. Everybody alighted except Tashi Lama, who rode up the hill, and then walked into the house upon cloths which were spread for him. I was carried into a tent as before, and besides tea had some cold mutton, rice broth, and fruits. The nuns who live here went in procession to pay their respects to the Lama. Many of them were young and well-looking; but their dress, which is the same as the gylongs, is very unbecoming, and the loss of their hair is a great want. Two of Tashi Lama's nieces are placed in this convent.

We stayed about two hours, and halted again at an encampment two miles farther up the valley, to drink tea. About a mile farther on we arrived at Tashitzay, Tashi Lama's birth-place.

I was lodged in a low room in a sorry house, at the foot of the mount upon which it stands. It was the worst quarters I had met with in the country. However, it was only for a day or two, so I did not mind. But Tashi Lama sent a gylong overnight with some fruits, etc., and he having given a report of my accommodation, Tashi Lama sent to me next day, and I was removed into a good room in the castle, which looked into a small court, where the dancers, etc., were to exhibit. Tashi Lama's nephews came and passed the whole day with me, and I here began an acquaintance and connection with them, which turned out the most pleasurable of any I made in the country. I had also a visit from his nieces, the nuns, and the Tashitzay Depon, or Killadar,<sup>13</sup> likewise paid me a visit, and brought me a present of a handkerchief, two or three small bulses of gold dust, some fruit, etc. I returned the compliment in the evening.

I passed the time in looking at the dancers, or playing at chess with some of the Tibetans. The court held about thirty dancers, half of them men, half of them women. The men were dressed in different and party-coloured clothes, with their large sheep's-wool bonnets, a bit of coloured

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12. The Chanzo Cusho (Chungpa Hutuktu) was the Tashi Lama's half brother, with the same mother but a different father, and became Regent in Tashilhunpo on the Tashi Lama's death in 1780.

13. The Bengal term for the commander of a fort or garrison.

silk in one hand, and a leather machine, something in shape of, but rather less than, a fiddle at their side. The women had their faces washed, and clean clothes, abundance of rings upon their fingers, and of coral, amber beads, bugles, etc., on their heads and necks, and each wore a small round hat, covered with circles of white beads. They formed a ring, the men being altogether, the women altogether, and five men were in the middle of it. They danced to their own singing, moving slowly round in a sort of half-hop step, keeping time with their hands, while the five in the centre twisted round and cut capers, with many strange and indescribable motions. The second part of the entertainment was performed by four or five men, with winged rainbow-coloured caps, who jumped and twisted about, to the clashing of cymbals and the beating of tabors. Among the rest was a merry Andrew with a mask stuck over with cowries, and a clown with a large stick in his hand. These two were more agile than the others, and between whiles carried on a dialogue, and the grimace and conversation gave great entertainment to those who understood it. As I was not so fortunate, I was obliged, as I have often been in more polite assemblies, to seek for amusement in the dress and physiognomies of the spectators.

In this manner did I spend two days. Towards the close of the last Tashi Lama seated himself under a canopy and blessed the people, a ceremony which I have already described.

The house where Tashi Lama was born is built on the top of a high bank. It is very large, the windows regular, flat-roofed, and of goodly appearance from without; within, irregular and smoked. I was not in many of the rooms. All the adjacent villages, together with the valley, which is pretty extensive, were granted to Tashi Lama by Dalai Lama, to whom they formerly belonged.

We got up before daybreak, continued our journey as soon as it was light; stopped at the tents to drink tea; got out of the valley of Tashitzay by the same road that we had entered it, and proceeded towards the great river. About eleven o'clock we reached some tents where refreshments of tea, cold mutton, etc., were prepared for us, and arrived towards evening at our quarters, which formed a little encampment. Tashi Lama's tent was a large Kalmuk one enclosed within walls, and as he sent for me soon after our arrival, I had an opportunity of seeing it more narrowly. It was round, about sixty feet in circumference, and formed of a number of rods stuck into the ground, and gathered at the top into a hoop, which was covered with oiled paper to let in the light. On the outside it was covered with white cloth, except the top, over which some very beautiful panther skins were spread. The entrance was by a small door. All the inside was hung

with crimson satin, and the floor covered with carpet. It was very warm and commodious. The Chanzo Cusho was lodged at a little distance in a small tent of a like construction, but I was not in it.

My habitation would have done better for a milder climate. The tent had walls round it, and was of double canvas, and in European form. However, I got a large fire, and covered myself well up at night with all my furs and sheep's clothing.

In the morning [11 December 1774] before we set out I looked at the thermometer, which was kept in a basket among linen, and found it within two degrees of the bottom of the scale.

We did not stop till we arrived on the bank of the Tsangpo. Here we halted till our horses were ferried over, and had the same refreshments as usual. About two thousand people were assembled to see and prostrate themselves before his Holiness. Tashi Lama walked upon cloths to the river side. His nephews, who had accompanied him, here took leave. He made me go in the boat with him, in which were only the Chanzo and the two Sopons. The boat I have elsewhere described. The river was covered with shoals of floating ice. On the opposite bank the Kashmiri merchants and great crowds of Tibetans waited. They made their obeisance at a distance. We arrived at our quarters towards evening. They were like the former. Tashi Lama sent for me, and observing that my saddle, however well calculated for travelling or hunting, was not suited to the fashion of this country, presented me with a Tibet one, which had a very deep peak of iron, all stuffed, so that it makes one look very lofty. All the ironwork of the saddle and also of the bridle was gilt. He also gave me a yellow satin tunic, faced with black fur; for, says he, "you are to go into my capital tomorrow." These little civilities gained a high value from the manner in which they were done.

We stopped about three miles from Tashilhunpo, the crowds increasing as we advanced. Tashi Lama had a large tent pitched for him, where everybody came to pay their respects and receive his blessing. He was dressed in his sacerdotal habit, and seated on his high-raised cushions. I was placed the second from the Chanzo Cusho, and next under Dalai Lama's vakil. We had some tea, boiled roots, and rice with sugar at the top, while numbers of people passed before him and received the chawa or imposition of hands. The two Commissioners of Shigatse fort [Dzongpön] cut the most remarkable figure. They were dressed like women, but their whiskers and overgrown carcasses left no room to mistake their sex. Their heads were bound with white turbans rolled into a square form; round turquoise earrings, about the size of a watch, hung from their ears, and fell

upon their shoulders. They wore slippers, and the rest of their dress was of blue satin, with their arms bare to the elbows. This habit is worn by all the lay officers subject to Lhasa, on holidays and grand occasions. We had much singing and dancing without Tashi Lama's tent, by gylongs dressed in party-coloured habits, and also by the peasants. The castle of Shigatse, which stands on the eastward of Tashilhunpo, was now above us. It is built on a hill with towers and battlements, and is subject to Lhasa.

From the resting place till we arrived at Tashi Lama's palace the road was lined on both sides with ranks of spectators. They were all dressed in their holiday clothes. The peasants were singing and dancing. About three thousand gylongs, some with large pieces of chequered cloth hung upon their breasts, others with their cymbals and tabors, were ranked next the palace. As Tashi Lama passed they bent half forwards, and followed him with their eyes. But there was a look of veneration mixed with joy in their countenances which pleased me beyond anything, and was a surer testimony of satisfaction than all the guns in the Tower, and all the odes of [William] Whitehead [Poet Laureate from 1757 to 1785] could have given. One catches affection by sympathy; and I could not help, in some measure, feeling the same emotions with Tashi Lama's votaries.

Tashi Lama rode as far as he could, and then walked slowly through the purlieu of the palace, stopping now and then, and casting a cheerful look among his people.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Tashilhunpo December 1774 to April 1775

#### 1

#### Bogle's Journal

We passed by the bottom of Tashilhunpo, which is built on the lower declivity of a steep hill. The roof of the palace, which is large, is all copper gilt. The building is of dark-coloured brick. The houses of the town rise one above another. Four churches with gilt ornaments are mixed with them, and altogether it cuts a princely appearance. Many of the courts are spacious, flagged with stone, and with galleries running round them. The alleys, which are likewise paved, are narrow. The palace is appropriated to Tashi Lama and his offices, to temples, granaries, warehouses, etc. The rest of the town is entirely inhabited by priests, who are in number about four thousand. The views of it, which Tashi Lama afterwards gave to me, will convey a better idea of it than any account I can write; for there is no describing a place so as to give others a just notion of it.

I attended Tashi Lama to his apartments, and as soon as I retired I was conducted to my own. They are new, having been built and finished by Chanzo [Chungpa] Cusho during Tashi Lama's absence at Dechenrubje. There was one room for me, another for Mr. Hamilton. I do not think the apartment allotted to me inferior to any at Tashilhunpo; and although I have little success at these sorts of descriptions, I must attempt to give some account of it. You enter by a door formed of one piece of wood, painted red, strongly secured by two flat bars of iron cunningly gilt, and having a large ring of the same workmanship in the middle, with a white



satin handkerchief tied to it, so that you may not wear off the gilding in pulling the door after you. The door turns upon two pegs cut out of the plank itself, and received into two holes top and bottom. It is fastened by an iron latch and staple, with a lock of the same construction of those which are sometimes brought from China, and about a foot long. The room is about fifty feet long and thirty broad, interrupted by nine square wooden pillars, painted red in streaks, which make them look fluted. There are two small windows with wooden shutters at the west end, but I never opened them, having enough light from above; for in the ceiling of the room there is an opening about thirty feet long and fifteen wide, and the south side being covered only with loose planks, laid slopingly over: you remove as many of them as you please in the day time, and shut them up again at night. They rest upon a beam which is supported by the two middlemost of the nine pillars, which are much longer than the others. The walls, which are of plaster, are painted green, broken with a few horizontal streaks of blue and yellow. The capitals of the pillars, and the beams which form the four sides of the opening I have mentioned, are curiously carved, gilt and ornamented with festoons of dragons and flowers. The floor is of chalky clay, mixed with small pebbles, and formed into a smooth and very beautiful terrace, which, by the labours of a young gyelong, who every morning gets his feet upon two woolen cloths, and exercises himself for three or four hours in skating about the room, will, in the course of fifteen or twenty years, acquire a polish equal to the other floors in the palace, which are not inferior to the finest variegated marble. Mr. Hamilton's room was much smaller and warmer than mine.

From the day of our arrival at Tashilhunpo [13 December 1774] till the 18th of January, 1775, Tashi Lama was engaged in receiving visits and presents. Among the rest of his votaries were a large caravan of Kalmuks [Mongols, including those from Russian territory], who offered up to his shrine ingots of silver, furs, pieces of silk, and dromedaries. They remained about a month at Tashilhunpo, and then proceeded to Lhasa, where they spent about ten days and they returned to their own country, which was about three months' journey to the northward.

I was not present on any of these occasions, but remained at home, where I had enough visitors of my own. The crowds of gylongs used to come at all hours into my room to see me, and get upon the roof and look down upon me. Among these last came the Shigatse Killadars [Dzongpön], dressed in their feminine attire. I never forbade anybody; and after giving them a pinch of snuff and indulging them with a look at the chairs and other things I had brought with me, which always produced an ex-

climation of "Pah-pah-pah, tze-tze-tze!" they used to retire and make way for others. This continued, more or less, all the time I was at Tashilhunpo.

Tashi Lama went down to the large hall which adjoins my apartments, in order to bless the people. It is about sixty feet long and fifty broad; the ceiling supported by a number of high pillars, and the walls adorned with mythological paintings. Tashi Lama was seated upon a lofty throne, raised with cushions, under an alcove at one end of the room; and there was another throne, not so high, on his right hand, which belongs to Chanzo Cusho, who sat, however, on a low cushion at the foot of Tashi Lama's throne, the Sapon Chumbo standing beside it. Immediately without the alcove were placed the four inferior Lamas. I was seated upon a cushion next to them, and opposite to me sat a Kalmuk lama, lately arrived from the Urga Lama [Jebtsun Dampa Hutukhtu], called by the Hindus Taranath, and close to him Dalai Lama's wakil. The wakil of the Rajah of Benares<sup>1</sup> was placed below me, and Mr. Hamilton towards the door, and after him a the vakils from inferior princes and other Hindus.

I came in soon after Tashi Lama was seated, and having made three profound bows, presented to him my handkerchief, which he always receives with his own hands. He spoke to me for about two minutes, inquiring about my health, what I thought of Tashilhunpo, and how I liked my accommodations. After this crowds of people, gylongs, annis, Khampas, Kalmuks, governors of all the neighbouring castles, men, women, and children came to make their offerings and obeisances to the Lama, bringing purses of gold, talents of silver, pieces of Chinese satin, bundles of tea or of fruits, dried sheep's carcasses, bags of flour or of rice, small images with a bit of yellow satin wrapped mantle-wise over them, books of religion, bundles of incense rods called pyes, bells, and a variety of different articles. Those of low degree gave only a white satin handkerchief. They went up in their turn to Tashi Lama's throne, who touched their heads in the manner I have before described. The young gylongs immediately after the imposition of hands retired; but I could not help observing with pleasure the attention which Tashi Lama paid to some of

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1. Chait Singh was Rajah of Benares. His father, Bulwant Singh, had been an ally of the Company (for most of the time, at least). Benares acknowledged the suzerainty of Oudh (Awadh) until 5 July 1775 when, following the death of the old Nawab-Vizier of Oudh Shuja-ud-Daula (January 1775), Chait Singh acknowledged the overlordship of the English East India Company and agreed to pay it an extremely large annual tribute.. This 1775 agreement initiated a very unhappy period in relations between Chait Singh and the Company which was to reflect little credit on Warren Hastings and to figure in his impeachment proceedings. See also: Note 4 below and Ch. VII above, Note 9, p. 159.

the old gylongs, speaking to them for a minute or two with that affable and engaging look which "wins the hearts of men."

Between whiles Tashi Lama, and everybody that was seated, drank a dish of tea. I had mine out of Tashi Lama's golden teapot, an honour bestowed only upon Chanzo Cusho, the inferior Lamas, and the vakils of Dalai Lama and the Urga Lama [Taranath]. There was a company of fifteen young boys, from seven to twelve years old, dressed in different coloured chintzes and kincobs [brocades, often with gold thread], with white turbans, and small axes in their right hands, who at intervals danced before Tashi Lama, to the music of hautboys, flutes, kettle-drums, and bells, keeping time with their axes, with their hoppings, their twirlings, and many other motions which I attempt not to describe. I am told it was an imitation of a Ladakh dance. Another part of the entertainment consisted of public disputes, which were supported by gylongs of whom several in different parts of the room were holding different arguments at the same time. Religion was the subject of their debates; perhaps the immortality of the soul, or the unchangeable nature of right and wrong; but my ignorance of the language rendered them quite unintelligible to me. They were carried on with much vociferation and feigned warmth, and embellished with great powers of action, such as clapping hands, shaking the head, etc. These gestures seem very ridiculous to an European; perhaps our orators would appear equally ridiculous to them. Dinner was afterwards brought in. Six large, low tables, covered with wooden painted platters, filled with Chinese and Kashmiri dried fruits, sugar, treacle cakes, and sweetmeats, piles of biscuits, dried sheep's carcasses, etc., were set before Tashi Lama; two tables garnished in the like manner before the Chanzo Cusho; and some bread, pieces of dried mutton, plates of fruits and sweetmeats, before me and each of the other guests. After drinking a dish of tea, cups of mutton hashed and of pounded rice and mutton boiled to a jelly were set before us, of which I ate heartily. Then a joint of mutton boiled and another roasted, upon the same wooden plate, were served up to each. The meat was tough and sinewy, but the Lama presently sent me a leg of most excellent boiled mutton off his own plate, and smilingly beckoned to me to eat of it. When we had finished our repast, the Sapon Chumbo distributed the fruits, sweetmeats, etc., according to a list which he held in his hand, sending some of them to people without the palace, and the rest to the guests. Mine were all upon silver dishes. Then everybody retired.

Tashi Lama went up by a back stair to visit the new apartments, and carried me along with him. He went first into the gallery, which is on the

same floor with my room, and walking up to the image of the god Sakya [a Buddha or Bodhisattva], which is in the middle, fell down three times before it. I may as well describe this temple while I am here.

The gallery contains thirteen gigantic figures, which would be about eight feet high standing; but they are all, except the image of the God of War and another, sitting cross-legged. They are of copper gilt, holding a pot with flowers or fruit in their lap. They are represented covered with mantles, and crowns or mitres on their heads; and altogether, particularly the drapery, are far from being badly executed. The thrones upon which they sit are also of copper gilt, adorned with turquoises, cornelians, and other stones of no great value. The mouldings and ornaments of the thrones are in a good style. Behind each figure the wall is covered with a piece of carved work, like unto the heavy gilt frames of our forefathers' portraits, or looking-glasses. Behind them are earthen vases, some of them very handsome, loads of china and glass ware, the last partly Chinese, partly European, filled with grain, fruit, or gum flowers; a variety of shells, large chanks set in silver, some ostrich eggs, coconuts, cymbals, and a variety of other articles, making a most heterogeneous appearance. Round the necks of the images are strings of coral, ill-shaped pearls, cornelian, agate, and other stones, and their crowns are set with the like ornaments.

The ceiling of the gallery is covered with satins of a variety of patterns, some Chinese, some Kalmuk, some European brought through Russia and overland. The gallery is lighted on the south side by five windows, and the walls between are hung with paintings of the different deities in groups and seated on clouds. The opposite side, where the images are, is shut in all the length of the gallery with a net formed of links of iron.

Tashi Lama went within, and as he went along sprinkled rice upon the images. It was a kind of consecration. When he came out we sat down to tea, and Tashi Lama explained to me some of the paintings, and marked the different countries from which the silks overhead had come. At each end of the gallery was a large collection of books deposited in small niches, or rather pigeon-holes. Having finished our tea, we went by a back staircase into my room, which Tashi Lama also bespattered with rice. After examining the furniture, with a set of chessmen in battle array upon the table, he passed into Mr. Hamilton's room, and having there performed the same rites of dedication, I took my leave and Tashi Lama proceeded to his own end of the palace.

Next morning [19 December 1774], Tashi Lama repaired again to the hall, whither we all attended him. But why should I repeat over the ceremonies of which I have already given so minute and so tiresome a

description?

I had a visit [on 20 December 1774] from Depon Patza [Petsal or Pachhal], who is one of the four Tibetan generals, and I took care to receive him in all due form. He said he came by Tashi Lama's orders, who told him that as I had come from so far a country, and from the sovereigns of Hindustan, it was proper he should wait upon me. He is a very cheerful, pleasant man, and after some conversation, and drinking a dish or two of tea, we sat down to chess. Although my pieces were entirely new to him, he fought a tough battle, and I believe, if we had played another game, the general would have gained the victory. But he was next day to set out for Lhasa, and was afterwards ordered upon service into Demo Jong's country [Sikkim] to oppose the troops with which the Gorkha had invaded it.

On the 25th December, Depon Dinji came also to take leave of me. He is the governor of a castle belonging to the Tashi Lama, about six days' journey higher up the Tsangpo; and as nobody under Tashi Lama's jurisdiction is put to death, all great criminals are sent to him, where, by confining them without meat or drink, he soon puts an end to their existence. He had paid me frequent and unceremonious visits in my tents upon the road. His looks and his manners are exactly those of an overgrown country farmer and smoking plentifully of tobacco. I could not help sometimes thinking him a little crack-brained. He discovered that the dress of the English was exactly that of the Russians; for indeed the tunic which I wore, and also my cap, the cut of which was four-square instead of being round, had been made a present of to Tashi Lama by some Turki Tatars. I had no business to undeceive him, especially as I got so much into his good graces on this account. He said he liked the Russians for their enmity to the Chinese, who were a base, barbarous, and scoundrelly people. I confess I was a good deal surprised at the warmth with which he always revived this treasonable subject, till I discovered that he had been in the service of Wang Cusho [Gyurmé Namgyal, son of Polhanas], the last of the Tibet Rajahs, who about twenty-five years ago [1750] was treacherously put to death by the Chinese at Lhasa.<sup>2</sup>

I had a visit from the Chauduri [Chaudhri or Chaudhari: in this context the title for a sub-ordinate revenue officer], a native of Palpa,<sup>3</sup> whom I have elsewhere mentioned, accompanied by other Hindustanis. The vakils

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2. See Ch. IX below, Note 1.

3. An independent state to the west of Kathmandu which would finally be conquered by the Gurkhas in 1805. Palpa was one of those states known collectively as the Chaubisi, the 24 Rajahs. See: Ch. X below, p. 272.

of Chait Singh [Rajah of Benares]<sup>4</sup> and of Kashmiri Mull [a great banker and trader nominally subject to the Rajah of Benares]<sup>5</sup> also came to see me, and afterwards frequently repeated their visits. Their discourse has no business to come in here. But I may be allowed to remark that the fulsome compliments and cringing humility with which it was mixed were to me little grateful, in comparison with the plain and honest manners of the Tibetans.

Tashi Lama was to receive the vakils sent by Dalai Lama and Gesub Rimpoché at Lhasa, to congratulate him on his return. He asked me to be present. The ceremony was in the large church to the south of the palace. I was up in the balcony that looked into it. The church was full of gylongs, dressed in yellow caps and mantles, and seated as close to one another as possible. When Tashi Lama came in, he made three prostrations towards the altar and the image of Sandia [Sakya, or Sakyamuni, the Buddha]; after which he ascended his throne, raised very lofty by steps. We had a great deal of praying, and some dishes of tea between whiles. Then came in Dalai Lama's, with a large silver platter curiously embossed, and covered with rice divided into five heaps; and he, together with three others, stood with it before Tashi Lama, while he made an harangue of an hour long. I was in pain for him, as I thought once or twice he would have fallen through it. During all this time Tashi Lama or anybody else spoke not a word. When it had ended, Tashi Lama answered him in a short speech, and taking up a little of the rice, threw it towards the altar. He then received Dalai Lama's letter, together with four or five small images, as

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4. Chait Singh, as has been said in Note 1 above, was nominally subordinate to the Nawab of Oudh; but he behaved to all intents and purposes as an independent ruler. In July 1775 Chait Singh entered into a treaty with the East India Company by which he agreed to pay the Company an annual tribute of twenty-two and a half lakhs of Rupees. With the outbreak of Anglo-French war in 1778, Hastings imposed further financial and military demands upon Chait Singh, who eventually refused, or was unable, to comply with further requests for money including a massive fine. In 1780 an abortive revolt against the Company's exactions (for which Chait Singh may well not have been responsible) broke out in Benares. Chait Singh was obliged to flee, making his way to Gwalior. Hastings deposed him, putting his nephew in his place while to all intents annexing Benares to the Company's dominions.

5. Kashmiri Mull's house in Benares was to become something of a tourist attraction in later years. Laurence Oliphant, for example, made a special point of seeing in 1850 what he called "this antique specimen of a nobleman's house". See: L. Oliphant, *A Journey to Katmandu (the Capital of Nepaul) with the Camp of Jung Bahadoor; including a Sketch of the Nepaulese Ambassador at Home*, London 1852, pp. 16-17.

many books, and some chunks set in silver, all which he placed before him on his throne. Next came in a string of people carrying gifts; each man a talent of silver, a piece of silk, or a bundle of tea. When all Dalai Lama's presents were finished, Gesub's were brought, in the same style, but of less value. Altogether there were about a hundred talents of silver, a hundred and twenty pieces of silk, and sixty bundles of tea. There were also about six talents of silver, two pieces of silk, and four bundles of tea given to the Chanzo Cusho. While all this was passing, a great number of petitions were, according to the custom, thrown into the church, each being tied to a white satin handkerchief. The gylongs afterwards handed them from one to another till they reached the foot of the throne, where they were collected, and then handed up to the Lama. I am told they are principally desiring prayers for sick people, or for the souls of those lately dead. Tashi Lama read over one or two of them, after which he said a short prayer by himself, and was followed by another by the gylongs; and so every one departed.

What can I do to break the thread of these tiresome ceremonies; and how can I render the account of the tedious and uniform life I spent at Tashilhunpo agreeable? It was monastic to the greatest degree. Nothing but priests; nothing from morning to night but the chanting of prayers, and the sound of cymbals and tabors. Every attention was paid to me by Tashi Lama. I enjoyed good health, and a mind free from care and anxiety. Yet the employment I found in attempting to acquire the language, in listening to the stories of fakirs and Kashmiris, or in carrying on a broken conversation with the crowds of Tibetans who used to frequent my apartment, yielded an entertainment listless and insipid when compared with the pleasures of society; and my life at Tashilhunpo, when stripped of the little unmarked circumstances which amuse, one knows not why, and seen through the dull medium of description, must appear joyless and uninteresting.

I must confess the pleasantest hours I spent, before the arrival of the Pung Cushos, were either in my audiences with Tashi Lama, or in playing at chess. The arrival of a large party of Kalmuks furnished me with enough of combatants. Their method of playing differs from ours, in the privilege of moving two steps being confined to the first pawn played by each party; in castling and stalemate being unknown; and in the game being reckoned equal when the king is left solus without a piece or a pawn on the board. It is a generous principle. In my first trials of skill with the Tatars, I used often to come off loser. For when a Siberian sits down to chess, he gets two or three of his countrymen to assist him; they lay all

their great bare heads together canvassing and consulting about every move. At length I found out the way of managing them, and encountered them with their own weapons. If I could not get a Siberian to enter the lists with me in single combat, I engaged an equal number of Tatars on my side, and we used to beat them hollow.

Soon after their arrival at Tashilhunpo, Tashi Lama went to visit the different temples, and I was always invited to be present. A small tent was pitched for me on the flat roof of every temple, and I used to pass the first part of the service, which generally lasted a couple of hours, in drinking tea, eating boiled mutton and sweetmeats, and playing at chess with the Kalmuks. After this, I used to go onto the balcony which looked into the temple and sat another hour or two as a spectator on a cushion next to the Chanzo Cusho in a balcony which looked into the church. The gylongs are all seated, as I have already described. The prayers are mostly chanted in different, and often not unmelodious, notes; and the service, except on particular holidays, is conducted with great decency. The priests here are much better taught than in the Deb Rajah's country, and in repeating their offices have no occasion for the books which are used at Tashichodzung. On some festivals, however, a man, dressed in party-coloured clothes, and a cap like that of a cardinal adorned with small death's-heads, used to come in, and with many strange gestures hop and twist about, pouring out oblations of oil, brandy, rice, etc., and holding a human skull, a bell, a scimitar, or an axe in his hand. Between the services, Tashi Lama sometimes sent for me into a small room upon the roof. During my stay at Tashilhunpo, I suppose I spent fifteen or twenty days in this manner. I never failed to attend their solemn rites when asked.

I had this day a visit from the vakils who lately came from Dalai Lama and Gesub Rimpoché. One of them was a priest, and dressed in the habit of his order. The other was clad in feminine attire. They brought me some small barrels and boxes containing presents from Gesub Rimpoché. Upon opening them, they were found to consist of Chinese distilled whisky, a variety of small cakes made by the same people, a kind of fish less than a minnow, dried, and some dried mushrooms, which they said came from Peking. The whisky was stronger and better than that of Tibet; the bread of very fine flour, but not half baked nor even kneaded. The fish were either good for nothing, or we could not find out the right mode of dressing them; but the mushrooms served greatly to improve the simple and unsavoury economy of our table. I received the vakils in all due form; they stayed with me about an hour, and left me little satisfied with their manners or conversation.



The holidays at the New Year drew nigh, and all Tashi Lama's relations came from different parts of the country to pay their respects to him. His cousin the Tashitzay Depon, with his wife and family; his nieces, the two annis (nuns) whom I saw at Tashitzay; their mother Chum Cusho; their two brothers, the Pung Cushos; and a half-sister named Dorje Phakmo [Thunderbolt Sow], a female Lama, who is abbess of a monastery [Samding] near the Palti Lake and according to the belief of the people is animated by the spirit of a holy lady who died many hundred years ago.<sup>6</sup> All the ladies, together with the Depon, were lodged in a house situated in a grove of old trees under the palace, and the Pung Cushos in a Kalmuk tent adjoining to it. They stayed about two months at Tashilhunpo, during which time Mr. Hamilton cured Dorje Phakmo and Chum Cusho of complaints which they had long been subject to, and I improved my connection with the Pung Cushos.

They used often to come and pass two or three hours with me. I sometimes went down to their tent, where we spent the time in singing, smoking, drinking chang, and playing upon the flute or the guitar, at which the elder brother is a great adept. We made little excursions into the country; and I afterwards accompanied them, to their estate at Rinjaitzay, and spent five or six cheery days at their castle. The eldest brother is about twenty-seven, the youngest about twenty-two.

There is another brother, who is bred up to the church. He is a Lama or high-priest, but is not yet allowed to officiate on account of his youth. He used also to come often to see me, and being very lively and of great curiosity, I had much pleasure in showing him anything; but the decorum of his character would not permit him to be of any of our parties with his brothers. Lama Alli (the word alli means little) is about sixteen: short for his age, but very fair and ruddy, and blessed with that fine temper which distinguishes all Tashi Lama's family.

On the first day of the Tibetan year [17 January 1775], everybody, except Tashi Lama, assembled in the large court which is under the palace. All the galleries which ran round it were crowded with spectators. I was placed, as usual, next the Chanzo Cusho in the highest balcony. The exhibitions began with dancing by merry Andrews in masks. Then a number of banners were set up, and a crowd of gylongs, dressed in various coloured habits, with their cymbals and tabors, and with trumpets, hautboys, and drums, marched in procession round the court. Next, about twenty gylongs, in visors representing the heads of different, mostly ideal [imaginary], animals, and in masquerade dresses, danced with antic

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6. Often described as the only female Incarnation in Tibet.

motions, in the same manner (but better performed) as I had seen at Tashichodzong.

After this, the figure of a man, chalked upon paper, was laid upon the ground. Many strange ceremonies, which to me who did not understand them appeared whimsical, were performed about it; and a great fire being kindled in a corner of the court, it was at length held over it, and being formed of combustibles, vanished with much smoke and explosion. I was told it was a figure of the devil, but am not sufficiently skilled in the Tibetan mythology to enter into particulars. One thing is certain, it was painted white with regular features; and whether or no it was intended to represent that being who "goes to and fro upon the face of the earth, seeking whom he may devour," I could not help sometimes fancying that it much resembled a European.

I was visited by the wakil of Prithvi Narayan, the Rajah of Nepal, who presented me with two sheep, some rupees, rice, spices, etc. The conversation that passed I have elsewhere related.<sup>7</sup>

A good many Kalmuks visited Mr. Hamilton. He thought they were come to apply for some medicines. Every one presented him with a handkerchief, according to the custom of the country. They told him, that having heard of his great skill in the occult sciences, they were come to have their fortunes told, and at the same time stretched out their hands for that purpose. While he was hesitating whether to carry on the joke a little farther, they desired him first to tell what had happened to them last year, and then to proceed to unfold their future destiny. This is a good way enough of proving a fortune-teller, and was a task Mr. Hamilton was unable to undergo. I have often myself been taken for a conjurer, and had applications of the same kind made to me; but it was only by my particular acquaintances. I dare say a man skilled in palmistry or a company of gypsies would have a world of business in these parts; for although I could not discover in the country any of those Shamans, or Tatar conjurers, mentioned by some travellers, the Tibetans have great faith in fortunes.

The Tashitzay Depon paid me a visit [11 February 1775], bringing two tables covered with dried fruits and sweetmeats. I offered to repay the compliment, but he never sent to me, and I did not wish to appear over zealous in cultivating his friendship, as it would have hurt my connection with the Pung Cushos, who are on but indifferent terms with him on account of his wife, who belongs also to them. It is a strange story and exhibits manners very different from our own; but I forbear to lay open

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7. See Chapter IX below, p. 245. The visit of the Gurkha wakil apparently took place on 13 February 1775.

the family disputes of my two young friends.

We spent this day [15 February 1775] with the Pung Cushos, at some tents prepared for us on the side of a hill, a few miles from Tashilhunpo. Shooting at a mark, running races, and seeing some of the peasants dance and sing, formed our entertainment, for there is no hunting or killing animals so near the palace. Our friends had prepared a great feast for us. Not knowing what we would like, took care to have every kind of flesh, fish and fowl they could think of. After dinner, tables covered with fruits were brought in, and they insisted on presenting us with dresses and horses. Having drank plenty of tea and chang, we returned to the palace. I rode the horse the Pung Cushos gave me, which was a Kalmuk, but I did not find it so tractable as these horses are said to be. I had enough ado to keep it from running away with me.

I waited upon the ladies [18 February 1775]. The Chum Cusho is a cheerful widow of about five-and-forty, with a ruddy complexion, and the remains of having once been handsome. In her younger days she was a nun, and her husband, Tashi Lama's brother, a gylong; but they happened somehow to form such a connection together as put an end to their state of celibacy. Tashi Lama was much displeased with his brother, and would not admit him into his presence for many years. After his death, Chum Cusho, being passed the heyday of life, resumed her religious character; and having taken up her vows of chastity, laid aside all her ornaments, dressed herself in a homely garb, and set out on pilgrimages to visit the temples in Nepal, Palpa, etc. Tashi Lama has since behaved to her and her children with much kindness. Her sons, the Pung Cushos, and her daughters, the annis, were present. We had plenty of tea, mutton, broth, fruits, etc., and the old woman was as merry as a cricket.

The mother went with me into the apartment of Dorje Phakmo, who was attired in a gylong's dress, her arms bare from the shoulders, and sitting cross-legged upon a low cushion. She is also the daughter of Tashi Lama's brother, but by a different wife. She is about seven-and-twenty, with small Chinese features, delicate, though not regular, fine eyes and teeth; her complexion fair, but wan and sickly; and an expression of languor and melancholy in her countenance, which I believe is occasioned by the joyless life that she leads. She wears her hair, a privilege granted to no other vestal I have seen: it is combed back without any ornaments, and falls in tresses upon her shoulders. The imposition of her hands, like that of Tashi Lama's, is supposed to convey a blessing, and I did not fail to receive it. After making my presents and obeisances, I kneeled down, and stretching out her arm, which is equal to "the finest lady in the land", she

laid her hand upon my head. The entertainment was the same as at the mother's. Dorje Phakmo spoke little, and but for the old woman, who was present, the conversation would have had many pauses. I never visited her but this time. Mr. Hamilton on account of her sickness used to be there every day.

The two nuns are as merry and good-humoured as their mother.<sup>8</sup> The eldest, who is about seven or eight and twenty, is dark complexioned and hard featured. The youngest is about nineteen; remarkably fair and ruddy. Their dress is the same as that of the gylongs, the head shaven, the arms bare, a red frieze jacket, reaching a little below the waist, a piece of coarse red woollen cloth thrown over their shoulders, a petticoat of red serge falling a little below the knee, and red woollen hose soled with leather, and gartered under the knee. They, as well as the priests, are not allowed to wear any kind of ornament, except it be a few beads of coral strung with their rosaries.

I may be excused, perhaps, in mentioning a circumstance, which, although it does not properly belong to these memoranda, I cannot, in justice to my Tibetan friends, omit. From the civilities which Tashi Lama and everybody about him had shown me, as well as from my desire of conciliating the good-will of the Tibetans, whose country I believe no Englishman had ever visited before, I resolved to make some presents to Tashi Lama's relations; and accordingly purchased coral beads, which are much valued in this part of the world. I carried them with me on my visit to the Chum Cusho and her daughters, and had much ado to procure their acceptance of them. The Pung Cushos were still more difficult, and I believe I spent an hour in their tent before I could get them to agree to take my beads. "You," said they, "are come from a far country; it is our business to render your stay agreeable; why should you make us presents?"

The Tatar (Kalmuk) Lama, who has been sent as an envoy from the great Urga Lama, called by the Hindus Taranath, came to visit me [25 February 1775]. He receives the title of Lama, I believe, only by courtesy. He is a native of Ladakh, but has resided long in Siberia; is a very pleasant and entertaining man, and brought me a pot full of tea, and a handkerchief. I wanted to return his visit, but he excused himself on account of

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8. Hugh Richardson has suggested the possibility that one of these became Bogle's wife (according to Tibetan custom at any rate) and the mother of his children. This is interesting speculation which certainly should not be dismissed out of hand. If correct, then Bogle's descendants were related to no less than four major great Tibetan Incarnations, the Panchen Lama, two of his brothers, and the "Thunderbolt Sow" Dorje Phakmo. See: H. E. Richardson, "George Bogle and his Children", *The Scottish Genealogist*, XXIX, 3, September 1982.

his attendance on Tashi Lama. He remained some time after the departure of the Kalmuk pilgrimage for Lhasa, and paid me another visit before he set out.

About this time I undertook a work for Tashi Lama which gave me a good deal of employment and a good deal of trouble. It was an account of Europe, and I confess I found it a very difficult task, for I had to fancy myself a Tibetan, and then put down the things which I imagined would strike him. I had abundance of difficulty also in translating it into the Tibet language, being obliged to use an interpreter, a kind of being who is generally more apt to follow out roundly his own ideas than to keep strictly to yours. I got through France, England, and such other countries as I have seen; but having no books to assist me, I was obliged to leave it unfinished. As it was, it afforded a great feast to Tashi Lama's insatiable curiosity. [The English version is reproduced at the end of this Chapter].

As Mr. Hamilton was returning from Dorje Phakmo's [28 February 1775], he saw a crowd of people, in the midst of which a young gyelong was being chastised for neglecting his lesson. He was extended upon the ground and held down by four people, while a fifth was bastinading him.

The Pung Cushos used often to come and see me. Today [3 March 1775] their sisters, the nuns, came along with them. They asked me to show them my Fringy dress, and we prevailed on the youngest sister to put on my coat. We had a great deal of laughing and merriment. But who can repeat the little unimportant trifles which gladden conversation and serve to while the time away?

The priest, who every morning came to me with boiled rice and tea from Tashi Lama, was called Depon Dinji Sampu. He was about fifty, marked with the smallpox, his eye mild and candid, and himself of great singleness of mind and simplicity. He came to understand my imperfect attempts to speak the Tibet language tolerably well, and we used to have long chats together. I grew very fond of him, and he took a great liking to me. He always kept a box of excellent snuff, and was not niggardly in offering a pinch of it. But with all Depon Dinji's good qualities, he was equally averse to washing his hands and face as the rest of his countrymen. He happened one morning to come in while I was shaving, and I prevailed upon him for once to scrub himself. With the help of soap and water I gave him a new complexion, and he seemed to view himself in my shaving glass with some satisfaction; but he was exposed to so much ridicule from his brother priests, that I never could get him to repeat the experiment.

On the 11th of March, 1775, the Pung Cushos were to set out for their country seat, about two days' journey from Tashilhunpo, and asked me to

accompany them. I was glad of an opportunity of varying the insipid scene, and applied for Tashi Lama's permission, which he readily granted me. We set out about midday. I carried with me only one Hindustani servant, resolving to live like a Tibetan. The Pung Cushos had about a dozen servants. We arrived towards evening at a village, in the valley through which runs the Tsangpo, and took up our quarters in the head man's house. After drinking tea, dinner was brought in. A cup of hashed mutton, not unlike a greasy curry, another of boiled rice, a third of raw beef beat into a jelly, and highly seasoned with red pepper and other spices. It is far from unsavoury, when one can get the better of European prejudices. There were also a joint of mutton well boiled, and another just scorched on the outside but raw within. It is easy to guess on which I made my dinner. In this country two people never eat off the same joint of meat or help themselves from the same plate, so that each man had a mess to himself consisting of the dishes I have mentioned served up to each. After this we had fruits and sweetmeats, and, the Pung Cushos having lent me a pipe, we sat down to smoking. We then adjourned to a small garden, to shoot with a bow. A tent was pitched for us. A black cloth with a small white circle in the middle was hung up at some distance. Everyone who hit the mark had a handkerchief given them. I also received one although my archery had not merited it. Night came on. We returned and sat down about a goodly fire, new kindled in the middle of the room, and spending a couple of hours in singing, drinking chang, playing upon the guitar, or at chess. Mr. Hamilton and I then retired to another apartment, where a supper was prepared for us, as if we had not tasted meat that day; but afraid that we might not relish Tibetan victuals, the Pung Cushos had ordered their servants to ask our people about our usual food, and had prepared some eggs, fish, roasted fowls etc., etc..

Next morning we got up before day, and found the Pung Cushos ready to sit down to breakfast upon tea and cold mutton. As I can always eat at any hour of the day or night, I did not fail to partake with them. After this we had the ceremony of the master of the house presenting us with fruits, sweetmeats, and dried sheep's carcasses; and having returned these civilities by presents in usual form, we set out on our journey. Having rode about an hour we reached the banks of the Tsangpo.

The boats were all on the other side, and the river covered with shoals of broken ice mixed with snow. We had to wait here a couple of hours. There was a tent with tea prepared for us, and I spent part of the time in sliding on the ice, with which a neighbouring pool of water was covered. As soon as we were ferried over, we mounted our horses and rode cheerily

up the sandy banks of the Tsangpo, stopping twice at tents prepared for us, to refresh ourselves with tea, mutton, etc.. In the afternoon we came to the foot of a mountain covered with red ochre, and dedicated to some wrathful deity. Here the Pung Cushos set up the branch of a tree, with a white handkerchief fastened to it. The Tsangpo at this place forms a large sheet of water immediately below the road. You have a view of its windings for a great way up and down, and the prospect would be very fine if the adjacent mountains were not so bleak and bare. The winds in this valley are very strong, often carrying up the dust in columns to a great height, or forming it into hills of sand. Turning to the right we entered the valley where the Pung Cushos' estate is situated, and stopped at some tents set up by a servant of Gesub Rimpoché who has the care of a house belonging to that minister. Among the rest of our entertainment were excellent mutton puffs, a dish which I had not before seen. Ascending the valley we arrived at Rinjaitzay Castle about an hour after it was dark, having, by our stoppings and tea drinkings, taken a complete day to perform a journey which might easily be done in six hours.

I was lodged in the room adjoining to the domestic chapel, which is generally the best in the house. As the Pung Cushos, particularly the youngest, are keen sportsmen, it was hung round with matchlocks, bows and arrows, swords, shot-bags, etc., and one part of the wall was covered with Chinese paper hangings. After presenting me with loads of fruit, they brought in supper, which was the sixth solid meal I had seen that day.

During the five or six days we spent at Rinjaitzay, the Pung Cushos entertained us in the most hospitable manner, omitting nothing that could contribute to our amusement. They exhibited different feats of horsemanship, made shooting parties with bows and arrows and matchlocks; they caught and bagged hares to be coursed by us with greyhounds; procured partridges and other game for us to eat, and one day we went out with the nets to catch musk goats. This requires a more particular description.

After riding about three miles from Rinjaitzay, we stopped at a tent and sat there two hours while the servants went up the hills reconnoitring. I confess I did not much conceit this method of hunting in a tent, and formed no favourable presage of our sport. At length I prevailed on the younger brother to set out, and letting loose the dogs we rode along the sides of the hills, but without seeing anything except a covey of partridges; and although the Pung Cushos make no bones of shooting when by themselves, they were afraid that some of Tashi Lama's people who accompanied me might mention it at Tashilhunpo, and so get them into

a scrape.

At length, when we were about to return, one of the servants came with the news of having found a musk goat asleep in a quarry. The dogs were immediately tied up. The people with the toils went along the side of the mountain, and above the place where the game lay, while we followed slowly after. The toils are made of cords, formed into a number of nooses hung close to one another on a rope which is extended at about three or four feet from the ground, and supported by rods stuck in the earth at intervals of about ten or twelve feet. There is another row of nooses similar to this placed parallel to it, and at the distance of about five feet and at the same height. When these double toils were set all round one side of the quarry, and at about a gunshot from it, we spread ourselves, encircled the other side, and with shouts and stones at length awakened the musk from his profound sleep. As soon as he got upon the brow of the hill, he boundingly made towards the toils, and having twice attempted to leap over them, thrust his head into one of the nooses. When we came up to him he was quite breathless with struggling, and all the skin, which is very tender, was torn off his neck with the cord. We carried him home and put him into a closet adjoining to my room; but he died before morning.

The musk animal is about the size of an antelope, but without any horns. The bag of perfume for which it is famous is produced only in the male, who is also of a colour more dark than the female, and distinguished by two tusks which fall perpendicularly from his upper jaw. The colour of the hair at the point is brown intermixed with yellow and resembles the fledges of a quill almost as much as hair. It has an amazing strong attractive quality, like amber, and sticks to your fingers so that it is difficult to shake it off. The skins of the musk animals which I have seen in the Deb Rajah's country are much darker than those in Tibet; they approach almost to black. The common way of killing the musk is by matchlocks and bows and arrows. It is sadly persecuted by the peasants about the beginning of winter, and numbers of them seek protection on the privileged mountains behind the palace of Tashilhunpo.

The partridges are considerably smaller than those in England. Regarding their taste I cannot say anything, for the cook allowed three, which Mr. Hamilton one day shot, to fly away some hours after they were dead; and those which the Pung Cushos now caught for me were so tame, it would have been a sin to kill them; so I set them at liberty, which was considered by Tashi Lama's servants to be a very pious action. As to the Pung Cushos, they are little scrupulous about this or any venial sin, and, as long as it comes not to the knowledge of Tashi Lama, will do anything



you like.

The Pung Cushos keep a large parcel of all kinds of dogs at Rinjaitzay, and some of them, particularly Shamo, are great favourites. There is also a wolf chained at the foot of the stair, a tiger cat fastened to a stone on the roof, besides other animals.

After supper every one retired to his room and went to bed, thinking no evil. But about the middle of the night we were alarmed with a dreadful barking and howling amongst the dogs, which soon brought all the family together upon the terrace; Mr. Hamilton and I in our shirts, the rest with only a blanket wrapped round them, it being the custom for the Tibetans, both men and women, to sleep naked. The noise still continued. Some said it was thieves; but as I could not think anybody would be so wicked as attempt to rob Tashi Lama's family, I had nothing for it but to conclude it was the devil. In the meantime a most extraordinary yelling began just under our noses, which being totally different from anything I had ever heard, would certainly have served to confirm my notions, had not the whole family, to my utter astonishment, burst out into a fit of laughing; and, Padma having managed to light a lamp with his tinder-box, we had the satisfaction to see Mr. Wolf, whose breaking loose had occasioned all this disturbance and had wounded many of the dogs, pinned down by the tiger cat, with her claws fixed in his cheeks. So, having remanded him into confinement, each of our motley group, after looking a little at one another, returned laughing to bed.

Early in the morning [17 March 1775] we took leave of our hosts, set out from Rinjaitzay, and by declining to drink tea at various places and pushing through a great whirlwind of dust towards the end of our journey, with great difficulty reached Tashilhunpo at night. The palace and all the town were illuminated in honour of the last Tashi Lama. It is reckoned very unlucky if the lamps should be blown out, and yet they were blown out upon this occasion. However, the sons of men can easily find salvos for anything. A few extraordinary prayers, or one or two solemnities, avert the evil.

In the morning [18 March 1775] my friend Depon Dinji Sampu came to see me. He looked more thoughtful than usual; and after we had drank a dish of tea and exchanged a pinch of snuff, he told me the cause of it - that he was appointed Governor of Janglache, a castle of some consequence, about three days higher up the Tsangpo. I congratulated him on his good fortune; but it would not do. He said to me: "I know that many people would solicit this office, the obtaining of which gives me so much uneasiness; but I have from my youth continued with Tashi Lama.

I have never been employed on any public business; I am not used to writing, and have had no practice in accounts. I shall have a vast deal to do in my new employment; I know not well how to set about it, and am afraid of getting into a scrape." As the Christian virtue of humble-mindedness is so rare, I could not help being pleased to meet with it in a Pagan. What I said to encourage Depon Dinji produced, as often happens, no effect; and he wanted me to apply to Tashi Lama that he might accompany me, at least to Tashichodzung; but he would not allow me to mention it as his desire, and I could not do it otherwise. Soon after he set out for his government, having first taken leave of me, and presented me with some bulses of gold dust and a white handkerchief at parting. I felt not the same heart's liking for the priest who succeeded to the office of bringing me rice and tea in the morning, as I had for Depon Dinji. He afterwards was sent by Tashi Lama to attend me to Tashichodzung, and fell a sacrifice to a strange climate.

Some Chinese merchants came to Tashilhunpo to buy lamb's skins, and a Kashmiri brought one of them to see me [on 23 March 1775]. His manners bespoke him a man of his rank. His cap was faced with black lamb skins; but as I understood Tashi Lama did not wish me to have any connection with him, I sent him away. I did not find his complexion near so fair as I expected.

I was invited to pass the afternoon [of 25 March 1775] at the Cup-bearer's [Sopon Chumbo], where I was treated with all the things I have so often repeated, set off with the most easy conversation. The manners of the Tibetans are in general very engaging; but this officer, by travelling through Tatory and China, and by a long residence at the Court of Peking, has improved upon them.

I now seldom stirred out of my room, being employed from morning to night in translating some papers which Tashi Lama gave me about Tibet [the nature of which Bogle does not explain].

The severity of the winter was now passed; the ice melted faster than it froze; the weather in the heat of the day was very comfortable, and I began to turn my views towards Bengal.

The Tashitzay Killadar's family had left us, and Dorje Phakmo had set out for her convent. The Pung Cushos were returned to Tashilhunpo, but it was only to escort their mother and sisters to Tashitzay. I this day took leave of Chum Cusho and the two nuns, not without many blessings and much advice from the old woman, and many promises to the nuns of writing to them and sending them corals and looking-glasses. My parting with the Pung Cushos was a harder task. I never could reconcile myself to

the thoughts of a last farewell, and however anxious I was to return to Bengal and to the world, I could not take leave of my Tibetan friends with indifference, and would now find little satisfaction in repeating the circumstances of it.

The last days of my stay at Tashilhunpo were taken up with these ceremonies; all my acquaintances in the palace coming to me with pots of tea, little presents, kind looks, and kind expressions.

At length everything was ready for my departure. Tashi Lama had already given us our public audience of leave. On the morning of the 8th of April [1775] I took my last farewell, not without a heavy heart, being thoroughly attached to him from his civilities to me, from his bewitching manners and his amiable character.

About 9 o'clock we mounted our horses and set out from Tashilhunpo.

#### A Necessary Caution.

The above memorandums ought to be read with a grain of allowance. I have attempted to set them down faithfully; but I cannot answer for myself, for I am apt to be pleased when I see others desirous of pleasing me; to think a thing is very good when it is the best I can get, and to turn up the white side of everything. A man more sagacious and distinguishing than myself might probably give a very different account of his reception in Tibet. But I could only put down what occurred to myself. If my temper has warped me, it was not my intention; and so I ask pardon.

## 2

### **Bogle's draft account of Europe for the Tashi Lama**

**Note.** This was written in English, to be translated into Hindustani and then, eventually, into Tibetan. Bogle started writing it while he was in Tashilhunpo, but he never completed it. What he did write, in its Tibetan version, appears to have been for many years the standard Tibetan account of Europe.

The whole world is divided into four quarters, Europe, Africa, Asia and America.

Europe is parcelled into a number of different states speaking different languages, governed by different Kings each independent from another authority. The principal of these are Russia, England, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Denmark, Spain, Poland, Sweden and Portugal. The gov-

ernment of Russia, France, Spain, Poland, Denmark, Sweden and Portugal are all despotic: the Kings of these countries can do what they please. Holland is governed by a certain number of the principal inhabitants elected by the people. The government of England is a mixture between these two.

I will begin with England of which country I am a native. The King of the country is hereditary; upon the father's death his eldest son succeeds him, and thus it has been for many, many ages. The King has the appointment of all offices, the command of the forces and able of himself to make peace or war; but all laws relating to justice or the collection of revenue are not entrusted to him alone, and he must have the consent of two assemblies called Parliaments, which are formed in this manner. The inhabitants of each district, or of each town, in the Kingdom meet together and choose one or two, or sometimes of a very large one four, men whom they can trust, who are to represent them in the King's presence. These men serve for seven years, after which they may be again elected, if not others are chosen in their stead. All the different representatives, being assembled in the city where the King resides, meet in an edifice. There are about six hundred of them. Every law relating to the government of the country, or to the revenue, is first proposed in this House where, all the most able men having given their reasons for or against it, it is put to the vote, those that are for it separating on one side of the House, those that are against it on the other. Then each party is counted. If more are against it than for it, the law is set aside: if more are for it, then it passes and is sent up to the superior Parliament called the House of Lords. This is formed of all the nobles of the Kingdom who assemble in a separate House. They are about four or five hundred in number. The law is debated also by them and the votes for or against it collected, according to the numbers of which it is either thrown out or passed. If thrown out, it is no law; if passed, it is sent to the King. If the King approves of it, it becomes a law, if not it is rejected. Thus the making of a law must have the consent of the greatest numbers of the representatives of the provinces and towns, of the greatest number of the nobles, and, lastly, of the King; after which all the subjects must obey it.

The judges who have the administration of justice are appointed by the King, receive large salaries and hold office for life. They are sworn to do justice according to the laws and the customs of the country. But in case of crimes such as murder, the punishment for which is death, the lives of the people are not entrusted to these judges alone. Suppose a man is murdered. Twelve of the inhabitants, farmers, tradesmen or merchants,

are appointed to view the facts and to return an answer upon them as to whether he has died a natural death or been killed by another man. If they answer that he has been killed by a particular man, this man is seized and thrown into prison. There twelve other men, all from the body of the people, are appointed to enquire further and to declare upon oath whether there is grounds for his being tried for murder, which if there is, the return in writing is that it appears to them on such judgement that such a person murdered such a man. After this the events move on. The judge appears in court, the prisoner is brought to be present. Twenty four men are chosen from among the people and questioned by the judge; and twelve among them are sworn in by the judge according to their answers. The evidences against the prisoner are then called, and being sworn, are examined by the judge, and everything they say is taken down in writing. The prisoner is then allowed to ask any questions of the witnesses, which are also written down. The prisoner is then called upon to make his defence. After this the judge repeats the substance of the evidence and desires the twelve jurymen to say whether he is guilty of murder. They retire to another room to consult alone among themselves and the door is locked. When they have come to a resolution they return into the court. If they say the prisoner is not guilty, he is immediately set at liberty. If they say he is guilty, the judge according to the law pronounces sentence of death which, however, is not carried into execution without the King's order. If the King pleases he may pardon him; but no man can be put to death but by the manner of trial. In matters of life and death every man is equal. About twenty years ago one of the nobles murdered his servant, and was tried and hanged. Instances of murder, however, seldom happen. Robbery is punished with death; small thefts by transportation out of the country for a certain number of years.

Inheritance: the eldest son succeeds to all the land of the father; the money and effects are divided among all the family. The younger brothers: some join the army, some the law, some go to sea. The sisters remain with the elder son until they are married. A man is allowed to marry one wife: upon her death he may marry another.

If upon the death of a King he has no son, his daughter may succeed to the throne; but there are only three instances of it in English history. The King is assisted with his own Council into which he admits any one he pleases. The King does not go to war himself but sends such of his people he can trust. On the King's birthday there are great rejoicings. There are exhibitions, fireworks and bonfires. Upon his death every person of quality is dressed in mourning, which among the subjects is black, among the

Royal Family is purple.

The city where the King lives is London. The public buildings are of stone, the rest of the houses are of brick. Every house is supplied with water which is brought to it by leaden pipes. All the streets are paved.

Most of the inhabitants of the land, even among the peasants, are able to read. There are schools established throughout the country. The better sorts of people after learning their own language, are taught the Latin language which is never spoken in the country; but so many books about 1,500 or 2,000 years ago on government, philosophy and laws are written in it. They are then taught Greek which is also a dead language; and is the same as was spoken by Alexander the Great. They are afterwards instructed in astronomy, mathematics, philosophy, law or the different sciences that may qualify them for the professions which they are to follow.

Peasants and the lower classes live principally on bread, cheese, milk and roots. The higher folk have a variety of meats served up at the table, and drink a variety of wines. They drink tea or coffee many times a day.

The fuel of the country is mostly coal. Three quarters burn coal, one quarter burn wood.

There are excellent manufactures in England. Those in which they excel are broadcloth, glass and cutlery and all sorts of machinery. The country produces few silk wares. The manner by which the English print is by movable type; and there is every day a paper of news printed and distributed.

The strength of the nation is at sea. The Kingdom of England is entirely surrounded by the sea. In times of peace they keep few land forces. A man who has the government of the ship must have gone through much training and as a common sailor have learned every post of his ship. Those that follow this way of life enter it at a very early age. The sons of the best families go in the King's ships. They have to enter as a common sailor, and rise gradually. An Admiral, which is the highest office at sea, has under his command from four to thirty ships according to the service which he is employed on, and, having served in all the inferior stations, is fully acquainted with his business. This gives the English a great advantage over the other European nations whose fleets are often commanded by men who have nothing to recommend them but their interest at Court, and are entirely ignorant of the business they are employed on. The same custom prevails in the army, though it is not observed so strictly for it is very much easier to learn the business of a soldier than of a sailor.

The largest ships carry 120 guns and 1,050 men. They have lately discovered a method of making salt water fresh by distilling it, which a ship

has recourse to when driven by necessity. In the middle of the ocean a ship sees no land and knows its situation from the height of the sun at twelve o'clock and from the height of the pole star. Its situation as to east and west is known by the course indicated by the sharp point of the compass.

It is a principal of the English nation never to go to war but upon necessity; and in times of peace they keep up few troops. In times of peace they are defended from any invasion by a number of ships which are perpetually sailing about these coasts. When they go to war they plunder no country but purchase the necessaries of life from the inhabitants. When they take any prisoner they treat them well and like friends; but keep them in confinement till the war is over. The English have been at peace with all the world for many years. The last war they had was with France and Spain together.

The [East India] Company are under the orders of the King who protects them but seldom interferes in their affairs. This year I am told he has sent orders for confirming the Governor and established his authority for Madras and Bombay and for the administration of justice in Bengal. The Company has a large body of men in England who had the management of all the English affairs in Hindustan: among them 24 men are really in charge who manage for all the others.

Every religion is allowed and protected in England; and the priests, like the Brahmins in Bengal, marry. They leave not their own country, but remain at home in every part of the Kingdom. They have land and revenues allowed them for their subsistence.

The country of England produces wheat, oats, barley and rye. They possess horses, sheep, superior goats and cows in plenty. The horses are of different kinds, some of them exceeding large and strong which are used for drawing carriages. All the gentlemen and nobility ride in these. They all have four wheels upon which they run. They hold generally three persons which are drawn by two powerful fiery horses. Some of them hold six persons, which are drawn by six horses. No man is allowed to have more than six horses in his carriage except the King, who has eight. These carriages are generally well founded and gilded. They have glass windows, and are hung on springs to make them easy so that a person can sleep, read or play at chess. As the roads throughout England are very good, one can travel very fast in these carriages, fresh horses being put in every six or eight *cos*: thus one can go 40 *cos* in a day. There are also houses every eight or so *cos* for the accommodation of passengers. Goods transported through the country are also carried upon carriages with four wheels, but coarse and ugly. The next breed of horses are used for riding, for hunting

and for running. They are not so large and are lighter made. The people of England are very fond of riding upon horses. Those that live in the country often go a hunting of foxes and hares, which are caught by dogs; and there are races where large prizes are given to those that run fastest.

Their amusements include playing at cards or dancing. Every person is taught to dance; and there are public meetings of 50 or a hundred persons which are conducted with great decency.

There are also a few events given which is only in the great towns. There is a large hall where everybody sits one above another for the advantage of seeing. At the end of this there is a stage with cloths draped so as to represent rooms, woods, mountains, rivers etc.. Upon the stage is represented some story. Those that are intended to make people laugh are called comedies. Those that are intended to make people cry are called tragedies. The comedies are generally taken from real life and represent ridiculous actions; and the scenes are painted to represent the different places; and the actors are all dressed in character and speak in character. Thus a clown is dressed as one, and a judge like a judge, a lady like a lady, a servant like a servant. The tragedies generally represent parts of history and the actions of Kings. It is not uncommon to see over half the audience, particular the women, in tears. Between the acts of a play is music and singing, dancing etc.. In the great cities there are also shows of dancing upon a rope, tumbling and such like exhibitions; but they are mostly frequented by the lower class of people.

[Bogle attempted to provide at this point an example of a play for the Tashi Lama. Unfortunately, he was no dramatist. Moreover, his efforts in places are impossible to decipher. His sample drama is, accordingly, omitted here.]

The physicians of England are very famous. It requires many years study before they are allowed to practice; and they gain in their knowledge chiefly from dissecting dead bodies and from attending sick houses. Of these there are a number in all large towns which are supported at the public expense. When any poor man is sick or an accident has happened to him, he is carried thither. He is supplied with meat, drink and bedding. Some of the ablest of the physicians attend every day and provide medicines for them. When they are cured they return to their business and their houses. The young doctors attend these sick houses where they have an opportunity of seeing a vast number of sick persons, see all the different diseases and the method of treating them by the most skilful physicians. The smallpox used formerly to be fatal in England. About 70 years ago



inoculation was introduced by a person who had travelled in Turkey. Since that time all the better sort of people inoculate their children. Not above one in a hundred dies of it.

The poor in England are not allowed to wander about. There are houses for them in all parts of the country where, when a man or woman through age cannot support themselves, they go thither. They are fed and clothed at the public expense, but not permitted to be idle. Cotton or wool is given them, or other works are assigned them according to their knowledge, which are afterwards sold and pay for part of their subsistence: the remainder is made up by the King.

There are also houses where old soldiers and sailors, or such as are disabled in battle, are received and supported at the public expense while they live; but they have no work to do. Such as have to live at home with their families have a monthly allowance from the King.

Having mentioned many of the customs of England, I did not mean to leave out some of the bad ones. The laws, although equal to all men, has too many punishments of death. They are tempered, indeed, by the mercy of the King.

Gentlemen in the country and the large class of people are apt upon holidays to get drunk. And there is one custom which, although I am afraid to mention it, I must not conceal. It is called duelling. There is no reproach to an Englishman so great as to say you lie. If a man is detected in a lie, nobody will keep company with him: everybody shuns him as an infected person. If any man says to another you lie, he challenges him to fight him in single combat. They settle the time and place where they are to meet. Each man goes with a sword, attended by a friend to look and see that everything is fair. They fight until one of them is disarmed, wounded or killed. The laws have done everything to extirpate this custom. If a person kills in a duel he is tried as for murder and sometimes hanged. But what can he do if he does not fight? He is reckoned a coward and nobody will eat, drink or keep company with him. There are not many of these duels because there are few occasions for them. About fifteen people may be killed within a year. These duels are only among the higher class of people.

France is divided from England by a narrow sea on the west and south, and is passed through with many rivers. The King is absolute master of the country, and the people are not free as in England. There is an assembly of men in every Province for the administration of justice; and the King, when he issued any orders to any Province in regard to revenue and justice used always to register them in the books of the assemblies. Their

members, dazzled with the power and splendour of the Parliament in England, wished to be put upon the same footing, and insisted that no orders of the King were to be obeyed until registered, which they have often refused when they thought them oppressive. But as the King maintains a large body of troops, he sends them to the house where they assemble and registers his orders by force, imprisoning and fining such of the members as are refractory, so that they are helpless. The members of these assemblies are not elected like those in England but obtain therein either by birth or purchase. The revenue of France is farmed and to a particular set of people who pay for it, and their agents oppress the people who can get no redress. Justice is therefore not so equal as in England but depends in great measure upon favour and friends. In trial for crimes the prisoner is not confronted with witnesses, nor is he tried in open court but the doors are shut. The institution of juries is not used, and the judges being under the influence of the King are ready to give a sentence according to his pleasure. The prisoner is frequently also put to the torture and confesses crimes from pain which he suffers. In France whenever a man robs he also murders. If a stranger dies in France, all his goods are confiscated by the King.

The people of France are very merry, and more polite than the English, but are much given to flattery and not so sincere. They are more fond of dress and show, the men all powdering their hair and many of the women painting their cheeks red. They have generally black hair, and are darker coloured than the English. Among their diversions are assemblies of people where everyone goes in masks and strange habits, and dance in them. They are more addicted to gaming than the English, but not so much to drinking. Everybody that can afford it lives in towns where they can have their diversions, and the country is left to the peasants, so one meets seldom with the houses and gardens which are so common in travelling through England.

In France they suffer no religion but their own, and persecute people for religion. Their clergy do not marry and travel to different countries. Padres who were formerly in this country [Tibet] were either from France or Italy where the religion is the same.

The French excel in silks and lace. The most valuable production of their country is grapes, and the wine that is made from it is the best in Europe.

The principal city is Paris. It contains about six lacks [600,000] of people. It stands upon a river about half as wide as the Tsangpo. The houses are all built of stone. It has many fine gardens and palaces, but the

streets are too narrow and the houses are not kept so clean as in England. The country is in many places very fine. In the interior Provinces it is wooded and little inhabited.

The King of France is named Lewis Fifteenth. He is sixty-five years of age. Upon his death he will be succeeded by his grandson who is about twenty. According to the customs of France no woman can succeed to the throne.

Holland was formerly subject to Spain, but about two hundred years ago, being much oppressed by their masters on account of religion and loaded with taxes, the seven different Provinces united together and after long and deadly wars they threw off the yoke and set up for independence. Each Province sends representatives to a small city called the Hague where, when they are all met, they consult on the affairs of the country; and no war nor peace, nor anything that regards the State, can be done without the consent of this assembly. They have a Chief who is hereditary; but he is so much under the influence of the assembly that he has only to execute their orders. This form of government secures the people free and happy during peace; but in times of war subjects their councils to delays and disputes. Justice in Holland is very impartial, and the most able people in every town are annually chosen to administer it.

The country of Holland is very low; and a great part of it is gained by much difficulty from the sea which is higher than the land and is kept off by banks which are supported at an annual expense. When invaded by an enemy, they break down the banks and the whole country is flooded. There are canals cut everywhere through it, and all kinds of goods and merchandise are transported in boats which are used also in travelling. The lowness of the country and the quantity of water makes it very unhealthy to strangers who are subject to colds and agues.

The natives of Holland are very big but not strong in proportion to their size. They are industrious and sober. Everybody is engaged in trade; and, although their country produces neither manufactures nor sufficient subsistence for the people, it is extremely opulent from its trade. It carries the productions of one country to another in ships, and the different goods of Europe are loaded in Holland as in a warehouse. It is full of people; and every man that is obliged to quit his country finds protection and safety in Holland. There are few entertainments in Holland: the people are too busy. They are much given to smoking tobacco. Their towns and houses are the cleanest I ever saw: one might eat off the streets. They are much infested with frogs and vermin and but for this cleanliness there would be no living in it.

Adjoining Holland are some Provinces subject to Germany which are called Flanders. They are low, though not so much so as Holland. The disposition of the people is much the same as in Holland. They excel in the manufacture of linen. The chief town is called Brussels, where the Emperor's Viceroy resides. It may contain forty thousand inhabitants. The trade of Flanders was formerly very considerable. It was formerly subject to the Spaniards; but their oppressions and the security of Holland ruined it. The horses of Flanders are the largest in Europe.

The Empire of Germany lies eastward of these countries.

[Bogle on leaving school had travelled fairly widely in France in 1764-65. His father had studied at Leyden in the Netherlands, and doubtless told his son many things about that country. On the rest of Continental Europe Bogle was probably not so well informed, and, of course, he had no works of reference with him in Tibet. It may be supposed, therefore, that with the German Empire Bogle found he had run out of useful comments: hence the abrupt termination of this account.]

## CHAPTER IX

### Negotiations with the Tashi Lama at Dechenrubje November to December 1774

#### 1

**Extract from Bogle's letter to Hastings, written on  
27 April 1775 from Paro in Bhutan**

The infrequency of my correspondence requires an apology; and I will submit to your candour the causes which have occasioned it. However anxious I might be for the safe arrival of my letters, I found that I could not employ my own people in conveying them without increasing that jealousy of the purpose of my commission, which was but too strong; and I was obliged to leave it to the Bhutanese. During six months I received no letters from Bengal, except a short note from Lieutenant Williams [which was] broke open; I had no news of my despatches of the 5th December having arrived at [Cooch] Behar. I had therefore reason to think that my letters had miscarried, or were intercepted, and I confess I had in mind that my address to you had been inspected, perhaps by the Court of Peking.

I will now beg leave, however, to give you some lights into the politics of Tibet, and into the circumstances of my commission, requesting, at the same time, that you would please to consider the present letter as addressed, not to the Governor, but to Mr. Hastings.

About seventy years ago [1717-1720], the Emperor of China acquired

the sovereignty of Tibet, in the way that sovereignties are generally acquired, by interfering in the quarrels between two contending parties [a reference to the Chinese Manchu Dynasty intervention in Tibet following the Dzungar occupation of Lhasa in 1717, an episode in Tibetan history which is discussed in some detail in the second volume of this book]. In consequence of a revolution, which happened about twenty-five years ago, the government of Tibet was committed to the former Dalai Lama.<sup>1</sup> Upon his death [VIIth Dalai Lama, died 1757], Gesub Rimpoché,<sup>2</sup> his cup-bearer or confidant, procured the supreme administration of affairs [or Regency], partly through his own interest at the Court of Peking, and partly by the recommendation of Tashi Lama, who came now to be considered as the first man in the country. After two years, Tashi Lama discovered the child into whose body Dalai Lama's spirit had passed, and gave notice to the Court of China. He was immediately recognized by the Emperor.<sup>3</sup>

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1. The reference here is to the attempt to resist Manchu control by the last King of Tibet, Gyurmé Namgyal, which resulted in his assassination by the two Chinese representatives in Lhasa, the Ambans, in 1750. The Ambans, in turn, were killed by an enraged Tibetan crowd. A Chinese military expedition then restored order in Lhasa. The Tibetan secular regime was abolished; and Tibet was ruled by the Dalai Lama (or his Regent during a minority) under the supervision of the two Ambans. The institution of Panchen (or Tashi) Lama occupied an important but ill defined role as a balance to the Lhasa regime in this new situation.

2. By Gesub Rimpoché Bogle means the Tibetan Regent (Rgyal-tshab) in Lhasa, an office created in the context of the minority, or absence pending discovery, of the VIIIth Dalai Lama. Tibetan sources maintain that this was on the initiative of the Tibetan Government, while Chinese sources claim that it was on the instructions of the representatives in Lhasa of the Chinese Imperial Government. Bogle seems to support both views. The first Regent or Gesub Rimpoché was Demo Trulku Jampel Delek of Drebung and Tenyeling Monasteries: he was sometimes known as Demo Nomihan. He died in 1777 and was replaced, as the next Regent, by Ngawang Tsultrim of Tsemonling, who, confusingly, was also known as Demon Nomihan (or Gandin Shratu Nomihan). This 2nd Regent was the Gesub Rim-poché encountered by Samuel Turner on his mission to Tibet in 1783. See: Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa, *Tibet. A Political History*, New Haven & London 1967, pp. 153, 155; Ya Hanzheng, *The Biographies of the Dalai Lamas*, Beijing 1991, p. 66.

3. The VIIIth Dalai Lama, Jampal Gyatso, was born in 1758. He was in fact recognised as Dalai Lama in 1763, at the age of five. He was formally acknowledged by the 6th Panchen Lama in 1765, and the same Panchen presided over his ordination into full monkhood in 1777. He came fully of age in 1781 and died in 1804. The parents of the VIIIth Dalai Lama were related in some manner to the parents of the 6th (or, as some will have it, 3rd) Panchen Lama. The VIIIth Dalai Lama's father, Sonam Dargye, became one of the great Tibetan aristocrats of his day; and from him is descended the line of the politically important Lhalu

Changay Lama [Changkya Hutukhtu], the high-priest who resided at Peking, came to visit him, and after passing some months at Tashilhunpo, returned to Court. For many years after Gesub's promotion, Tashi Lama continued to have great influence in the government; but for some time past Gesub has endeavoured by his own interest to maintain himself in office, and although he appears to pay great deference to Tashi Lama's opinion, he consults him as seldom as possible. The grand object of Gesub's politics is to secure the administration to himself, and afterwards to his nephews; while Tashi Lama, on the contrary, is exerting all his interest at the Court of Peking to procure the government for Dalai Lama, who is now nearly of age, and to obtain the appointment of a minister devoted to himself. If he can carry his point, his influence will immediately revive; for, independent of the good understanding which subsists between all the Eastern pontiffs, Dalai Lama owing his promotion to Tashi Lama, and having been tutored by his people, will naturally pay great attention to his advice and opinion.

The obstacles to my journey arose chiefly from Gesub Rimpoché. Soon after my arrival at Dechenrubje, Tashi Lama gave me one of his letters, where he mentions that he had heard of two Fringies [Europeans] being arrived in the Deb Rajah's dominions, with a great retinue of servants; that the Fringies were fond of war; and after insinuating themselves into a country, raised disturbances, and made themselves masters of it; that as no Fringies had ever been admitted into Tibet, he advised Tashi Lama to find some method of sending me back, either on account of the violence of the smallpox, or on any other pretence. It was upon this letter that Tashi Lama wrote to me to return to Calcutta. After the arrival of the Gosain, and the receipt of the letter I sent him from Tashichodong, he wrote to Gesub that he had from the beginning dissuaded Deb Judhur [Zhidar] from going to war; that the government at Lhasa had encouraged him to it; that Deb Judhur had been defeated, and a great part of his country conquered; that he, Tashi Lama, had written to the Governor, who had not only given over hostilities, but restored all the Deb Rajah's country; that as I was sent by the Governor, he thought it was proper to receive me; but if they, contrary to his opinion, persisted in refusing their permission, and any calamity should afterwards come upon the country, they had themselves to blame for it. This letter procured me admittance; but Gesub, at the same time, wrote to Tashi Lama to prevent my coming to Lhasa, and repeated this in several letters after my arrival. The truth is, he is naturally

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family. See, for example, Ya Hanzheng, *Biographies, op. cit.*, pp. 65-87; L. Petech, *Aristocracy and Government in Tibet 1728-1959*, Rome 1973, p. 39.

of a jealous and suspicious temper, and was besides afraid of giving umbrage to the Chinese, as jealous and suspicious as himself. Gesub, however, sent me some Chinese brandy, biscuits, and fish; and his servants, who came to congratulate Tashi Lama on his return to Tashi-lhunpo, paid me two visits. By the return of his people, I sent him some trifling presents, for I had no other to send, and wrote him, or rather Tashi Lama wrote for me, a letter; but I never received any answer.

In this situation I was obliged to confine my negotiations, for extending the trade between Bengal and Tibet, entirely to Tashi Lama. I could not think of going to Lhasa without such presents to Dalai Lama, to Gesub, and to the four ministers [Kalons], as were suitable to your character; and, at any rate, Gesub's jealousy put it out of my power. As to Tashi Lama, I had every reason to think, both from his attention and civilities to me, and the manner in which he expressed his sense of the favour you had done him by concluding peace with the Bhutanese, that he entertained the most friendly dispositions towards you; and it was my business to cherish them as well as I could.

Tashi Lama is about forty years of age. He is of a cheerful and affable temper, of great curiosity, and very intelligent. He is entirely master of his own affairs; his views are liberal and enlarged, and he wishes, as every great man wishes, to extend his consequence. From his pacific character, and from the turn of his mind, naturally gentle and humane, he is averse to war and bloodshed, and in all quarrels endeavours by his mediation to bring about a reconciliation. In conversation he is plain and candid, using no flattery or compliments himself, and receiving them but badly if made to him. He is generous and charitable, and is universally beloved and venerated by the Tibetans, by the Kalmuks [Mongols], and by a great part of the Chinese. The character I give of him may appear partial; but I received it in much stronger colours from his own subjects, from the Kashmiris, and from the fakirs; and I will confess, I never knew a man whose manners pleased me so much, or for whom upon so short an acquaintance I had half the heart's liking.

In consequence of my representing to him your wish to open a free communication of trade between the inhabitants of Bengal and Tibet, he wrote to Gesub Rimpoché on the subject. He wrote also to the principal merchants, Kashmiris as well as natives. Many of them, either in person or by their agents, came afterwards to visit me. The Tibetans excused themselves from sending gumashtas [envoys] into Bengal, on account of the heat and unhealthiness of that country. Several of the principal Kashmiri houses, who had been forced by the Gorkha Rajah's oppressions to



abandon this trade, assured me that they would send their agents to Calcutta as soon as the rains are over, and the Lama engaged to procure them a passage through the Deb Rajah's territories. As the Gorkha Rajah had invaded the country of a chief subject to Lhasa, Tashi Lama could make no application to him; but immediately on his death [Prithvi Narayan Shah died on 11 January 1775], he wrote to the new Rajah of Nepal [Pratap Singh], desiring him to favour and protect commerce, and to allow all merchants, Hindus, and Mussulmans, to trade freely through his dominions; for, says he, everybody is now afraid to enter your country, and it will become poor and desolate. He wrote also recommending the same thing to the Deb Rajah, and has sent one of his gylongs to co-operate with me at Tashichodzong, in my applications on this subject. In regard to allowing Europeans to go unto Tibet, it was a point, although not particularly mentioned in your instructions, which I wished to have carried, as I was sensible it would have reflected great credit on my commission.<sup>4</sup> But the jealousy of the hill people, of the administration at Lhasa, and the circumstances I have already mentioned, will, I imagine, serve to show that it was a thing simply impossible. If the government of Tibet is entrusted to the Lamas, I should think this point may then be urged with some prospect of success; but at present I consider it as out of the question. As the returns, however, for the commodities of Bengal carried into Tibet are made principally in gold, any extension of this commerce is so much clear gain to Bengal; and the channel through which the trade is carried on, although of consequence to individuals, is, I humbly apprehend, of very little to the country. If any Englishmen choose to embark in this traffic, I do not see why it may not be conducted by Asiatic agents as well as by European ones, without running any risk of disturbing that friendship and good understanding which I know you wish to cultivate with the Northern powers.

In my address of the 5th of December, I mentioned Tashi Lama's desire of founding a religious house on the banks of the Ganges. About seven or

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4. Bogle's decision not to raise with the Lama the question of Europeans visiting Tibet is, it seems probable, the meaning of the rather enigmatic comment in Bogle's letter to Hastings of 5 December 1774, printed here as No. 4 in Ch. VI above (p. 162). The extreme caution of Bogle's language in this letter rather suggests that he still feared (as, also, is suggested by his remarks at the very beginning of this Chapter) at this time the possibility of his correspondence being intercepted and read by persons for whom it was not intended (? Chinese). The letter here was written from Bhutan not Tibet, and it may be that by April 1775 Bogle had acquired a greater degree of confidence in the security of his communications with Calcutta.

eight hundred years ago, the Tibetan pontiffs had many monasteries in Bengal, and their priests used to travel to that country in order to study the religion and language of the Brahmans, and to visit the holy places in Hindustan. The Mussulmans, upon conquering Bengal, plundered and destroyed their temples, and drove them out of the country. Since that time there has been little intercourse between the two kingdoms. Tashi Lama is sensible that it will throw great lustre on his pontificate, and serve to extend his fame and character, if he can, after so long an interval, obtain a religious establishment in Bengal, and he is very solicitous about this point. He proposes, also, to send some of his gylongs, during the cold season, to wait upon you at Calcutta, and afterwards to go on pilgrimages to Gaya and other places, and has written to Chidzun Tamba [? either Urga Lama or Changkya Hutukhtu], at Peking, who has great interest with the Emperor, informing him that the English are now masters of Bengal; that you, their chief, have shown him great favour; that the English allow everyone to follow his own religion unmolested; and advising him to send some persons to wait upon you, and to visit the principal temples in Bengal. I own I encouraged all this, in the view of strengthening the intercourse and connection with Tibet, and thinking it would be of advantage to the Company to open any channel of communication with the Court of China; and although I am not so sanguine as Tashi Lama about the success of his endeavours, however sincere, to obtain leave for you to send a person to the Emperor, I do not altogether despair, by your favour, of one day or other getting a sight of Peking.

The present Emperor is of a violent and imperious temper. He has conquered Yarkand by dint of numbers. He has, partly by arts unworthy of a great monarch, reduced the Kalmuks to strict subjection. But a petty Khampa prince, between Yunnan and Tibet, defended by his mountains, and assisted, I believe, by the King of Pegu<sup>5</sup> has kept his numerous armies

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5. Actually Ava, the Pegu kingdom having given way in the 1750s to Alaungpaya's Konbaung Dynasty.

It is not easy to identify precisely to what events in Kham (Eastern Tibet) Bogle is referring. According to Shakabpa (Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. 151) the Chinese sent a large force, several thousand men in all, to Lhasa in 1751 through Kham, where it had aroused considerable opposition. The result may well have been rebellion along the way, and in places not too far away from the sphere of influence of the Kingdom of Ava. The outcome, according to Shakabpa again, was that the number of Chinese troops stationed in Lhasa had to be greatly reduced, In the end the Ambans retained a garrison of some 1,500 men. From what the Tashi Lama told Bogle in 1774, fighting in Kham was then still in progress and the Chinese had yet to secure complete control of the line of communications.

at bay for several years past; and the quarrels about the boundaries and the migration of subjects, between him and the Court of St. Petersburg, are likely to come to a rupture, when, I imagine, he will get himself heartily drubbed.<sup>6</sup> Tashi Lama is endeavouring to prevent it; but the Chinese seem to be in the wrong, and the Emperor's haughty mind cannot stoop to make concessions.

The death of Gorkha has, for the present, put an end to hostilities in Demo Jong's country [Sikkim]. The character of Pratap Singh, who has succeeded him, though not great, is better than that of his father.

Deb Judhur [Zhidar] remains in confinement at Gyantse, a fort on the road from Tashilhunpo. His associates are distributed in the different castles throughout Tibet. But the fear of the Bhutanese are not quieted while Deb Judhur is yet alive; and were it not for Tashi Lama, I believe the administration at Lhasa, gained by their intrigues, would ere now have sacrificed him to their resentment.

## 2

### **Bogle's Memorandum on negotiations with the Tashi Lama**

The day after my arrival [at Dechenrubje on 8 November 1774] I waited upon Tashi Lama with the Governor's despatches, having previously and without difficulty settled that I should be allowed to give the letter into his own hands. I delivered it, together with the pearl necklace, while my servants spread out the other presents before him.

He received me with a very courteous and smiling countenance, and I was seated near him on a high stool covered with carpet. He spoke to me in Hindustani, of which language he has a moderate knowledge. After inquiries about the Governor's health and my journey from Tashi-

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According to recent studies of Chinese Central Asian policy it would seem that there were two major crises on the western border region of Sechuen (Sichuan) Province in the reign of the Ch'ien-lung (Qianlong) Emperor, in 1747-49 and again in 1771-76. Bogle's narrative may well have involved some confusion between the two. See, for example: E.W. Mote, *Imperial China 900-1800*, Harvard 1999, p. 936.

6. The Torghut Kalmuks in 1771 moved from Russian territory on the Volga to the Ili under Chinese protection. This caused great Sino-Russian tension to add to that arising from the consequences of the recent Chinese conquest of Eastern Turkestan: considerable friction arose, for example from Kazakhs and other nomads trying to escape from Chinese rule by fleeing to Russian territory or by launching cross-border raids. See also: Ch. X below, Notes. 9 & 14.

chodzung, he introduced the subject of the war in [Cooch] Behar. He blamed Deb Judhur [Zhidar] as the occasion of it. "I always," said he, "disapproved greatly of his seizing the Behar Rajah, and going to war with the Fringies; but the Deb considered himself as powerful in arms, and would not listen to my advice. After he was defeated I wrote to the Governor, who, in ceasing hostilities against the Bhutanese, in consequence of my application, and restoring to them their country, has made me very happy, and has done a very pious action. My servants who went to Calcutta were only little men, and the kind reception they had from the Governor I consider as another mark of his friendship."

I told him that [Cooch] Behar is separated from Rangpur, one of the provinces of Bengal, only by a rivulet; that the Bhutanese from time immemorial had confined themselves to their mountains, and when they visited the low countries it was in an amicable manner, and in order to trade; that when many thousand armed men issued at once from their forests, seized and carried off prisoner the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar, a petty prince, who could be no object of their jealousy, possessed themselves of his country, and settled in it, the Company had just cause to be alarmed, and to conclude that, encouraged by their success in [Cooch] Behar today, they would hardly be confined by any ideal boundary, but attempt the conquest of Rangpur tomorrow, and even extend their views to the interior and more fertile provinces of Bengal; that the Governor, although he had heard much of Tashi Lama's name and holy character, yet being totally unacquainted with the Bhutanese nation, and having then had no connection with their Chief, had the more reason for these apprehensions, and immediately upon an application from the Behar people for assistance, despatched a battalion of the Company's sepoy to repel the invaders; that he, Tashi Lama, was well acquainted with what followed; that the Governor was extremely rejoiced on the receipt of his letters, immediately suspended the war against the Bhutanese, and afterwards concluded a peace between them and the Company, by which the whole of their country was restored to them; being happy to cultivate the friendship of a man whose fame is known throughout the world, and whose character is held in veneration among so many nations; that he had therefore sent me to his, Tashi Lama's, presence with letters and tokens of friendship which I had then the honour to lay before him, and which I hoped would find favour in his eyes.

He made no answer to what I said. Indeed, I doubt whether he understood it well, for I spoke in a language which he had not been used to, and the guttural R, which I inherit from my mother, probably increased the

difficulty. After this I endeavoured to confine myself within the compass and to imitate the phraseology of his language, and so we made it out very well.

"You have no doubt heard," said Tashi Lama, "that Deb Judhur [Zhidar] has been turned out of his government, and has fled to me: he did not manage the country properly, and the Fringies were not pleased with him." I replied, that the English had no concern at Deb Judhur's expulsion; it was brought about by his own people; and that the Company only wished the Bhutanese to continue in their own country, and not to encroach upon Bengal, or raise disturbances upon its frontier. "The Governor," said he, "had reason for going to war, but, as I am averse from bloodshed and the Bhutanese are my vassals, I am glad it is brought to a conclusion." He then opened the Governor's letter, but it was not at that time explained to him.

He enquired what office I held under the [East India] Company. He asked if the Company was a King. I told him they were not but that they were protected by him. He asked me the name of my country, which he said he had heard was an island. He enquired if it were near the country of the cannibals. In answer I told him I had read of that people, but as none of my nations who sailed in ships to most parts of the world had ever met with them, I could give him no particular information about them. He asked if my country was near Sundirdeep [Serendip, as the Arabs called Ceylon]. I replied that Sundirdeep was an island at no great distance from Bengal, but England was four or five months voyage from it. He made me repeat England two or three times. He desired me to put on my hat. I declined it in his presence. He said the Chinese wore their hats before him and insisted that I should. I just put it on and took it off again. After some questions about my opinion of this country, some advice about the manner of my being in it and avoiding cold, and desiring me to refresh myself after the fatigues of my journey, he put a white satin handkerchief about my neck and I took leave much satisfied with my reception.

Next day [10 November] Tashi Lama was engaged in receiving the visits and presents of some Kalmuks, and I had no opportunity of waiting upon him. He sent for me the next morning [11 November]. He was without his mitre cap, and nobody was with him besides the Sapon Chumbo [Solpon Chenpo], his confidant and favourite.

He resumed the story of [Cooch] Behar, and I repeated the reasons for the war on the same principle but in stronger terms than before. He again expressed much satisfaction at the reception the Governor had given his servants; he said he had sent another person with them who was of a

higher station, but he had been prevented from proceeding to Calcutta by sickness. "I will plainly confess," said he, "that my reason for then refusing you admittance was that many people advised me against it. I had heard also much of the power of the Fringies; that the Company was like a great king, and fond of war and conquest; and as my business and that of my people is to pray to God, I was afraid to admit any Fringies into the country. But I have since learned that the Fringies are a fair and a just people. I never before saw any Fringies, but am very happy at your arrival, and you will not think anything of my former refusal." I replied that I always attributed his refusal to the representations of some evil minded people, which had made an unfavourable impression on his mind, as clouds will for a time darken the sun. In order to remove them [false impressions referred to in previous sentence] I begged his patience while I laid before him an account of the Company.

"Some hundred years ago when Hindustan was united under one Government, the King of my country having heard of the fame of the Emperor sent an Embassy to his Court. After a long and dangerous journey he arrived at Delhi, delivered the King of England's letter and presents, and was very graciously received by the Emperor. After this the Emperor issued his firman [edict] to the Nawab of Bengal, that the English Company who are subjects of the King of England should be allowed to settle and trade in his kingdom and be protected by his Government. In this manner they long continued in Bengal bringing much wealth into the country and showering down upon it the blessings of commerce. During the time that Bengal continued to be governed by a succession of Nawabs appointed by the Emperor, a tribute was annually remitted to Delhi. As the affairs of the world are known to your enlightened mind, why should I represent the disturbances which afterwards arose in Hindustan, or state how the great city of Delhi was taken and plundered by Nadir Shah [1739], and then [in 1756] by Abdallah Khan [Ahmad Shah Durrani or Abdali, died 1772], native of Kashmir [actually Afghanistan, though in control of Kashmir since 1753]. Alivardi Khan, seizing the opportunity of these commotions and by the murder of his brother, and by many other crimes which I omit to mention in your presence, usurped the Government of Bengal and threw off all allegiance to the Emperor. But although cruel and oppressive, he was a wise man, encouraged trade and protected the English who continued to live in tranquillity under his Government and to enrich his country. Upon his death he was succeeded by [his grandson] Siraj-ud-daulah who attacked the English, plundered Calcutta where they resided and which was granted to them by the Emperor's firman, and

having hundreds of them prisoner he put them to death in a dungeon [the famous Black Hole of Calcutta, June 1756].

The English being thus obliged in self defence to go to war with Siraj-ud-daulah who was defeated and slain [battle of Plassey, 23 June 1757], another Nawab [Mir Jafar] was appointed by the Emperor. Although raised and befriended by the English, he<sup>7</sup> [in fact Mir Kasim, not Mir Jafar] turned his arms against them and murdered a great many of them in prison at Patna<sup>8</sup>, but the English being favoured of the Almighty God and assisted by Bulwant Singh<sup>9</sup>, the wisest man in Hindustan and other princes who knew the justice of their cause, the Nawab was driven out of Bengal, and the Emperor bestowed upon them [the English East India Company] the management of Bengal<sup>10</sup>. The Nawab and his war with the English was assisted by Shujah-ud-daulah [Nawab-Vizier of Oudh], who entered Bengal and advanced towards Patna, but was defeated [in the battle of Buxar, 1764], obliged to fly and the country which borders upon Bengal taken. Trusting to the generosity of the English he threw himself into their hands, when his country was freely restored to him and a friendship established between him and the Company which has since continued without interruption. Since that time the English although they kept up a large army for the defence of Bengal have not attempted to extend their possessions, and the limits of Bengal are the same as in ancient times. The territories of Shujah-ud-daulah and the Rajah of Benares continue to form the frontier on the one side: on another the dominions of the Marathas have suffered no encroachments. Sylhet and Chittagong which always belonged to Bengal continue still to bound it towards the East. The people of Assam who visit your country can say whether any attempts have been made in their kingdom. The Bhutanese are now in full possession of their territories. In the war which was carried on between them and the English, hostilities were commenced by them. On their part it arose from a desire of conquest and of extending their possessions. On that of the English it

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7. Bogle was simplifying the story a bit. Mir Jafar (who was related to the former Nawab's family by marriage) was replaced in 1760 by his son-in-law Mir Kasim. After Mir Kasim's defeat by the English in 1764, Mir Jafar was brought back as Nawab, only to die in January 1765.

8. The massacre of the English and other Europeans at Patna, about 150 in all, in October 1763.

9. Rajah of Benares and father of Chait Singh, who came over to the English side at the time of the battle of Buxar in 1764.

10. The grant of the Diwani (administrative and revenue powers) over Bengal, plus much of Bihar and Orissa, by the Emperor Shah Alam in 1765.

was undertaken from necessity of self preservation.

If the frontier of Bengal towards Morung and Nepal has undergone alterations, the Company is not to blame. It has not been by their consent or assistance. Satisfied with the management of Bengal, they attempt not to invade the property of others, and wish that every one may enjoy their rightful and ancient possessions.

The Governor is above all things desirous of obtaining your friendship and favour, as your opinion is so generally and so justly regarded in that part of the world. He is sensible how much the character of the English is in your hands, and that their good or bad name depends greatly upon your judgement. I have therefore represented these things in your presence the truth of which is known to all the world."

In return, Tashi Lama assured me his heart was open and well disposed towards the English, and that he gave no credit to the representations which had been made to their disadvantage. "I wish," he said, "to have a place on the banks of the Ganges, to which I might send my people to pray. I intend to write to the Governor on this subject, and wish you would second my application." I replied that as I knew how desirous the Governor was to cultivate his friendship, I was persuaded on this or any other occasion he would find him very ready to gratify him as far as in his power.<sup>11</sup>

After this he asked me what connection the English had with China. I told him they had a factory at Canton, where they have long been settled to carry on a trade which is much encouraged by the Chinese. He enquired if I understood the language of China and mentioned the names of several places of which I was ignorant. He asked if the English had any intercourse with the Burma Rajah; at this time I knew not the name. He said it was a Rajah to the eastward of Bengal who carried on war against the Chinese for three years, in which some lakhs of Chinese had perished, and that the Emperor had written to him to keep a good look out upon all the neighbouring Rajahs. This must be the King of Pegu [actually Ava under the Konbaung Dynasty founded by Alaungpaya]. I told him that the English had no connection with the interior Rajahs to the eastward of

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11. Note by Alexander Dalrymple (c. 1792):

This he did after Mr. Bogle's return. A piece of land was purchased and given to him on the banks of the Ganges opposite to Calcutta. A house and a temple were constructed upon the spot by the Lama under the direction of Mr. Bogle; and people from Tibet and Bhutan constantly resorted to it during the time for which my knowledge reaches: I conclude the same to this hour.

See also: Ch. X below, Note 5, and Ch. XII below, No. 12.



Sylhet. He asked me if Russia was near England. I answered it was at a good distance, and many intermediate powers between them.

He then enquired about my religion, and desired to know the name of my great priest or Guru. I said as the language of my country was entirely different from his, he could not understand our names. That we called Sandia, God. He inquired if we worshipped the *Criss*, making a cross with his fingers, and adding that there were formerly [in Tibet] some Fringy padres at Lhasa who worshipped the *Criss*, but they bred disturbances, and were turned out of the country.<sup>12</sup> I replied that the Chinese and the people of Hindustan, and of his country, gave the name Fringistan to all the lands on the west side of the world, which are divided into fifteen or twenty separate kingdoms, of different languages or religions, governed by their respective princes, and independent of one another. In the same manner the people of my country comprehended under the name of Asia, China, Bengal, Surat, Tibet and many other states, with which he was unacquainted; but he well knew that China and Bengal were at an immense distance, unconnected and almost opposite to one another in almost every particular. It was that case in what they called Fringistan. I said, I had heard of the priests who had been at Lhasa; that they were not of my country, spoke another language, and that their religion differed from mine; that the clergy of England remained at home, and travelled not into other countries; that we allowed everyone to worship God in his own way, to which the Gosain or any of his people who had been in Bengal could bear witness; and that we esteemed a good and pious man, of whatever religion he might be. He changed the subject, and I was not sorry for it.

He enquired whether my country was near Tatory. I answered that the English, as well as the Persians, comprehended under the name of Tatars the nations who are still Sokpo [nomads], and with which he was well acquainted. He asked me if I had ever been to Tatory, and repeated the names of some of the tribes, Tungans [or Hui, Chinese-speaking Sunni Muslims], Moslems [generally Turkic-speaking], etc. I said that I had formerly heard some of the names but had never seen a Sokpo before my arrival at his court. He said he understood the Governor had a map of his country with the names of the places. He shewed me a small China jar on which were two paintings of shepherdesses with baskets of flowers, remarking that the features and complexions were like ours and that they

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12. The last members of the Capuchin Mission in Lhasa left Tibet for Nepal in 1745: they eventually established themselves at Chandernagore on the Hughli near Calcutta. The history of the Jesuits and Capuchins in Tibet is discussed in greater detail in the second volume of this book.

must have been taken from some of my nation. I informed him in answer that the merchants at Canton carried out pictures from England which the Chinese copied. He next shewed me a small pocket azimuth compass which he had also got from the Emperor. It had only four points marked upon it, appeared to be French and probably belonged to some of the Jesuits formerly settled at Peking.<sup>13</sup> He then made his people bring a hand organ which he had lately acquired from Chait Singh much out of order, and a camera obscura with views of London about which he asked me many pertinent questions. But I have already put down too many.

After this he desired me to walk about the room which he understood was our custom. "As for me", says he, "here I sit from morning to night, thus," at the same time crossing his hands before him, closing his eyes and drawing himself up in the figure of an image. I drank some dishes of tea and retired.

In the afternoon I visited the Chanzo [Chungpa] Cusho, who is brother to Tashi Lama by the same mother, but by a different father, but has little of his engaging manners or abilities. The conversation was short, formal, and uninteresting.<sup>14</sup>

I had been told that Chait Singh's wakil had described the English as a people designing and ambitious; who, insinuating themselves into a country on pretence of trade, became acquainted with its situation and inhabitants, and afterwards endeavoured to become masters of it; and that his representations, in concurrence with other circumstances, had contributed to raise up obstacles to my journey.

He [the wakil] came to visit me; and as I think it best and most becoming the character of the English to deal openly with every man, I resolved to mention this to him. I accordingly told him what I had heard. I said that the English had always been befriended by Bulwant Singh, his master's

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13. The Jesuit mission in Peking (Beijing) was established in 1601 by Father Matteo Ricci. By the beginning of the 18th century, under the early Ch'ing Dynasty, there were some 60 Jesuits in China along with several representatives of other orders, Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians; and by this time many of the Christian missionaries were French. The Jesuit mission was appreciated by the Ch'ing Dynasty because of its astronomical skills (invaluable for calculating the calendar) and its cartographical abilities. As the 18th century progressed a number of arguments between various Christian orders weakened the Jesuit position, fatally so after the Papal suppression of the Jesuit order in 1773. The French missionaries in China through their publications were a major source, though by no means the only one, of information in Europe about the Far East.

14. Chungpa Cusho became Regent for the infant Tashi Lama after 1780; and, as such, was met by Samuel Turner in 1783. See Ch. XV below, 9.

father; and if their transactions in Bengal were unjustifiable, Bulwant Singh was equally to blame in assisting them; that, however, it was known to the whole world that the English were obliged by necessity and in self-defence to go to war. I briefly mentioned their rise in Bengal, enlarged upon the assistance Bulwant Singh had afforded them; the friendship that had always subsisted between him and the Company, and which was still continued with Chait Singh. I added that as I knew how displeased the Governor would be were I to say anything unfavourable of his master, I was convinced Chait Singh would disown him in anything he might say to the disadvantage of the Company.

He declared he had not spoken anything against the English; that he believed a vakil of Kashmiri Mull [see Chapter VIII above, Note 5], who was lately gone to Lhasa, might; that he only told Tashi Lama what he knew of the affairs of Hindustan, and concluded with the rote of Hindustanis, that I was his master, a great man, etc.. I replied, that as he was sent to Tashi Lama by the Rajah of Benares, I in the same manner was deputed by the Governor on the part of the Company; that it was my duty to attend to the character of my constituents, and it was the custom of the English to deal openly; that I had only reported to him what I had heard, and was glad to find from him that I was misinformed.

After this altercation he and I became great friends. He used to come frequently to see me, and having been a great traveller, his conversation sometimes helped me to beguile a few tedious hours.

On the 15th of November, Tashi Lama sent for me, and desired me to bring all my people with me. He repeated the assurances of his good opinion of the English, and expressed himself with respect to the Governor in very friendly terms, accompanied with that frank and candid look which ought to be the pledge of sincerity. After some observations on the coldness of the climate, he caused me to be dressed in a purple satin gown, lined with fox skins, and trimmed at the neck and cuffs with a scalloped gold lace, which he said had come from Russia; cap of European flowered silk brocade, turned up with sable, and crowned with a red silk tassel; and a pair of large red leather jack-boots. He equipped Mr. Hamilton also in Tatar costume, but his tunic was of blue satin; and all our servants, either this day or a few days afterwards, received tunics lined with sheep skins, and boots.

I next day went to the Sapon Chumbo, who is a great favourite. He has been at Peking, through a great part of Tatar, and even as far as the borders of Russia, and has a knowledge of the languages of these different countries. I made a short visit; for Tashi Lama seemed fully master of his

own affairs, and had before told me, though I recollect not at which conversation, that as I could speak to him without an interpreter, he wished me to apply only to him about any business I might have, and not to trouble myself with representing it through the channel of his officers.

On the 19th of November I visited Tashi Lama. A small lantern which I presented to him turned the subject upon curiosities. He showed me a handsome clock made by Elliot which had been sent him by Chait Singh. It went well enough but the chimes were out of order. I tried in vain to put it right. "What a number of curious things are made in your country," said Tashi Lama; "here there are none at all. We have a cold hilly country. On one side of us is the Chinese Empire, on another the great kingdom of the Hindus some of which I understand the Company is now master, and on a third the Russian Empire. We know nothing but read and pray to God. One cannot tell who is Chief of the country. One man says I am Rajah, another says I am Rajah, and a third says I am Rajah. But the Emperor of China is above all. He has appointed Gesub Rimpoché to govern the country, and sends two officers called Ambans to Lhasa to see how he behaves. If he manages well, so much the better; if ill, he will cut off his head. These Viceroys are removed and others are appointed every three years. As to me, I am a priest and not a Rajah. I know nothing about fighting. If anyone comes to slay me, I can make no resistance. After the death of the former Dalai Lama, I discovered the present one and carried him to Potala; and I applied to the Emperor of China that Gesub Rimpoché who had been preceptor to the previous Dalai Lama should have the government of the country."

Tashi Lama returning to the subject of curiosities, said he understood we had glasses to look at the sun and the moon, and enquired about their appearance. From this the conversation somehow descended to the depths of the sea; then got upon pearl fishing, and landed at Ceylon. After passing from thence to several other countries I at length promised to give Tashi Lama the outlines of the world and of the principal countries in it [see: Chapter VIII above, No. 2].

My chief object hitherto has been to remove the impressions which the Tashi Lama has received to the prejudice of the English. I took the occasion therefore from his mentioning the order of mendicants and the information they had given him concerning the state of the countries to the southward to represent to him that although the character of a fakir, who devotes himself to the duties of religion and the performance of meritorious pilgrimages is universally respected, there are a number of vagabonds, sunyasis, gosains etc., who, fond of a vagabond life, assume the

name of fakirs and under that cloak are guilty of the greatest outrages; that for some years past bodies of these pretended pilgrims armed with matchlocks and swords and shields have infested Bengal burning the villages and plundering the inhabitants; that against these robbers (for they deserve no better name) the Governor has been obliged to send parties of sepoys. "The accounts," said I, "which this set of people give you of the English will hardly be favourable. But when bodies of armed men attempt to carry fire and sword through a country, can the Rulers of it sit still and let the people be plundered?" Tashi Lama mentioned that two or three fakirs who were last year driven out of Bengal had actually come hither. "In your Presence", said I, "they appear in a humble posture and with only a pilgrim's staff. In Bengal they carry guns and swords." The Governor, he replied, was much in the right, and assured me he did not give credit to the reports of such people. However, as he is very inquisitive and collects information from all hands, I thought what I had told him would do no harm.

It was now time that I should open to him the purpose of my mission.

I informed him that as Bengal is at peace with all the world and is a commercial country, the Company was extremely solicitous to give every encouragement to merchants, and had therefore removed all obstacles that were formerly exposed; that notwithstanding this the Governor was much concerned to observe how greatly the trade and intercourse between this country [Tibet] and Bengal were fallen off, and had directed me to represent this to him, Tashi Lama, in the hopes that in his knowledge of the intermediate states, and his influence over them, a free channel of trade might be opened which being of mutual advantage to both countries and to all the world, would serve to render his name still more famous; that the Governor on his part was ready to cooperate with him in everything that could promote so laudable a purpose, and wished that as Tashi Lama and he were united in friendship, the inhabitants of their respective countries might be so in trade.

Tashi Lama began enumerating some causes of the decline of the trade between Bengal and Tibet. He mentioned, first, the war with Deb Judhur [Zhidar], during which nothing was allowed to pass through his country to or from Bengal, and, said he, "if I would allow him he would again go to war with his own people, but I will not suffer him to quit Gyantse, where he now is." He next mentioned Prithvi Narayan, the Rajah of Gorkha, who, he said, had conquered all the countries in Nepal, and by his exactions and oppressions had obliged all merchants to quit his country, as he seizes upon their money and goods whenever he has occasion. "He

has now," said he, "taken possession of Bijapur [Vijayapur], on the borders of Bengal, and, I am told, threatens to invade the Deb Rajah's country. As to me, I give encouragement to merchants, and in this country they are free and secure."<sup>15</sup>

I said that as he was so well acquainted with the causes of this stagnation of trade, and as he and the Company coincided in their treatment of merchants, I assured myself that he would apply an effectual remedy. He replied that the people of his country carried their goods only to Pharidzong, where they were received and purchased by the inhabitants of the Deb Rajah's country, and by them carried into Bengal; and that the goods of Bengal were conveyed into Tibet in the same manner. I told him that the people of the Deb Rajah's country always carried on some trade to Rangpur, and were this year to send their horses, etc., as usual, and I was convinced would have no reason to be dissatisfied with their reception; that this, however, was only to a small extent, was nothing equal to the consumption of the two countries, and bore no proportion to what the trade was in former times. To this he fully assented, and finished his conversation with informing me that he expected one of the ministers from Lhasa in a few days, and that he would introduce me to him, as he wished me to be known to all the principal people in that country. From this I understood that something depended on this man.

Several holidays and much praying prevented me from seeing Tashi Lama for some days. He introduced the subject of trade; he enumerated the different articles sent from this country to Bengal: gold, musk, cow-tails, and coarse woollen cloths. He said that the Tibet people were afraid to go to Bengal on account of the heat; that he had last year sent four people to worship at Benares, of whom three had died, besides the person he intended should have gone to Calcutta; that the journey was also uncommon, and they were frightened at it; that in former times great numbers of the people of this country used to resort to Hindustan; that the Lamas had temples in Benares, Gaya, somewhere in Purnea, and at several other places, the names of which I did not know; that their priests used to travel thither to study the Shaster and the religion of the Brahmans; and after remaining there ten, twenty, or thirty years, returned to Tibet,

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15. Bijapur or Vijayapur was located in the hills immediately north of Morung (the centre of which is now the town of Biratnagar and which may well have been included in what Bogle understood by Vijayapur) and between the Kosi River on the west and the Sikkimese border on the east. It represented the key territory linking the Gurkha possessions and Sikkim, through which lay the route to Bhutan. Some modern maps still show the place, Bijayapur, just in the hills about 5 miles to the north-east of Dharan.

communicating their knowledge to their countrymen, and thereby gaining great reputation; that about eight hundred years ago Bengal was invaded and conquered by the Mussulmans, who destroyed and pillaged the temples and plundered the people, so that such as escaped returned to their mountains along with some Brahmans who fled from the persecutions; since which time the inhabitants of Tibet have had little connection with Bengal or the southern countries.

I told him that times were much altered; that in Bengal and under the Company every person's property was secure, and everyone was at liberty to follow his own religion. He said he was informed that the country under the Fringies was very quiet; that as I had come so far a journey, and had been sent by the Governor, he would be ashamed if I were to return with a fruitless errand; that as soon, therefore, as he arrived at Tashilhunpo, where he would have his officers about him, and likewise some of the people from Lhasa, he would consult with them, and also send for some considerable merchants, after informing them of the Governor's desire, and of the encouragement and protection which the Company afforded to traders in Bengal, discuss the most proper method of carrying it on and extending it. "You," said he, "will also speak with them, and we will see what can be done." I could have nothing to say against a proposal so reasonable, and I saw plainly he chose not to take any step before he had communicated this to his own officers and to the people at Lhasa.

The conversation turned as usual to other countries. He said that in their histories, Hindustan was formerly reckoned the greatest Empire in the world, next to it [Ottoman] Turkey [Rum], and after that China. "But", said he, "the Empire of Hindustan is now gone to ruin and I am told that the present King of Delhi is raised and supported only by the Fringies. Then turning to the Kashmiri who happened to be with me, "your nation", quoth he, "is well pleased with this. The weaker the King of Delhi is the better for you." He then enquired about the Marathas. After I had answered his questions he produced some Russian coins, and concluded with mentioning the disputes which exist between that country and China about their boundaries, and the subjects that desert from one frontier to the other. I at this time took my leave.

On the 28th of November I had another audience of Tashi Lama. He talked of religion and of the connection between his faith and that of the Brahmans; that they worshipped three of the Hindu gods, Vishnu, Brahma, and another, but not their inferior deities. He then asked me how many gods there were in my religion. I told him one. He replied that he had heard that in my religion God was born three times. I had no mind to

attempt an explanation of the mysteries of the Trinity. I felt myself unequal to it. I told him, therefore, that according to my faith God had always existed. He observed, charitably, that we all worshipped the same God, but under different names, and all aimed at the same object, though we pursued different ways. The answer I gave him was in the same tolerant spirit; for I am not sent as a missionary, and after so many able and ingenious Jesuits, dressed in the habits of apostles and armed with beads and crucifixes, have tried in vain to convert unbelieving nations, I am not so arrogant as to believe that my labours would be successful. Tashi Lama observed that his religion and that of China was the same. What a tract of country does it extend over!

From religion we talked of the stars. He mentioned the names of many of them in his own language, and was desirous to know them in mine. He was informed, he said, that we reckoned the world to be round, and that people lived under the earth. I have set down his part of the conversation to show how inquisitive he is. It is unnecessary to mention my answers.

He showed me a silver watch, Graham's, which he had got from the Tatars. It was out of order and it was no wonder, for says he "we are so ignorant about them that some people say they should be wound up one way and some another." He showed me a plan of Tashilhunpo, his palace, and of the Potala, that of Dalai Lama. They were in no kind of symmetry; but I am in doubt whether a view of the front and also the inside of the building does not give me a better idea of it than a view in strict perspective.

Tashi Lama told me that he had written to Lhasa on the subject of opening a free commercial communication between this country and Bengal. "I have told them," added he, "that as you are come so far, and from the Company who is the King of Hindustan, they must attend to your business."

Although he spoke this with all the zeal in the world, I confess I did not much like the thoughts of referring my business to Lhasa, where I was not present, where I was unacquainted, and where I had reason to think the ministers had entertained no favourable idea of me and my commission. I represented to him, therefore, that I considered him as the principal; that during the minority of Dalai Lama the government of the country was in his hands; and that I trusted solely to him for removing the obstacles to the trade between this country and Bengal. He said he had also written to encourage the merchants to trade to Bengal. I replied that the merchants, if they found their advantage in this traffic, would no doubt be ready to follow it; but as he had informed me of the difficulties they were exposed



to in passing through Nepal, and as he knew that the Deb Rajah did not allow a free trade through his dominions, I begged to know by what road they could go. He said that formerly Deb Judhur [Zhidar] would not suffer the Tibet people to trade into his country; that the Bhutanese as well as the inhabitants of Demo Jong's country [Sikkim] lying between Pharidzong and Morung, were oppressive and lawless, so that merchants lay at their mercy. I begged leave to represent to him that I had found them very honest and peaceable; as I knew his influence over the Bhutanese I made no doubt but he could procure their permission for a free trade. He observed that the present Deb Rajah was an old man, and spoke not very respectfully of him, but added that he would write to him on the subject, and I might be assured of his exerting himself in the business I was sent upon. It was late and I took my leave.

I waited on Tashi Lama on the 30th of November. A telescope which I presented to him gave occasion to much conversation on different subjects. He said the Chinese sent spying glasses and other glasses hither, but they were not equal to those of England; but in his country they knew not so much as to make a glass. I replied that my country was famous for glasses and for clockwork; and that every year they were making improvements in them. After this he enquired about the English settlement at Canton, and what name the Chinese gave the English. I told him that the English had long been settled at Canton, and carried on an extensive trade. He asked if they had any troops. I replied that they had no occasion for troops as they were encouraged and protected by the Government, but that as I had not been in China, I could not inform him of the name the Chinese gave my countrymen, and repeated to him what I had formerly said about Fringies. He said that there was one of their Lamas at Canton, but the present one was very young.

He then mentioned the war between the Chinese and the people of the country called Khampas about two months journey to the North East of Lhasa. He said they were a very inconsiderable people, and that their forces were called a few thousand men, that they inhabited a hilly country like the Deb Rajah's, and rolled down stones upon the Chinese; that they used likewise a number of elephants, armed with a kind of broadsword which at first made great havoc among the Chinese, but afterwards they found out a way of filling tiger skins with gunpowder, which when the elephants attacked blew up, and made them recoil upon the enemy. Upon this I took occasion to show the Lama my knowledge of ancient history by giving him an account of the management of elephants in the battle between Alexander and Poros. (NB. I am of the opinion that the cir-

cumstances of the elephants mentioned by the Lama belongs to the war waged against China by the King of Pegu, and that his Holiness was mistaken in placing it in the Khampa War.) He said the Chinese had lost a great number of men, had made a road with bars of iron stuck in the sides of the mountain, in which work multitudes had been destroyed, and yet the war was not yet brought to a conclusion. The Chinese, he said, were also very unfortunate in their war with the Burma (Pegu). At one time the Emperor's son-in-law who was sent against them fell into their hands, and after cutting off his nose and ears, they desired him to go in that situation and give an account of his defeat to the Court.<sup>16</sup> He said that the Chinese were obliged to give up a very large tract of country to them and that the Emperor who was formerly to be an exceeding good natured man was so soured with all this that he fell into a passion on the smallest occasion and is guilty of the greatest cruelties.

There is no following the links by which a conversation is joined. It turned to animals. Tashi Lama asked me about a fish with a number of eyes. I knew nothing of it. He enquired particularly about crocodiles and leopards; and I told him that in my country they had neither tigers nor leopards nor any other noxious animal, that there are some snakes, but they may be handled without danger, and scorpions equally harmless. I told him it was observed that dangerous animals were rare in cold climates and even in Bengal the bite of a serpent is much less dangerous in cold than hot weather. That the tigers at Gungo Sagor were the fiercest perhaps in the world, while those at Rangpur were hardly to be dreaded.

He resumed the subject of trade and expressed the desire of promoting it. He repeated the risks and oppression which the merchants were exposed to in the Deb Rajah's country. I represented to him that these would cease, if the Deb Rajah knew that this Government interested itself in their safety; that an intercourse of trade between Bengal and Tibet would certainly have great benefit to the Deb Rajah's country; that the opulent and flourishing situation which Gorkha had found in the territories of the Patan, the Bhatgaon and the Kathmandu Rajahs, was owing entirely to this cause, and would operate equally favourably in the Deb Rajah's country, and that its inhabitants professed the same religion with him and were subject to the same authority, it was certainly his advantage to promote theirs; that the Deb Rajah having no intercourse with other nations had not the same liberal ideas with regard to commerce which the Government of Tibet adopts; but if the advantages which his country would from the

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16. The Burmese captured Ming Jui, the Ch'ien-lung Emperor's son-in-law, in 1768, who committed suicide rather than face the imperial wrath of Peking.

resort of the merchants and the extension of trade were set forth to him and enforced by him, Tashi Lama, I made no doubt of having its desired effect. In return he gave me assurance of his exerting himself in order to open the road through the Deb Rajah's country, but that he must defer it till after his arrival at Tashilhunpo.

There were other arguments which occurred to me, but which I durst not use directly with Tashi Lama, I thought it better to suggest through the Gosain. One great source of advantage to his Holiness is the resort of pilgrims who make offerings to his shrine. The people of the Deb Rajah's country although they acknowledge him their Pontiff, hardly ever visit him. They trade only to the borders of Tibet; if they were encouraged to proceed to the capital the principal of religion would mingle itself with that of commerce, and like the Mahometans at the Haj at Mecca they would offer up their devotions to their priest, while they carried on their trade. The resort of the Bhutanese would also naturally increase his influence in that country, an object which I know he had much at heart.

On the 1st of December I paid a visit to Tashi Lama's confidant, adjusted the telescope, repeated some things I had formerly said to Tashi Lama and applied through him about some goats, sheep and cow-tailed cattle which were to be sent to Bengal.

Tashi Lama sent for me on the 6th of December, and delivered me some letters from Calcutta and [Cooch] Behar. At his desire I opened them in his presence. He inquired what news, and particularly if there was anything said about Gorkha. I told him there was not. "Because," said he, "his forces are employed in attacking Demo Jong [Sikkim], whose country is in the neighbourhood of Bengal. They have surrounded it; Gorkha has trained sepoy after the English manner, and given them muskets; but I am told they are not good marksmen, and do not hit above once in a hundred times." I said I had been told in the Deb Rajah's country that Gorkha was somewhere on the borders of Tibet. Says he, "they must have meant Demo Jong's dominions, which are subject to Lhasa. Oh," says he, "I have just now a letter from the Deb Rajah. He is in a sad plight about Deb Judhur [Zhidar], having heard that he was about to return to invade the country, and he writes me by all means to detain him."

After this he inquired about lightning in Bengal. He said in Tibet the thunderbolts are sometimes of stone or iron, and then showed me a knife, with an open-worked handle of steel and gold, with several heads carved upon it, and some Chinese characters on the blade, which he said had fallen from the clouds. It was almost the only part of all his conversations that was marvellous. He asked me many questions, but it is endless putting

them down. As he had deferred my business till his arrival at his capital, I said nothing on the subject.

On the 7th of December Tashi Lama sent for me and Mr. Hamilton. He was to set out from Dechenrubje next morning, in order to return to Tashilhunpo, his palace, from which he had been three years absent. Our visit was short.

## **CHAPTER X**

### **Negotiations with the Tashi Lama at Tashilhunpo December 1774 to April 1775**

#### **1**

##### **Bogle's Journal**

At the second stage from Dechenrubje Tashi Lama slept in a Kalmuk tent. I had expressed to somebody a desire to see it: this was reported to Tashi Lama and he immediately sent for me. He had been so much hurried at Tashitzay (the first stage and his birth place) seeing nephews and cousins, that he had not had time to see me. After all the conversation which the roads, the weather, our journey and the Kalmuk's tent suggested, the Lama informed me he had received a letter from the Depon [Governor] of Pharidzong with the news that seven thousand Gorkha troops had defeated Demo Jong [Ruler of Sikkim] and had possessed themselves of half his country; that an old woman, a priest, had fled upon the men's shoulders and escaped to Pharidzong; and that the Demo Jong had applied to Lhasa for assistance. I asked him if Demo Jong was not subject to Lhasa. He said he was, and paid annually a considerable revenue; but he did not know what answer could be given to him. He enquired if the English had not sent troops against Gorkha. I told him that seven or eight years ago they sent a few sepoy to the assistance of one of the Nepal Rajahs, but that it was during the rainy season, many of them died of sickness and the rest were obliged to return on account of the

rivers being so much swelled.<sup>1</sup> Gorkha applied at that time, said he, to Lhasa for assistance representing that the English were coming upon him with a mighty army. When this was not granted him, he next requested that the Government at Lhasa would remain neuter, and not assist his enemy, the Rajah of Patan, promising that he would never encroach a finger's breadth on the Tibet territories; but, added Tashi Lama, Gorkha is a most faithless and most ambitious man that lives, and it is his way never to have above one enemy at a time, speaking fair to all the world besides, and as soon as he has defeated one power he immediately quarrels with another. The present dispute with Demo Jong [Sikkim] is owing to Deb Judhur [Zhidar] who, when he found himself unequal to the English, applied to Gorkha for his aid. Upon this he sent seven thousand men who applied for a passage through Demo Jong's country which was refused. In the meantime Deb Judhur was expelled and peace concluded; but the forces have remained, have invaded the country and have made themselves masters of many parts of it. He said, he understood that the Rajah of Vijayapur<sup>2</sup> had fled into Bengal when his country was invaded by Gorkha, and asked me if it were so. I was ignorant.

Tashi Lama enquired if there were any great men of my nation at Canton, and whether we sent any vakils to the Emperor of China. I replied that the settlement of Canton was mainly for the purpose of loading and unloading ships, explaining to him the nature of the trade with China and that I believe no vakils were sent to Peking. He told me of a war which the Lhasa Government had with Assam some years ago when a great many Tibetans were killed by stones and trees thrown down upon them. He mentioned a nation subject to China which as soon as the father or mother arrived at the age of sixty their children put them to death, that the present Emperor had endeavoured to put a stop to this strange custom by rendering it capital. He gave me an account of his pedigree. He enquired about the Mugs.<sup>3</sup> He asked me if the Company had not had a war with the Rajah of Tipperah [Tripura]. Strange how long the impression of a name will last! Some hundred years ago the Rajah of Tipperah was a mighty

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1. A reference to the Kinlock expedition of 1767 when the Company tried without success to send a military force to rescue the Newars rulers of the Kathmandu Valley from Gurkha conquest. This abortive venture discussed in some detail in the second volume of this book.

2. This key territory between the Gurkha possessions and Bhutan by way of Sikkim, had in fact been the object of an abortive expedition by Deb Judhur [Zhidar] in 1770.

3. Muggs or Maghs, Muslim natives of Arakan and the Chittagong region.

prince. He has long ceased to be so, and yet Tashi Lama always classes him among the great powers of Hindustan.<sup>4</sup> I gave Tashi Lama a true account of the situation. Tashi Lama enquired what was the King of England's name; and he put many questions about lions, and seemed very desirous of having a skin.

Tashi Lama passed the following night in another Kalmuk tent. He called me to him. A fall from his horse which had happened to Chanzo Cusho, English and Bengal horses, our entry next day into Tashilhunpo, and a yellow satin gown faced with black fur which he presented to me, furnished materials for a short conversation.

Next day Tashi Lama stopped at some tents about two miles short of Tashilhunpo. All the world was there and I was there among the rest; but it was all eating and ceremony and no conversation. We continued our journey to the palace through files of priests and crowds of spectators. I accompanied Tashi Lama to his apartments. He spoke of the apartments he intended me, asked my opinion of the palace, talked to Doctor Hamilton who was with me of the number of patients he was likely to have, and although his antechamber was crowded with people of the first rank in the country he managed a conversation of a quarter of an hour with good nature and winning affability.

The variety of people who crowded to pay their respects to Tashi Lama on his return to his Capital put it out of my power to have a particular audience of him before the 21st of December. After asking me how I liked the palace and my accommodations, he told me that some people had come from Dalai Lama and Gesub Rimpoché [Regent] at Lhasa to congratulate him on his arrival; that they had brought some Chinese wine, bread and tea for me, and that as he wished to show me every attention on account of the distance I had come, he had desired then to pay me a visit, which they were to do in the afternoon; that they were people of some consequence and I would receive them accordingly. I made my acknowledgement for his attention.

I had heard that Gesub Rimpoché intended to send a wakil to Calcutta and had asked the Gosain about it, who had mentioned it to Tashi Lama; and he now spoke to me of it. He said he had not seen Gesub Rimpoché's vakils but in public and had heard nothing of this, but it was likely enough; that as Dalai Lama's name was well known and as Gesub Rimpoché was his minister appointed by the Emperor of China, and had the entire management of the country, it could be for the Company's honour that their

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4. Tripura had been incorporated into Bengal as part of the Moghul Empire by 1733.

vakils should proceed to Calcutta. That if I wished it and would carry them with me, he would write to Gesub on the subject, or if not that he would dissuade him from it. After returning the thanks which this deserved, I replied that as I had only heard of the circumstance by chance, I thought it unnecessary for him to write until he should be informed of it by Gesub, or his envoys, and that it was better to wait until he had received Gesub's answer to the letter he had written to him. He answered that he would see the deputies the next day or the following, and that in the mean time I might talk with them on this subject. I said that in case they spoke of it to me, I would; but that I could not with propriety mention it to them first, and, as I wished to be ruled entirely by his order, begged he would send some of his people to be present when the Lhasa people came to see me. He approved of this.

He then spoke to me of what he had before mentioned as to forming a religious house somewhere on the Ganges, and I repeated my belief of the readiness with which his desire would be complied with.<sup>5</sup> He said he had also written or proposed to write to Changay [Changkya Hutukhtu] Lama, the high priest at Peking, with whom he was upon the most friendly and intimate terms, mentioning that the Fringies were masters of Bengal, and had shown him great favour; and, says he, "I think it probable he will send some of his people to visit the principal religious places. I," added he, "am but a little man in comparison of the Changay Lama, for he is always in the Emperor's presence, and has great influence over him. The favour which the Emperor shows to me and Dalai Lama is in a good measure owing to Changay Lama's good offices at Court. I hope, therefore, in case he sends any persons, that the Governor will give them a good reception." I encouraged him very much in all this. "At present," said he, "I cannot say whether they will come or not. If they do, I will send them to the Deb Rajah, and from thence they will proceed to Bengal." I said the Governor, I imagined, would be glad to know some little time beforehand, that he

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5. Note by Alexander Dalrymple, c. 1792.

On learning of the Lama's wish, Warren Hastings gave the necessary orders about building a Buddhist temple on the banks of the Hugli; and, as soon as it was completed, he wrote and informed the Lama, who had previously sent images to be deposited in it. Referring to the temple, Warren Hastings says, in a letter to Tashi Lama: "by the blessing of God it will be the means of making your name known in this country, and of strengthening the friendship which is between us, and you will consider it as a mark of the confidence and regard which I bear to you."

See also below, Ch. XIII, No. 12.



might give orders for their journey. Nothing else of consequence passed; and I went to receive the Lhasa deputies.

There were two of them. The one was a gyalong, the other a layman dressed in a feminine garb, and they came with about twenty attendants. They brought with them many boxes, full of small dried fish, cakes, flour, mushrooms, etc., and some bamboos filled with distilled spirits. The layman spoke. He said they were come from Lhasa to wait upon the Lama, and brought these Chinese meats from Gesub to me, of which they desired my acceptance; that, although it was not the custom, Tashi Lama had ordered them to call upon me, as I had come from such a distance, and from the chief of the Fringies. In return, I made acknowledgments for the favour which Gesub had shown me; that I was sent by the Governor to pay his respects to the Lama, and that I was extremely happy and honoured by their visit.

They said the Fringies had shown great favour to Tashi Lama, and to them, by making peace with the Bhutanese and restoring their country. I replied, that the name and character of Dalai Lama and of Tashi Lama were well known to my constituents, and that the Governor was very ready to cultivate their and Gesub Rimpoché's friendship and good opinion; that the English were far from that quarrelsome people which some evil minded persons represented them to be, and wished not for extent of territories; that as they were entrusted with the management of Bengal they only wished that it should remain in tranquillity; that the war with the Bhutanese was of their own seeking; that they, the [Lhasa] deputies, being well acquainted with government, could judge whether the Company had not cause to be alarmed when 8,000 or 10,000 Bhutanese, who had formerly always confined themselves to their mountains, poured at once into the low country, seized the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar, took possession of his territories, and carried their arms to the borders of Bengal; and whether they were not in the right to oppose them; that in the course of the war some of the Bhutanese country was taken from them, which, however, was immediately restored at Tashi Lama's request; that so far from desiring conquest, the boundaries of Bengal remained the same as formerly; and although the English kept up a large army, the war with the Deb Rajah was the first they had been engaged in for many years. The layman gave a nod with his head. He then said Tashi Lama had written to Lhasa about merchants; that the people of this country were afraid of the heat, and proceeded, therefore, only to Pharidzong, where the Deb Rajah's subjects brought the commodities of Bengal and exchanged them for those of this country; that this was the ancient custom, and would certainly be

observed. I replied, that this trade had always been carried on by the Deb Rajah's people, who were this year gone to Bengal, as usual; but, besides this, there was formerly a very extensive trade carried on between this country and Bengal, which my constituents were sorry to see had declined very much of late years; that it was needless for me to represent to them, who were acquainted with the state of affairs, the causes from which this proceeded; that the Governor was desirous of removing these obstacles, and had ordered me to represent them to Tashi Lama, who had, in consequence, written to Lhasa on the subject, and I trusted that Gesub Rimpoché and the government there would readily comply with so reasonable a proposal. They answered, that Gesub Rimpoché would do everything in his power, but that he and all the country were subject to the Emperor of China. This is a stumbling-block which crosses me in all my paths. The Lhasa people took their leave. I offered to return their visit. They seemed not to wish it, but said they would come to see me again.

On the 23rd of December, before Tashi Lama went to church he sent for me. At his desire I repeated to him what had passed between me and the deputies from Lhasa. I told him that they said the ancient custom would certainly be observed; that according to the ancient custom Nepal was governed by its own Rajahs, and merchants were at liberty to trade through that country between Bengal and Tibet; that unless the government at Lhasa could restore Nepal to its former state, or order Gorkha to treat the merchants with indulgence, I confessed I did not see how the ancient custom could be preserved. He said he was very sensible that the trade with Bengal had declined very much of late years; that formerly the merchants used to bring coral, pearls, and broadcloth in abundance into the country, which was not the case nowadays; that as to Gorkha, there was no trusting him; that a few years ago he encouraged some merchants to settle in Nepal, treated them well at first, but afterwards cut off their ears and turned them out of the country; that he had also promised again and again to him, Tashi Lama, and to the government at Lhasa, that he would never encroach a finger's breadth on their territories, but now he had attacked Demo Jong's country [Sikkim], which was subject to Lhasa; that he was convinced of the reasonableness of my proposals in regard to trade, and had accordingly written to Lhasa on the subject, and had received an answer from thence, in which Gesub Rimpoché mentioned his apprehensions of giving umbrage to the Chinese; and that besides, the disturbances which Gorkha Rajah was making in Demo Jong's country, and on the borders of that of the Deb Rajah, rendered this an improper time to settle anything of the kind, but that in a year or two he hoped to bring

it about; that the Depon, who had visited me and played at chess, with two others, was gone with forces to oblige Gorkha either to quit Demo Jong's country, or fight with him. I replied that as to Gorkha, I did not imagine from all I could judge that he was likely to be a smaller man, but, on the contrary, a greater; that so far from being satisfied with the conquests he had made, and the extensive country of which he had got possession, he was meditating new schemes of ambition; that he had subdued Morung, Vijayapur, and had now attacked Demo Jong's country [Sikkim], which gained, he would make himself master of the Deb Rajah's dominions, or perhaps extend his views towards Pharidzong; that, in short, Gorkha's views aimed plainly at conquests.

Tashi Lama was obliged to go to church, but as I was taking leave he desired me not to mention what he had said at my last visit about the persons from China, which was a great affair (*Burrah Kaum*). I assured him of my silence in general and as to this in particular [referring to Tashi Lama's correspondence with Changay Lama in Peking].

On the 28th December I had an audience with Tashi Lama, where nobody but his confidant [the Sapon Chumbo] was present. He expatiated largely on Gorkha's war with Demo Jong, his treachery and breach of promise to him and to the government at Lhasa. I repeated to him my opinion of Gorkha; that his ambition and his abilities made him aspire at conquests; that if he succeeded in the conquest of Demo Jong's country, he would attempt Pharidzong or the Deb Rajah's country; and that having assumed the title of *Parbat-kai-Padshah* [King of the Mountains], he wished to be so in reality; that in judging of the intentions of men their actions ought to be the criterion; and that I could not help being concerned that Gorkha, after having from a petty rajah made himself master of all Nepal, after having subdued Vijayapur and Morung, and after having at length attacked the territories of Demo Jong, a vassal of Lhasa, should be considered by Gesub and the government of this country as more to be trusted than the English, who during twelve or fifteen years had never attempted to extend the boundaries of Bengal, who had restored the Deb Rajah's country, and who were known to adhere religiously to their engagements. Tashi Lama replied that the government at Lhasa's eyes were opened, and that they viewed Gorkha's designs in a very different light; that as to the English, Gesub had received such accounts of them as raised his suspicions; "and," added he, "his heart is confined, and he does not see things in the same view as I do." I said I had heard a great deal of Gesub's abilities, but I confessed in the present case I thought he was blind to his own interest; that I knew Gorkha was afraid

of the English; that he was sensible also how firmly they adhered to their treaties and to their friends; that he had seen Shuja-ud-daulah's country [Oudh] enjoy a state of perfect tranquillity during twelve years, merely from the Marathas and the other powers of Hindostan knowing that the English would be ready to assist him; that Shuja-ud-daulah, when apprehensive of an invasion, had even sometimes called in the assistance of the Company's troops, which had marched to the extreme boundaries of his dominions, and had afterwards, when there was no further occasion for their presence, returned to Bengal; that I confessed I saw nothing more likely to make Gorkha desist from his war with Demo Jong and confine himself to his own country, than the knowledge of a connection between the government of this country and that of Bengal.

He seemed to be much pleased with what I had said, and asked me if he might write this to Gesub. I told him he might, and that I had no doubt that the Governor would be ready to employ his mediation to make Gorkha desist from his attempts on the territories subject to Lhasa, and that I had reason to think, from Gorkha's dread of the English, that it would be effectual; but I added that if Gesub, contrary to reason, and what he had seen of the fidelity and moderation of the English, continued to entertain suspicions of them, I was helpless, and my constituents were helpless.

He said that Gesub's apprehensions of the English arose not only from himself, but also from his dread of giving offence to the Chinese, to whose Empire this country was subject; and that he wished to receive an answer from the Court at Peking. I replied that whenever he mentioned the name of the Emperor of China I was struck dumb; that from his letter to the Governor, as well as from every account, my constituents considered him (Tashi Lama) as the chief of the country during Dalai Lama's minority, and that although the Emperor was paramount sovereign, everything was left to his management; that Gesub owed his promotion to him, and followed his advice; that the Governor, in his proposals about trade, was promoting the advantage of Tibet, as well as of Bengal; that in former times merchants used to come freely into this country, that Gorkha's wars and oppressions had prevented them for some years past, and only prayed him to remove the obstacles which these had occasioned. He replied that he had no doubt of carrying the point I wished, but that it might require a year or two to do it effectually; that besides the obstruction to trade which Gorkha's conduct in Nepal had occasioned, his present war with Demo Jong prevented the importation of sugar, spices, tobacco, etc., and that the people of this country complained loudly of it.

After thanking him for his intentions of opening trade in the course of two years, I told him that, being sent by the Governor upon this business, I could not help being zealous for its success; that it depended on him whether I should return to Bengal happy and crowned with reputation, or covered with shame, which would certainly be my portion if I failed in the point which, by the Governor's orders, I had represented to him. He dropped the subject. He gave me a book containing cuts [illustrations] of the Bible with written explanations in the Russian language at the top and Latin ones engraved at the bottom, also the heads of the Popes, Emperors of Germany and Kings of France, which he had got from some Russian pilgrims. He desired me to carry them with me and look them over. I then took my leave.

On the 30th of December, Gesub Rimpoché's people came to take leave of me. I mentioned to them that I wished to have waited upon them; but they had declined my visit; that, however, I proposed to write to Gesub Rimpoché by them, and begged they would be so good as to take care of my letter. They said if I mentioned simply in my letter the receipt of the Chinese brandy, etc., they would carry it, but that if I said anything of business, or anything about the Kalmuks that might bring troubles on the country or on Gesub, they would not carry it. I confess I was much struck with this answer. I replied that being sent to Tashi Lama and living under his roof, I had asked his opinion about writing to Gesub, that he had advised me to it (through the Gosain), and that I should write nothing without showing it to him and receiving his approbation; that I was concerned at their expressing an apprehension of my writing anything that could embroil Gesub; that I was come into the country with a pure heart and wished its happiness and Gesub Rimpoché happiness. They desired I would give them a copy of the letter I intended to write to Gesub. I replied that I would give the letter and copy to Tashi Lama, and if he thought proper he would show it to them. I added that I wished to know the ground of Gesub's suspicions, and as I knew the uprightness of my constituents' intentions as well as my own, I was ready to give him every satisfaction. Their answer was that they were come to take leave of me, that much conversation was not the custom of this country, and so wished me a good journey to Bengal. I endeavoured to get them to listen to me. I wished to introduce the subject of trade, but it was to no purpose; so we parted.

This conversation gave me more concern than any I had in Tibet. I immediately applied for an audience of Tashi Lama, and was admitted. I repeated to him what had passed. He said the people from Lhasa were

little men and knew no better. I replied that had I thought their conversation proceeded only from themselves I would feel little uneasiness at it; but I had reason to consider their sentiments as those of Gesub's, and could not help being concerned that he should suspect me of coming into this country to raise disturbances; that God was my witness that I wished him well, that I wished Tashi Lama well and the country well, and that a suspicion of treachery and falsehood was what I could not bear. I was a good deal affected, and said this with some warmth.

Tashi Lama endeavoured to remove my concern. He said that Gesub was unacquainted with the character of the English; "but," said he, "at any rate Dalai Lama will be of age in a year or two, and then Gesub's management will be at an end." I told him that I had before sent to ask his opinion as to the propriety of my writing to Gesub, and having now represented to him what had passed between me and Gesub's vakils, I was come to ask his advice and opinion. Upon this I took out the draft of a letter I intended to have sent to Gesub, and read it to him. "Every country," quoth Tashi Lama, "has its particular manner of writing. If you please I will write a letter for you." I accepted his offer. He immediately called in one of his people, and making him sit down, dictated a letter in the Tibet language in my name to Gesub Rimpoché, explaining it to me at the same time in the Hindustani language. To the best of my remembrance it was to the following purpose:

To Gesub Rimpoché.

[After some compliments.] I have received the Chinese wine, fish, mushrooms, biscuit, etc., that you were so good as to send me in great abundance, and all very good of their kinds. May your country enjoy tranquillity and yourself happiness. I request, in the name of the Governor my master, that you will allow merchants to trade between this country and Bengal. I have sent you a gun, a piece of broadcloth, and a hand-kerchief, which you will please accept of.

After the letter was written I took leave of Tashi Lama.

Next day I sent the letter with the broadcloth, etc., to Gesub's servants by one of Tashi Lama's people, and begged him to tell them how concerned I was for what had passed; that if Gesub in spite of everything would entertain suspicions of me, and if they would not listen to what I had to say in order to remove them, I was helpless; that I had sent a letter for Gesub, which I requested them to deliver to him, and in case they wished to know the contents, they would apply to Tashi Lama, who had seen and approved of it. They returned me an answer that they were sorry and ashamed at what passed at our last meeting; that they would deliver

the letter to Gesub, and would faithfully mention to him what I had said. From this I found that Tashi Lama had spoken to them.

I had no opportunity of seeing Tashi Lama again till the 9th January [1775]. He made me many apologies for not having sent to me before, which he said was owing to the number of people he was obliged to receive on his return, and the load of ceremonies he was under the necessity of performing. "I have written," said he, "a letter to the Deb Rajah on the business of the merchants. I have told him that by granting them liberty to pass through his country he will not only comply with the Governor's desire but will oblige me."

I returned him my thanks and added that if the Deb Rajah attended to the advantage of his country he would be very ready to encourage the resort of merchants; that the former wealthy situation of Nepal, and the resources which enabled Gorkha to perform such extensive things and to grow so great, was owing to the commerce which used to be carried on between Bengal and Tibet through Nepal. He answered that he was very sensible of this, but the views of the Bhutanese were confirmed, and he could not foresee in what manner they would consider this affair. "However," says he, "I will write to Gorkha who I believe will pay some regard to what I say, and advise him to treat the merchants with more indulgence." I replied that at the same time I was fully sensible of his zeal in this business, I must submit to him whether this was a proper time to write to Gorkha; that I believed the Company had neither any friendship nor enmity for Gorkha, but it was the custom of the English to act a fair and direct part; that if Gorkha would give over the war with Demo Jong, which was in fact the same thing as a war with Lhasa, would confine himself to his own country and not aim at new conquests every year, I would then think that his writing to him was highly proper; but at present I was afraid it would only give offence to the Government at Lhasa, and while Gorkha continued hostilities would produce no great effect. "Well," said he, "I'll first wait and see how this war ends; but I remember a vakil of Gorkha's told me about two years ago that Gorkha felt his country much impoverished of late, that gold and silver no longer came into his country as formerly, and that he was even at a loss to pay his troops. Upon this, I wrote to Gorkha's son, who is a good young man and very unlike his father, desiring him to advise Gorkha to encourage and protect the merchants; but he returned me for answer for God's sake not to write to him, because if his father knew it he would certainly put him to death. I told him that as far as I could understand Gorkha's policy was very shortsighted; that his exactions upon merchants, although it might supply

his immediate necessities, was striking at the root of the tree upon the fruit of which he must afterwards subsist; and that I had some reason to think the fresh wars and conquests in which he was perpetually engaging arose from necessity as well as ambition, that he maintained a vast army, he was loth to reduce it, he was unable to pay it, and had no way of keeping it together but by employing it in the reduction of countries where the booty might keep his troops together, that in this manner he had seized Vijayapur and Morung, and had now turned his arms against the territories of Lhasa."

Tashi Lama said Gorkha's pretence for seizing Vijayapur was that it was given him by the King [of Delhi, the Moghul Emperor]. I told him that I had been informed in the Deb Rajah's country that when the present Chief applied to Gorkha about that Province, he returned for answer that it had been ceded to him by Deb Judhur [Zhidar]. Tashi Lama said that he believed that was the true story, and that Deb Judhur, when he found that he could not cope with the English, had sent Gorkha I do not recollect how much money, and had also given his consent to his seizing Vijayapur.

The rest of this conversation was enquiring about the King of England, about the Company, about Holland, France and Denmark; but I will not lengthen out this account with my answers.

It may appear extraordinary that, though I was exposed to so many inconveniences from the seat of government being at Lhasa, I should never have proposed my going thither to the Lama; and it is necessary that I should give my reasons for it. I had every cause to think, from Gesub Rimpoché's letter to Tashi Lama, from Tashi Lama's conversation, and from other accounts which I had received, that Gesub Rimpoché was extremely jealous of me; that he considered me as come to spy "the nakedness of the land," and that the English had designs upon this country. I was suspicious therefore that he would refuse my visit while he continued in this way of thinking, and I entertained some hopes that Tashi Lama's letters and the representations of the Chauduri (a man whose connection with me I shall afterwards mention) would bring him to entertain a more favourable idea of me and of my business. Another thing, I could not (in the character I bore as being sent on the part of the Company) go to Lhasa without suitable presents to Gesub, to Dalai Lama, and, perhaps, to the Chinese officers; and these presents I had it not in my power to make.

I visited Tashi Lama on the 13th January, and he introduced this subject himself. He said that as I had come so far he would be very glad that I should see Lhasa also; that Gesub, however, was averse from it, and



had written to him to keep me with him, and that I should not go to Lhasa; that he was afraid of my seeing the city; that, however, if I chose to send any of my servants to Lhasa he would give them passports, and they could afterwards give me an account of it and of anything I wished to know. It became now necessary that I should give an answer either one way or the other. I replied that I was exceedingly concerned to find that Gesub still continued to entertain such suspicions of me, and to imagine that I was come with a design of making an unfriendly account of this kingdom; that I knew nothing about surveying or war; that Mr. Hamilton, who was with me, knew as little; that as to the country of Tibet, the Gosain, who had been down in Calcutta, could tell him that the Governor had plans of it, and knew the names and situations of the principal places, Lhasa, Chamnamring, Shigatse, Janglache, Gyantse, Painam, etc.; that although I would own to him that after coming so far, and being within a few days' journey of Lhasa, I would be glad to go to that city, yet it was on a very different account from what Gesub supposed; that my having been at Lhasa would, among my countrymen, tend to my credit and reputation, and I conceived also some hopes that Gesub Rimpoché, after seeing and conversing with me, would alter his opinion, and that his jealousy would be removed. He said it was very true, but Gesub's heart was small and suspicious; and, to tell the truth, he could not promise that he would be able to procure his consent, but I might send one of my people. "I will give you an instance," said he, "of the narrowness of Gesub's mind. Gorkha has sent some vakils with letters to me and to himself; they are now at Kuti, the frontier town of Nepal: and Gesub, among other reasons, objects to their coming into Tibet lest they should learn the manner of the Kalmuks fighting on horseback, which is practiced in this country (describing it at the same time by motions), and should teach it to Gorkha's people." I replied that as to my servants going to Lhasa, it would be to their credit, not to mine; and as to giving me an account of the city, it was what I did not wish to know, and that he might himself judge of my indifference on this subject, from my having been so long at Tashilhunpo, and having never once visited Shigatse, a town in its neighbourhood. To tell the truth, I had restrained my curiosity merely in order to counteract the idea of my having come to examine and pry into the country; for Shigatse is commanded by officers subject to Lhasa. Tashi Lama upon this offered to give me a map of Tibet from Ladakh to the frontier of China, with the names of places and their distances. This was a splendid object, and to obtain it, I was sensible would reflect much lustre on my commission. But I considered the Company could have no interest in this country but that

of commerce, and that to know a number of outlandish names or to correct the geography of Tibet, although a matter of great curiosity and extremely interesting to geographers and map sellers, was of no use to my constituents, or indeed to mankind in general; and that to this I might be sacrificing objects of far greater importance, and exciting that jealousy which had hitherto so cruelly thwarted me in all my negotiations. I replied therefore, in the same style of indifference, after thanking Tashi Lama for his kind offer, that the situation of the country, its strength, forces, etc., were of no concern to my constituents; that the Company considered Tibet as at such a distance from Bengal, and separated by such mountains, the difficulty of which I had but too well experienced, that they never dreamt of any danger to Bengal from that quarter, and the same causes, supposing the Company even had intentions of extending their territories, which their conduct showed they had not, served equally to ensure Tibet from any danger from Bengal; and that in taking a map of this country I would only afford ground for Gesub's suspicions. He replied that Gesub would know nothing of it. I told him that I could not answer for that, and at any rate it was not an object with my constituents; that I would be glad indeed to know the laws and customs of Tibet, because, as every country excelled others in some of these particulars, it was the business of a traveller to inform himself of those, and to adopt such as were good; and I would own to him that the Governor had desired me to inquire about their manners, but at the same time to concern myself in no way about the strength or forces of Tibet. He seemed to be well satisfied with what I said, and told me that he would order his people to write down every particular regarding the laws and customs of the country that I wished to know. I thanked him and told him that I would first give him an account of Europe which from the great curiosity and the novelty of the subject would be agreeable to him. He afterwards talked about the scripture prints, about the cuts in Buffon<sup>6</sup> which I had sent to him and about other subjects of that kind, which it is needless to mention.

Next day I had a short audience with Tashi Lama. The Chanzo Cusho was present, and he talked little on business. I recollect only one thing worth mentioning. He spoke of Deb Judhur [Zhidar]. Tashi Lama said that when he seized the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar and carried him prisoner into the hills, he was applied to by a Brahmin or Guru to write to Deb Judhur in his favour, and that he thereupon wrote to him to set him at liberty; but he returned for answer that the [Cooch] Behar Rajah was applying to the

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6. French naturalist, 1707-1788, of whose *Natural History* a number of volumes had been in process of publication since 1749. See also: Chapter XV below, p. 430.

Moghuls, and intended not only to invade his territories but also those of Lhasa. "Before the war in [Cooch] Behar," says he, "Deb Judhur fought some battles, I don't know whether with you or the Nawab's [of Oudh] people at Soneeasseecotta." I replied that Deb Judhur had been engaged in many battles, but not with the English; that he had always come off the conqueror and had got a great deal of booty and money; that when a man finds his advantage in a thing he is naturally led to follow it, and so Deb Judhur considered that fighting was a good business. "Deb Judhur," said he, "is in a very different situation now. The Government at Lhasa ordered him to be confined. As he is a strong man and always went armed, they were afraid to seize him. They therefore took him while at dinner. It is contrary to custom to bind a rajah; and so they have sewed up his hands and his whole body, and keep him confined at Gyantse."

The rigorous treatment of Deb Judhur is to be ascribed not to Gesub's great friendship for the present Chief, but to Gorkha's hostilities, which they lay entirely and not without reason at Deb Judhur's door.

The 19th of January was the first of the holidays at the change of the year. I went to see the ceremonies at church. Before they began Tashi Lama called me into a closet, and told me that Gorkha's vakils, who had been so long stopped on the borders of the country, were arrived; that the principal one was a Gosain, who had formerly resided long in this country; that he had brought a letter from Gorkha, in which he said everything was written, but it was in Nagari [the Sanskrit alphabet which was the basis for modern written Hindi], and he had given it to be translated, and would afterwards inform me of its contents; that Gorkha therein styled himself the King of the Mountains (*Parbat-kai-Padshah*); that formerly he used to send presents of fruit only, but upon this occasion had sent more valuable ones. He said he understood that the Kerant Rajah [presumably Kirat, in Eastern Nepal, rather than Kiranti on the Tista in Bengal], upon his country being seized by the Gorkhas, had taken refuge with Demo Jong; but having since, upon Gorkha's hostilities with that chief, discovered the insecurity of his situation, had fled towards Purnea [in Bihar]. Tashi Lama then asked my opinion of Gorkha, and whether he had ever attacked the English or invaded Bengal. I confessed that I knew very little of him till I came into his presence; that from what he had been pleased to tell me, and from what I understood of the number of troops he kept in pay, of his every year entering into some new war and making new conquests, and his late invasion of Demo Jong's territories, I was of the opinion that he aimed at making himself master of all the hilly country; that as I was ignorant of his purpose in sending vakils, I could say nothing particular about it; that

if at the same time he had withdrawn his forces from Demo Jong's dominions, I should think him in earnest in his professions of friendship and moderation; but I confessed I did not understand a man who made proffers and assurances of friendship with one hand and a sword in the other. "We will see," said Tashi Lama. "In the meantime Gesub Rimpoché has sent 18,000 men, under the command of Depon Patza, together with a priest or inferior lama, in order to be prepared either for war or peace." He also told me that Gorkha was covered over with blotches and sores, and his health very bad. The service began, and Tashi Lama went to church.

On the 19th [of January] I had another audience with Tashi Lama at church, and between the services. He told me that Gorkha had written not only to him, but also to Dalai Lama, to Gesub Rimpoché, and to Gubshay Pandita,<sup>7</sup> who is one of the ministers at Lhasa; that he mentioned in his letters having subdued Kerant, Morung, etc.; that he also wrote that he did not wish to quarrel with this state, but if they had a mind for war, he let them know he was well prepared, and desired them to remember that he was a Rajput; that he wanted to establish factories at Kuti, Kerant, and another place, upon the borders of Tibet and Nepal, where the merchants of Tibet might purchase the commodities of his country and those of Bengal, and desired their concurrence; that he would allow the common articles of commerce to be transported through his kingdom, but no glasses or other curiosities, and desired them to prohibit the importation of them also; that he desired them further to have no connection with Fringies or Moghuls, and not to admit them into the country, but to follow the ancient custom, which he was resolved likewise to do; that a Fringy had come to him upon some business, and was now in his country, but he intended to send him back as soon as possible, and desired them to do the same with us; that he had written also about circulating his coin, and had sent two thousand rupees for that purpose. Tashi Lama then asked me about this Fringy who was with Gorkha; but being quite in the dark I could give him no manner of information. Tashi Lama did not at this time desire my opinion upon Gorkha's letter, and I made no remarks upon the subject.

The accounts which I received from other hands of Gorkha's letter served to confirm that which Tashi Lama gave me, that he had besides therein desired Tashi Lama to send gold and silver to repair some temples and images in Nepal which had anciently been erected by the Tibetans; that the style of his letter except acknowledging Tashi Lama as his Guru or Pontiff was far from respectful, being more proper to be addressed to

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7. One of the Kalons, who had played a major part in the crisis of 1750.

his vassal than to a Chief totally independent of his authority; that he had besides sent a turban to one of the most wealthy and intelligent of the Gosains who had fled from Nepal, and had instructed his vakils to encourage him to return; that the words of Gorkha's letter desiring that curiosities may not be allowed to be imported is *Toom tam khail tamasha* [meaning "noise of no great import"].

Being totally in the dark in regard to the Fringing whom Gorkha mentioned to be with him, I cannot pretend to judge how far his arrival may have contributed to this embassy; and in my conjectures I am liable to be wildly mistaken. I am of opinion however that one principal object of Gorkha's letters and deputation was to frustrate my going to Lhasa. But the hostilities in which he was engaged with Demo Jong [Sikkim], a vassal of Tibet, raised the jealousy of the administration at Lhasa, and his vakil being refused a passport was detained four months at the frontier town of Tibet, so that he did not arrive with Tashi Lama till two months after me. I am inclined also to think as well from the circumstances above mentioned, as from what Tashi Lama formerly told me, that Gorkha's views in regard to trade are beginning to change. Nepal being neither famous for its manufactures nor producing either gold or silver, the wealth of the country arose from its being the residence of opulent merchants and the channel of commerce between Bengal and Tibet. From the former kingdom it imported silver, which being coined into base rupees, was exchanged at a very favourable rate for the gold of the latter. Gorkha, as I have elsewhere mentioned, has by his violence and exactions almost entirely stopped up these sources of wealth. The large army which he maintains, in order as well to secure his dominions over states unaccustomed to the yoke of a conqueror as to carry on the enterprise which his unsatiated ambition is perpetually prompting to undertake, requires a revenue which his country, wasted with war and destitute of commerce, is unable to supply. He is perhaps desirous, therefore, of regaining the confidence of merchants, and of reviving commerce, which his conduct for so many years has served to destroy.

As to his prohibitions in regard to curiosities, I can form only two conjectures: either he is suspicious of arms, etc., being introduced into the country under that name, at the same time he is afraid of mentioning this openly; or that he is apprehensive that the English may by means of them gain a place in the good graces of Tashi Lama and the administration of Lhasa which it is in his interest to prevent. For the manner in which he has formed and disciplined his troops, and the good fortune which generally attends his aims, incline him probably with hopes of further conquests, and

he sees no power except the Company to check the career of his successful ambition.

On the 26th of January I visited Tashi Lama. It was the first day of the Tibet year. Nothing of business passed. He desired me to look at the paintings with which his room was hung. They consisted of two or three Hindustani towns perfectly circular, and I believe ideal, two or three tablets, and thirty-five portraits of heroes and rajahs of Hindustan. As I went round, Tashi Lama gave me an account of each; but unskilled as I am in legendary lore, I will not attempt to write the history of these saints. As to the paintings, they were like all those in Tibet, done in the Chinese style and colours. They were hung upon Chinese tapestry, fine but badly executed. Tashi Lama observed that the pictures of my country (meaning prints) were exact copies of what they were taken from; and I in return for the compliment remarked that the colours of his paintings were much more lively and brilliant than with us.

I afterwards visited Chanzo Cusho. It was a visit of form.

On the 9th of February [1775] Tashi Lama sent for me. There were some other people with him, and the conversation turned upon indifferent subjects; about animals and enquiries concerning those in Bengal and England. He said that elephants were reckoned unlucky and were not allowed to be brought into the country. He told a story of a rhinoceros which came from Nepal and broke loose and frightened a whole village almost out of their wits: he described it with much humour. Tashi Lama told me that he understood for certain that either Gorkha or his son was dead, for that all the Newars (Natives of Nepal) had shaved their eyebrows and beards.

As I was very desirous of knowing something about the Fringy whom Gorkha had mentioned in his letter, I had got the Gosain to enquire about him of the vakils; and not being able to procure any information that way, I had through him represented to Tashi Lama my desire that he would be pleased to enquire of them himself. I therefore begged to know what answer they had given him. He said they told him that there was a Fringy at Gorkha's Court, that there was one arrived at Vijayapur; but I could make nothing of his name, and that a Moghul had arrived with Gorkha as a gumashta [an agent or confidential representative] of a Fringy and had brought a considerable trade with him. I observed to Tashi Lama that his account of the vakil's did not correspond with what his master had written in his letter, and that it was impossible a Fringy could be arrived at Gorkha's Capital without everybody of his Durbar knowing it. He said it was very true, but that I must not be surprised at the contradictions of

Gorkha and his people.

The 13th [of February] I had a visit from Gorkha's wakil. He began with telling me that he did not know of my arrival here, otherwise he would have brought me a letter from his master, that Gorkha had sent a wakil, before his departure, to Calcutta as he was very desirous of cultivating the Governor's friendship; that if I chose to write to Maharajah Prithvi Narayan, he would charge himself with the letter. I answered after compliments that the Maharajah was a great man and King of the Mountains, that I was but a little man and sent here by the Governor to Tashi Lama, that therefore although I was very sensible of his and his master's Hindustani, I did not think it proper for me to trouble him with my letters. He afterwards talked of the natural strength of Nepal and how many years, I think it was two and thirty, it had taken his master to reduce it, and that he never would have succeeded but for the jealousies and dissensions which subsisted among the different chiefs; that he had since reduced Vijayapur and had stopped his troops at a village, I do not recollect the name, understanding that it belonged to the Fringies, at the same time valuing much his instance of his master's friendly disposition; that he had since conquered Kerant, that a young boy who was with him was a native of this last country: he was very white. I told him I had heard his master was now engaged in the reduction of Demo Jong's country. He answered it was true, that he had sent some troops thither; that Demo Jong's people had committed hostilities in Gorkha's dominions and that Maharajah had therefore sent to chastise him.

I said I understood that Demo Jong was a vassal of this Government, and surely it was not Gorkha's intention to quarrel with Lhasa, while he had sent him as his wakil with overtures of friendship. He said that Gorkha was very far from wishing to quarrel with Lhasa, but that I knew that provincial governors would often breed disputes without the knowledge of their masters. I said it was very true, but I imagined among states who wished to live at peace with one another it was customary in such cases to represent the grievances to the Presence, and to seek redress by fair means before they betook themselves to foul. He repeated that Gorkha by no means wished to quarrel with Lhasa; but if they would quarrel with him, he was helpless, and had written them so in his letter, "that he was Rajput". As to that, I said I imagined Gorkha had no cause of apprehensions, the peaceable dispositions of this government were known to all the world; that they made no attempt to extend their territories towards Nepal, while that country was divided among deferent Rajahs, and would hardly now, when it was firmly united under a Chief so powerful and so fortunate as

Prithvi Narayan; that as far as I could judge the great object of Tashi Lama's government seemed to be the peace and security of the people; that besides the extensive territories of which the Tibet Government were masters they lived under the protection of the Emperor of China, and as Gorkha was no doubt well informed of these circumstances, he would consider well before he quarrelled with them. Our conversation was interrupted by the arrival of one of Tashi Lama's nephews; and what passed afterwards is needless to put down.

On the 17th of February I had an audience with Tashi Lama. An eclipse had happened the night before, and he asked me if we considered them as portentous. I told him not. He said that the people of Tibet did, but not the Chinese. He then asked me what we thought of comets. I told him we were only afraid of the coming near the earth as they were extremely hot and might burn it to ashes. He said they were much afraid of them here as a prognostic of some calamity to the state or the kingdom; but the Chinese only considered them as the forerunner of much rain. I gave him an account of the Northern Lights; and in return he told me of some extraordinary phenomenon in the heavens, about which Taranath, the Lama of Urga [Jebtsun Dampa Hutukhtu], had about seven years ago written to him. But why should I repeat them?

I had made an account of the government and customs of England in the Tibet language which I presented to him [presumably the Tibetan version of part of the text reproduced above in Ch. VIII, No. 2]. He read the first part of it, and observed that the former Emperors of China, like the Kings of England, used to do nothing without the advice of their councils; but the present Emperor was extremely tyrannical, and had put everyone to death who opposed his will. "If," says he, "upon his return from hunting, a servant leaves a spot upon his clothes, he will order him to be put to death. About fourteen years ago the Dzungars were at war with him, and after their defeat thousands of them were sent in cart loads to Peking and were executed by the most cruel deaths in the presence of the Emperor, who waded in blood.<sup>8</sup> We (Tashi Lama) have often remonstrated with him on this subject, and about the wars which he carries on. He has lately attended to our advice, and the Empire of China is rather more quiet than it was. He some years ago reduced Yarkand and added

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8. The wars between the Ch'ien'lung Emperor and the Dzungars effectively ended in 1757. Some Dzungar groups at this time sought refuge in Russian territory. Many Dzungar districts were depopulated of their original inhabitants and then settled with other peoples, mainly of Central Asian origin. The reference here is doubtless to the process of depopulation.



it to his dominions [in 1759]. He then ordered his commanders to push their conquests to the sea; but they were repulsed and obliged to desist. Many years ago he had some thoughts of sending some Ambassadors in a friendly manner into Hindostan; but his people dissuaded him from it."

Tashi Lama asked some questions about the arms of the English, whether they used cavalry or bows and arrows or spears, in all of which I gave him answers. He enquired about the Empress of Russia [Catherine II, the Great, 1762-1796], and said that she had put several people to death who went to meet the Dzungars who had fled into her country.<sup>9</sup> He enquired about the war between the Russians and Turks, and who had the best of it.<sup>10</sup> I told him that about eighteen months or two years ago the Russians had, since which time I had heard no news; that the Turks besides their losses in the war had suffered considerably by the revolt of Egypt and part of Arabia, which they could hardly regain while they had so heavy a war as that with the Russians upon their hands. After some enquiries about Egypt, Tashi Lama observed that the same thing had happened in Hindostan where the Marathas, the Moghuls and the different chiefs had thrown off all dependence upon the Emperor and had each set up for themselves; and he concluded with asking me some questions on this subject.

I then gave him a particular account of what had passed at my conversation with Gorkha's wakil, upon which he made no remarks. As he had some time ago sent me word that Gesub Rimpoché was very sick and his life in danger, I took occasion to ask him if he had received any

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9. It is not clear quite to what the Lama is referring here. The Dzungar exodus into Russian territory took place in the late 1750s, while Catherine the Great did not come to the throne until 1762. The reference may well be to the flight of the Torghut Mongols from the Lower Volga to the Ili region of Chinese Turkistan in 1771. The Torghut, who according to some sources numbered 50,000 or more, were welcomed by the Chinese who fed them and then provided them with land on which to settle (much of it that from which the Dzungars had been cleared); but they were pursued by Russian forces after they had crossed into territory under Chinese influence, a fact which greatly strained Sino-Russian relations in Central Asia. While they were still living in Russia the Torghuts had been accustomed to send embassies from time to time to Lhasa. After arriving on territory under Manchu protection, some of the Torghut chiefs were invited to meet the Ch'ien-lung Emperor at Jehol. See also note 14 below.

10. War between Russia and the Ottoman Empire broke out in 1768 and continued until 1772 when a truce was arranged. Hostilities broke out again in 1773. In July 1774 the Russians, who were the victors, signed with the Turks the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji by which, among other territorial provision, the Ottoman Empire lost control over the Crimea.

answers to the letters we had written, or any further accounts of Gesub's illness. As to the first, he said he had not; and as to Gesub, some people said he continued dangerously ill, others that he was actually dead; but that having some time ago written to the Emperor that he was grown old and unable to go through the load of business, he had desired leave to resign in favour of his nephew, and that therefore they concealed his death until a return should arrive from Peking; that if this was true, it would be very bad for Tashi Lama, and he had therefore sent a man on purpose to Lhasa to get to the bottom of it, but desired me on no account to mention this to any one whatever.

On the 24th of February I waited upon Tashi Lama to take leave of him for a few days, which I proposed to pass with his nephews at their estate at Rinjaitzay, which is about two days' journey from Tashilhunpo. The account of England [see: Chapter VIII above, No. 2] which I had formerly given him produced many more questions and much conversation, but it would swell these memorandums to a tiresome length were I to insert them.

Tashi Lama told me he had received a letter from Depon Patza who commanded the detachment sent by the Government at Lhasa to the assistance of Demo Jong, informing him of his being prevented from proceeding by the snow, which stopped up the road and cut off any communication; that for the same reason he, Tashi Lama, had received no late intelligence from that country; but if the report of Gorkha's death was true, he supposed hostilities would cease; that Gorkha's eldest son Pratap Singh's character was very different from his father's, and it was said he had once dissuaded Gorkha from engaging in perpetual wars, but had received a very sharp answer.

Before I retired I asked Tashi Lama whether he had received any letters from Lhasa, or any answer from Gesub on the subject of trade. He said he had not, and that Gesub from his indisposition was not in a situation to write, but I might depend upon its being done. After representing my anxiety on this subject, I told him that from his account of Gorkha, as well as what I had heard from the merchants and Gosains, I was convinced that they would never trust themselves in Nepal, that the road through Demo Jong's country was now stopped up by Gorkha's invasion of the territory of that Chief and his conquest of Morung [or Vijayapur], and therefore I had no hope of seeing the trade between Bengal and Tibet revive, unless the Deb Rajah would allow, and this government encourage, the channel through Bhutan.

Says he, "I am told that the Morung Rajah has fled into Bengal, and it

is very likely the English will support him and wrest his country from Gorkha." I replied that I imagined the Company, from their peaceable disposition, would hardly take this step; and that at any rate I was convinced from the Governor's regard to his (Tashi Lama's) opinion in everything that concerned the hilly country, that he would first consult with him upon the subject. He seemed pleased with this, and assured me that I might depend upon everything in his power to prevail upon the Deb Rajah to allow a free passage to merchants through Bhutan. "But," says he, "I must mention, and intend to write to the Governor to order the merchants to confine their trade to the usual articles of commerce such as broadcloth, coral, pearls, diamonds, Bengal cloths, tobacco, sugar, etc., and not to bring in new curiosities as telescopes, clocks, etc., except such as myself, Dalai Lama or our officers may want, because if the Emperor of China should know of it, he will be much displeased at these things coming into the hands of little men." I had reason to think that he had some other motive for his restriction, and although I could have mentioned the liberty which the English enjoy of importing all kinds of curiosities into China, I thought it best not to dispute his pleasure, and assured him of a ready compliance of any regulations he might think proper in regard to the trade between Bengal and Tibet. I then took my leave and set out next day for Rinjaitzay.

I returned on the 2nd of March, and had an audience with Tashi Lama on the 3rd. After congratulations on my return, and questions about the entertainment his nephews had given me at Rinjaitzay, he told me the messenger he had sent to Lhasa was returned, and had brought him accounts of Gesub being now out of danger; that upon his illness the Chinese officers had consulted some conjurors concerning his fate, who had given an oracular answer; that they had despatched messengers to Peking with the accounts of his being dangerously ill; that extreme unction was performed on him, and he remained several days with his eyes fixed on the ground, and in a manner insensible, but the violence of his disease having abated he was able to walk about the room, though not to apply to business. Tashi Lama further told me that the report of Gorkha's death was confirmed, and that he had received letters from Lhasa giving an account of it, which was corroborated by the advices of Gosains and Kashmiris; that three wives and six concubines had burnt themselves at his funeral, and that Pratap Singh, his son, had succeeded him in the government. Tashi Lama further informed me that news was received at Lhasa of the Chinese having at length by means of an immense army subdued Ribdyen Gyarpo (the rebellious chief who, with a few thousand

brave adherents, had defended himself and his hill-bound country [Kham] against the united power of the Chinese empire); that they had approached almost to the capital of his province, by roads which they made through the mountains with immense labour, when the Khampa Chief in despair threw himself from the walls. He told me also that Dalai Lama was next year to proceed to Peking to wait upon the Emperor. My part of the conversation need not be put down.

Tashi Lama next enquired whether I had ever been in any battles or engagements. I told him I never had, my business being entirely peaceable and that besides there had been no wars in Bengal for twelve or fifteen years, until Deb Judhur [Zhidar] began it with the invasion of [Cooch] Behar; that the only fighting I had ever seen was while I was at Tashichodzung. He put many questions to me on this subject, and said he heard that the Deb Rajah's people were most skillful archers. Says he, "the gylongs (priests) in that kingdom put animals to death and go to war." I replied that I did not imagine they killed animals, but they went to war. "That is not the case amongst us," says he. "My gylongs never go to war, and I am told the Brahmins do not." I informed him that a great proportion of the English sepoy were Brahmins. He then passed some jokes upon the Gosain who happened to be present, about the military exploits of the Brahmins.

He had received no letter from Lhasa about my application; and it could serve no good purpose to tease him over and over again with the same subject. Before I left him he gave me a letter in Nagari which he had written to Pratap Singh and bade me read it. It was to the following purpose:

To Pratap Singh

I have heard of the death of your father Prithvi Narayan. As this is the will of God, you will not let your heart be cast down. You have now succeeded to the throne, and it is proper that you attend to the happiness of your people, and allow all merchants, as Hindus, Mussulmen, and the four castes, to go and come and carry on their trade freely, which will tend to your advantage and to your good name. At present they are afraid of you, and no one will enter your country. Whatever has been the actual custom, let it be observed between you and me; it is improper that there should be more on your part, and it is improper that there should be more on mine.

On the 8th<sup>11</sup> of March I had a visit from the Nepal wakil. I told him that I heard from everybody of Gorkha's death, and inquired if he had received any accounts of it. He said he had none, and that he had there-

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11. Markham has 18th of March.

fore not ordered the Newars (natives of Nepal) to shave their beards and eyebrows. He spoke of it, however, as a thing there was no doubt of. He said some of Gorkha's sepoys had come to Kuti, and that Gesub Rimpoché was offended at it, and had written to the Lama, who had spoken of it to him; that he had told the Lama that it was to teach the Tibetan troops their exercise; but Tashi Lama replied they wanted to continue their old customs.

I replied that as Tibet was now subject to the Lamas, they, I imagined, wished for nothing but to preserve it in tranquillity; that the country was abundantly extensive and besides this the policy of Lamas and laymen was very different; that the former attended to their religion and were fond of peace, whereas Kings and Rajahs turned their thoughts to war, to extending their dominions and seizing other countries. I said the views of Tashi Lama and of the English were the same, and that although the Company had maintained a vast force, they had entered into no wars for a great many years; that the war with the Deb Rajah was the first, and I accounted for it on principles of self preservation, in the same manner as I have mentioned in my conversations with Tashi Lama. I then explained to him the undue means by which Deb Judhur [Zhidar] had procured his election, that his measures in regard to [Cooch] Behar were taken in direct opposition to the advice of the clergy and of his ministers; that being defeated and all the low country taken from him, he applied to Tashi Lama who sent his vakil to Calcutta; and the Company in compliance with his desire had immediately ceased from war and restored all the country to the Bhutanese. He said it was a very pious action; that Deb Judhur had not written to Tashi Lama to make peace but for his assistance; that he had also written to Gorkha, his master, to the Four and Twenty Rajahs [Chaubisi], and to another state, the name of which I do not recollect; that his master had sent a considerable body of troops, and by their means had got possession of Keranti [Kirat] and Vijayapur; that Tashi Lama had replied to Deb Judhur that he would immediately send a vakil to Calcutta with proposals of peace, and advised him in the meantime to suspend all hostilities, and wait the issue of his applications. I observed that it was not friendly of Gorkha to send forces to the assistance of Deb Judhur while at war with the English. He said Gorkha did not intend them against the English, but only on that pretence to possess himself of Keranti, where the had refused him a passage, and that he would never have got possession of that country otherwise; that it was plain that he had no intention of war with the English, as his troops never arrived with Deb Judhur or engaged with the English. I begged to set him right as to that particular by

informing him that immediately upon Tashi Lama's vakils' arrival at Calcutta orders were given to desist from hostilities; that before this Deb Judhur had been expelled and the negotiations of peace actually begun, so that there was no occasion for Gorkha's forces. He said it might be so; but Gorkha was obliged to the English for these two countries which he would never have got but by this pretext; that the English had not objected to his seizing them; and that he had sent a vakil to Calcutta two months before he subdued them.

In the end I told him that the customs of my country were very different, and that the method of making war under the colour of friendship, and seizing the country under pretence of marching through it, was not known among us; that every nation thought their own customs best, and it became not me to judge the conduct of Kings and Princes. "I will not pretend to say," replied he, "whether it is right or wrong; but all the world, however, knows that Gorkha would never have conquered Nepal but by treachery" (using a word which I did not understand); that Nepal was naturally strong, and if the Rajahs had united against Gorkha, he would easily have been defeated; but by professing friendship to one Chief, by sowing dissensions among other, by clandestinely introducing troops into some places, and by breaking oaths and the most solemn engagements, he had successfully reduced the different Rajahs, who opened not their eyes until it was too late, and until Gorkha had acquired a degree of power which it was in vain to oppose. He then gave me an account of the reduction of Makwanpur in stronger colours than I had yet received it. It was to the following purpose.

Gorkha was married to the sister of the Rajah of Makwanpur [Digbandhan Sena] by whom he had several children, and amongst the rest Pratap Singh the heir to his crown.<sup>12</sup> Regardless of the ties of blood, he invaded Makwanpur [1762], and having defeated his brother-in-law, put him to flight. Having escaped into the woods with a great part of his treasure, Gorkha, unable to get possession of his person by force, had recourse to a base and perfidious stratagem. He made his wife write to her brother, promising him safety and a kind reception from her husband, and advising him to throw himself upon Gorkha's generosity. The Rajah too readily trusting to her assurances, quitted his retreat and repaired to Nepal, where he was immediately thrown into prison and loaded with chains. After many years confinement, he applied to his nephew Pratap

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12. See: Kumar Pradhan, *The Gurkha Conquests. The Process and Consequences of the Unification of Nepal with particular reference to Eastern Nepal*, Calcutta 1991, p. 97.

Singh to solicit his release, who accordingly represented to his father the hardships which his uncle suffered, that his country was now reduced to subjection and that a Chief so inconsiderable was in no situation to cause trouble to the conqueror of Nepal; that, however, if he had any doubts of his fidelity, he might place an officer with a body of troops in Makwanpur, and concluded with entreating him in the most correct manner to set the Rajah at liberty and either allow him to return to his own country or give him an establishment elsewhere. Gorkha angrily replied "it is time enough for you to interfere in the affairs of my kingdom when you shall have succeeded to the throne; while I am Rajah I will imprison whom I please and release whom I please." Having said this he ordered his son immediately to quit his presence: had it been other but his son, added the vakil, he would have put him to death.

We came next to speak of the specie current in Tibet; and the vakil expressed his surprise at the high value to which it had risen, considering that it was about one half copper; and was equally astonished that the Government and the merchants should refuse the new coin which was of a good standard. I told him that although it might be presumptuous in me to speak to him upon a subject on which he was much better informed, I could not help giving him my opinion upon it: that the present high rate at which the old coin passed appeared to be owing, first to the usual supply being stopped up ever since Gorkha's conquest of Nepal, and next to the decline of trade in Tibet. I observed that a country separated from all the world, an island for instance, might fix an arbitrary value upon any metal, or esteem a bit of stamped leather before a gold mohur<sup>13</sup>, and it was only by its trade with foreign countries that it could come to know the value of gold and silver; that formerly there was a very considerable trade carried on between Bengal and Tibet through Nepal, and the merchants brought the silver of the former country into Nepal, had it coined at the mint, and afterwards proceeded into Tibet where they exchanged it for gold and silver in those two countries, allowing for their own profit; but that he well knew that almost all merchants, Kashmiris, Gosains, and even many of the Newars, had abandoned Nepal, and that liberal intercourse of trade with Bengal was now at an end, and of course the proportion between the metals was left at the discretion of the people of Tibet; that it did not appear to be the interest of this Government to take means in order to beat down the value of the old Nepal Rupees, insofar as all the revenue was paid in them, and therefore the higher they rose in their price so much the

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13. A coin of the Moghul period which was subsequently adopted by the English East India Company: at the end of the 18th century it was worth Rs. 16.

better for the Government [of Tibet]. They could now purchase with twenty rupees what formerly cost thirty-five, and as the introduction of Gorkha's coin would naturally have the effect of lowering the actual specie I did not see why the Government of Tibet should encourage it; that he knew very well in what manner the former coin of Nepal was circulated in this kingdom, that it was not by force of arms but by friendly agreement; that besides the coin was principally introduced into Tibet by the merchants, who found their advantage in it; that these merchants had formerly houses and settlements in Nepal as well as Tibet, and from their dependence on the protection of Nepal Rajah, were ready to support the credit of their coin and to employ all their influence in circulating it in the country. But Gorkha having driven them out of his kingdom by his oppressions and exactions, they had no interest in seconding or promoting any of his measures. Gorkha was the best judge as to the propriety of his conduct, but I always understood that the encouragement of merchants and trade tended to the wealth and prosperity of a country, and, of course, the power of its Prince.

I am sensible some of my reasons may seem too fine spun to be used to a Hindu; however, he agreed or pretended to agree to the justness of what I had said, but added that Gorkha was a man to whom no one durst offer advice. I knew however that Gorkha slept with his fathers. The freedom with which his wakil had spoken of him convinced me that he knew it also, and I intended what I said to be for the new Rajah. The wakil was to set off next day for Lhasa, and so after exchanging some compliments we parted.

In the course of the conversation the wakil mentioned that the present Deb Rajah had sent a wakil to Gorkha requiring him, not without threats, to restore the country of the Vijayapur Rajah who paid him [Deb Rajah] an annual tribute of 50,000 rupees; but Gorkha returned him for answer that he had taken it by the sword, and if he thought himself the strongest, he might send his troops and see if he could take it back again.

I had no opportunity of waiting upon Tashi Lama till the 15th of March. He told me that he had been so much engaged with some Kalmuks, and had so much to write on their account, that he had not been able to see me sooner; that several years ago a tribe of Tatars, who were subject to Russia,<sup>14</sup> had gone over to the Chinese, and that the Emperor of

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14. The Torghuts, in 1771. See also Note 9 above in this Chapter.

Often in a Russian context known as the Kalmuks (Kalmyks), the Torghuts, because of their dramatic migration of 1771, have generated an impressive literature. Edward Gibbon, in Volume III of the Bury edition of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Vol. II of the original edition which first appeared in 1781), Ch. XXVI, refers to this Torghut (he calls them Calmucks



China had formerly written to him of this, felicitating himself on his good fortune in it; that the Russians had since sent four ambassadors to China to demand their vassals, whom the Emperor had imprisoned; and, as I understood him, had also confined some other Russian subjects who were afterwards sent upon the same errand, and to request the release of their countrymen. The Russians had not yet begun hostilities, but he imagined they would soon go to war about it. I told him that as the Russians were engaged in a very heavy war with the Turks, which I was uncertain

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or Torgouts) migration in 1771 as a modern illustration of an admirable example of the nomad way of life which had been of such importance in earlier times for the fate of the Roman Empire. As he wrote of the events of 1771: "the march and return of those wandering Tartars, whose united camp consists of fifty thousand tents or families, illustrate the distant emigrations of the ancient Huns." Gibbon's source was the French missionary Père Amiot whose monumental edition of a series of papers on China was just beginning to appear. ("Monument de la Transmigration des Tourgouths des bords de la mer Caspienne, dans l'empire de la Chine" in *Mémoires concernant l'histoire .... des Chinois; par les Missionnaires de Pekin*, Vol. I, Paris 1776). Amiot's account was the basis of the essay by Thomas de Quincey which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* of July 1837, entitled "The Revolt of the Tatars, or, flight of the Kalmuck Khan and his people from the Russian territories to the Frontiers of China".

The Chinese Emperor Ch'ien-lung was so pleased at this turn of events, the arrival under his protection of the Buddhist Torghuts to take up land from which the troublesome Dzungars had been removed, that he caused to be constructed in the Manchu Imperial retreat city of Jehol a copy of the Lhasa Potala palace. See: Sven Hedin, *Jehol, City of Emperors*, London 1932. On the Kalmuks (Torghuts) generally, see: P.G. Rubel, *The Kalmyk Mongols. A Study in Continuity and Change*, Bloomington, Indiana, 1967. A modern study of the Torghuts and their migration of 1771 is: M. Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Meet. The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1600-1771*, Cornell 1992.

The Torghuts or Kalmuks had been much influenced by the Yellow Sect of Tibetan Buddhism since at least the early 17th century. Their base (where they had moved by the early 17th century) was the north shore of the Caspian and the lower Volga; but they retained close contact with Lhasa where Kalmuk missions were fairly frequent and where individual Kalmuks studied. The flight of the Torghuts from Russian territory to China was undoubtedly a major coup for the Central Asian policy of the Ch'ing Dynasty. Evidence is strong that in the negotiations between the Manchu authorities and the Torghuts which preceded the migration the Tibetan Buddhist leadership had played an important part. In that the VIIIth Dalai Lama was in 1771 but twelve years old, it seems likely that the initiative must have come either from the Lhasa Regent or, even, the Panchen Lama.

Many Kalmuks, of course, remained on Russian territory. Some of those who had moved on to Chinese soil in 1771 came to regret what they had done and expressed a desire to return to Russian protection. See also: Ch. IX above, Note. 6.

whether they had yet finished, I supposed. they would hardly think of entering into another with the Chinese, and encountering two such powerful neighbours at the same time; but as soon as they had made peace with the Sultan of Rum [the Ottoman Empire] I made no doubt of their resenting the conduct of the Chinese in a very high strain; that the present sovereign of Russia [Catherine II, the Great], although a woman, was extremely able and active, going in person to review her forces, receiving all ambassadors, and inspecting every department of government herself; that the Russians were also a very hardy and warlike people, and capable of great efforts, and I doubted whether the Chinese would be able to cope with their troops, who had been so long accustomed to actual and very severe service. He replied that it was very true; that former Emperors would have weighed these circumstances, but the present one was too violent and too fond of war to listen to advice, and was besides offended at the Russians for the refuge they had accorded to the Dzungars, a tribe of Tatars whom he had subdued; that things must now take their course, and he was afraid that no representations of his or of his friend, the Lama of Peking, could prevent a war.

He then asked me many particulars about the Turks and Russians, which of their countries was the most populous, and which of them had the best in the war. I answered that I believed the Turkish Empire was better peopled than that of Russia, but being made up of distinct states and kingdoms which had been conquered by the Sultans at different times, it was kept together only by force of arms, and each of the different nations, although obedient in time of peace, were ready upon any favourable opportunity to rise in rebellion and set up for independence. Whereas the inhabitants of Russia having been long subject to the present race of Emperors, were submissive to Government and ready to second its measures, which gave the latter a great advantage. That besides the Russians had, a short time before their war with the Turks, been engaged in hostilities with their neighbours, while the Turks having enjoyed long peace were unaccustomed to fighting. From all these causes the Russians, I understood, had much the advantage in the war. He then enquired into the causes of the war; and I replied that it was about a tract of country which lay between the two Empires and which was claimed by both, that this country though very fertile was of little value being almost entirely desolate; for as it was the common soil upon which the Turks and Russians engaged, nobody would settle there to be exposed every twenty or thirty years to the ravages of such mighty armies; that the wars were generally productive of little benefit to either of the parties, who, after spending

their force and killing two or three lacks of men, made peace: but I ask pardon for these lengthened disquisitions.

"I am informed," said Tashi Lama, "by my people that the dress of the Russians is like yours. My messenger [Lobsang Tsering], who went to Bihar [Oudh] and afterwards to Gaya, told me Colonel Cumming was dressed just like a Russian".<sup>15</sup> Changing the subject, he asked me how I liked the account of Tibet which he had sent me. Having expressed my satisfaction and made my acknowledgements, he told me that justice was formerly administered according to the laws and institutes of the Rajah. That, however, within these hundred years and since the country became subject to the Chinese, considerable alterations had been made by them; that formerly no man used to be punished capitally, but now when a man is confined for a crime, and it is reported to the Emperor, he according to his pleasure orders him to be released or put to death (this is only to be understood of great men). The Chinese Government, however, ensured peace to the country, which was before much subject to invasions by the Tatars; but the present Emperor had reduced them entirely to subjection, and the Tibetans have nothing to fear from them. Tatory was a vast large country, and they reckoned above forty Chiefs who were formerly often engaged in war with each other; that some of them had thirty or forty thousand men under their command, and others not above a hundred; that they were strong and warlike, particularly the Mongols who conquered China, and from whom the present Race of Emperors are descended;<sup>16</sup> that the reigning Emperor [Ch'ien-lung or Qianlong, regnal title of Hung-li, born 1711, reigned 1736-1796] like them had no notion of settling disputes by writings or negotiations, saying that "the sword was the

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15. Cumming, commander since 1771 of the Company's troops in the service of Oudh; knighted 1780, died 1786. For Cumming and Lobsang Tsering, see: Notes 1 & 2 at the end of Chapter II above.

16. Bogle would seem to have confused Mongols with Manchus. The reigning Chinese Dynasty in Bogle's day, the Ch'ing (Qing), was in origin Manchu, that is to say derived from peoples of nomadic origin from what came to be called Manchuria. The Manchus claimed descent from the Jurchen, Central Asian nomads who were distinct from, though sharing many common features with, the Mongols of the Genghiskhanid Empire. For more on this complex subject, see: P.K. Crossley, *The Manchus*, Oxford (Blackwells) 1997. Chinese historiography, it must be said, did not always distinguish between Mongol and Manchu: nor, it may well be, did the Tashi Lama.

For biographies of Ch'ien-lung and other Emperors of the Ch'ing Dynasty, see: A.W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, 2 vols., Washington D.C. 1943.

best settler and ought to be tried first." When he was displeased with any of the Tatar Chiefs he thought nothing of putting them to death. He then mentioned the roving life of the Tatars and said that the Chief of the Dzungars when engaged in war with the Emperor had sent him this message: "if you are victorious, what can you get in my country? If I am victorious I shall get all the treasures of China." It is exactly the answer of the Scythians to Alexander. He had some occasion (I forget what) to mention Tibet. "It is a small country", says he. I observed that it was three or four months journey from one end of it to the other. "Yes," replied he, "but what signifies a country full of hills and without people. China and Bengal, I am told, swarm with inhabitants, and the large towns contain lakhs of people. It is not so in the Pyba dominions. There is not near a lakh [100,000] of people in Lhasa, Tashilhunpo and Gyantse put together." Before I replied I enquired whether he had received any answer from Gesub Rimpoché to the letter I had written about the merchants. He said he had not, which he ascribed to the Gesub's indisposition; but that he intended to call together and consult with the principal merchants, Kashmiris as well as Tibetans, and would write the Governor upon the subject.

On the 27th of March some Kashmiri merchants came to me, and after presenting silk handkerchiefs, according to the custom of the country, informed me that they waited upon me in consequence of Tashi Lama's orders; that he had written to their constituents at Lhasa (for these at Shigatse are only agents), acquainting them that the Governor had written to him, and that I had represented to him the Governor's desire of opening the commerce between Tibet and Bengal, so that merchants might freely trade between the one kingdom and the other; that the trade which was formerly carried on through Nepal by the many Kashmiri houses settled there had been greatly obstructed by the oppression of Gorkha, and that he, therefore, advised them to send their trusted agents into Bengal, through the Deb Rajah's country; that the Governor had engaged to give them every assistance and protection, and that he, on his part, was always ready to encourage merchants and trade. Whether all this was in his letter, or spoken by Tashi Lama himself, I cannot say, for they told me further that they had waited upon Tashi Lama, and he had desired them to come to me. I told them that the Governor had indeed desired me to represent to Tashi Lama how much the trade with Bengal had declined of late years, owing to causes with which they were well acquainted, and to request his assistance in restoring it; and that Tashi Lama had been good enough to promise his best endeavours for that

purpose. I then explained to them the steps which had been taken in Bengal for the ease of merchants by abolishing the ancient chokies [customs stations] and exactions upon trade; by fixing the duties at only two rupees in the hundred, and by granting every protection and encouragement to the merchants; that if they choose to send gumashtas [trusted representatives] into Bengal I could venture to assure them of the Governor's readiness to grant them every security and assistance; that the only difficulty was the road by which they were to get to Bengal; that I understood they were all afraid of trusting themselves in Nepal, to which Morung and Vijayapur were now subject; that the Deb Rajah's country only remained, who had granted permission of transporting goods through his territories only to one or two merchants; that I had mentioned the subject to him but very slightly, reserving it till after I had waited upon and received the order of Tashi Lama, to whom I was sent; that, for my part, I should use every argument and every means with the Deb Rajah in order to obtain his consent; that I trusted to Tashi Lama's seconding my applications, and was in hopes they might be crowned with success; but could not promise with certainty as to the determination of people with whom I was but little acquainted.

They replied, that from Tashi Lama's conversation and assurances they had little doubt of obtaining the Deb Rajah's permission to pass through his kingdom. After the unsuccessful war which the Bhutanese had carried on, and having their country restored to them, they imagined the Deb Rajah would be very ready to comply with any demand on the part of the Company, as he would be afraid, in case of refusal, that the English would again invade his territory, and concluded with saying that I might threaten him upon this score. I told them I had no power to use such language to him, and that whatever I did with the Deb Rajah must be by peaceable and friendly means. The Company, in consequence of Tashi Lama's letter to the Governor, had restored the Deb Rajah's country, and entered into a treaty of peace with him, which, according to the maxims of the English Government, would, on the part of my constituents, remain for ever inviolate. They observed that Gorkha was now dead; that they hoped his son would be more favourable to merchants; and in case of the Deb Rajah's refusal, that the Governor's application to the new Rajah of Nepal, Pratap Singh, would certainly procure them a free passage. I said as I was unacquainted with Pratap Singh's character or the measures he intended to pursue, I could say nothing upon this subject. If he followed the footsteps of his father, made promises and oaths only to break them, and engaged in perpetual wars, it was difficult for my constituents to enter into

friendship or negotiations with him; that if he contented himself with the peaceful possession of his own dominions the Governor could then send a wakil and solicit his protection and encouragement to merchants; but that in this, as well as everything which regarded the hills which separate Bengal from Tibet, I imagined he would be greatly influenced by the opinion of the Lama, whose character and abilities enable him so well to judge of the measures to be pursued with the chiefs to whom they are subject. I then asked them when they proposed to send their gumashtas to Bengal. They told me after the rains, and applied to me for letters to the people on the borders of Bengal, as they were entirely strangers there. I promised them letters to some of my acquaintances, and that if they chose it I would request the Governor to write to the Killadars [military commanders or governors of fortresses] on the frontier provinces to afford them every necessary assistance; but that in Bengal merchants were always well received, and had nothing to fear. They seemed to wish however for passports. I recollect nothing further of consequence that passed. Before they went away they desired that I would inform Tashi Lama of their having visited me in obedience to his orders.

On the 29th of March about a dozen of the principal Tibetan merchants paid me a visit. They deal principally in tea, some of them to the extent of two or three lakhs a year, though one would not suspect it from their raiment.<sup>17</sup> They also told me they came to me in consequence of Tashi Lama's orders. They mentioned having received a letter from him while at Dechenrubje, advising them to send gumashtas to Bengal, and that he had likewise spoken to them to the same purpose since his arrival at Tashilhunpo. They said that being born in a cold country they were afraid of going into a hot one; that their people would die in Bengal; that they had it from tradition that about eight hundred years ago the people of this country used to travel into Bengal, but that eight out of ten died before their return; that the Kashmiris and Gosains travelled into different countries, but that they could not. I replied, that I could only promise them the protection and assistance of the Government of Bengal; that the climate was in the hand of God; and after giving them an account of the climate of Bengal during the cold weather, I told them that if they were

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17. Tibetans consumed large quantities of tea which was imported from Western China in the form of bricks carried by porters bearing extraordinarily heavy loads. In Markham's day, in the 1870s, there was great interest both in British India and in Britain in the possibility of substituting for this poor quality (as it seemed) Chinese tea the superior product of Bengal and Assam. As is suggested in Chapter XV below, No. 6B, something very like this possibility had already occurred to both George Bogle and Warren Hastings by 1780.

afraid of sending their servants thither, the Kashmiris and Gosains would supply them with what they wanted, and it was the same thing to Bengal and to the inhabitants of Tibet. I enlarged on Tashi Lama's desire of preserving peace in the world, and of promoting the trade of merchants and the happiness of mankind, and they in their turn praised the free and equitable government of the English, which they said Tashi Lama had informed them of.

As some of them were very old men, I asked them what proportion they supposed the commodities now imported from Bengal bore to that of former times. They would not mention any fixed proportion, but said that formerly great quantities of coral, broadcloth, etc., used to come through Nepal, but now what was brought was principally by the fakirs [religious pilgrims], who smuggled it into the country. They added that as to this country [Tibet], people imagined from gold being produced in it that it was extremely rich, but this was not the case, and that if extraordinary quantities of gold were sent to Bengal the Emperor of China, who was sovereign of the country, would be displeased at it. I replied that the trade between Tibet and Bengal was no new thing, and had been carried on for many hundred years; that the conquest of Nepal by Gorkha had put a stop to it; and that the Governor only wished to see it restored to the same state as formerly. They seemed highly pleased with this, and, after desiring me to report their visit to Tashi Lama, took their leave.

I next day [30th March] visited Tashi Lama who made apologies as usual for not seeing me oftener. He enquired about a Rajah in whose country he said there was a temple and an image which was held by them in much veneration. From the imperfect marks which he gave me of the situation of the country, I apprehended that it might be Pegu about which he had asked me a great many questions, and whether the Company had any connection with the Rajah.<sup>18</sup> I told him Pegu was separated from Bengal by wilds and thickets, inhabited by a race of people called Mugs; that many ships went from Bengal to Pegu from which they imported timber; but I believed that the Governor had little intercourse with the Rajah. He said he wished to send some offerings to the temple he had before mentioned. I represented to him that I thought the best way would

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18. By this time the Mon Kingdom of Pegu had ceased to exist, having been overthrown by the Burmans under Alaungpaya, founder of the Konbaung Dynasty. The East India Company, which had at times established factories on Burmese soil, effectively terminated formal relations with the Burmese authorities in 1761. As Bogle indicates, however, British traders continued informally from time to time to visit Burmese ports in quest of cargoes of teak.

be to entrust them to a fakir; and that, if he desired it, the Governor would procure him a passage to Pegu in one of the trading vessels.

He then made enquiries about Assam and what connection there was between it and Bengal, and whether any of the English went into it. I told him that there were some merchant settled at Goalpura on the borders of the two countries, whither the Assam people brought their Munga dhoties and coarse silks, and exchanged them for salt, pepper and other spices. He said he sometimes sent one of his people to the borders of Assam for spices;<sup>19</sup> that a fakir had made a proposal to this Government to conquer Assam, representing it as an easy undertaking. He asked what I knew of the Assam people, whether the English had ever any quarrels with them. I told him I believed they were a quiet people, confined themselves to their own country and were therefore never molested by the English.

Tashi Lama afterwards told me that besides his desire of sending presents to the holy place already taken notice of, he wished also to visit by means of his servants the twenty-four places which he before mentioned; that he would write to the Governor on the subject, and desired me also to represent it to him; that he would not think of sending any Pybas [Tibetans] at this season of the year, and exposing them to the heats of Bengal, but proposed to despatch them so as to arrive at [Cooch] Behar towards the cool of autumn. He hoped the Governor would give orders for their proceeding to Calcutta and would appoint a pundit [Brahmin learned in Sanskrit] skilled in the Hindu religion to attend them; of all this I took upon me to give him assurances.

After this he mentioned the names of some of these holy places, accompanying them with legendary and miraculous stories which I did not then comprehend and which I think it unnecessary now to attempt to repeat. One of these temples was at Sindh. I represented its great distance. He said he did not imagine the Tibetan gylongs, little accustomed to journeying, could travel so far, that he intended only that they should visit the holy places in Bengal such as Gaya, Gunga Saugur [? Gangasagar] etc., and that he would send Hindus on pilgrimage to the rest.

He then repeated having written to Changay Lama, the great Lama at Peking, of the friendship and moderation of the English, and advising him to send some persons on pilgrimage into Bengal, in which case he said he hoped that the Governor would show them every attention as it would not only tend to his credit but might be the means of opening a communication between the Company and the Emperor of China. Upon this point also I returned to him assurances. "The Lama at Peking," says he, "is

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19. Perhaps by way of Tawang and Monyul?



much greater than either Dalai Lama or me, at least from living in the Emperor's palace he had much more power and influence. I am sorry," says he, "that I could not grant your permission to go to Lhasa and visit Dalai Lama, who is under China, the sovereign of the country; but Gesub Rimpoché who is at present entrusted with the government is exceedingly jealous of the English, and the Governor may then send vakils to him where they will be well received." I had only to make my acknowledgements. Says he, "I am afraid the Governor may have been displeased with my refusing at first to admit you into this country, but it arose entirely from what Gesub Rimpoché wrote to me. I have given you that letter and I wish you would take an opportunity of representing the matter thus to the Governor."

After this I told him about the Kashmiri and Tibetan merchants having visited me, and reported to him what had passed. I told him that by his favour there was no obstacle to their proceeding and they were equally free in Bengal; that the only difficulty was the Deb Rajah. "As to that," replied he, "I believe there will not be so much difficulty, for the Bhutanese are exceedingly apprehensive of Deb Judhur [Zhidar] at Tashichodzong, and although he is now in confinement at Gyantse, for which the Deb Rajah sent Gesub two mules laden with silver, yet they are afraid of our letting him loose upon them, and taking him by the hand, and will hardly refuse a case of this kind." I told him I trusted chiefly to his good offices, and hoped he would write to the Deb Rajah; that the Bhutanese might be afraid of this government, but were not so of the English as they knew that the Treaty of Peace by which this country was restored to them would never be broken. "They may not," says he, "have so favourable an idea of the truth and fidelity of the English, and besides I understand you have a great deal to say with the Deb Rajah, who wrote to me in your favour." As to that, I told him I had no reason to think so; that although the Deb Rajah had treated me with much civility he had not with confidence, which I supposed might partly be owing to the anxiety he was in about Deb Judhur, for when I was at Tashichodzong the clouds were gathering over his head and he foresaw the storm which followed.

I then told him that there was a point about which I wished to consult him; that Vijayapur, as he knew, had formerly belonged to the Deb Rajah and paid him an annual tribute; that it had been treacherously seized by Gorkha and annexed to Nepal; that although neither the Deb Rajah nor the people had spoken to me on this subject, yet I knew how anxious he was to recover it, and I thought it not unlikely he might write to the Governor or desire me to apply on the subject, and request his en-

deavours with the new Rajah of Nepal to recover it; that I had no instructions from the Governor on this subject, but as the friendly connection between the Company and the Bhutanese was formed by his (the Lama's) means, and as I knew how much regard the Governor had for his character, I wished to know his opinion on this subject, in case the Deb Rajah should speak of it to me. After asking me particularly whether the Deb Rajah had ever mentioned this to me, he told me that he had himself formerly written to the Rajah of Nepal to restore Vijayapur to the Bhutanese, or at least to allow merchants to pass through it, and as to my question he would afterwards give me his sentiments.

He then asked me the Deb Rajah's character and that of his officers. He said there was a report of Shuja-ud-daula's death, and asked me if I knew anything of it [Shuja-ud-daulah, Nawab of Oudh, died on 26 January 1775]. He enquired where he was, and said he heard he had gone to Delhi. He asked about his son, about Shah Alam and the Marathas,<sup>20</sup> to all which it is also needless to repeat my answers. He then gave me two portraits and different views of Tashilhunpo, sitting down upon the floor to explain them. This ease and condescension in a Pontiff who stands in the same relation to the Emperor of China as the Popes of Rome did to the German Emperors, to whom pilgrimages are made from the extremities of Tatory, and who is considered God's vicegerent, is worthy attention.

Tashi Lama told me he would soon give me my audience of leave.

On the 30th March I visited the Sapon Chumbo, or confidant, by invitation. Our conversation turned principally on the Tatars, among whom he had lived many years; and upon fruit trees, when I gave him an account of the manner of planting wall fruit in Europe. He entertained me with tea, boiled mutton and fruits according to the custom of the country; mixing it with many assurances of Tashi Lama's good disposition towards the English, his satisfaction at my arrival, his wishes that I was to remain longer with him; but the rainy season coming on, and his desire of sending an answer to the Governor, made him hasten my departure. His offer of service, presents of some pieces of cloth, etc., apologies that they were so trifling, my answers containing assurances of the Governor's desire of cultivating the friendship and good opinion of Tashi Lama, and acknowledgement for the many civilities Tashi Lama and himself had shown me, concluded the visit.

I paid a short visit to Tashi Lama on the 1st of April. He said that Gesub Rimpoché's administration was near an end, and that he wished, when

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20. Shah Alam II, the Moghul Emperor, was restored to his throne in Delhi by the Marathas in 1771.

Dalai Lama came of age, that the Governor would send an embassy to him. He mentioned also a fakir from Assam, who he said gave himself out for the Rajah's son. "But I have had so many impostors of Rajah's sons," said he, "that I am grown very incredulous." He said he proposed, if a place on the banks of the Ganges was granted him, to place the Gosain, who was down in Calcutta, there; "and," says he, "if he should stand in need of any small matter, I trust you will supply him." I asked him about what part of the country he wished it to be. He said that he would like it to be near Calcutta, that the people he sent down might have an opportunity of waiting on the Governor, but he would leave it to the Governor and the pundits, only to be near the Ganges. He told me that the troops under the command of Depon Patza had returned, as they were unable to proceed on account of the great quantities of snow, which rendered the road impassable; that Gesub Rimpoché was very angry with the commander and had ordered him to return. He said that he had also received a letter from the commander of Gorkha's troops, mentioning that he intended to desist from war on account of his master's death, and proposing a truce for three years. Tashi Lama then gave me a Persian paper containing some memorandums, which he said he wished me to keep in mind. He also gave me some garden seeds and a view of Tashilhunpo. These last gave rise to a conversation which lasted till the end of my visit.

On the 3rd of April I waited on Tashi Lama to take my public leave of him. He sent first to speak to me in private. I told him I had read the Persian paper he had been pleased to give me. He recapitulated the points which it contained; he mentioned what he had formerly said about the Lama at Peking; that he hoped the Emperor would put the government of the country in the same manner as formerly in the hands of Dalai Lama, "and then," says he, "I shall have no difficulty in carrying any point that the Governor pleases, and hope to settle it so with the Emperor that the Governor may send his people to Peking, and, if he pleases, establish English factories; but at present, while the administration is in Gesub's hands, he and the Ambans are excessively jealous of foreigners coming into the country, so much so that he stopped the admission of a wakil from the King of Assam, and you know the difficulty I had about your coming. In regard to the house which I wish to have on the banks of the Ganges," continued Tashi Lama, "I propose that Purangir, who was down in Calcutta, should settle it. I do not wish it to be a large house, and let it be built in the fashion of Bengal." I begged him to give Purangir instructions about it, which he said he would do. "Purangir," says he, "has served me very well, and I have not found him guilty of so many lies as most other

fakirs, and I hope the Governor will show him favour. The old Gosain, Suk-Debu, has also asked me leave to go down to Calcutta: he will accompany you; and I have also written to the Governor about him, and I hope he will favour him."

I then asked him about Vijayapur, which I had mentioned at a former meeting, and begged to know his opinion as to the answer I should give the Deb Rajah in case he spoke to me on that subject, and also that I might represent it to the Governor. "I have already," says he, "written to Pratap Singh, telling him that his father treacherously and unjustly made himself master of Vijayapur, and as I have heard a favourable character of him, I hope he will restore it to the Deb Rajah, its rightful possessor. I have also advised him to send a vakil to Calcutta; as yet I am ignorant what answer he will return; but if the Deb applies to you about Vijayapur, I think you should tell him that you understand from me that I had written on the subject, and in case I receive no unfavourable answer, then the Governor may, if he pleases, write to Pratap Singh about it."

I repeated his words, to be sure that I understood them right. He then asked me if I had any request to make to him. I said I had before mentioned to him how fond the Governor was of strange animals, and he had been so good as to send some; but there were two wild ones in this country which could not be sent unless they were reared and tamed when young, the one was the musk goat, the other the tus [source of shawl wool], would oblige the Governor by giving orders for this purpose, and sending them down to Bengal in the cold weather. Says he, "I will order the musk goats to be caught and given to you on the road." I thanked him, but said it was impossible to keep them alive unless previously tamed. "Well," says he, "I will give orders about the animals, and send some of them down by my people after the rains; and if there are any others or anything in this country which the Governor wishes to have, write to me about it."

My next request was to procure a list of all the comets, with the dates of their appearances, from the earliest period of the Chinese history; which, after some inquiries about comets, and telling me that they expected one in six years, he promised to do, and to write to the great Lama of Peking about it. He told me also that, from the first of the Chinese kings till Hrondzain Cambo [Song-tsen Gam-po, or Srong-btsan sgam-po], who reigned in Tibet about eight hundred years ago [c. 618 AD according to the late Hugh Richardson], they reckoned 20,000 years. After this he asked about Russia, and if the King of England had much to say with the Empress. I told him he had more influence at the Court of Russia than any other Prince in Europe, although their kingdoms were separated at a great

distance from one another. Says he, "I am glad of it, for in the event of a war between Russia and China, I may perhaps be able, through means of the Company, to do something towards bringing about a peace, and that is the business of us Lamas." He then laid before me his presents to the Governor, and showed me his letter before he sealed it. After this he gave them to me in charge. I asked if he did not intend to entrust them to the Gosain; but he desired me to take them, and I accordingly accepted them. "They are very trifling," says he, "but what can I send from this country?" After giving me presents of some silk, bulses of gold dust, silver talents, etc., and clothing me in a fine khilat [dress of honour], he took a bit of red silk, and tying a knot upon it himself, he threw it about my neck with his own hands. I then had my public leave, but was to wait upon him again in private.

On the 4th of April I again waited upon Tashi Lama. His room was hung round with festoons of painted paper intermixed with the figures of his deities. It was on account of some religious holiday. He asked me a great deal about our religion. As I am not sent to convert unbelieving nations it is a subject I seldom enter upon, and I gave such answers as turned the conversation. He asked me also particularly about the missionary Padres [Capuchins, whose Mission finally left Lhasa in 1745], who had been in this country, and when expelled had settled in Nepal. I repeated to him what I had formerly mentioned, that I imagined they came from Italy, as there were some of that nation now at Patna; that their religion differed from ours, and in nothing more than in their intolerant spirit and desire of bringing all the world to their own opinions, whereas every religion was allowed in England, and good men of every faith respected. He told me that the missionaries were expelled from Tibet about forty years ago, on account of some disputes with the fakirs.

After this he asked me about the English settlement at Canton, and whether any Englishmen had ever gone to Peking. In answer I gave him an account of the trade between England and China. I told him that I believed that no Englishman had ever gone to Peking. "Not one?" says he. I replied that many years since an English physician [John Bell, whose narrative was published in Glasgow in 1763] had gone when very young into the service of Russia, and accompanied an ambassador who was sent about fifty years ago to the Emperor, but I never heard of any other.<sup>21</sup> "I

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21. John Bell, of Antermony, *Travels from St. Petersburg, in Russia, to various parts of Asia*, 2 vols., Glasgow 1763. Bell, who was, of course, a Scot (but Bogle wisely decided not to raise this point and complicate the Lama's idea of the English), travelled in the 2nd and early 3rd decades of the 18th century, his book

will endeavour," says he, "through the means of the Lama at Peking, to get permission for the English to go to the Emperor; whether I shall be able to carry this point or not I cannot say, but I will afterwards write to the Governor how I have succeeded." I expressed my acknowledgments how much it would tend to the Company's satisfaction, and how happy I was convinced it would make the Governor.

"The Russians and Chinese," says he, "are at present on bad terms. If any of the former go to Peking, I am told they are not admitted into the Emperor's presence without being searched, on account of a Chinese man having been some time ago killed by a Russian who concealed a pistol within his sleeve." After this I reported to him a conversation that had passed between me and Chauduri, on which he made no observations, except that the Hindus were fond of appearing of consequence, and scrupled not to tell falsehoods. He then showed me the images and the dress which he intended to send down to Bengal by the Gosain, in order to be put up in the temple which he proposes to build on the banks of the Ganges. He desired me to inquire particularly about the situation of a town called Shambul [Sambhala, a mythical place of great interest to Tibetans], about which he said the pundits of Bengal would be able to inform me. I recollect nothing further.

Next day I waited upon Tashi Lama, Dr. Hamilton was with me, and he inquired a great deal about the method of treating the smallpox in England, and described the fatal effects of the disease in Tibet. It is unnecessary to insert what passed on this subject. He showed me about five or six watches which had come overland to him. They had chiefly German or Dutch names upon them, and were all except one out of order. This gave rise to a conversation on watches, which it is also needless to put down.<sup>22</sup> He desired me to speak English, and I repeated some verses of Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard." I mention these things only because they serve to mark his character.

On the 6th of April I again waited upon Tashi Lama. Soon after my entrance his servants who were to accompany me came in to take their leave, and had their heads touched according to the custom of the country

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being published many years later. Bell's narrative was reprinted in: John Pinkerton, ed., *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World, many of which are now first translated into English*, Vol. VII, London 1811.

22. Clocks and watches, which tended to accumulate as gifts in the residences of the great Tibetan Incarnations, were rarely in order. Hence, perhaps, one inspiration for the interest in watch repairing shown by the XIVth Dalai Lama.

and their respective ranks. "These people," said he, "are to accompany you as far as Buxaduar, but the weather is now becoming so hot that everyone is afraid to go to Bengal. As soon as the rains are over, I will send down some gylongs to Calcutta to wait upon the Governor, and to visit the religious places in Bengal, and will write to the Governor by them. I have spoken to you about getting me two lions' skins, a crocodile, and some other things; pray how do you propose to send them?" I said, I thought of transmitting them to the Buxa Subah, who would forward them to him. "The Deb Rajah's people," says he, "will make mistakes, and you had better give them to my people on their return to Bengal." He then asked me how I imagined the Governor intended to send his despatches to him. I said that as to any orders he [Tashi Lama] had given me, or any letters he might have to forward to him, that I would follow his directions as to the manner of transmitting them; but I conceived the Governor could not entrust his letters or presents but to his own servants, who would bring them into his own presence. Says he, "I will be plain with you. I wish the Governor would not at present send an Englishman. You know what difficulties I had about your coming into the country, and how I had to struggle with the jealousy of Gesub Rimpoché and the people at Lhasa. Even now they are uneasy at my having kept you with me so long. I could wish, therefore, that the Governor would rather send a Hindu. I am in hopes my letter to the Lama [in Peking] will have a good effect in removing this jealousy, and I expect in a year or two that the Government of this country will be in Dalai Lama's hands, when I will inform the Governor, and he may then send an Englishman to me and to Dalai Lama. But Gesub is so very suspicious, and looks upon you so much as come to spy the country, that I shall have great difficulty about another Englishman coming." I promised to represent all this to the Governor, for I was sensible of the truth of what he said; but I at the same time used some arguments in order to show how ill-grounded this jealousy was; though I must confess, while I used them, I did it more to enable him to avail himself of them with others than from any idea that he harboured these unjust suspicions himself. I concluded by telling him that if the Governor had entertained any intentions that were unfriendly, he never would have sent me into this country, and that whatever faults the English might have, all the world knew that treachery was not among them. I promised, however, to represent to the Governor what he had desired me.

Upon this he asked me if I had any further conversation with the Chauduri. I replied not; that I had told the Chauduri in all matters to apply to Tashi Lama, who was best acquainted with the affairs of Bengal

and the state of Hindostan. He seemed pleased with this. "Gesub," says he, "now governs the country, but his administration is, I imagine, near an end. The Governor is a great man, and the Company now are sovereigns of Hindostan. I should like to open a connection between them and the Emperor of China; but Gesub was formerly and will now be again a little man: it would serve no purpose to do it with him." These sentiments are different from what Tashi Lama expressed in a previous conversation; but I imagine the reports of Gesub's endeavours to continue the government in the hands of his own family; his intention, which I am informed of, to put Deb Judhur [Zhidar] to death before Tashi Lama should know of it, and perhaps other circumstances of which I am ignorant, had served to render him very cool with regard to Gesub.

Tashi Lama then changed the subject. "I formerly told you," says he, "how the Chinese were engaged in a war in the neighbourhood of Yunnan with a Rajah to the southward of it. The Emperor wrote to me to endeavour to procure intelligence about him, but none of our people are allowed to go into those countries, and I was unable to give him any information. When you return to Bengal I wish you would inquire about this Rajah and write to me." I replied that if it was the King of Pegu I did not despair of procuring him some intelligence, but if it was any of the interior Rajahs who was at war with the Emperor it might not be in my power, but he might depend on my inquiries. Says he, "I wonder you never heard of this war in Bengal." I represented the situation of Pegu with respect to Bengal, and how little interest we had in anything that was passing in that country. He asked me if the Governor had any connection with the King of Pegu. I said that many years ago the King of Pegu had written to the Governor, but I did not know of any correspondence since. Says he, "It is my business to endeavour to settle quarrels and to make peace, and I wish the Governor could put me on a way of doing it in the war I have mentioned. It is not so violent now as it was, but they are still on bad terms." He asked me how many years the Governor would remain in Bengal. It was a question I could not well answer. He spoke of the monastery in Bengal, and said he did not wish it to be large; that Purangir Gosain he hoped would behave well, if he did not, to write to him. Immediately after this Purangir himself came in, and nothing further passed worth repeating.

On the 7th of April I waited upon Tashi Lama. I requested of him that he would order his servant, the priest who was to accompany me to Tashichodzung, to second me in my applications to the Deb Rajah about merchants, and to assist me in my conversations. He promised to do it. He



told me how much the Deb Rajah's people were still afraid of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], although in confinement, and that they had guards and spies placed in different places on the borders of their country. After giving me many advices in order to secure myself from the heats of Bengal, he expressed his concern at my departure, but added that he hoped to see me again in two or three years hence, when Dalai Lama would have the government in his hands; and that I might then go to Lhasa. I then retired, but to wait upon him next morning before I set out.

In the afternoon I waited on Chanzo Cusho. The conversation was entirely taken up with questions about the weather and animals in Bengal; and I therefore put it not down. I had no interpreter with me and was obliged to make use of my little knowledge of the Tibetan language as well as I could.

Immediately afterwards I paid a visit to the Sapon Chumbo, where I was also without an interpreter. He said Tashi Lama had bid him tell me it was unnecessary to send up panes of glass which I had mentioned to him, but begged me to keep in mind the telescope and lions' skins which he had before spoken to me of; and also, in case of Purangir's death, to appoint some person to take charge of the monastery. I said it was not likely to happen; but promised in that event to do as he desired.

I then begged him to put Tashi Lama in mind of the musk goats and the tus [by which Bogle meant the animals bearing the wool used in Kashmir shawls] which I had taken the liberty to mention to him; that he would oblige the Governor much in sending them, but that it would be necessary to have them taken very young and tamed. He promised to mention this to the Lama. He said Tashi Lama had also desired him to remind me of speaking to the Governor to forbid merchants from bringing curiosities into the country, as the Emperor would be displeased with it and the Chinese merchants would complain, saying that the people were so fond of these that they bought nothing from them. This I promised to do. I sat with him about two hours and we talked as well as we could on indifferent subjects. Before I left him he gave me a handkerchief and a small piece of gold ore to present in his name to the Governor.

I saw the Sapon Chumbo next morning [8th of April] as I went to Tashi Lama's apartment. He told me he had represented what I had said, and Tashi Lama would immediately give orders about the musk goats and tus.

Tashi Lama repeated his concern at my departure; the satisfaction he had received in being informed of the customs of Europe, and concluded with many wishes for my prosperity, and that he would not fail to pray to Heaven in my behalf. He spoke all this in a manner and with a look very

different from the studied and formal compliments of Hindostan. I never could reconcile myself to taking a last leave of anybody; and what from Tashi Lama's pleasant and amiable character, what from the many favours and civilities he had shown me, I could not help being particularly affected. He observed it, and in order to cheer me mentioned his hopes of seeing me again. He threw a handkerchief about my neck, put his hand upon my head, and I retired.

After a short visit to Chanzo Cusho I mounted my horse, and bade farewell to Tashilhunpo.

My connection with the Chauduri<sup>23</sup> forms an episode to the rest of my negotiations at Tashilhunpo, and I have reserved it for this place. It is needless to enter into long details about an affair that ended in nothing, and I will therefore relate what passed as briefly as possible.

Soon after Tashi Lama's return to his capital a man named the Chauduri came to see me. He was a native of Palpa, or some other of the hilly countries subject to the Twenty Four Rajahs.<sup>24</sup> His first visit was merely of ceremony; a few days afterwards he came alone. He told me that he had lately been at Lhasa, and enlarged much on the confidence and favour which Gesub Rimpoché had shown him. He said he had been sent by Gesub to wait upon Tashi Lama and to visit me; that Gesub was much pleased with the Company having concluded peace with the Bhutanese, and was desirous of cultivating the Governor's friendship; that he proposed, therefore, to send him (Chauduri) as his vakil to Calcutta, with a letter and presents, and that he was to accompany me on my return.

As Tashi Lama had never mentioned this man's name to me, and as Gesub's servants, who had visited me the preceding day, had desired me not to attend to what the fakir said, without giving me any explanation of this caution, I confess I was suspicious of his exceeding the extent of his commission, but had no doubt of his having some commission. I repeated to him, however, a great many things I had said to Tashi Lama about the Company's friendly intentions towards Tibet, and that if Gesub chose to send a vakil to Calcutta I was convinced the Governor would show him all respect and attention; that as to myself I would be very glad of his company on the road, but that as I was sent to Tashi Lama, and living

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23. An official title in the context of traditional Nepalese administration, the equivalent either of a revenue official or a zamindar. See: Ch. VIII above, Note 3.

24. The 24 Chaubisi, of which Palpa was one, to the west of Kathmandu, had by 1789 all been conquered by the Gurkhas except Palpa, which finally fell to them in 1805.

under his roof, and as there was no difference between Gesub and Tashi Lama, it was necessary to mention this to the latter. I asked him at the same time whether he had spoken to Tashi Lama about it. He replied that he had no opportunity, on account of Tashi Lama being so much engaged on his return, and seemed not to like my speaking to him about it, saying it was needless. I told him, however, that it was the custom of the English to deal plainly and openly, and that I could do nothing without mentioning it to Tashi Lama.

I was perhaps wrong in this; and a man more artful than myself, knowing, too, the little cordiality that there was between Gesub and Tashi Lama, might perhaps have carried on his negotiations with the Chauduri without communicating them to Tashi Lama. But I must own, in my small experience through life, I have always found candour and plain dealing to be the best policy, and I had no notion of running the risk of forfeiting the confidence of one who, I had every reason to think, was well disposed towards me and my constituents, in order to take the chance of opening, through an uncertain channel, a connection with a man who I believed entertained no very favourable sentiments of me or my masters.

The Chauduri at length consented to my speaking to Tashi Lama about it, which I did, as mentioned in my conversation of the 4th of April.

After this I had another visit from the Chauduri, who had also spoken to Tashi Lama, on the subject. He repeated Tashi Lama's answers in the style of Hindostan, not of Tibet. He said also that Gesub wished much to gratify the Governor in everything; that if he wanted to establish factories at Lhasa, Gesub was very ready to grant him permission; that Gesub had thought of introducing the rupees of Bengal into this country, and hoped the Governor would consent to it.

When I compared in my mind all this account of Gesub's vast benevolence, with his objections to my coming into the country, and recollected what had passed between his servants and me, my suspicions of the Chauduri's veracity increased. After telling him, therefore, how happy I was to hear of Gesub's good dispositions, which I was convinced would be reciprocal on the part of the Governor, I said that I had no order from my constituents for applying about factories; that the Governor had indeed observed with concern the obstacles which the merchants who traded between this country and Bengal were of late years exposed to; and that I had by his order represented them to the Lama, who, I believed, had communicated them to Gesub; and that as the removing of them would be of advantage to this country as well as to Bengal, I had no doubt of his concurrence in so good a work; that, as to the rupees, the Company

hindered no person from carrying them out of the country; and if the merchants found their advantage in it they would no doubt bring them into Tibet; but unless the value of a sicca rupee was greatly increased beyond its present price of two indermillies, I did not see how the merchants could find their advantage in it.

The Chauduri said he proposed in about ten or twelve days to go to Lhasa; that he would represent to Gesub what I said about the freedom of trade, and that he would engage, in four days after his arrival, to procure me a favourable answer from him, and would also write to me himself; that after staying some time with Gesub, and receiving his letter and presents for the Governor, he would return to Tashilhunpo, and accompany me to Calcutta. I recollect nothing further material that passed, either at this or two other conversations, for I was cautious in what I said myself, and an Hindu can say a great deal without saying anything, only that I made him some personal promises in case Gesub should send him as his vakil to Calcutta, and, indeed, at one time I had thoughts of making him some presents.

Meanwhile Tashi Lama had written about the Chauduri to Gesub, and received an answer, which he sent to me. In this letter Gesub disclaimed having given the Chauduri, who, he said, had gone to Tashilhunpo on his own business, any commission to me; that he had never spoken about sending him to Calcutta; that he had no connection with him, and only knew his face by having seen him once, at his country seat; and desired Tashi Lama immediately to send him to Lhasa.

I confess I was equally at a loss to reconcile this letter with the intelligence I had received; for although I gave little credit to the Chauduri's vaunting discourses, I had been informed by all the world that Gesub had made him a present of between four and five thousand rupees, and could hardly think he would be so generous to a man he had only seen once, merely for his *beaux yeux*.

The Chauduri was carried away to Lhasa. I did not see him before his departure, but assured him, through one of his people, of my friendly dispositions to him, and of my services, in case he performed what he had promised.

I heard nothing further of the Chauduri till about a week before my departure for Bengal, when he arrived at Tashilhunpo. For several days he did not come to see me, and I let him know, through a third hand, that I was surprised at it. After this he visited me, when his conversation was to let himself down softly, and to do away with everything he had before said; that Gesub, although well disposed to the Governor, was afraid of giving

umbrage to the Chinese, and therefore ordered him, the Chauduri, in case he went to the Ambans, and they should ask about me, to give them an evasive answer, and not to let them know that I was a Fringy; that the Ambans, however, did not ask him; that Gesub had still thoughts of sending him, the Chauduri, to Calcutta after the rains. I said that I had written to Gesub, but he had not thought proper to favour me with an answer; that I could therefore form no judgment of his sentiments or intentions; but if he proposed to send anybody to Calcutta I supposed he would mention it to Tashi Lama; that, as to the Chinese, I thought Gesub's precautions unnecessary; that I was not come into Tibet as a spy, but to wait upon Tashi Lama; that the English were strangers to duplicity and treachery, and I could not help being surprised that he should be so afraid of offending the Chinese by admitting a vakil from the English, who never had or could have any quarrel with Tibet, while he permitted to go to Lhasa the vakil of a man who was actually at war with his vassal, and whose ambition and treachery he had so often experienced. He said it was very true, but everybody was afraid of the Fringies. I knew this but too well. Little else passed. I was on the reserve, and so was he. I had full opportunity to have reproached him for his fruitless promises about procuring me an answer from Gesub; for his confident assurances of being sent with me to Calcutta; and so I might have taken some revenge upon him for deceiving me. But it would have served no good purpose; and as I had not and did not intend to give him anything, what right had I to upbraid him? I therefore took leave of him with fair, but guarded, words.

In endeavouring to account for this strange intrigue, I can only form two hypotheses: either that the Chauduri, according to Gesub's account of the matter, acted entirely from himself, and hoped, upon the strength of his pretended commission, to ingratiate himself with me, to draw from me some presents, and then, by means of this, to ingratiate himself with Gesub; or, which I think the more probable of the two (for I am clear as to Gesub having made him a considerable present), that Gesub, jealous of my visit to Tashi Lama, and desirous to know my errand, had employed the Chauduri to sound me; at the same time, as he could not avow this, that he disclaimed any connection with him, and summoned him to Lhasa on pretence of punishing him; but, in fact, to know what had passed between him and me. Be it as it may, the whole matter ended in smoke.

## 2

**Extract from Bogle's letter to one of his sisters, 10 March 1775<sup>25</sup>**

As the time of my departure drew near, I found that I should not be able to bid adieu to the Lama without a heavy heart. The kind and hospitable reception he had given me, and the amiable disposition which he possesses, I must confess had attached me to him, and I shall feel a hearty regret at parting. In spite of all my journeyings and wanderings over the face of the earth, I have not yet learnt to take leave, and I cannot reconcile myself to the thoughts of a last farewell.

When I look on the time I have spent among these hills it appears like a fairy dream. The novelty of the scenes, and the people I have met with, and the novelty of the life I have led, seem a perfect illusion. Although my days have been spent without business or amusement, they have passed on without care or uneasiness, and I may set this down as the most peaceful period of my life. It is now almost over, and I am about to return to the hurry and bustle of Calcutta.

Farewell, ye honest and simple people! May ye long enjoy the happiness which is denied to more polished nations; and while they are engaged in the endless pursuits of avarice and ambition, defended by your barren mountains, may ye continue to live in peace and contentment, and know no wants but those of nature.

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25. From Markham, *op. cit.*, p.177.

## CHAPTER XI

### Political and Ethnographical Notes on Tibet and Other Parts of Asia

**Note.** Bogle compiled these notes while in Tibet and in Bhutan on his way back to India. They are contained in a Chinese-made blue cloth-bound notebook, presumably acquired in Tashilhunpo. Bogle may well have intended to produce a more detailed and elaborate account of Asian history and peoples; but, in the event, he never did. Although incomplete and fragmentary, these notes have great value as contemporary, or near contemporary, evidence, particularly for events in Tibet in 1750. The original MS, in the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, is far from easy to read. Much of the subject matter of these notes is discussed in some detail in the relevant chapters of the second volume of this book: here comment will be kept to a minimum.

#### A

#### Pybas (Tibetans)<sup>1</sup>

There are two kinds of priests, one wears red caps, the other yellow. The first marry and are held in little estimation; the last lead a life of celibacy, abstain from spirituous liquors and kill no animals. Indeed, this of killing animals is considered as a crime among all sorts of people, but the lay men regard it little. The [Tashi] Lama's nephews told me of their going a hunting and fowling, but their uncle knew not of it, and they begged me for God's sake not to speak of it. The gylongs are either of the Dalai Lama or the Tashi Lama, maintained and clad at their expense. Very different

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1. Pöpa or Bod-pa. See for example: R.A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, London 1972, p. 27. Stein observes that this term is used by Tibetans to contrast the settled people of central Tibet with nomads (Drokpa), Bogle's Dokpas referred to in G below in this Chapter.

stations among them. The Chief of the country, Gesub, a gylong: the man that sweeps my room, a gylong. Received at an early age, voluntary in their parents: the same with the annis or nuns. Neither wear any ornaments: both have their heads shaven, and dress in one uniform. A good many Kalmuks are gylongs, and some Khampas.

The gold mines belong half to Tashi Lama, half to Dalai Lama. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood, and others, purchase land where it is found at 1000 tanks<sup>2</sup> the cubit. They pay besides annually a tola<sup>3</sup> of gold for every man they employ in digging for it. Besides this, people are sent by the Lamas to dig on their own [the Lamas'] accounts. No large pieces are allowed to be taken away: it is sometimes found in lumps of the size of a man's head.

The Dzungars [Zungars, Jungars etc.] invaded this country and plundered Lhasa [1717]. Their favour to Tashi Lama from something they saw: built the present palace of Tashilhunpo. Went to plunder a monastery: found a sow sitting in the place of the Lama: therefore diverted from it. They were reduced and extirpated by the Emperor of China. Yarkand subject to China. Their [China's] manner of carrying on war: sent first 10,000 men [who were] defeated: then 20,000: defeated: then thirty thousand: carried the place.

Murder punished by throwing headlong from a tower: sometimes by torturous deaths. Robbery also punished with death. Under the Lama's jurisdiction no man put to death: flogging and imprisonment. Great crimes sent to a place where they die of hunger.

When a man marries a second wife and his sons lie with her, the children are reckoned to be the father's. When a son marries and the father cohabits with his wife, the children are reckoned the son's. In the Dokpo [nomad] country to the west of this [Tashilhunpo] the people generally marry one man and one woman. Among the annis many break

2. Tanka, tangka or tamka, a Tibetan (based on Nepalese) unit of value generally understood at this time to represent a multiple (about six) of the coin called by Bogle an indermille (another term with Nepalese origins). Before the Nepalese system was introduced into Tibet (according to Shakabpa, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. 10, c. 1750) the normal Tibetan units of value were based on weights of silver bullion. See Chapter XII below for more on this complex subject.

3. Tola, an Indian unit of weight which in the 19th century was standardised at 180 grains Troy, the amount of silver in the Sicca Rupee. In Bengal the scale of weights was: 4 Dhans = 1 Rati; 8 Ratis = 1 Masha; 12 Mashas = 1 Tola; 5 Tolas = 1 Chitank; 16 Chitanks = 1 Ser; 40 Sers = 1 Maund. The system was regularised by the Government of India in 1833. See: Wilson, *Glossary, op. cit.*, p. 524.



their vow of chastity: if they have no children it is seldom taken notice of. If they are found with child they are expelled the convent, relinquish their habit and live with their lover. The Dechenrubje Killadar [garrison commander] is an instance.

When any brother of a family separate from the rest, he gets no share of the patrimony or effects: an excellent regulation. The daughters inherit their father's fortune in case of failure of male issue. When any of the Lama's subjects leave their habitation and remove to another part of the country, they continue obliged to pay him rent.

The revenue the Lama draws from the gold mines is above a lakh [100,000] of Rupees annually. Once found a lump of gold the size of an elephant's head: when they came to cut it, first blood ran out, afterwards milk; therefore ordered by the Lama not to be taken away but to be buried up. Anybody allowed to go and dig [for gold] for paying the tax of about 10 ounces of gold. The Dalai Lama no share, but his people excused all duty. Some people meet with a great deal: others nothing. It depends on luck.

Miwang Cusho reigned 40 years.<sup>4</sup> He is the same whom in Mr. Stewart's translation of the Spanish missionary's letter is called a just king: he governed the country well. He was succeeded by his eldest son Wang Cusho at the age of twenty.<sup>5</sup> He was cruel and tyrannical and put a great number of Tibetans of the best families to death: at last he put his younger brother, a gylong who remonstrated freely against the impropriety of his conduct, to death. He kept the Dalai Lama in a great state of dependence, alleging that his business was merely spiritual and that he had nothing to do with temporal affairs. The Emperor of China being informed of these particulars, as well as the representations of the Dalai Lama, as of his Ambans, sent orders to the latter to put Wang Cusho to death.<sup>6</sup> They were at first afraid to execute the commands, but on receiving repeated and peremptory orders they allured the Rajah into their house by fair words upon pretence of letters from the Emperor, and, having provided a great entertainment for him and while he was perusing some papers, cut off his head, which, together with his hand, were sent in a box to Peking.<sup>7</sup> His

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4. Miwang, "King of Tibet". He was Pho-lha-nas, who reigned from 1728 to 1747.

5. Tsang Wang, otherwise known as Gyurmé Namgyal.

6. The two Ambans were Fucing (Fu-ch'ing) and Labdon (La-pu-tun).

7. According to Shakabpa, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. 148, the killing of Wang Cusho took place on 11 November 1750.

body was thrown out of the window and afterwards exposed by one of the gates. This producing great tumult at Lhasa, many of the Chinese being put to death by the adherents of Wang Cusho; but they were afterwards quelled by forces from China. This revolution however had an important effect on the constitution. The supreme power came to be vested in the hands of the Dalai Lama [the VIIth Dalai Lama, Késang Gyatso]. The Chiefs, instead of being hereditary, held their offices solely during the pleasure of the Emperor.

The Government of the Dalai Lama was mild and generally liked. Upon the Dalai Lama's death [1757], Tashi Lama came to have great influence, and he procured the administration of affairs for Gesub during the minority of the young Dalai Lama.

The brother of Wang Cusho was older than him: he was a gylong; he lived at Gartok and had large authority there.<sup>8</sup> He and his brother quarreled. Wang Cusho sent troops against him. He likewise opposed them with an army, was defeated and put to death. Wang Cusho ordered great rejoicings upon this event. The Dalai Lama availed himself of it [the situation], wrote to the Emperor who issued the orders for his death. His son, wives and family were also put to death. Gubshay [Yabshe "Duke"] Pandita's wife [who was Wang Cusho's sister] only was spared.<sup>9</sup> The Tibetans upon the death of Wang Cusho rose against the Chinese, slew all of them they could lay their hands on: the rest took sanctuary in the Palace of Potala. Pandita was raised to the Government. He continued in office till an answer from Peking: the Viceroys [Ambans] obliged him to make restitution for all the outrages which had been committed against the Chinese, to give up all the people who had been concerned in the insurrection, who were put to death; and then Pandita was dismissed from the Government and the Dalai Lama had the administration during his lifetime and gave satisfaction. Upon his death it was entrusted to Gesub.<sup>10</sup> But as Tashi Lama was a real favourite of the Emperor's and was assisted by a very able man, the former Chanzo Cusho, he continued to have superior influence to Gesub; upon Chanzo's death this influence increased. The present Dalai Lama is a nephew of this Chanzo's, and he owes his

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8. The brother was called Gyumey Tseten.

9. Doring Gung Noyon Pandita, son of a high official who had been at one time Governor of Western Tibet. Pandita means "learned man". After 1750 he served in the Dalai Lama's cabinet, the Kashag, as a Kalon.

10. "Regent", in this case the Lama Demo Trulku Jampel Delek, a high official of Drepung and Tengyeling Monasteries. He died in 1777, according to Shapabpa. Gesub is Bogle's version of rGyal-tshab. See also: Chapter IX above, Note 2.

promotion to Tashi Lama who wrote to the Emperor, who expressed his satisfaction and ordered his Viceroys, together with Gesub, to go and receive him. Tashi Lama also went.

During Tashi Lama's minority the Dalai Lama used also to come to Tashilhunpo and officiate for him on any particular occasion. Tashi Lama's palace is a sanctuary for debt and even for murder. He himself is also very humane. An instance of this is Nuno Cusho, the brother of the Ladakh Rajah, and the golden image.<sup>11</sup> The Ladakh Rajah is related to the Lama [through the Lama's mother]. During his minority his mother had the Government: she managed badly and the people rose up against her. Since the son has grown up he has called all his mother's opponents to a severe account. The present Chanzo is very severe, fond of money and makes use of his influence in getting it. There are also others of the Lama's people who get money [whenever they can]. He himself [the Tashi Lama] never, and is very angry when he hears of it. ... The former Chanzo Cusho was very generous and used to give away his money to Kashmiris etc. in [quantities] of 3 or 4,000 indermillies.

The quarrel between Wang Cusho and his brother arose from some remonstrance which the latter, who lived at Gartok, made him on his having put some principal Tibetans to death. The other returned him an angry answer and threatened to turn him out of Gartok. The brother replied that he was the son of Miwang Cusho as well as the Rajah and was the master in Gartok the same as he was in Tibet. Upon this the Rajah [Wang Cusho] prepared to oppose him. Their armies were nearly equal and the Rajah's ministers advised him not to hazard a battle but to put his brother to death by craft. For this purpose some Tibetans dressed themselves in Chinese habits and, going to the army, sent word that they came by the Emperor's order to endeavour to compromise the matters. They were admitted into the brother's tent and murdered him. Upon news of this arriving at Lhasa, Wang Cusho ordered a great rejoicing and gave everybody money to make merry and be glad, saying that his enemy was slain. As Miwang Cusho, the father, was much liked, some of the natives expressed their sense of the indecency of rejoicing at his son's murder; and Wang Cusho hearing of it ordered them to be put to death. After this Wang Cusho conceived the desire of throwing off all dependence on the Emperor of China and wrote to the Khampas to second him. He collected a large army, and the Khampas also were preparing to join him. He built a palace about two days journey from Lhasa, and his army was assembled there. In the meantime the Dalai Lama, who was a native of Kham, got

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11. Bogle does not expand on this.

notice of his designs and communicated them to the Emperor, who proposed to fight him [Wang Cusho]; but the Lama as well as the Viceroy [Ambans] represented his great strength and advised to cut him off by treachery. They (the Viceroy) wrote to him therefore informing him that the Emperor had sent him some presents together with a letter and title and desired him to come forthwith and receive them. He [Wang Cusho], ignorant of the treachery, immediately repaired with about 200 of his followers, who all remained below, while he together with 4 of his officers went up into the Viceroy's house. His four attendants remained without. After he had made a proclamation, the Viceroy showed him some things which they said were the Emperor's presents and desired him to prostrate himself to them, which while he did, a Mussulman who had been prepared on purpose severed his head from his body with a scimitar. The head was immediately put in a box and a courier despatched with it to Peking; and his four attendants being put to death. Wang Cusho's body was thrown over the wall into the street. His attendants gazed at it with surprise and, knowing it by some clothes and other marks, fell into great fury. His vizier who was among them immediately attacked the house. One of the Viceroy was killed with a ball, and the other who was a relative of the Emperor's to avoid being killed by the Tibetans hanged himself. The house was burnt after and every Chinese they could lay their hands on slain. The vizier sent an account of this to the Rajah's [house] and, desiring that they would send the Rajah's son, a child, that he might place him on the throne of his father; but his mother, upon news of her husband's death, fled together with the child; and his army fled also. The vizier upon this followed his example. Dalai Lama then issued his orders from Potala requiring every one to remain in peace until an answer should come from Peking and the Emperor's pleasure be known, and in the meantime appointed Pandita to the Government. The Emperor sent four Viceroy with about 3,000 men. They continued the former officers in power until they had made reparation for the damage sustained by the Chinese and delivered the people concerned in the insurrection, after which they were put to death. The wives and children of Wang Cusho also suffered, and the Emperor gave orders that in future Dalai Lama should be considered as the Chief of the country. The tale of the Chinese treasurer was hard enough: during the tumult he escaped almost alone by throwing talents of silver among the soldiers who came to arrest him, and took shelter in the Potala. The Viceroy ordered him to be put to death because he had thus wantonly apprehended the Emperor's treasure and had abandoned it while he ought to have defended it; and he was hanged.

[Information from a Kashmiri who came to Dechenrubje]

The Tibetan women are kind, tender-hearted and easily won. The Kashmiris who marry in this country sometimes purchase their wives by paying 50, 100 or 200 indermillies for them, sometimes from a prior connection and pregnancy. Most of the Kashmiris' handmaids are converted to the Mahomedan religion and forswear the Gods of their fathers. Their husbands allow them not to go out and often for a year or two lock them up whenever they go out, which effectively secures their fidelity. The Kashmiris however sometimes carry on intrigues with one another's wives in spite of all these precautions. It is not uncommon when a man takes a penchant for a Tibetan's wife to obtain the husband's good offices and consent by presents. About a year ago a Kashmiri fell in love with the wife of a Tibetan of some rank and consequence at Lhasa. The lady was of extraordinary beauty, and proved kind. After some time the husband happened to find him and was very angry, but the wife whom he was very fond of told him that unless he allowed the Kashmiri to share her affections she would desert him and betake herself to the Kashmiri. The Mussulman at the same time made the husband some presents, and he agreed not to interrupt the lovers. After this the Kashmiri used to visit as often as he liked at the house and was always well received by the indulgent husband. At length the wife deserted him and went and lived with the Kashmiri.

The private crimes and irregularities occasioned by the celibacy of the priests: formerly unknown, but taught them by the Chinese: anecdotes of this: but it is a subject which I will not communicate in my paper: and have heard it contradicted by others.

When any despatches are sent from the Government, they are sewed to an arrow and wrapped round it: it is an emblem of speed.

It is no uncommon thing for a man who is hard pressed by his creditors to apply to Government for an order to them to refrain from molesting him. This seems to strike at the roots of justice, but the bad effects of it are not so sensibly felt among this simple people as they would be in a commercial country.

## B

### Demo Jong [the ruler of Sikkim]

That Demo Jong [Namgyal Phuntsok] upon his father's death was very

young and his guardians advised to put him under the protection of Lhasa.<sup>12</sup> A wakil<sup>13</sup> was accordingly sent and the Government at Lhasa acknowledged him as their vassal. They sent officers who remained in this country till he grew up, when they were withdrawn.<sup>14</sup> Since this time Demo Jong has acknowledged himself as the vassal of Lhasa, and pays them an annual revenue. This country borders with Kiranty [Kirat, the Morung-Vijayapur hinterland] on the west and the Deb Rajah's country [Bhutan] on the east.

## C

### Kalmuks [Mongols]<sup>15</sup>

Any difference among them: appoint a third man to settle it. Live in tents: different in summer and winter.

Change their place of habitation according to the soil, pasturage or time of year.

Some of the priests live in houses in the winter. Two men will eat a sheep and drink the broth in which it is boiled: instances of one man's doing it.

Few children die: suckled till 2, 3, sometimes more: little trouble in teething: give the child pieces of sheep's tails to chew. Oldest man has seen 95: seldom sick. Eat horses and camels: sometimes their meat raw.

Camels and bullocks for burden. Camels also found wild (contradicts Buffon).<sup>16</sup>

Kalmuks downright and direct. Trials are held by the Chan [Khan] or Rajah: the old men are also present when the crime is proved: the punishment is judged according to the books: the old men give their opinion and if the Chan does not listen to it the people will rise against him and

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12. The immediate cause of this decision was a Bhutanese attack on Sikkim in 1740.

13. By name Tandin.

14. The principal officer was Rapten Sharpa.

15. Bogle uses Kalmuk to mean Mongol in general; and it is clear from internal evidence here that his main source of information was a "Kalmuk" who was almost certainly not a Torgut.

16. George Louis Leclerc Buffon, 1707-1788, French naturalist whose *Histoire Naturelle* was one of the major works in this field during the second half of the 18th century. See also: Chapter XV below, Note 1.

put him to death. Theft is punished the first time with compensation of goods and sometimes imprisonment: the second time the arms and legs of the criminal are broke or bruised with stones: the third is punished with death. Murder is punished with death: beheading.

A man generally marries only one wife unless she is barren when he takes another. The great people have two, three, or sometimes five [wives]. If a woman marries two men or is guilty of adultery she is put to death.

The brothers upon the death of their father, or even during his lifetime if grown up, generally separate into a different tent. The eldest son receives a much larger portion of his father's effects than the others.

There are seldom disputes among the Kalmuks, and they generally settle them amicably. The token of reconciliation is interchanging a pinch of snuff.

They grow no kind of grain nor cultivate the lands. Their riches consist in sheep, cattle, horses and camels. They sometimes purchase rice from the Chinese when on the borders of their country.

When the Chan oppresses them or rules with injustice, they complain to the Emperor of China.

The Lama Taranath [Jebtsun Dampa Hutukhtu in Urga] or the gylongs interfere not in the administration of justice.

The gylongs never guilty of theft or any other crime. N.B. The informer is gylong himself.

The Dzungars <sup>17</sup> formerly lived at peace with the rest of the Kalmuks, and subject to the Emperor of China, rebelled under Amersing [?Amursana], invaded Tibet: the Chief afterwards put to death by the Emperor,

17. Bogle presents a somewhat confused picture of Dzungar history. Amursana had nothing to do with the Dzungar occupation of Tibet in the first decades of the 18th century: he was one of the last great leaders of the Dzungars and related groups who, having at one time collaborated with the Manchus, ended his days resisting their advance into Central Asia. He died in 1757.

The Dzungars (Zunghars) were western Mongols of the Altai and Ili regions, a confederation of Khoshot, Derbet, Khoit and Choros Mongols which made up one part (Dzungar means literally "Left Wing") of the Oirats. The group emerged in the early 17th century. In older European writing the Dzungars are sometimes referred to as Eleuths (derived from Olöt, strictly speaking a term referring to the Choros only, but used by many western writers to mean all members of the Oirat group). A French translation of an inscription on a monument erected by the Ch'ien-lung Emperor shortly after 1757 in celebration of the victory over the Dzungars was published in Paris in 1776 by Père Amiot. See: Père Amiot, *Mémoires concernant L'Histoire, Les Sciences, Les Arts, Les Mœurs, Les Usages, &c. des Chinois, Par les Missionnaires de Peking*, Vol. 1, Paris 1776, "Monument de la conquête des Eleuths".

also numbers of the people. Kalmuks connected with the Russians only during the winter when the rivers and lakes are frozen. ... [This information from the Kashmiri who went to Peking and the Sapon Chumbo]. ... Kalmuks plain, hospitable and direct. Kalmuks plain and honest in their dealings. Stranger to guile or deceit. Have amazing appetites. Very cleanly in their eating and displeased when any of their victuals falls upon their clothes. The women dexterous, ride, but never go hunting. The manner of hunting, enclosing the game as described by many writers. Manner of binding a child's head soon after it is born in order to render it large particularly the brow. The same to render them broad shouldered. The Kalmuks' great veneration for the Lamas and very religious. That there are some, though not many, who suffer by cruel deaths. That their administration of justice is very strict and exact. Their dependence on the Emperor of China. The revolt of the Torgut nation, former subject to the Russians, to China.<sup>18</sup> ... That the Torguts have little religion because not under the spiritual dominion of the Lamas. An account of the roving life of the Tatars, very merry at nights and much music, singing and dancing and drinking spirits. An account of their carriages for travelling over the snow. Of a very large fish taken out of a sea which I imagine must be the Baikal.

## D

### Kashmiris

**Note.** Kashmir was from the point of view of the East India Company one of the most important regions of the Subcontinent in that it was the source of those shawls already becoming highly valued in Europe. One objective of Bogle's Tibetan mission was to try to acquire specimens of the animals, tus, from which the shawl wool was obtained and perhaps enable the Company to compete with Kashmiri weavers in the production of this textile. It is surprising, in these circumstances, how little was known about Kashmir by the British at this time. The French physician F. Bernier visited the Vale of Kashmir in 1665 as part of the entourage of the Moghul Emperor Aur-

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18. The Kalmuks, strictly speaking, were the western wing of the Oirats which had split away from the Dzungars and established themselves eventually on the lower Volga in Russian territory (though Bogle certainly used the term Kalmuk in a rather more general sense). In 1771 some of this general group, the Torguts (Toghud) fled from Russian territory and settled in Dzungaria in eastern Chinese Turkestan, at that time depopulated because of the Ch'ing Dynasty operations against the Dzungars. The Ch'ien-lung Emperor was so impressed that he caused a pagoda to be erected at his mock-Tibetan city of Jehol, north of Beijing, to commemorate the event. See above: Ch. IX, Note 5, and Ch. X, Notes 9 & 14.



ungzeb. Bernier's published narrative was charming but certainly not too full of precise geographic or economic data. From the latter part of the 16th century Kashmir was visited from time to time by Jesuit missionaries (including Jerome Xavier, a relative of St. Francis Xavier) attached, or trying to attach themselves, to the Moghul court. In the early 18th century the Jesuit Desideri visited Kashmir in 1714-15 on his way to Tibet, and something of what he noted on the shawl manufacture of the Valley could possibly have been known to the East India Company in Bogle's day. The first Company servant to visit Kashmir would appear to have been George Forster in 1783; and his account leaves a great deal to be desired (see: George Forster, *Journey from Bengal to England*, 2 vols., Calcutta 1790.) Rennell's map of northern India of 1792 shows Kashmir in a highly stylised manner as a plain with two lakes entirely surrounded by a perfectly circular mountain range. Rennell is clearly relying on very indirect sources. While correctly locating the source of the Jhelum in the Vale he fails to give the name Srinagar for its principal city. (See: J. Rennell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindoostan*, 3rd. Ed., London 1793.) Against this background of relative British ignorance, Bogle's brief historical narrative on Kashmir is of some interest. See, also, Ch. II above, No. 12, for more on Kashmir and the shawl trade. Bogle's various writings make it plain beyond doubt that the importance of Kashmiris, both Muslims and Hindu Brahmins (Pandits) in the trade of northern India in the latter part of the 18th century could hardly be exaggerated.

The Kashmiris settled in Tibet are mostly the offspring of Tibetans, a sixth or eighth part only being natives of Kashmir. They have been long settled in this country and from the wealth which they acquire by their extensive commerce form a very respectable, though not numerous, body. Their consequence formerly may be estimated from one circumstance. One of the fifteen officers who assumed the Government into their own hands and put the Chief to death was a Kashmiri. Those from Kashmir seldom return into their own country. They marry the women of this country, and the difficulty of transporting their wives and families over the arduous mountains which separate Kashmir from Tibet, the security of property which they here enjoy, and, I believe, the little credit they would get at home with a renegade wife, conspire to prevent their return. There are, however, some instances of it. They enjoy here their religion, unmolested as their wives are generally converted to the true Faith, from which according to the law of Mahomet a large portion of merit accrues to the husband. Some of them, however, continue to follow the Gods of their forefathers, when they are to be considered rather as concubines than wives. As the Tibetan women are accustomed to the greatest liberty in their life and conversation, it costs the husband some pains to break them in to that confinement and those habits which the jealous disposition of the Mahometans renders necessary. However they generally praise the

docile temper and fidelity of their wives, which as they take every precaution, of locks, duennas and doors, to secure, may be a very just encomium. The mixture between Kashmiris and Tibetans make a very good breed. The prominent noses and high features of the former, when incorporated with the flat faces of the latter, make a good assemblage. The complexion is also fairer. I have seen several of their children as fair as Europeans and freckled.

The Kingdom of Kashmir continued subject to the Hindostan Emperors, from the time that Akbar Shah was called in to take part in the internal garrison of the country, for about 250 years. The last Subah, or Viceroy, sent by the Court of Delhi was ... [name left blank by Bogle]. The following year, the disputes running high among the different parties, they called in Abdullah [Ahmad Shah Abdali or Durrani], who, however, did not reduce the country till after many battles he appointed ... [name left blank by Bogle, actually Sukh Jiwan Mal, second Governor of Kashmir under the Afghans] his Viceroy. This man was a Hindu. The Kashmiris were conspiring against him, he discovered it, and immediately made the following proposal to them: that they should raise him to the throne of Kashmir when he would throw off all dependence and connection with Abdullah, and rule over them as their own prince. It was agreed to and carried into execution. Years after this Abdullah sent a great army to reduce this rebellious officer who having raised and formed a very considerable army of 20 or 30,000 men, which is far beyond the number which Kashmir can support, was become unpopular among the inhabitants, many of whom secretly encouraged Abdullah's invasion. [Sukh Jiwan Mal] however opposed the forces sent by his former master with great spirit. Several engagements were fought with ultimate success and Abdullah only became master of the Kashmiris by surprising ... [Sukh Jiwan Mal's] ... person, who had imprudently advanced with a few attendants before his army. His eyes were immediately put out and he was sent to Abdullah's court where he was kept a prisoner, but allowed the company of his wife and family. Some years afterwards upon Abdullah's proposal to invade Hindostan, he sent for his prisoner and asked him what he wished for. He replied, "let me be sent again as Viceroy to Kashmir". This request, however, was not granted, and Abdullah's officers took occasion from it to persuade their master that ... [Sukh Jiwan Mal] ... was engaged in a private correspondence with the Sikhs, and he was soon after put to death; but whether before or after Abdullah's departure is uncertain. After this Abdullah continued to send Subahs to Kashmir and it remained under his authority until his death [1772 or 1773]. There was

no money sent from Kashmir in money, it was always in shawl cloths and manufactures of gold and silver; and as so much wealth has continued to flow into it from Hindostan and other countries by means of its foreign trade and in return for its valuable manufactures it had needs be very opulent. Upon Abdullah's death, Kashmir threw off its dependence on the Afghans. His son, Timur Shah, being engaged in domestic quarrels was unable to give attention to the affairs of so distant a state. The Kashmiris, however, continued the Afghan Subah as their Chief, and he now reigns over them. Upon his death what may be the consequences one does not know.<sup>19</sup>

## E

### Yarkand

[Information derived from Kashmiri who was at Peking].

Yarkand was long subject to the Mussulmen and governed by its own Rajahs. It was invaded about 12 years ago by the Emperor of China's forces who could make no impression upon it. Troops after troops arrived who were cut to pieces in the passes and among the mountains. At length the Rajah's [of Yarkand] treasury being exhausted he had recourse to exactions upon the merchants and upon his own officers. Some of his principle people remonstrated with him upon it and were put to death. The rest consulted among themselves saying thus: "he will also put us to death; it is better for us to submit to the Emperor of China". They accordingly wrote to the commander of the Chinese troops to return and they would deliver the Rajah into his hands. The Rajah, ignorant of this conspiracy, went out to meet the Chinese. His officers with their troops deserted him and left him an easy prey to the Chinese who, taking possession of his capital, sent him a prisoner to Peking where he was put to death. The brother of the Rajah was at Peking whither he had fled, and he now claimed the Emperor's liberty to return to govern his country, and presented many petitions to that purpose; but the Emperor returned him for an answer that he wished to remain in his presence as he had taken an

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19. The Afghan Subah, or Governor, in question was Haji Karimdad Khan, a cruel ruler so tradition has it, who was followed by his son, Azad Khan, who was in power at the time of Foster's visit to the Kashmir Valley in 1783. Afghan rule in Kashmir finally came to an end in 1819 when the Valley came under the control of Ranjit Singh, ruler of the Sikh Empire of Lahore.

attachment for him. He treats him well but will not allow him to leave Peking. The informer [the Kashmiri who had been to Peking] saw him at Peking. He asked him many questions: said his brother would not have fallen if he had not been betrayed. He seemed melancholy and very desirous of returning to his native country.<sup>20</sup>

## F

### Khampas [from Eastern Tibet, Kham]

[Sources: the Kashmiri who went to Peking and the Kashmiri who was at Dechenrubje].

These long wars with the Chinese as mentioned in the conferences with the Lama.<sup>21</sup> The Emperor of China sent an immense army against them under his son's command. Defeated and this son killed. Another army besieged in a fort and obliged to surrender under the want of provisions after having eaten up all the horses. In short victorious in every engagement and have made encroachments on the Empire of China. They are opposed by the King of Pegu and also by Lao. This Kashmiri [who was at Peking] travelled through part of their country. A more particular account, see [(i) below]. The Khampas are very warlike and in their war with the Emperor of China had slain a great number of the Chinese, their country being surrounded with mountains through which the entrance is by narrow passes. The Chinese could make no impression on them. The [Dalai] Lama of Tibet undertook to make peace; and a deputation was sent from Lhasa who accordingly settled matters and the Khampas promised to acknowledge the Emperor upon certain conditions. Some of the principal men of the country were invited to Peking upon promise of presents and honours; but after their arrival were put to death by the

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20. The Chinese capture of Yarkand was in 1759. The Ch'ing Dynasty invasion of Western Sinkiang, Kashgaria, followed their defeat of the Dzungars and the death in 1757 of the last Dzungar champion, Amursana. Chinese Central Asian policy in the 18th century is discussed in some detail in the second volume of this book. See, for example: M. Courant, *L'Asie Centrale aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles. Empire Kalmouk ou Empire Mantchou?*, Paris 1912; R. Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes, a History of Central Asia*, New Brunswick (New Jersey) 1970; J.-P. Roux, *L'Asie Centrale. Histoire et Civilisations*, Paris 1997; T.J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier. Nomadic Empires and China*, Oxford (Blackwell) 1989; M. Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia from 1368 to the Present Day*, London 1973.

21. See above, Ch. IX, Note 4.

Emperor. The Khampas enraged at so base and treacherous an action, put all the Chinese to death and again went to war.

A reason is given for the discontent of the Khampas with the Emperor of China. The former Dalai Lama was from their country. Tashi Lama discovered the present one and the Emperor of China confirmed him. The Khampas, they say, are dissatisfied that he was not taken from among them. In the old Dalai Lama's time the Khampas were much favoured by him. When they came to Lhasa the inhabitants were much afraid of them and there arose a quarrel between them and the officers of the town.

Under the name of Kham the Tibetans include a great many different Governments, some of which are subject immediately to China, others to Lhasa. The latter are the most westerly. Every house pays an annual tax of half an indermille besides which there are large exactions levied upon them by the officers.

## G

### **Dokpas [ Tibetan nomads]<sup>22</sup>**

The Dokpas inhabit the country between Tibet and Tatory and their manners is a mixture between them. Their language and their features bear a near resemblance to those of Tibet to which they are subject. Their roving life and the custom of living in tents is like the Tatars [Mongols]. The country they inhabit is plain. No hills and covered with long grass upon which they support their numerous herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. During the winter great quantities of snow falls in some places, when they remove with their families and flocks to a different part of the country. There is no wood and they use cow dung for fuel. The tents in which they live are very large. The young lambs and kids are lodged in one corner of it. Bladders filled with butter are heaped up in another. Sheep carcasses dried occupy a third place and their furniture and utensils a fourth. Every man has a separate wife and every wife a separate tent: the men live and sleep in the great tent and visit their wives in their own. The Dokpos lead a very simple and peaceable life, they engage little in war and are not quarrelsome, passing their time tending their flocks and minding their dairies. They are very hospitable and when a merchant arrives among them they strive with one another about the honour of entertaining him. He lives with one of the families who supply him with everything at no expense. But he must be cautious of forming intimate connections with

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22. Drokpa or 'Brog-pa

any of the daughters for in that case they will not allow him to return: he must settle among them. They use very large cups in which they drink their tea, and sitting over the fire sip it from time to time so that they will be about an hour in finishing one dish. They use their sheep in carrying salt into Tibet which they exchange for barley or other grain. They have no manufactures among them and they go generally, especially the lower class of people, clad in sheep skins. The men do not tie their hair but let it grow long upon their shoulders. The women plait it neatly and wear a piece of cloth covered with cowries upon the back. They have no musk but plenty of tus which produce the shawl. It is less than a sheep, has two twisted horns like an antelope. They shoot them with arrows or catch them in nets; but they use their wool only for thread or ropes. There are also a great number of buffaloes which they shoot among the long grass. ... There is likewise a kind of wild sheep with exceedingly thick horns. The country is infested with wolves; but the Dokpo dogs are an even match for them. Their principal trade is in butter; and a great part of that used in Tibet comes from their country. They send also people to the gold mines. When a man marries another wife, he gives a number of sheep according to his land to the father, perhaps 1,000 or perhaps 50. No sowing or ploughing in the country. Thus it was in the days of the patriarchs.

## H

### Nepal

The former [Newar] Rajah of Kathmandu had no children; and at his death he recommended a son of his brother's to Gorkha's protection as he was young. Gorkha [Prithvi Narayan] placed him with his sister. Among the women that she entertained, one of them was remarkably beautiful; and a young assistant to a Kashmiri merchant, a handsome man, who was particularly connected with Gorkha's eldest son Pertab Singh, and in some favour at Court, fell in love with her. He broke the matter to the Rani's young guest [the nephew of the old Kathmandu Rajah], and gave him a thousand rupees in order to secure his good offices with the damsel. They were successful, and she one night stole out of the palace to the Kashmiri's arms. Unluckily she was missed. The Rani told her brother [Gorkha] who next day ordered her to be secured and tortured ... [to reveal her] ... amour. The Kashmiri, although he spent a lakh of rupees, together with the young Kathmandu man [the nephew of the Kathmandu Rajah] were hanged. The [Gorkha] Rajah's severity on this occasion is said to have

proceeded from jealousy. ... The girl suffered by a death too shocking to mention in order to wipe off the pollution which this affair was supposed to bring upon his House. He performed many religious ceremonies, and made large offerings to the Brahmins to defray for which he exacted a ... [head tax] ... of 4 annas upon the inhabitants. Gorkha entertains a vast number of women, seizing the most beautiful in every country that he conquers. Some he reserves for himself; the rest are given up to the embraces of his courtiers and officers provided that they be Hindus.

Gorkha after an unsuccessful attempt to reduce the 24 Rajahs [Chaubisi] whose country lies to the west of Nepal, proceeded to use his brother ill, and he fled into their country as for protection. They [the 24 Rajahs] received him and he remained with them three years during which he was treated with much attention. In the meantime he carried on a correspondence with Gorkha, who meditated a second invasion; but, one of his letters being intercepted by the Rajahs and his treachery thereby discovered, he was put to death.

Gorkha may have about 50,000 men.

His oppressions upon the merchants which force them to leave the country: even the two [merchant] houses that remain carry their head in their hand and are often fined two or three or five thousand rupees on the smallest pretenses.

The difference between the Government of this country [Tibet] and [Gorkha] in regard to circulating coin: the first wants it to pass at the rate which the merchants may choose to value it; the other insists upon fixing the rate.<sup>23</sup>

Gorkha views to make himself master of Demo Jong's country [Sikkim] and then of the Deb Rajah's [Bhutan], by which means he will have the command of the whole of the trade and of the supplies between Bengal and this country.

Gorkha married his daughter to the Rajah of Makwanpur and afterwards seized him and now keeps him a prisoner [so Chait Singh's vakil believes].

There are two classes of people in Nepal, the Newars and the Parbatoo

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23. By putting a premium on newly-minted coins produced by the Gorkha regime. Disputes over the circulation of Nepalese-minted coinage in Tibet produced more than one crisis in Tibeto-Nepalese relations, not least in 1788 and 1791, the latter resulting in a formidable Chinese military intervention on behalf of Tibet. See below, Ch. XIII, No. 4.

The history of the rise of the Gurkhas, their conquest of the Newar States of Nepal and the consequences for trans-Himalaya trade, are discussed in the second volume of this book.

hill people: the latter inhabit the mountains which surround Nepal and are the fighting people. The Newars, like the Hindus, are divided into castes but eat almost anything and are promiscuously together. They observe little ceremony at their marriages. The bride comes to the house of the bridegroom. When dissatisfied and entertaining a penchant for another man, she goes to the Rajah, and after the usual outcries she lays 5 [very small coins] before him and represents her being dissatisfied with the marriage. She then lays another 5 [very small coins] before him and mentions the desire of marrying the paramour; and the Rajah in consequence gives his consent. The like ceremony is performed by a husband in case of the dissatisfaction arising on his side. The dress of the Newars is different from that of Hindostan, so is their language, which in some words answers to that of the Tibetans. Their numbers are nearly the same [as those used in the Tibetan language].

The Parbati language as well as their religious ceremonies and customs are much the same as among the Hindus. The practice of wives burning themselves with their husbands is common among them.

The ancient form of Government was almost similar to that of the 24 Rajahs: but Gorkha has turned things topsy turvy; he has imposed heavy taxes on the people; he is regardless of ancient grants and lay possessions. He has introduced a considerable body of standing troops composed of foreigners; but still the greatest part of his forces consist in the inhabitants who are bound to take arms by their military tenures.

When any person or rank or consequence in Nepal applied to Gorkha about a point which he did not choose to grant, his common answer was, "what you say is very true, but it [is my] will".

## I

### Chinese

[Sources: various Kashmiris and a gylong who was at Kepta].

The Chinese artful and industrious.

This Kashmiri [pilgrim] went from Lhasa. He travelled eastward through the Khampa country, through Yunnan to Canton, and from there to Peking. He was twice attacked and robbed. He was in the Emperor's presence, who asked him some questions about Hindostan. He [the Emperor Ch'ien-lung] may be about 60 (I am told by others 54). He returned through Tatory by way of Sining.



The Treasurer to the Chinese at Lhasa employed the money which was remitted for the pay of the troops in purchasing merchandise so that when the day of payment came there was not money in the Treasury. The Ambans complained to Peking and the Emperor ordered him to be put to death. He was publicly executed: his head was cut off at three strokes. The informer [another Kashmiri whom Bogle met at Dechenrubje] was present.

The Chinese merchants and soldiers often beat the lower classes of Tibetans in the market place: they make no resistance and dare not complain.

The quarrel was first with some Rajah whom I take to be the King of Pegu.<sup>24</sup> He, after conquering many neighbouring Rajahs, attacked some of the Provinces of China, particularly Yunnan, and carried his arms almost to Canton. The Emperor sent a very large force against him. The Rajah ordered all the chokies [customs posts on the frontier] to be taken away and the Chinese troops to penetrate into the hilly country, when he attacked them and put them to flight having killed a great many of their men. Such of the soldiers of the Chinese as escaped were put to death by the Emperor's order. The Emperor then sent a larger force under the command of his son and son-in-law who promised not to return till they had subdued and extirpated the Rajah. The latter put in practice the same stratagem with them and allowed them to enter the country without resistance. At length they came to two roads. The Emperor's son took the one with a large detachment of troops, the son-in-law the other with 6,000 Kalmuks besides a great number of Chinese. The son advanced till he

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24. Burmese incursions into Thailand and Laos under King Alaungpaya and his immediate successors so disturbed the Yunnan border tracts that in 1766-69 the Chinese were forced to intervene. A Chinese invasion of Upper Burma in 1766 was defeated and repulsed; and the Burmese followed this up by encroaching upon Chinese territory. In 1767, under the command of Ming Jui, the Ch'ien-lung Emperor's son-in-law, the Chinese attacked Burma once more, this time in two columns. Ming Jui advanced over Burmese territory to within thirty miles of Ava before discovering that he had fallen into a trap. The other column failed to come to his relief and, eventually, withdrew to Yunnan. Ming Jui could probably have himself escaped; but rather than face the wrath of his father-in-law the Emperor, he committed suicide.

Bogle is in error in associating Pegu with these events: Pegu had long ceased to be a Burmese capital; but the name persisted. Alaungpaya, founder of the Burmese Konbaung dynasty, captured Pegu in May 1757. Pegu was the chief city of the Mons who in the 1740s rebelled against the Burmese Toungoo dynasty with its capital at Ava. An admirable short history of Burma is: D.G.E. Hall, *Burma*, London 1950.

arrived at a fort surrounded with water which he took possession of without resistance and wrote to the Emperor of his success. In the meantime the Rajah of Pegu assembled his forces and blocked up all the roads so that the troops were at a loss for subsistence, and the son, seeing himself surrounded on all sides by troops in a hilly and hostile country, proposed to the Rajah that if he would allow him passage he would return into China. The Rajah refused it; and after the troops had eaten up all their horses and other animals, he attacked them and cut them to pieces, dismissing a few to tell the Emperor what had happened. The Emperor's son among those who were killed. Nor did better fortune attend the son-in-law who, after fighting well with his Kalmuks for eight days, was slain together with a great number of men, though more of this party escaped than of the other. Among others was a Mussulman of some rank in the Emperor's service who begged the bodies of the two Princes and carried them to Peking. The Emperor was so much chagrined with this disaster that he ordered the Mussulman to be put to death, upbraiding him with returning alive when his son and so many men had fallen in battle. As they carried the Mussulman to execution he laughed; and they informed the Emperor of it who, curious to know the cause, ordered him to his presence and asked him why he laughed. He said that after having brought the bodies of His Majesty's son and son-in-law so far that they might not be left in a strange country, he was now to be put to death for it. The Emperor pardoned him and received him into favour. After this the Rajah of Pegu [or ? Aon]<sup>25</sup> wrote to the Emperor that if he had a mind to continue the war he would not only keep the Provinces he had conquered but take Peking itself: that if he had a mind for peace he would leave him his conquests, and in that case he would advance no further into the country. The Emperor after long considering the proposal accepted the last, and the informer knows nothing further.

There are a great number of Mussulmen in China, descendants of those who had invaded the country in days of old, or Chinese who had converted to the True Faith. Many of these Mussulmen come to Sining and Lhasa for the purpose of trade. They are not very straight laced in religious matters, drinking wine and doing other things which true believers ought not to do. They frequently give their daughters in marriage to the Kashmiris, together with a sum of money. These ladies are generally

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25. Bogle, it would seem, has some doubts about quite what Pegu had to do with this story. It is possible that what appears to be "Aon" in the Mitchell Library MS, really should be "Ava", which would be a correct capital for the Konbaung Dynasty in Burma.

far more beautiful than the damsels of Tibet, but are reckoned more wicked and apt to go astray.

The daughters of the Chinese settled at Lhasa are also sometimes married to Kashmiris: they excel also in the fairness of their complexions and regularity of their features, but their spirit and warm constitution often lead them into scrapes. None of the Chinese at Lhasa, whether soldiers or merchants, bring their wives with them. It is contrary to the laws of the Empire. Most of them, however, form connections with the daughters of Tibet who live with them while at Lhasa but are not allowed to go into China. Upon the husband's return the wife separates herself to some other of the Chinese newly arrived, or procures a husband among her countrymen with the money which she has picked up under her Cathayan spouse. As the troops in Lhasa are changed every three years, the Chinese soldiers seldom carry their children with them into China, their tender age rendering them unequal to the fatigues of so long and arduous a journey. They remain in Tibet and serve to whiten and improve the breed of the natives.

But the merchants and tradesmen settled at Lhasa, residing there for twelve, fifteen or twenty years, continue long enough to see their children grow up; and upon their return to their native country carry their daughters as well as their sons with them, [but] not their wives.

Some particulars which I heard from the informer and which were corroborated by others, though trifling serve to show the nature of the Chinese Government at Lhasa better than things of seemingly more consequence. The Chinese soldiers are extremely insolent and often beat the Tibetans in the market who dare not complain. If a Tibetan offers to make any resistance it only serves to increase his drubbing or is construed into a crime. They think nothing of stopping a Kashmiri's wife or daughter in the street, taking her in their arms and kissing her from cheek to cheek. Her brother or father dare only civilly beg of them to desist. They make still more free with the Tibetan women who sell tea in the market. The Chinese are not amenable to any of the Tibetan courts or officers. Any complaints against them must be preferred directly to the Ambans to whom both from their ignorance of the language and being surrounded only by their countrymen access is very difficult, and to obtain redress still more so. In a court where the Tibetan officers sit and where every native comes into their presence with the greatest deference and keeps at the most respectful distance, a Chinese man of a low rank and of no public character will come in [and] set himself down in the midst of them, and coolly take out his pipe sit a-smoking. The servants of the Ambans will

come into a merchant's, whether Tibetan or Kashmiri, shop, and carry off a piece of goods saying it is for the Ambans' use. The merchant has no chance of being paid for it. He may dance all in vain for months to no purpose. There is only one instance of redress from an Amban who, during the heat of summer used to come frequently to walk in the Kashmiri's garden, and so gave the merchant an opportunity of complaining upon which he severely chastised his servant and paid the man for his goods. About five years ago a Newar man detected a Chinese stealing a piece of goods and carried him clamorously before the Ambans who instead of listening to his complaint ordered him to be beat and confined for fifteen days on account of having had the presumption to lay hands on a native of China.

According to the religion of this country it is a great crime to kill any wild beasts or game. In the sequestered places of the country the musk goats etc. are killed by the peasants clandestinely, and laymen of distinction also in the same manner may go a shooting or hunting; but in the neighbourhood of towns and still more so in the neighbourhood of the residence of the Lamas, such things are never done by the Tibetans who would be severely punished for it. The Chinese, however, regardless of the customs of the country or the prejudices of the people, entertain themselves with shooting and hunting all round Lhasa, and often kill pigeons in the town itself.

There is no person allowed on horseback within the precincts of Lhasa under pain of confiscation of the horse. The Chinese however, and their lowest servants, scamper through the streets night and day.

To such insults and to such galling distinctions are a people subject to a foreign yoke continually exposed and obliged tamely to submit.

Some Chinese traders come from Lhasa to Shigatse. A Kashmiri brought one of them to see me; but as I discovered that the [Tashi] Lama was averse from it I gave him his ... [welcome] ... without much conversation. He was dressed in a blue silk jacket with small buttons of brass; trousers of the same, and shoes and stockings joined together. He wore a small round cap faced with lamb's skin and in black; and he was neither so clean nor so fair as I expected. His complexion was about that of the Kashmiri's. His hair was plaited into a long tail that hung down his back. He might be about five and twenty and had little or no beard.

## J

**The Twenty-four Rajahs<sup>26</sup>**

[Source; Chait Singh's wakil].

In former times they were subject to one of their number: they acknowledge him as their superior and performed some services, one supplied him with wood, another with rice, a third with butter; but this subordination is now in great measure ended. Each Chief is independent and they unite only against a common enemy, such as Gorkha. Some of the smaller Rajahs may desire a sort of protection from their more powerful neighbours. Offices, that of the Chief excepted, are not hereditary. The Governments of different districts are generally held only for three years when the officer is changed by the Chief unless some extraordinary service merits his continuance. There are Chauduris which are granted as fiefs during the life of the Chief or of the vassal: upon the death of either they are returned. These Chiefs are often engaged in endless wars about the limits of their territories, which are attended with alternate success. During these they fail not to keep up the appearance of friendship, and upon the death of their enemy shave their whiskers [and] eyebrows, and they bury also the bodies of such of their adversaries as fall in battle. The people are trained to arms and bound to follow the standard of the Rajah; but there is no subordination [among the 24 Rajahs] as among the Marathas and other States where hereditary dignities are common. Every Chief administers justice by himself or his officers. They

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26. The Chaubisi, or 24 Rajas, occupied a diagonal strip of territory to the west of the Kathmandu Valley and extending from the edge of the plains right up to the high mountains of the Himalayan Range. Colonel Kirkpatrick, who visited Nepal in 1793, gives the following list: Lamjung, Kaski, Galkot, Rising, Ghiring, Palpa, Musikot, Isma, Tanahun, Gulmi, Khanchi, Dhor, Parbat, Bhirkot, Nuwakot, Paiyun, Garehun, Dang, Parthana, Wigha, Sallyana, Luttahoon, Jhili and Dhorkot (see: Colonel W. Kirkpatrick, *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul, being the substance of observations made during a mission to that country, in the year 1793*, London 1811). Other authorities, Hamilton (F. Buchanan Hamilton, *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*, London 1819), Vansittart (E. Vansittart, *Notes on Nepal*, London 1896) and Oldfield (H.A. Oldfield, *Sketches from Nepal*, 2 vols., London 1880), not to mention various Nepalese chronicles, give slightly different lists, not always adding up to 24. See, for example: L.F. Stiller, *The Rise of the House of Gorkha. A Study in the Unification of Nepal 1768-1816*, New Delhi 1973, p. 68. The predominant influence in the ruling houses of the Chaubisi was Rajput.

address one another in the style of equals. They are also distinguished not by the amount of their revenues but by the number of men they can bring into the field. Thus one is called the Rajah of 1,200, another of 2,000, etc. according to the strength of his army. Their whole force consists of foot, horse being useless in so hilly a country. They use principally bows and arrows and swords. They poison their arrows with a very subtle poison which is produced in their country. The Rajah of Palpa is the only one among them who understands Persian: he serves as their interpreter in any affairs they may have to transact with the Mussulman States.<sup>27</sup> The Mustang Rajah is different from them.<sup>28</sup>

## K

### On religion, justice and government

The gylong who was sent by the Lama to explain to me the papers upon these subjects which he had given me, one day spoke to me to the following purpose. "How propitious is your destiny among so many of your countrymen. You alone have had the good fortune to arrive in the presence of the Lama, and what superior advantages have you had over other travellers who are only allowed to see him at a distance, while you are admitted to long conversations and he has laid open to you the treasures of religion and the principles of justice which are hid from the rest of mankind". Happy people who are ignorant of all those doubts and uncertainties with which the arrogance of the sceptics and the vain imaginations of philosophers have troubled the world.

[There follows a list of the Ten Commandments with the main headings written in transliterated Tibetan. Perhaps Bogle prepared this for the Tashi Lama. It is omitted here].

In Tibet, as in ancient Gothic Kingdoms of Europe, a standard is fixed for the fine to be paid for the murder, and varies according to the rank of the person slain. It serves also to ascertain the different conditions of the people, and is as follows. [Some Tibetan names and terms are omitted].

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27. By 1805, when Palpa was finally conquered by the Gurkhas, it was also falling under British influence by virtue of its position adjacent to the Company territory.

28. Mustang is situated right up in the high mountains on the Tibetan border, and culturally it is very close indeed to Tibet. It certainly has no place in any list of the Chaubisi States.

1. The chief Lamas, next to the Great Lamas who being equal to the Firmament in dignity are excluded, the King of the Country, under which title Gesub, Pandita and other Kalons are comprehended.

2. A Dzungpön, or Governor of a fort or a district, who has 300 servants or more, and a Lama that is superior in a monastery or group.

3. An inferior Lama, the gylongs or priests, and a Dzungpön who has 100 servants or more.

4. A Dzungpön who has above 50 servants, or one that holds inferior office in Government, a secular priest, and a petty Chief.

5. A landholder, an archer, a young priest, and a soldier wearing a sword.

6. An inferior servant, an unlearned priest.

7. A man who has no ground, a butcher.

8. A blacksmith and other tradesmen who have some land, people without any fixed abode.

9. A handicraftsman without any land.

The fines or composition of the murder of the several classes is estimated as follows.

1st. class.

Not under 15 tank<sup>29</sup> of gold, sometimes 20 or 30, and above half of the murderer's land. There are instances in former times of the corpse being weighed against gold, and this quantity paid by the murderer; and at this day the Khampas are obliged to pay an annual fine having many years ago killed one of the Kings of Tibet.

2nd. class.

The fine 2,000 Caal<sup>30</sup> of tow which is paid to the heirs of the deceased, also 1,064 Caal to procure his forgiveness and 400 Caal of barley and 40 Caal of butter to be applied toward saying masses for the good of the deceased's soul.

3rd. class.

1,200 Caal tow, 532 Caal tow, 200 Caal barley, 20 Caal butter.

4th class.

600 Caal tow, 266 Caal tow, 100 Caal barley, 10 Caal butter.

5th class.

300 Caal tow, 168 Caal tow, 60 Caal barley, 6 Caal butter.

29. See Note .2 above. A tank or tanka, if it does not mean the weight of the coin of that name used in Tibet, could well refer to a measure of weight of varying value used by Indian goldsmiths. See: Wilson, *Glossary, op. cit.*, p. 508.

30. Perhaps by Caal is Bogle means call, a weight equivalent to about 60 lbs. Avoirdupois (see Ch. XIII below, Note 7). Tow is the flax fibre ready for spinning.

6th class.

240 Caal tow, 112 Caal tow, 40 Caal barley, 4 Caal butter.

7th class.

180 Caal tow, 84 Caal tow, 30 Caal barley, 3 Caal butter.

8th class.

120 Caal tow, 56 Caal tow, 20 Caal barley, 2 Caal butter.

9th class.

60 to 90 Caal tow, 35 Caal tow, 10 to 15 Caal barley, 1 or 2 Caal butter.

## L

### Marathas<sup>91</sup>

31. When Bogle compiled these notes the British establishment in Bengal knew relatively little about the Marathas. The Mahratha confederation, established by Sivaji in the 17th century as, so some Indian historians have argued, a kind of Hindu reaction to centuries of Muslim domination, was in close contact with the Company settlement of Bombay; but Bombay, unlike Bengal and Madras, had retained to a very considerable degree its original character as a trading post and generally did not involve itself unduly in the affairs of the remoter hinterland. Thus the full extent of the Mahratha power was not appreciated in Bombay, let alone Calcutta.

In fact, by the time that Bogle was writing (1774-75) the Marathas had become the major indigenous power in Western and Central India. While their expansion (at least north-westward into the Punjab) had to some degree been checked by the Afghans (at the 3rd battle of Panipat) in 1761, yet in 1771 they had been able to occupy Delhi and take under their protection the Moghul Emperor Shah Alam. At this point their influence extended right across India from Gujarat in the west to the borders of Oudh, Benares and Bihar and Bengal in the east.

Friction between the Marathas and the Company, which had been endemic in the Bombay Presidency since the latter part of the 17th century, by 1774 had become the direct concern of Warren Hastings, now Governor-General of all the Company possessions in India (as a consequence of the 1773 Regulating Act): from that time Mahratha affairs were watched closely in Calcutta, as one imagines Bogle was well aware. The Anglo-Mahratha wars which then (December 1773 may well be taken as a convenient point for the start of a complex chain of events) commenced did not result in a final British victory until 1818 under the administration of the Marquess of Hastings.

The Maratha confederation (there never was anything like a single Mahratha state) was nominally headed by a line of rulers known as the Peshwas, with their capital at Poona (Pune). Subject in varying degree to the Peshwas were four major dynasties, Gaikwar of Baroda, Sindia of Gwalior, Holkar of Indore and Bhonsla of Nagpur.

Bogle's observations on the Marathas were included in his *Notes* because they represented odd titbits of information he was able to glean at Tashilhunpo from Chait Singh of Benares' wakil which one presumes he thought might interest Warren Hastings but which did not merit a formal report. Whether Hastings saw



[Source: Chait Singh's vakil].

There are four Chiefs dependent of Poona ..., Tukoji Holkar etc. They enjoy different jagirs on condition of furnishing a certain number of men when required by the Chief: they pay no annual tribute, but a peshcush or fine upon succeeding to their fiefs which are hereditary. Tukoji [Holkar] succeeded his uncle and paid 30 lakhs of rupees to the Rajah of Poona [the Peshwa] and twelve to the Rajah of Nagpur [Bhonsla].<sup>32</sup> In their respective districts their authority is complete: they administer justice and exercise almost every other prerogative of sovereignty. Their vassals are bound to appear in arms at the command of their superior and enjoy lands as pay of service, together with the plunder they may obtain.

The police is very strict and regular: if a traveller has anything stole from him, he applies to the Kutwal [head of local police] of the village, who, if he cannot discover the thief, pays him upon his solemn declaration the amount, taking a ... [formal] acknowledgement of his being satisfied. Thefts and robberies are uncommon.

Travellers generally find accommodation in sarais [inns] or choultries [public buildings]. They purchase provisions in the market and sleep in these houses. If there is no choultry, they pass the night in the house of the man from whom they buy their victuals.

The Maratha women are not confined as in the rest of Hindostan, but allowed to go about. When any merchant or peddler arrives at their house they ... purchase goods from him themselves without their husband being present. There are seldom instances of their infidelity although it is not punished with the severity as in other countries. When a husband discovers it in his wife he turns her out of doors.

The Marathas have a particular custom before they go to war. When assembled together they destroy and plunder three or four fields of corn,

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these *Notes* or not is not clear: it is probable that Bogle at least discussed their contents with him. The first publicly available British writing on the Marathas would appear to be: James Kerr, *A Short Historical Narrative of the Rise and rapid Advancement of the Maharattah State to the present Strength and the Conquest it has acquired in the East*, London 1782, and: Robert Orme, *Historical Fragments of the Mughal Empire*, London 1782. For a recent history, see: Stewart Gordon, *The New Cambridge History of India*, II-4, *The Marathas 1600-1818*, Cambridge 1993; A.R. Kulkarni, *The Marathas (1600-1848)*, New Delhi 1996.

32. Tukoji Holkar was in Bogle's day one of the leading Maratha commanders. He did not formally become the head of the Holkar family until 1795. He died in 1797. Given his military reputation, it would not have been difficult in 1774 or 1775 to describe Tukoji Holkar as *the* Holkar.

as a presage of the booty they are to get in their future invasions. It bodes good luck. They pay the proprietor for it.

The Marathas are like the fox who leaves the sheep and geese in his neighbourhood unmolested, but forages without mercy on those of distant villages.

**Note.** Bogle did not speak much Tibetan when he arrived at the Tashi Lama's residence, though he must have picked up some during his time in Bhutan. He surely acquired a significant knowledge of the language during his stay in Tibet, but probably not enough to conduct profound conversations with Tibetan scholars. He certainly could not read Tibetan. Inevitably, therefore, his major sources of information were those persons he encountered in Tibet who could speak Hindustani. The Tashi Lama, of course, was one: so also were those Kashmiri traders (some resident in Tibet) whom Bogle met easily enough through his Kashmiri assistant Mirza Settar; and so also were the various Gosains, notably Purangir. The vakils, representatives, of several Indian rulers to Tashilhumpo, particularly of Chait Singh of Benares and of the Nepalese, were another valuable mine of information which Bogle could exploit. There is also an interesting hint of a written Tibetan source which the Tashi Lama made available to him in, one presumes, a form or manner which he could read or at least understand, perhaps either in a Hindustani translation or accompanied by an exposition by a Hindustani speaking Tibetan monk: see the reference to just such an individual and process of explanation in the opening paragraph of section K of this Chapter. The Tashi Lama's "account of Tibet", which may well have included more than one element, is referred to in Ch. X above, p. 257.

## CHAPTER XII

### Negotiations in Bhutan and the Return to India April to June 1775

#### 1

#### Bogle's journal

On the 7th of April, 1775, as soon as I had taken leave of my friends at Tashilhunpo, I hurried down the hill, got on horseback, and began my journey towards Bengal. There was a large cavalcade of us. For, besides Mr. Hamilton, myself, Mirza Settar [the Kashmiri merchant], and our Bengal servants, and Purangir, the young Gosain who had formerly been sent to Calcutta by Tashi Lama, and an old Gosain<sup>1</sup>, who, afraid that in passing through Nepal he might be stripped of all the wealth he had been gathering during forty years trading pilgrimages from the banks of the Indus to the plains of Siberia, had obtained leave to pass in my company through the Bhutan mountains, and Deb Gylong, a priest of Tashi Lama's household, with Padma, and about ten Bhutanese servants, who were to escort me to the frontier of Bengal, there were all the Kashmiri merchants of Shigatse, who insisted on paying me the compliment of seeing me fairly on my journey.

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1. Suk-Debu (see: Note 2 to No. 13 in Chapter II above). This the same person as the Sukhdeogiri mentioned in No. 5 below in this Chapter, and in Ch. XIII below, No. 9: C, D & E.

After accommodating matters with a large party of clamorous beggars, we rode slowly over the plain which stretches southwards from the palace, and arrived at a large tent, where tea was provided. Having drank two or three dishes, I took leave of my Kashmiri friends, by interchanging handkerchiefs, compliments, and good wishes. The palace and town, the monastery of Tashilhunpo with its copper-gilt roofs, the castle of Shigatse, with the town below it, and the high surrounding hills, formed a fine prospect at this distance. But the bleakness and barrenness of the country were a great drawback; for not a single blade of grass had yet sprung, nor a tree budded.

We reached the end of our stage in the afternoon. It is a large village. Our landlord was a priest, and our room set off with an image of a former Lama, as large as life, and small images with lamps burning before them. All our Tibet attendants, Deb Gylong excepted, had well refreshed themselves at parting with their friends at Tashilhunpo, and I persuaded some of them to deprecate the wrath of the Lama's image by lighting pyes (perfumed torches) before it. However, drunkenness is either not a sin among the laity of Tibet, or, as happens in all cold countries, by being often committed is made light of.

On the road to Painam we met Depon Patza [Petsal], who was on his way to pay a visit to Tashi Lama, before he went to join his troops. He was preceded by his wife and her female attendants, mounted astride on horseback. She had her face half covered, like the Armenian women. But I was so taken up in getting a handkerchief ready for the General [Depon Patza], that I did not observe his lady till she was almost past. We alighted on both sides. The General courteously declined to receive my handkerchief till he had given me his. After some mutual inquiries, he said he had a house in the neighbourhood, where he would have been happy to have received me, and to have played another game at chess; but expecting soon to be again sent towards Nepal, and being obliged to wait on Tashi Lama before his departure, it was not in his power. This was polite. The rest of the conversation turned upon his late expedition into Demo Jong's country [Sikkim]. Soon after parting from him we came in sight of his house. It stands in the plain to the north of Painam, surrounded by willow and other trees. There is a long bridge at Painam, which we passed, and arrived at the house where we had formerly been accommodated.

Our journey from Painam to Bengal was prosecuted nearly by the same road which we had before travelled. Did I intend by these memoranda to enumerate only the names of villages, or the bearings and distances of the several stages, I should have but to put down a list, which might be added

to the book of *Posts of Asia*; for the face of the country had suffered no change by a revolution of six months, and, although the sun was now within twenty degrees of us, continued to exhibit the same inhospitable appearance as in the dead of winter. But I have often thought that trifling incidents, artlessly told, serve to mark the genius and to convey an idea of the manners of a people, better than abstract characters or studied descriptions. The last I will not attempt. If the first is sufficient, I may be able to give them.

A blind man, with a young wife, came into the court and serenaded us. He played on the fiddle underhandwise; she sang; and both, assisted by a young boy, beat time, hoppingly, with their feet. The object of this compliment, I fancy, it is needless to explain.

Our musicians gave way to a parcel of mendicant priests. It may be necessary to state that there are two sets of clergy in Tibet, distinguished by, and classed under the names of, Yellow Caps [Geluk-pa or dGe-lugs-pa sect] and Red Caps [Nyingma-pa or rNying-ma-pa sect]. Dalai and Tashi Lamas are at the head of the Yellow Caps; the Red Caps have their own Lamas and monasteries. In times of old there were violent disputes between them, in which the Yellow Caps got the victory, as well by the assistance of the Tatars as by their superior sanctity. But as I adhere to the tenets of this sect, and have acquired my knowledge of religion from its votaries, I will not here say much upon the subject, lest it should be thought spiteful. I may be allowed, however, just to mention two things, which must convince every unprejudiced person of the wicked lives and false doctrines of the Red Caps. In the first place, many of the clergy marry; and in the next, they persist, in opposition to religion and common sense, in wearing Red Caps. The priests who now visited us were of this last sect. There might be about eight of them. Each held a staff in one hand and a rosary in the other. They formed into a circle, and began to chant their prayers, which, as I understood they were put up for my welfare, I was in no haste to interrupt. At length, to show them that, however hostile to their principles, I bore them no personal grudge, I dismissed them with a few small pieces of silver.

In the night a heavy shower of snow came on, and I was glad to get up to save my dogs from it. I had to pass through the room where all Tashi Lama's servants slept, and I may as well tell how they were lying. Each man was stretched upon one blanket or two, I cannot positively affirm which. He had thrown off all his clothes, and then covered himself with his woollen tunics, of which everyone in the winter time wears at least three. His boots, doublet, belt, and pouch, with the things that were in it,

huddled all together, formed a pillow to his chin, for they were all lying on their faces, with their heads over the top of the bed, and in this posture were smoking tobacco and chatting together.

The snow lay upon the road about six fingers deep, and all the hills were whitened with it. It was a good time for beggars to ask charity, and there is no want of them at Painam, no more than in all the towns and large villages in Tibet. They are very importunate, and make their petitions in a shrill, plaintive note, following you a great way on the road. A traveller that wishes not to appear uncharitable, and at the same time does not choose to bestow too much money among them, had best make a good many beggars assemble together, and giving a few pieces of small coin, leave it to them to divide the alms. The Tibet folks sometimes give them little bits of handkerchiefs, which is giving nothing and an indramelli rupee, which is worth about a shilling, is the lowest coin in the country.

Next day we arrived at the house of our former hospitable Gyantse landlord, Depon Tangu, who received us with much kindness, and insisted upon our passing the following day with him. Mr. Hamilton's medicines had much relieved him from his complaints, and he was in fine spirits; and as we had seen him often at Tashilhunpo, we were now very intimate. He and I had many long chats together, which we moistened from time to time with tea, and at night we used to get cheery wood fires and sit round them.

A Kashmiri, afflicted with sore eyes, came all the way from Lhasa to Gyantse, to apply to Mr. Hamilton.

The same good humour which we had formerly met with prevailed at Dudukpai. The wife, her two husbands, the brother, who is a priest, and all the children came in after supper, and two hours passed in listening to the songs of the men, and in seeing the children dance. A maid-servant of the house also joined in the songs; but it was a difficult thing to get the wife to sing, which often happens with handsome women. As I could now make it out without an interpreter, I had much more satisfaction in these parties, and when one is travelling there is nothing like making amusement out of everything.

A few miles before you arrive at the next stage, there is a hot spring on the top of a pebbly mount. I did not observe it before. It issues out of a piece of rock, which is cut into a small basin to receive it. The water is more than blood heat, and brings up a great deal of air with it. It does not rise equally, but every half minute bursts up in large bubbles, and with a good deal of noise. There are many of these hot springs in Tibet, particularly in the province of Chamnamring (Namling), called Chang. I am

told coal is sometimes found in the neighbourhood of them, but in no great quantity. Some of these waters are so hot as to boil an egg, or to serve to dress victuals. They are much frequented by sick people, and are considered as a cure for almost every disease. Tashi Lama also and the great people sometimes visit them, though in perfect health. I have brought away a bottle of the water, which anyone that can may analyze.

## 2

### **Bogle to Hastings, 28 March 1775, Tashilhunpo**

Having received no letters from Calcutta for several months past, and having had no accounts of my despatches I had the honour to send you on the 5th of December having reached [Cooch] Behar, I have declined addressing you from the belief that my letters would not arrive safe, and this consideration will I hope serve to satisfy the lateness of the present trouble.

I have continued to receive repeated marks of Tashi Lama's favour, and at his desire have remained thus long at Tashilhunpo. I propose in a few days to take leave of him and begin my journey towards Bengal in company with the Gosain who was formerly sent by him to Calcutta and a priest who is to attend me to Tashichodzung, and second me with the Deb Rajah. I have at present only to request that you would be pleased as a mark of attention to Tashi Lama to give orders to the Custom Master and Murshidabad and Hugli to pass our boats without duty, and in case you have sent me any commands subsequent to your letter of 10th August [1774], that you would be so good as order copies of them, together with what farther instructions you may think proper to favour me with to be sent to the care of Lieutenant Williams whom I have given such directions as may ensure their safe arrival with me at Tashichodzung.

## 3

### **Bogle to Hastings, 25 April 1775, Paro**

I beg leave to trouble you with the copy of a letter which I did myself the honour to write of the 28th March.

I set out from Tashilhunpo on the 8th [7th in No. 1 above] instant, arrived here [Paro or Rinjipu] yesterday [24 April 1775], and propose in two days to proceed towards Tashichodzung, in company with the persons

mentioned in my last address.

I will do myself the pleasure of writing more fully by some of the servants, whom I am to despatch to [Cooch] Behar tomorrow.

#### 4

#### **Extract from letter from Bogle to Hastings, written at Paro in Bhutan on 27 April 1775<sup>2</sup>**

The Deb Rajah is now at Punakha, and I am not to see him till his return to Tashichodzong, which may be about twelve or fourteen days hence. I will endeavour to bring my business with him to a point, as expeditiously as possible: for I long to return to your presence; and although, I am afraid, my journey has not fully answered your expectations, no more than my wishes, I trust, when you consider the disadvantages under which I laboured, that you view my conduct with an indulgent eye.

#### 5

#### **Bogle to Hastings, 9 May 1775, Tashichodzong**

I arrived here [Tashichodzong] yesterday [8 May 1775].

Besides the Gosain whom Tashi Lama formerly sent out to Calcutta, I am accompanied by another, a merchant who for many years traded between Bengal and Tibet. The danger of returning through Nepal or Vijayapur, where his wealth would be exposed to Gorkha's rapacious fingers, has for sometimes past detained him at Tashilhunpo; and having procured from Tashi Lama a recommendation to the Deb Rajah, he is glad to embrace the opportunity of proceeding with me to Bengal.

He has with him a considerable quantity of gold dust. Imagining that it would be agreeable to you to have the refusal of it, I have obtained from him samples which I now beg leave to enclose. He asks fifteen Sicca Rupees for the Sicca Rupee weight of gold dust. If you wish to take it at that price, I will get him to bring it down to Calcutta; otherwise he proposes to dispose of it at Murshidabad where I suppose Kant Babu's people can purchase it from him at, or for an anna or two above, the market price, in case the rate he now fixes exceeds it. As the Deb Rajah is not expected to arrive here these six days, and I propose to remain with

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2. A copy of this letter is in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.



him at least eight or ten days, there is sufficient time to procure, by the dak [mail runner system in this context], information of the price at Murshidabad; and I have only to beg you will be so good as acquaint me with your pleasure in a note, directed to remain till my arrival at Dinajpur. The merchant's name is Sookdeogeen.<sup>3</sup> He says he has got about three thousand Rupees in gold; but I believe it more considerable. Purangir, the young Gosain, may have about eight or ten thousand Rupees worth, which he proposes to sell at Murshidabad where he has some accounts to settle. If you think proper to order me, I will give you notice of his arrival to Kant Babu's brother, who may treat with him about it.

## 6

### Hastings to Bogle, 9 May 1775, received at Tashichodzong 25 May 1775

I have received your letter of the 28th of March. I am happy to learn that your visit has proved so acceptable to Tashi Lama, and flatter myself it will be productive of the good consequences proposed from your journey to him. I have given the necessary orders to the Custom masters at Hugli and Murshidabad for passing at those places the boats which you or the Gosain who is accompanying you from Tashi Lama may bring with you.

I recommend it to you to use your utmost endeavours during your stay at Tashichodzong to settle conditions with the Deb Rajah for the establishment of an entire freedom of trade between his country and Bengal. The annual caravan may continue its trade to Rangpur on the customary terms. To effect this purpose you may even consent to relinquish the tribute or duty which is exacted from the Bhutan caravan which comes annually to Rangpur. To that place all their goods for trade, of whatever kind, may come at all times, free from any duty or impost whatever, and exempt from stoppage; and in like manner all goods shall pass from Bengal into Bhutan free from duty and molestation. The caravan pays to Government about two thousand rupees, but it is probable that the right of levying it may serve as a cover to much greater exactions, and that the surrender of this privilege may therefore be considered by the Deb Rajah

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3. Suk-Debu, or Sukhdeogiri, already mentionend and also in Ch. XIII below, No. 9: C, D & E.

as considerable. This is to be the groundwork of your negotiations. You will build such improvements on it as your own judgment and occasion may dictate.

You will probably, in the course of your conversations with the Deb Rajah on this subject, be able to discover how his personal interests may be affected by the proposed scheme; a proper attention to which, and an encouragement of any hopes of advantages he may entertain (provided his particular profits to be derived from it will not interfere with or obstruct the general plan), may greatly facilitate your negotiations; and for this purpose you will be equally solicitous to remove his objections, and calm his apprehensions of detriment to his interests or danger to his country, should any such arise in his mind.

The great object of your mission is, as I have explained it in my letter to the Deb Rajah, to open a communication of trade with Tashichodzung, and through that place to Lhasa and the most distant parts of Tibet. The advantages of such a plan to the Deb Rajah himself cannot escape him. His capital will become the centre of a commerce the most extensive and the most lucrative, if properly improved, of any inland trade perhaps in the world, and will derive the greatest benefits from it, by being the medium of communication between the countries of Tibet and Bengal. This country is too poor to be an object of conquest, and the expense and difficulty of maintaining the possession of it, if it were subdued, would be an insuperable objection to the attempt. To these you will add such other arguments as your own experience and recollection may suggest to you to engage the Deb Rajah's acquiescence in your plan, and his steady support of it hereafter. The only obstacle that can oppose your success is the jealousy of this Government. This you will find no difficulty in removing, and in convincing him that it is repugnant to every interest of the Company to look to any other connection with his country, than that of making it a mart or channel for a fair and honourable commerce, which will conduce as much to his interest as ours. Enclosed I send you copies of two letters which I have written to the Deb Rajah since you left him, which you may make use of as arguments of the sincerity and earnestness of my professions.<sup>4</sup>

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4. These letters, of 28 November 1774 and 6 January 1775, are printed in Chapter V above, Nos. 16 & 17.

## 7

**Hastings to Bogle, 10 May 1775, Fort William<sup>5</sup>**

I shall expect with impatience the report of your negotiations with Tashi Lama, the sequel of your journal, and your observations on the people and the country which you have visited. ... I am not anxious to see you soon in Bengal, where my power is suspended and my friends involved in the effects of my situation.<sup>6</sup> Do however as you please, but conclude matters with the Rajah [of Bhutan] in the best manner you can before you leave him. You may assure him that the Company will approve and confirm the pacific and rational connection which I have endeavoured to establish between him and their governments. ... I have ordered a fine Arabian colt which I designed for *my own riding* [Hastings' italics] to be sent to your Rajah, let him know the value of such a present.

I wish you would make another trial with the shawl goats and cows, but remember that for breeding there should be females as well as males, and a larger proportion of the former. The cows all died on the road from Behar. Seven goats are living and likely to live.

## 8

**Bogle to Hastings, 25 May 1775, Tashichodzong**

I have always considered it as the great object of my mission to remove

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5. This letter appeared in the antiquarian bookseller Maggs' catalogue of 1925, and was subsequently published by E. Cotton, "A Letter from Warren Hastings to George Bogle", *Bengal Past & Present*, XLII, July-December 1931.

6. This was at the low point in Hastings' fortunes as Governor-General. The three Councillors from England, Clavering, Monson and Francis, appointed under the 1773 Regulating Act, had arrived in Calcutta (October 1774) where they proceeded to challenge Hastings's authority. They were, under the new regulations, the Majority in the Bengal Council. Hastings is in effect warning Bogle that anything he might negotiate with the Bhutanese could well be repudiated by the Majority. With the death of Monson in the summer of 1776 Hastings began to recover power by virtue of his casting vote in the Council. Throughout this crisis he had one ally in the five man Council, Richard Barwell. The Regulating Act of 1773 and its background is discussed in the first volume. For an admirable account of the career of Warren Hastings, see: Penderel Moon, *Warren Hastings and British India*, London 1947.

the obstacles which merchants are at present exposed to in travelling between Bengal and Tibet, and by that means revive and increase the commerce between these two countries. If the Deb Rajah allowed freedom of trade through his dominions, and permitted the merchants of Tibet to come and purchase goods in his country, I should have had occasion only to apply for the Deb Rajah's permission for merchants to bring the commodities of Bengal to Paro, which, being the capital of this region, being situated on the road from Pharidzong, and having a communication with Bengal by Lakhiduar, Dellamkotta, and Buxaduar, is well adapted to be a central market for the merchandise of Bengal and Tibet. But the whole trade in the more valuable sort of goods is engrossed by the Deb Rajah and his officers, who are, in fact, the merchants of Bhutan. The few Tibetans who come to Paro are allowed only to exchange the salt and wool of their country for the rice of Bhutan. Were I, therefore, to apply for permission for merchants to bring their goods only to Paro, without obtaining leave for those of Tibet to come and trade to that place, the Deb Rajah and his officers, men not wealthy, and who, being engaged in the affairs of government, carry on their commercial concerns but to a small extent, and without that enterprising spirit which merchants possess, would in fact be the only purchasers, and the trade would remain on much the same footing as formerly, only that Paro, instead of Rangpur, would become the market for the commodities of Bengal. The consumption of Bengal goods, except tobacco, betel nut, and other bulky articles, is very small in the Deb Rajah's country; and while the people remain poor, and preserve their present simple manners, will probably continue so. It is no object in Bengal; and their only commodities for exportation are musk, horses, munjit [madder, red dye], blankets, and some thin twilled cloths. The first three have always been monopolised by the rulers of Bhutan, and they would reluctantly part with them. The importation of the last ought rather to be discouraged, as it interferes with the sale of serge and of coarse broadcloths [by the East India Company]. In the dread which the administration at Tashichodzong is at present in of another insurrection in favour of Deb Judhur [Zhidar<sup>7</sup>], supported by the government at Lhasa, it is impossible to apply for the Deb Rajah's consent to allow Tibetans a freedom of trade to Paro without awakening their suspicions of treachery. I determined therefore to refer everything in regard to native Tibetan merchants entirely to Tashi Lama, and endeavour to procure leave for Hindus and Mussulmen to go and come through the Deb Rajah's dominions between Bengal and Tibet, leaving it to them either to dispose of

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7. Sometimes also known as Desi Shidariva.

their goods at Paro or carry them into Tibet.

Having resolved all these things in my mind, and knowing the impracticability of obtaining permission for Europeans to trade into the Deb Rajah's country, I drew up the following paper:

whereas the trade between Bengal and Tibet was formerly very considerable, and all Hindu and Mussulman merchants were allowed to trade into Nepal, which was the centre of communication between the two countries; and whereas, from the wars and oppressions in Nepal, the merchants have of late years been unable to travel into that country, the Governor as well as the Deb Rajah, united in friendship, being desirous of removing these obstacles, so that merchants may carry on their trade free and secure as formerly, have agreed upon the following articles:

that the Bhutanese shall enjoy the privilege of trading to Rangpur as formerly, and shall also be allowed to proceed, either themselves or by their gumashtas, to all places in Bengal, for the purpose of trading and selling their horses, free from duty or hindrance:

that the duty hitherto exacted at Rangpur from the Bhutan caravan be from henceforward abolished:

that the Deb Rajah shall allow all Hindu and Mussulman merchants freely to pass and repass through his country between Bengal and Tibet:

that no English or European merchants shall enter the Deb Rajah's dominions:

that the exclusive trade in sandal-wood, indigo, red skins, tobacco, betel nut, and pan, shall remain with the Bhutanese, and that the merchants be prohibited from importing the same into the Deb Rajah's dominions;

and that the Governor shall confirm this in regard to indigo by an order to Rangpur.<sup>8</sup>

The preamble is intended more for the Tibetans than for the Deb Rajah, and I drew it up in this manner with the view of transmitting it to the Lama. The relinquishing the duty upon horses, which I am told is six annas in the rupee, was an offer I had before made, and reckoning it at a much larger sum than I find it yields to government, had laid great stress upon it. The permission for the Bhutanese merchants to trade throughout Bengal is mentioned in a letter to the Deb Rajah from the Governor, of 6th

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8. Bhutanese representatives came to Calcutta in the cold season of 1778-79 to agree these terms with the Company. See Chapter XIV below, No. 1. The resultant agreement, for some reason unknown, does not appear in *Aitchison's Treaties*.

January. I had also proposed it in the course of my conversations at Tashichodzong; and the duty upon a trade so beneficial to Bengal may well be given up. I must trust, therefore, to the Governor granting dustucks [passports or permits] to any gumashta [envoy] whom the Bhutanese may send beyond Rangpur. At present they seem to have little thoughts of it; but I am convinced that after their people arrive at Calcutta, discover numbers of curiosities which they never saw before, and find the price of broadcloth, coral, spices, etc., much lower than at Rangpur, they will fall into the practice of purchasing their goods at Calcutta; which will probably have the good consequence of increasing the sale of English broadcloth, and of lessening that of France, of which last great quantities are now purchased by the Bhutanese for the Tibet markets. The nil, or indigo, is produced, I believe, only in Rangpur, and has always been engrossed by the Bhutanese, so that the exclusive right of trading in this article is no more than they have always enjoyed. The other articles of sandal-wood, red skins [tanned goat skins], etc., are too bulky for foreign merchants to trade in them and I confess I was ready to give them up, in order to secure broadcloth, which I consider as the most important commodity in the trade of Tibet. I have more than once mentioned the impossibility of procuring leave for Europeans to trade into Bhutan, and without quieting their apprehensions on this head, I saw that I should neither carry any point in regard to trade with this government, nor hope to obtain the sanction and concurrence of the administration at Lhasa. These reasons will I hope serve to justify the concessions which I have made.

## 9

### **Bogle to Hastings, 9 June 1775, Cooch Behar**

I was duly honoured by your commands of the 9th ultimo enclosing a letter to the Deb Rajah which I delivered to him. I set out from Tashichodzong on the 30th ultimo and arrived here yesterday.

Before I submit to you an account of my negotiations with the Rajah, I beg leave to lay before you such circumstances in regard to Bhutan as may enable you to judge the grounds for my conduct.

The trade of the Deb Rajah's country is conducted in a manner very different perhaps to any other in the world. Its rulers are merchants, all the more valuable aspects of commerce are monopolised by them. They

purchase horses, musk, munjit [madder], etc., which they send to Rangpur and exchange for the commodities of Bengal. These they dispose of in Tibet, and the gain upon the traffic is one of the principal sources of profit which arise from their employment. Foreign merchants have always been excluded except the Kashmiri houses who in consideration of a large sum of money are permitted to transfer otter skins, chank [conch shells], and a few other articles through the country, and some Tibetan merchants who are allowed to barter salt and wool for rice. These that are in a manner by their policy as well as by these mountains cut off from any intercourse with the rest of the world, they are averse from innovations and ignorant of all the advantages which flow from a free and extensive commerce.

The political state of Bhutan is likewise very singular. The Deb Rajah sends annually money, woolen cloth etc. to Dalai Lama and his officers in Lhasa. This the former considers a present to the Head of the Church and as a testimony of friendship, while the latter regards it as a tribute and a mark of subjection. Deb Judhur [Zhidar] also by securing the Chinese seal gave the Emperor a claim to the sovereignty of Bhutan, and although the Bhutanese see themselves free and independent, the Tibetans look upon them as subjects and vassals. Deb Judhur with a view of engaging the Government at Lhasa in his interest offered to hold Bhutan under the Emperor, to allow two Chinese Viceroys to reside at his Court, to obey implicitly their commands, to pay an annual tribute, and in order to regain his authority and be revenged of his enemies, scruples not to subject his country to a foreign yoke. Gesub Rimpoché with a reason which I pretend not to account for seems lately to have espoused Deb Judhur's cause, and has actually sent two officers to Tashichodzung to apply that his partisans now in Tashichodzung may be pardoned and restored to their positions; and that the office of the Paro Penlop or some other government in Bhutan may be conferred on the existing Chief. In this situation the Government of Tashichodzung are ill at ease, and while they are using every means by presents and professions of deference and even dependence to secure the friendship of the numerous rulers of Tibet, are making preparations as if upon the eve of an invasion.

The Deb Rajah or his officers never expressed to me any suspicion of the English; but I know from others that he feels strongly that jealousy which I believe is common to all the people bordering on Bengal. He has received letters from Gesub Rimpoché warning him against allowing the English to enter or get a factory in Bhutan lest it should open a road for them into Tibet, and all the solicitude he formerly showed to defeat my journey to Tashi Lama and procure my return to Bengal were I believe

from this cause. His country, however poor and mountainous, appears to him who has never seen any other, as the paradise of the world; and he knows how desirous the Emperor of China is of reducing it to subjection merely for the fame of having added to his dominions.

I had many conferences at Tashichodzong on the subject of trade prior to the receipt of your orders and also seconded by Tashi Lama's people. I found all my arguments, proposals, promises and even oblique threats ineffectual. In short, I despaired of being able to carry any point. At length Tashi Lama's servants told me that the greatest obstacles arose from the Deb Rajah's dread of European merchants coming into his country, and that independent of his apprehension that the English would make themselves masters of Bhutan as they had done of Bengal, he could not admit Europeans into his kingdom without breaking with Lhasa and drawing upon himself the resentment of the Emperor. When I considered the importance of the trade with Tibet to Bengal and the advantages it had formerly derived from it while Asiatic merchants were allowed to trade freely through Nepal, and when I considered also how this trade had declined since Gorkha's conquests and oppression, and that a free communication is now left between the low countries, I scrupled not in order to introduce a proposal of reviving the beneficial commerce to give up a point which it was impossible to carry, and to assure the Deb Rajah that my application was confined to Hindus and Mussulmen, and that no English merchants should enter his dominions. After this I found him much more ready to listen to my proposals.

In the meantime I was favoured with the receipt of your commands, in obeying which I have ventured in some points to deviate from the letter of your instructions. I hope you will be convinced that it was in order to comply more fully with what I understood to be the point of them.

Did the Deb Rajah allow the merchants of Tibet to come freely into his dominions, this capital is extremely well situated to be the centre of commercial communication between Bengal and Tibet; but as the whole of the trade of his country is in the hands of the public officers, the merchants of Bengal after bringing their goods into Bhutan would have been at the mercy of these people, whose turn of mind as well as their funds is little adequate to promote a liberal and extensive commerce. For these reasons, which are more fully explained in an extract of my journal which I take the liberty to enclose, I judged it necessary to apply for the Deb Rajah's permission to all Hindus and Mussulmen merchants to trade between Bengal and Tibet through his territories, leaving it to them to dispose of their commodities to the Bhutanese if they could find a market



to exchange them with one another, or to proceed with the to Lhasa, and imagining that the matters of commerce, freedom and security is all that is necessary to promote, and that merchants are naturally led by their own initiative to carry it on to their greatest extent; and to conduct it in the best manner.

After many conversations of the subject, the Deb Rajah consented to my proposals and agreed to allow Hindu and Mussulmen merchants to pass and repass through his dominions upon some conditions which I believe are in the Tibet language which he approved. A copy of these proposals is included in the enclosed extract of my journals.

Agreeable to your instructions, I have given up to the Deb Rajah the duty hitherto exacted from the Bhutan caravan. The treaty of [Cooch] Behar by giving them a right to trade to Rangpur free from all duty seems to have established this, although not before claimed by the Government of Tashichodzung. I have granted them a right to trade to any part of Bengal, which is mentioned in your letter to the Deb Rajah of the 6th of January, and as they propose to allow merchants to pass through their country free from duty, I have taken the liberty to grant them the same indulgence in their trade in Bengal trusting that you will in consideration of the benefit which Bengal draws from this traffic grant them districts should they thereafter send any of their people beyond Rangpur. I have also consented that no merchant should carry indigo, sandal-wood and some other bulky commodities into their country. The first article is of the most consequence; it is produced in Rangpur and has always been engrossed and purchased only by the Bhutanese so that during the war in [Cooch] Behar, it was, I am told, almost unsalable. I gave them up this article to show them that you were desirous of preserving the advantages they had usually reaped from their trade at Rangpur, in order also to prevent them from insisting upon an exemption of broadcloth and coral which I consider the two staple commodities in the trade between Bengal and Tibet. The other articles of sandal-wood, etc., are too cumbersome and of too little value to be transported into Tibet by foreign merchants, and I own I put them in more to swell the catalogue in favour of the Bhutanese than from any other motive.

I transmitted a copy of my proposals to Tashi Lama requesting him to write to the Deb Rajah upon the subject, and I also endeavour to procure the approval and confirmation of the administration at Lhasa, which I should think he has sufficient influence to obtain when their apprehensions about Europeans are removed.

The Government at Tashichodzung is little used to treaties and those

formal compacts which nations more civilized and who maintain an extensive intercourse with foreign states are led to adopt. As I received assurances therefore from the Deb Rajah that he approved the terms I had proposed, I thought it better to rest satisfied with this than insist upon an exchange of treaties, which I should have an abundance of difficulty in procuring being a thing unusual among the Bhutanese except as the peace of [Cooch] Behar where the Company in treating with a beaten enemy could prescribe what terms and modes they pleased. I will confess, I wished also to know your sentiments of the measure I had taken and the concessions I had made before everything relative to this trade should be finally fixed, for although you have been pleased to entrust me with such full powers, I feel a diffidence in myself in a business so new and so important.

Having formerly laid before you the disadvantages which I had to encounter in executing the commission with which you are pleased to honour me, and having now chiefly submitted to you the grounds of my measures and the issue of my negotiations, I wait in solicitude for your decision upon my conduct.

## 10

### Translation of a letter (undated) from Tashi Lama to Mr. Bogle

Two Persian verses.

I am at present in perfect health and am day and night praying for your happiness. It is now two months since the curtain of separation has parted us, since which time you have not written me any news of your welfare. I wish the reason of this may be propitious. I have repeatedly written you which you will surely have received, and I wish you to remember to send me an answer.

I have now received a letter from Nusser Debo,<sup>9</sup> who went with you, written from the Dukbo [Drukpa] country [Bhutan]. By this I understand that you were arrived there, which makes me very happy, and I hope you will get safely to Calcutta and that I will soon be favoured with your letters giving me accounts of your prosperity and that of those who are with you.

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9. Who was Nusser Debo? It is most probable that the gosain Suk-Debu is intended; but it is just possible that the reference is to the Kashmiri merchant Mirza Settar.

A letter is equal to half a meeting.

I understand from Nusser Debo's letter that you applied to the Rajah of Dukbo [Bhutan] that your people, merchants, traders and others should be allowed to go by that road and that it should be kept open; and that the said Rajah did not give you altogether a plain answer. I hope that you will not on this account allow any uneasiness to enter your heart upon this subject. Whatever is proper and necessary I will write to the said Rajah, and it is certain that he will execute and attend to m admonitions.

My people spoke to the servant of the Rajah of Nepal about the road through that country etc., while you was here and has been sent to Nepal and my people have also repeatedly written to the Nepal Rajah on the subject of keeping the road open so that the people may go and come. A man will shortly arrive at Calcutta. By the blessing of God on both sides, there will be an extension of communication with Calcutta, and in this matter let your heart be confident. I hope that you will write me frequently on the road and after your arrival at Calcutta, that my mind may be at rest. For the rest, may your prosperity increase.

**Note.** The Tashi Lama continued to write [in Persian] both to Bogle and to Warren Hastings, or to communicate with them by way of Purangir Gosain, until his death in Peking in 1780. He was, however, increasingly constrained by a reluctance to appear to be conducting a foreign policy unapproved by the Chinese Government. As he wrote to Bogle in the early summer of 1775:

as this country is under the absolute sovereignty of the Emperor of China, who maintains an active and unrelaxed control over all its affairs, and as the forming of any connection of friendship with Foreign Powers is contrary to his pleasure, it will frequently be out of my power to dispatch any messengers to you.

## 11

### **Bogle's memoranda of conversations at Tashichodzong, May 1775**

Upon our arrival at Tashichodzong [8 May] we found the Deb Rajah and Lama Rimpoché [the religious head of the state, in Bhutanese the Je Khenpo, who usually served for a term of three years] absent at their palace at Punakha. They arrived on the 16th May.

We next day visited the Deb Rajah where nothing passed but ceremonies and compliments. He pressed me much to remain at Tashichodzong for three months. I excused myself upon fifty accounts. How

different it this from his past solicitude for my return to Bengal last year. I could assign many reasons for it; but it is not worth while. On the 18th May I acquainted the Donyer that I wanted to see him and he appointed next morning. Tashi Lama's priest [Deb Gylong], and Padma who stood my interpreter, were present. After some conversation on indifferent subjects I introduced the affair of merchants. I said I had formerly mentioned to him the Company's desire of extending the trade between Bengal and the northern countries and the Governor's concern to observe the oppressions and exactions which merchants were exposed to in travelling between Bengal and Tibet by the way of Nepal so that great numbers of Kashmiris and others had abandoned this trade. I had also by the Governor's order represented this to the Tashi Lama, who, being sensible of the truth of this and how much the freedom of commerce and security of trade tended to the advantage of Tibet and Bengal and of the whole world, had been pleased to say that as there was no dependence to be put on Gorkha who was continually engaged in war and treachery. He said he would write to the Deb Rajah to allow all merchants as Hindus, Mussulmen and Tibetans to transport their goods through Bhutan, and he advised me also to represent this when I should arrive at Tashichodzong. Agreeable therefore to the orders of my constituents and also of Tashi Lama, I now applied to him, the Deb Rajah, on the subject. I then set forth the advantages which his country would receive from allowing traders to pass through it; that the charge of transporting their goods would come into his subjects' hands; that the merchants if not liable to duties would make him considerable presents; that the Deb Rajah's compliance on this occasion would be the means of strengthening that friendship which was now happily established between him and the Company. As to the Bhutanese who trade into Bengal, I was ready to engage for the Governor's granting them any indulgence they could ask. If they thought proper to send their horses to Calcutta, Murshidabad or Patna, I made no doubt of a parwana being granted them by the Company who were ready by every means to protect and encourage their trade.

The Donyer heard me with great attention and without interrupting me except to ask explanations. He said it was very fine; but that it had never been the custom to permit merchants to travel throughout Bhutan; that the road was narrow and arduous and the Bhutanese of a hot and angry temper that they might strike or even kill a merchant or some of his people and thus instead of contributing to strengthening the good understanding give birth to quarrels and disputes. I replied that I had a very good opinion of the Bhutanese and was not afraid of any thing of that

sort happening. In regard to its not being customary for merchants to travel through Bhutan, I was sensible of the truth of this. As the present difficulties which merchants labour under was equally hurtful to Tibet and to Bengal, Tashi Lama concurred with the Governor in the necessity of removing them. There were only two ways of doing this. The first was by obtaining the Deb Rajah's leave to pass through his country: the other was by making application to Gorkha or Gorkha's son to treat the merchants with more indulgence. As the Company had no particular connection with Gorkha and the English were not fond of making new friendships, the Governor was in hopes the Deb Rajah would grant his request; but if he refused it he was then helpless and had nothing left but to beseech Tashi Lama to write to Gorkha and also send a vakil to Calcutta and thus endeavour to restore that freedom of trade which merchants formerly enjoyed. I begged the Donyer to represent all this in the best manner to the Deb Rajah, which he promised to do.

In the afternoon the Deb Rajah sent for me. He was alone and said he had therefore called me to listen to anything I might have to say to him, and to tell me about such matters as he wished me to represent to the Governor. I told him as to myself I had only one request to make which I had explained to the Donyer in the morning who would represent it to him. He said it was very well but that I might also mention it to him. This I had no mind to do; I knew his character too well. Though naturally good tempered, yet, having passed all his life among monks and in cloisters, he is unacquainted with public business which is conducted entirely by his officers; and he is apt to start difficulties which, having once passed through the mouth of the Deb Rajah, he considers himself bound to support. I excused myself therefore on the score of avoiding to trouble him. I said that I had been three hours explaining it to his Donyer who no doubt had or would represent it to his presence. I was ready to listen to any points he might be pleased to mention to me.

He said it was very well and then began to tell me a long story which I had heard two or three times over from Paro Penlop, the Governor of Rinjipu [Paro], the chief government of Bhutan on the road from Tibet, about some villages which he said had belonged from of old to the Bhutanese but had been lately usurped by the Rajah of Baikuntpur. He had ordered his people not to raise any disturbances on this account, reserving himself till my return when he intended to write to the Governor and hoped I would represent it properly. I commended his prudence, and requested he would give me the state of the case together with the subsidiary papers in Bengal. He then said he had thought of sending a vakil

to the Governor and to accompany me. I confess when I considered the unhealthy season of the year at Calcutta I was afraid of his falling sick or dying; and being the first Bhutanese who had ever gone to Calcutta I was apprehensive that an event of this kind might deter any man in future from undertaking the same journey. I therefore dissuaded him from sending him at present, and advised him to postpone it till after the rains, promising to apply to the Governor for the necessary passports and also that a man should be sent from Calcutta to Cooch Behar. In this he seemed to acquiesce. He then spoke to me about the merchants at Rangpur. The Paro Penlop had also complained to me about them in language not over moderate, but without giving me a representation in writing; and I afterwards deemed that his complaints were without foundation. I therefore begged the Deb Rajah to give me an account of the matter in Bengal which I believed he would not do. I do not recollect anything further that passed except on indifferent subjects and such conversations at Tashichodzong meant not to be repeated.

On the 22nd [May] I waited upon the Donyer carrying Padma as my interpreter. I told him I was anxious to return to Bengal and hoped that he had been so good as to represent what I had said about merchants to the Deb Rajah. He said it was very well and wished to satisfy the Governor in it, but that this country was mountainous and difficult. Many of the Deb Judhur's [Zhidar] people had escaped and were lurking in the jungles and committed robberies and murders. The Bhutanese were alas of a fiery temper and in case any merchants should be robbed or plundered it might create disturbances and misunderstandings between the Deb Rajah and the Company. I told him that Mirza Settar and one or two more Kashmiris had carried on their trade through the Deb Rajah's country without as I understood sustaining any loss. He interrupted me by saying that a gumashta at Rangpur had been plundered, but on enquiring from Mirza Settar I understood it had been done by Deb Judhur's people during the late insurrection and therefore was not a precedent for peaceable times. I next told him that the same way of reasoning would preclude the Bhutanese from trading at Rangpur, for being passionate and quarrelsome people they were liable to raise disturbances and therefore the Company in order to preserve the Deb Rajah's friendship ought not to allow a Bhutanese to enter Bengal from the same reason that the Deb Rajah would not allow a Bengali to come into Bhutan.

I happened to have in my bosom a representation which the Paro Penlop had given me complaining of the obstacles his people were subject to in their trade to Rangpur; and I gave it to him to read, after which I

asked him whether any complaints could be stronger than those. "But," says I, "why should they disturb the good understanding between my constituents and the Deb Rajah. If these complaints are well founded, the Governor will no doubt order them to be enquired into, and those who are in fault will be punished; and what more can the Deb Rajah do in the like case. For if merchants should happen to lose anything in Bhutan, I do not see why the Governor should interfere. They will represent it to the Deb Rajah who will no doubt give them redress. The same objections may be raised in every country against admitting merchants."

The Donyer then betook himself to the argument of its never having been the custom and that it was the Deb Rajah's wish to maintain the old customs. To that I observed that one or two Kashmiris had obtained leave of the Deb Rajah to carry on their trade through his country. "The sum of the matter, however," says I, "is this. I have by the Governor's order represented everything in regard to trade to Tashi Lama who has approved much of the Governor's desire of removing the obstacles at present subsisting and there are only two ways of doing this, the one through Gorkha and the other through Deb Rajah." That as Gorkha has seized Vijayapur, was on bad terms with the Deb Rajah and engaged in perpetual wars, the Company had at present no connection with him; but the Governor would not sit still and see the trade between Bengal and Tibet, which was formerly so considerable and so advantageous to Bengal, dwindle to nothing. If the Deb Rajah forced him to it he would probably apply to the Rajah of Nepal who I had no doubt would consent in case Tashi Lama seconded the application. But as the English dealt plainly and directly, I must tell him that any friendship established between the Company and Gorkha would certainly put an end to their friendship between them and the Deb Rajah: the interest of these two Chiefs were incompatible as Gorkha had already seized Vijayapur with a strong hand and would be very pleased to add Chichakotta and the other low lands to his possessions were he but assured that the Company would not interfere; but agreeable to Tashi Lama's letter and the Governor's desire, would grant that for the sake of Tashi Lama and of the Governor which former [Bhutanese] Rajahs had granted on the petition of a private Kashmiri. I then begged him to represent what I had said to the Deb Rajah, and told him that I would wait upon him next day.

After I came home Padma told me he believed a great part of the difficulty arose from the Deb Rajah's apprehensions that, having granted leave to Hindus and Mussulmen, the English would next claim the same privilege. The English might be a very good sort of people, but all the

world was afraid of them lest in the same manner as they had first as merchants entered into Bengal and afterwards conquered it, they would also conquer other countries. He also told me the Deb Rajah had spoken much about the arrogance and violence of the English merchants which it becometh me not to repeat. Besides all this, even supposing him well inclined to allow the English to come into the country, he could not do it without bringing the Emperor of China and the Government of Lhasa upon his shoulders.

The situation in which the Deb Rajah stands with the Emperor of China is singular and I may as well mention it here as elsewhere. The Bhutanese many years ago were engaged in a war with the Tibetans. They were at first successful, afterwards not; and the Tibetans penetrated into the heart of their country. They made peace and agreed to acknowledge the Government at Lhasa as their superior.<sup>10</sup> The Chinese had not then reduced Tibet to the state of dependence it is at present. The Bhutanese send an annual present to Lhasa which, when the Government devolved upon the late Dalai Lama, was made to him; and having always enjoyed the privilege of electing their own Chief and appointing their officers, they have considered it rather as an offering to the head of the Church than as a tribute or mark of dependence. Deb Judhur [Zhidar] upon succeeding to the Government formed the design of rendering himself independent of

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10. In c. 1714 the Tibetan Government, under the influence of the Mongol chieftain Lhabsang Khan and on the very eve of attack from another Mongol group, the Dzungars, invaded Bhutan. The cause of the dispute seems to have been the status of the monastery of Tawang to the east of Bhutan and the adjacent territory of Monyul. Bhutanese sources suggest that in the end the Tibetans were expelled. In 1730 the Lhasa authorities under Pho-lha-nas became involved in a revolt against the Deb Rajah of the time and sent troops into Bhutanese territory. Negotiations then resulted. According to Bhutanese sources the main outcome was the decision of the Bhutanese to send a trade official, known as the Drug Lochchag or Bod Drugpa, on an annual mission to Lhasa (a practice that continued until very recently (certainly to 1950; and one Bhutanese writer says 1959). Tibetan sources indicate that this official was in fact a Bhutanese political envoy whose purpose it was to pay his respects to the Lhasa Government and generally accept some kind of Bhutanese tributary status to Tibet. Bogle's analysis of the ambiguities inherent in Tibeto-Bhutanese relations and their consequences is extremely interesting. See, for example: Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. 145; Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *History of Bhutan. Land of the Peaceful Dragon*, Thimpu 1980, p. 66; C.T. Dorji, *A History of Bhutan based on Buddhism*, Thimpu 1994, p. 116. M. Aris (*Bhutan. The Early History of a Himalayan Kingdom*, Warminster 1979, p. 259) agreed that the 1730 conflict resulted in "a formal acceptance of Manchu suzerainty in Bhutan" which, he added, was "never implemented by the Chinese and soon repudiated by the Bhutanese."



the priests; and in order to ingratiate himself with the administration at Lhasa applied for or consented to receive the Emperor of China's seal. It was sent him; and assembling all his officers he dressed himself in the Chinese khilat [formal dress], assumed the title of Most Fortunate which his destiny has since belied, and from that day issued all orders under the Emperor's signet. When Deb Judhur was expelled, the Chinese seal was lain aside, though only upon pretence of its being in his name. Gesub Rimpoché wrote to Peking for another which by some accident fell into the hands of the Khampas, a wild nation on the borders of China, and was destroyed. The Bhutanese in general never having felt the rigour of a foreign yoke would, I believe, be very loth to submit themselves to Chinese viceroys; but Lama Rimpoché's situation obliges him to temporize and to profess great deference for the Emperor, while the miscarriage of the seal, which Gesub is afraid to represent to the haughty Court at Peking, helps him to keep things in a state of ambiguity. Fully sensible, therefore, that to obtain leave for the English to trade with Bhutan or Tibet was a point impossible to obtain, I made no difficulty in giving up what I could not carry. Sitting down with Padma, I got him to draw up a memorial in the Tibet language setting forth the substance of what I had before represented to the Donyer, laying great stress upon Tashi Lama's approbation and letter to the Deb Rajah, and mentioning that my application was for Mussulmen and Hindu merchants and for no other caste or tribe.

In the meantime I visited the Tashichodzong Dzongpön, and after giving him this paper to read, I told him that I had before represented this subject through the Donyer and that I hoped also for his good offices and recommended it to the Deb Rajah. He said he had formerly understood this and set forth the same reasons against it as the Donyer had yesterday given me on account of its occasioning disaster. I used much the same arguments as I had before used with the Donyer and concluded with offering that the affair was of consequence, as upon it depended in great measure the friendship of the Company. We had a long conversation, but there was nothing new either on his part or mine and I have no mind to repeat the arguments.

I next waited upon the Donyer and delivered to him the memorandum for the Deb Rajah. He said that as to the Kashmiris who were allowed to transport their goods through the country, they were confined to otter skins, chank and a few other articles. If many Hindus and Mussulmen were to come into the country they would distress the inhabitants with carrying burdens, and besides that there were no markets and bazaars in this kingdom as in Bengal. I replied that as the merchants would no doubt

pay the rate of carriage I did not see how the inhabitants could be distressed: there were no bazaars in Tibet no more than in Bhutan and yet the merchants found no difficulty in trading freely through that country. It lay with the Deb Rajah either to make the merchants give him presents or to impose a duty upon their goods which they would be very ready to pay. As to nil [indigo] and to sandal-wood, I was very willing that the exclusive trade in it should rest with the Bhutanese. As the liberty of trade was for the advantage of Bengal, I was very ready upon his granting it to make him and Lama Rimpoché presents on the part of the Company; but if after Tashi Lama's having written on the subject and the representations I now made on the part of the Governor the Deb Rajah would fall into no measures but absolutely refuse to grant any permission, I was helpless: I foresaw that it would break the chain of friendship between the Bhutanese and the Company which by the Governor's orders I had been at so much pains to strengthen. As to myself I should return to Calcutta loaded with shame and reproach. He said the Deb Rajah would write by me fully to the Governor and so exonerate me from censure. I replied that in the affairs of this world it was not words but an exchange of good offices which laid the foundations of friendship. In case the Deb Rajah thought proper to comply with the Governor's request, I had no doubt that by representing this in the most favourable manner that my constituents would be ready to grant any reasonable point the Deb Rajah might wish; but if he refused me, I could not carry his letters to the Governor. I knew in this case they would be very coldly received and at any rate I was the worst person in the world to urge them for if I did not succeed in this matter I should forfeit all credit with my constituents and had nothing to do but return into some corner. I begged the Donyer to represent these things to the Deb Rajah, and retired.

I next went to the Paro Penlop. Having mentioned to him the affair of the merchants which I told him the paper I had given to the Donyer would fully explain to him, he stated a great many difficulties. Among other things, he said that Tashi Lama was a great priest, and therefore venerated by all the people at Lhasa, and the Deb Rajah was afraid of giving umbrage to them. As this country (Bhutan) was subject to the Chinese he was also afraid of offending the Emperor by any innovations. I replied that Tashi Lama and the Government at Lhasa were the same. If Tashi Lama's business was only to pray, how come it that he had been the means of bringing about a peace between the Company and the Deb Rajah. As to the Chinese, I did not see how they could be displeased, that I only asked permission for Mussulmen and Hindus who were allowed to trade to

Lhasa, to Tashilhunpo, to Sining, through Tatar and even to Peking.

He was at some pains to understand that I applied only for Hindus and Mussulmen, after which he promised to give my representations all weight with the Deb Rajah. He then turned the conversation to some villages which he had formerly spoken to me about at Rinjipu [Paro]. They were anciently, as he said, possessed by the Deb Rajah, and had lately been seized by the Rajah [Darrap Deo] of Baikuntpur. He talked, as in this way, about half an hour, ending in desiring me to represent it properly to the Government [of the Company].

I begged him, as I had before done, that he would give me the state of the case written in Bengali, as I was ignorant of the names of the villages, how many years they had been in the hands of the Bhutanese, the rights by which the Deb Rajah held them, since when the Rajah of Baikuntpur had seized them; and I could not pretend to charge my memory with all these circumstances.

This he hesitated to do, saying that if Darrap Deo should be supported by the Company in preference to the Deb Rajah, it might bring difficulties upon him. He at length, however, consented though I own I had great doubts of his doing it. He again promised me to speak to Lama Rimpoché and to the Deb Rajah about my business and retired.

I next called on the Kalon.<sup>11</sup> I repeated some of the things I had said to others, he promised to speak to the Deb Rajah and was called away.

Lama Rimpoché sent for me. After waiting in the antechamber about an hour, I was admitted. The Paro Penlop and the Donyer were with him. We had tea and boiled rice with a piece of butter stuck in it and sugar on top, streaks of pork roasted and boiled, and a kind of mutton boiled, all in the same plate together with a cup of *giagu*, a Bhutanese dish which I formerly described. I had also a cup full of milk; but this was not according to the custom of Bhutan, where milk is never drunk. The Lama, who is abundantly inquisitive, asked me a number of questions about ships, different kinds of jewels, about Tashilhunpo, the Chinese in Tibet, and Bengal, all which I will not repeat. Nothing of business passed, and he is too great a man to deign to mix conversation with those anecdotes and remarks which rendered my audiences with Tashi Lama so agreeable.

Having taken leave of His Holiness, I accompanied the Donyer to his apartment. After some discourse on indifferent subjects I enquired about my business. He said he had been at pains in explaining it in the best

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11. An official appointed by the Lama Rimpoché as a link with the Deb Rajah's council, with the special duty of keeping the Lama Rimpoché informed of what was going on.

manner to the Deb Rajah, and to the Lama, but there were many people to be consulted, all his officers and God knows how many hundred gylongs. As it was contrary to the ancient custom there was great difficulty in getting them to agree to it. The Government of Lhasa whose pleasure it behoved them much to study, had not written upon the subject; neither had the Governor mentioned it in his letter.

As to the first, I said that Tashi Lama was well acquainted with the disposition of the Government at Lhasa and that Mussulmen and Hindus had from time immemorial been not only permitted but encouraged to trade into Tibet: they had been allowed to pass through Vijayapur, Morung, Demo Jong's country, through the different States of Nepal, in short through every country except the Deb Rajah's. If Gorkha had not conquered Nepal and oppressed the merchants I should have had an occasion to apply to him on the subject. The Governor could not write to the Deb Rajah to allow merchants to trade until he had obtained Tashi Lama's consent, because it was not with the Deb Rajah's country they were to trade but with Tibet. He had given me full powers and had written to the Deb Rajah to place full confidence in anything I might represent to him; and having received Tashi Lama's consent I now made my application. He said that he did not know of any such letter from the Governor: the Governor's letters were written in Persian, which nobody here understood, and they had hitherto been obliged to send them to Bengal for translation. I begged him to show me the Persian letter and I engaged to point it out to him; for they had shown it to Mirza Settar but not to me.

Says the Donyer, "if the Company would give us Rangpur we would hold it under them and pay an annual revenue for it." I looked at him for some time and then said, "you are joking." "No," says he, "it is no joke, it would be vastly well," and, holding up his thumbs which is the mark of the superlative degree among the Tibetans, "it would be equal to that." I replied, "it is so hot in Rangpur that you would all die." "No," quoth he, "we would send people inured to heat. I would remain there nine months of the year and pass the hottest months among the hills." "You had better", says I, "recover all the lands that anciently belonged to you before you think of acquiring new ones." He asked me what I meant: I told him Vijayapur, which was formerly subject to the Deb Rajah and was now seized by Gorkha.

It was rather strong; but I confess I had considered this as the grand key upon which I could touch the Deb Rajah, and that by engaging to procure the Governor's good offices with the new Rajah of Nepal to restore Vijayapur, and afterwards acting in concert with Tashi Lama so as to

prevent any jealousy or blood, I hoped to carry my points with the Bhutanese. He said Gorkha had some time ago written the Deb Rajah and given him promises of relinquishing it. I said several things to him not to trust too much in Gorkha's words; but it is needless to repeat them.

"Well but," quoth he, "if the Company would give us Rangpur it would be for the advantage of the whole world." "Before I give you any answer about Rangpur," says I, "will you answer one thing, are you subject to the Emperor of China or are you not?" He seemed a good deal struck with the question. At last he said: "no, the Emperor of China is master of his country and we are masters of ours. We have no Chinese officers and no Chinese come into Bhutan." "Because", says I, "the Paro Penlop told me yesterday that all were subject to the Emperor of China." "Paro Penlop," says he, "knows best what he says, I know what I think." "You had best," quoth I, "rattle this among yourselves whether or not you are a subject of China before you apply about Rangpur." He said nothing further upon the subject. I again recommended my business to him and retired.

I left the Donyer and went to the Kalon who asked me to carry down a Bhutanese with me to Calcutta. I replied I would carry a hundred if he pleased so the Deb Rajah would consent to the request I had made him; that I would engage to procure leave for the Bhutanese to go themselves or send their gumashtas into any part of Bengal; but if my application were refused I was afraid the Governor would hardly admit them into Rangpur. He replied that the Deb Rajah would grant it; and being a man fond of giving himself consequence he said that he would get it done. I gave all encouragement and took my leave.

Before I left the Palace I paid a visit to Lama Rimpoché's Donyer. I found him unacquainted with my business. I only told him that I had made an application to the Deb Rajah in the name of the Governor, and had also given it in writing; that as it was of consequence towards confirming the friendship between the Governor and the Deb Rajah, I trusted that Lama Rimpoché would approve and grant it. He said a great deal in answer, but it was commonplace and concluded with his promise of speaking to the Lama about it.

Next day I waited upon the Deb Rajah and received my public leave, dressed in a satin tunic, a small cap, and a piece of red serge cloth wrapped round me. He spoke nothing to me of business, nor I to him.

I then went the rounds of the Tashichodzong Dzongpön, of the Kalon and the Donyer. The two first gave me encouragement that my business would be done. The last [the Donyer] raised objections mixed with some promises; but I am tired of repeating my conversations over and over

again.

On the 25th [of May 1775] all the Deb Rajah's officers went to a castle a few miles from Tashichodzong so that I had not an opportunity of seeing them.

In the evening I received a letter from the Governor dated the 9th of May enclosing one to the Deb Rajah, which, being written in Persian, he returned to me, requesting a translation which I sent him.

In the morning I went to the Tashichodzong Dzongpön where I found likewise the Donyer and the Kalon. I told them that I had received a letter from the Governor instructing me to apply to the Deb Rajah to allow a freedom of trade through his country. In order to bring the matter to some point, I had drawn up a few articles which I was going to explain to them, requesting that they would represent them to the Deb Rajah and endeavour to procure his consent.

Padma who was with me, and is a most excellent interpreter, explained them. When I came to the article about indigo, the Donyer, who is always the spokesman, observed that broadcloth, coral, Bengal cloth, spices and something else ought to be included. I said that this was equal to a prohibition, and that he would leave nothing but diamonds, pearls and chank for the merchants to carry from Bengal to Tibet. He could not deny it; and although I know they are afraid of the trade on these articles being taken out of their hands, yet in none of their conversations have they ever put it on that footing, which I confess I would have had some difficulty to answer. I did not say any more upon the subject, being afraid that they would have insisted upon broadcloth which I had more at heart than any other articles.

Instead of giving his opinion on my paper, the Donyer began a subject which I had before heard nothing of. He said that the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar had ever since the time of Namugay [Ngawang Namgyal, the Shabdrung] been particularly connected with this government [of Bhutan] and paid an annual tribute to the Deb Rajah. Deb Judhur [Zhidar] by raising disturbances had given the English the footing they now had in [Cooch] Behar. As the Company and the Deb Rajah were united in friendship, he hoped things would be restored to their former state. I did not well understand him, and requested an explanation. He repeated that the Deb Rajah only wished to have things restored to their actual footing. I observed that restoring things to their former situation would be for the English to resign sovereignty of Cooch Behar, to relinquish the annual revenue which the Rajah in consideration of the protection of the Company had consented to pay, and I suppose he meant also should make

a present to the Deb Rajah.

He repeated that [Cooch] Behar ever since the time of Namugay (263 years) had been subject to the Deb Rajah, and had always paid an annual tribute: it had only been two years under the English. All Bengal was subject to the Company, and they could well spare so inconsiderable a province. I answered that it was a thing I could not meddle with.

"Why," says he, "the Governor has given you full powers, and engaged to ratify whatever you promises." I said it was very true, but surely he could never think that I would enter into any negotiation for taking a province, now subject to the Company, and making a present of it to the Deb Rajah. I was totally unacquainted with every thing that concerned [Cooch] Behar, having been employed in other business at Calcutta, and could not blindfold enter into any negotiation or engagement in a matter where I was perfectly ignorant. I believed further it was a proposition the Company would never listen to. The freedom of trade, which the Company wanted to establish, was for the advantage of the Deb Rajah's country as well as Bengal, and if the Deb Rajah imagined they would purchase it on such terms, he was much mistaken. The Company would rather, though unwillingly, apply to Gorkha, who wished to conciliate the favour of the English, and would I believe grant a free passage of merchants without difficulty.

He said the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar had written repeatedly to Tashichodzung complaining that he was unable to pay the revenue which the Company demanded, and that this last year, instead of receiving any tribute from [Cooch] Behar, the Deb Rajah had lent the Rajah five thousand rupees to make up the revenue to Rangpur. At the same time the government of the country was not entrusted to the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar, but was in the hands of the Company's officers.

I repeated that I was entirely ignorant of everything that regarded Cooch Behar. I knew not how much revenue it paid to Rangpur, nor how it was managed.

The Donyer said that the Buxa Subah used formerly to purchase dried fish and oil in [Cooch] Behar, that this year they had raised the price of both, so that he was unable to procure them. As to this I promised him any redress he could wish, and that I would engage that their trade in fish and oil should be restored to its former footing. "But," quoth I, "you are far too able a negotiator for me. I have now in consequence of the Governor's orders been applying these ten days to the Deb Rajah on the subject of trade; I offer to delete it in a way most advantageous to him; and, instead of giving me an answer, you start a story about [Cooch] Behar which I am

entirely unacquainted with, and which at any rate I never could take upon me. I beg you will represent to the Deb Rajah the proposals I have now explained to you, and procure from him an answer, as my health requires my speedy return to Bengal, and I have promised also to write to Tashi Lama by the return of his servants."

The Bhutanese servants brought in dinner; and so I retired, promising to come back in the morning.

After I went home, I sat down with Padma and translated the paper which I have already mentioned into the Tibet language. I wrote also a letter to the Donyer, referring to this paper and requesting him to lay it before the Deb Rajah; that in order to prevent any disputes or complaints about their merchants who could in future go to Rangpur, I would engage if the Deb Rajah thought proper that the Governor should annually send one of his own servants, or appoint an officer to reside at Rangpur during the continuance of the caravan, to represent any grievance to the Khil-ladar, and if not immediately redressed, to write to Calcutta about it. In regard to the purchasing of oil and fish, I promised that it should be settled according to the usual custom in any way the Deb Rajah chose. The affair of [Cooch] Behar was too important for me to meddle with, that I had never heard anything of it till that morning and was every way unacquainted with it. As the Deb Rajah proposed to send a vakil with me to Calcutta, I thought the best way would be for him to carry a vakil from the Rajah of Cooch Behar along with him, and jointly to make representations to the Governor, whom I was convinced would listen to any reasonable proposal from the Deb Rajah. I concluded that as I had laid before the Deb Rajah my sentiments in regard to merchants, I requested to be favoured with his, when the matter would be immediately settled.

When Padma had finished the letter, a servant of the Donyer's came to call me, so I carried it along with me. I found my Pharidzong Depon with my landlord at the stage of Gyantse [Depon Tangu], and two servants sitting with him. They were sent by Gesub Rimpoché and Tashi Lama to apply to the Deb Rajah in favour of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], that he would pardon the insurgents who fled into Tibet, and allow them to return to their homes. There are now about eighty of them at Pharidzong waiting the Deb Rajah's answer. They were likewise to propose that the Government of Paro, or some other of the governments in this country, should be bestowed on Deb Judhur. They talked a great deal: I did not understand them. The Donyer spoke little, and only said that he would represent it to the Deb Rajah. Before they went away we drank a dish of tea and talked on indifferent subjects.



It was now almost dark. The Donyer had my papers, and promised to lay them before the Deb Rajah. He then returned to [Cooch] Behar and pressed me to give him some writing about it, which I absolutely refused, saying that I would not write anything with my eyes blindfolded, and advised him to represent it by his vakil who was to go with me to Calcutta. "But," says he, "as the Governor has employed you in forming and establishing a friendship between the Company and the Deb Rajah, unless you second our vakil, he will be able to do nothing."

I told him that he was mistaken, that the Governor was entirely master of his own affairs, and needed no advice or assistance. He had given me ample powers to settle with the Deb Rajah in regard to trade; but my commission expired upon my return to Calcutta, and if I were to die the day after my arrival, it would make no alteration in the peace and friendship between the Company and the Deb Rajah. However, if he would instruct his vakil to confine his applications to procuring a diminution of the revenue of Behar, and that the Rajah of that province should make the Deb Rajah a consideration for his good offices on this occasion, and as a token of friendship, or if he had anything to represent about the internal government of [Cooch] Behar, I would promise him, after I understood it, to give his application all the advantage I could. If he intended, however, to apply to the Company to relinquish the sovereignty and the revenue of [Cooch] Behar, I would not speak to the Governor on the subject, for if I did he would think me wrong o'the head. Before I took my leave Padma came in, and told us that Deb Gylong, who had accompanied me from Tashi Lama, was dead at Paro, so that he was obliged to leave me next morning. It was now dark and I retired.

I could have wished that Padma had remained a day or two longer with me, that I might have known the Deb Rajah's resolutions before I wrote to Tashi Lama, but under the present circumstances the thing was impossible. I therefore sat down and got Padma to write the following letter to Tashi Lama.

To the Tashi Lama:

After taking leave from your presence I proceeded to Pharidzong, receiving every assistance and accommodation on the road agreeable to your orders. Upon my arrival in Bhutan the Deb Rajah was at Punakha, so that I did not see him till his return to Tashichodzong. I explained to him what I had before represented to you in regard to allowing Mussulmen and Hindu merchants to pass through the country. In answer, he told me that it had not been the ancient custom, that you had only written to him to send the Bhutan merchants to Rangpur and afterwards to sell their goods at

Pharidzong; sometimes he proposes that the Company should give Rangpur into his hands; at others that they should relinquish the sovereignty of Behar, which put itself under their protection when invaded by Deb Judhur; and I have now waited twelve days without any certain answer.

I now send a copy of the proposals I have made to the Deb Rajah enclosed, and hope you will approve of them, and as I know how desirous you are that the merchants should be free and secure, and as peace and friendship was established by your mediation, I hope you will be pleased to write to him to comply with the request I make him on the part of the Governor, which will serve to strengthen the friendship between them, and be for the advantage of the whole world. I request that you will please also represent it to Gesub Rimpoché and Dalai Lama at Lhasa and endeavour to procure their confirmation. You will thus confer a particular favour on the Governor, and the merchants being free and secure as formerly will praise your name. I beg your excuse for representing these things to your presence, but my credit is at stake.

I have received a letter from the Governor full of satisfaction at the kindness you were so good as to show me, and I must ever preserve the remembrance of them with gratitude. I will from my heart obey all your commands, knowing that I am thereby complying with the desire of my constituents. Should you have any intention of sending people to visit the temples in Bengal, be pleased to give your orders and information to us as to the time they will arrive in Behar, that every thing may be ready for their accommodation, and people be waiting to accompany them. I will afterwards write you from Calcutta. At present your servants who return to your Presence, being acquainted with all particulars, will represent them.

I begged Padma, as he knew everything that had passed between me and the Deb Rajah's officers, to represent it to the Sapon Chumbo for Tashi Lama's information and get him to take down a memorandum about this. I thought it best in my letter to Tashi Lama to represent things in the strongest light, and promised Padma to write him a note to Paro, where he proposes to stay some days, and inform him of the Deb Rajah's final answer.

The next day [27 May] the Deb Rajah sent for me to take leave. I first waited upon the Donyer, and told him that however desirous I was to return to Bengal, I could not think of taking leave of the Rajah without a precise answer to the propositions I had made him on the part of the Governor in regard to trade. Unless this matter were properly settled my journey or his wakil's journey to Calcutta was to very little purpose. I wished therefore to speak first to the Deb Rajah on this subject.

The Donyer represented this to the Deb Rajah; and I was called in.

The Deb Rajah in his formal manner, went back to my first arrival in his Presence, then proceeded with me to Tashi Lama, brought me back to Tashichodzong, and presaged me a happy journey to Calcutta. He said a

great deal about the Governor's friendship, clicking it according to the Bhutanese way with his two fore fingers, all which it would be tedious to repeat. I followed the Deb Rajah's footsteps, and travelled my journey over again, mixing it with many acknowledgements for the favours and civilities he had shown me. I then told him that the Governor in his letters to me, expressed the strongest desire for cultivating the Deb Rajah's friendship, and of preserving that peace and good understanding which was now happily established between him and the Company. The Governor had written to him on the subject of trade and had informed me to treat with him about it. I represented the freedom which merchants formerly enjoyed in trading between Bengal and Tibet through Nepal, and the advantages which that country had derived from it: although it produced neither gold nor silver, nor horses, nor manufactures, it had grown to be populous and wealthy. Gorkha by his wars and oppressions had forced the merchants to abandon it, and in a few years had reduced it to a state of poverty and desolation. The Governor, from his friendship and confidence in the Deb Rajah, was desirous of reviving the trade between Bengal and Tibet through the Deb Rajah's kingdom, which would thereby reap all the benefits which Nepal had formerly enjoyed. I had held many conversations with his officers on this subject, and had also given my proposals in writing, all which they had no doubt laid before him: I expected from him a favourable answer which would be the means of strengthening the friendship and good understanding between him and the Governor.

He replied in a very long and wary speech, which not understanding, I did not much like. Being explained to me, it contained the same objections as his officers had stated, first that in case of any merchants losing any goods, on being robbed by Deb Judhur's people, it might well occasion misunderstandings and quarrels between him and the Company, and next that he could only answer for his own country; that Tashi Lama, although a great Pontiff, held not the Government of Tibet, but it was managed by the Chinese officers and an administration at Lhasa (I know this but too well) and that he could not say whether they would allow merchants to proceed into their own country.

I replied as to the first, that the Governor had no concern about it: if merchants in travelling through Bhutan lost any goods, they would apply to him or his officers who would no doubt give them any redress. I would have included this in the paper I had sent him; but it was the custom of every country in the world, and was a point as clear as the sun, that however if he desired it I would give it him in writing and he might also if he pleased mention it in his letter to the Governor. I was very sensible

of the justness of what he said about the Government of Tibet; but that although the administration was carried on at Lhasa, he knew very well that Tashi Lama had a good deal to say. When I had formerly represented to Tashi Lama the obstacles which merchants suffered, he himself had proposed an application to him (the Deb Rajah) to allow them to pass through his country as the best remedy. I had since written to Tashi Lama on the subject and sent a copy of the paper I had given him in the Tibet language, requesting him to represent it to Lhasa. As this was a matter which reflected neither peace or war, nor governments, nor lands, but only the ease and freedom of trade which was established in Tibet, in Tatar, in China, and in every other country, I had no doubt of Tashi Lama's being able to procure the approval and confirmation of the Government at Lhasa. But, if contrary to all expectations, the administration at Lhasa should refuse to allow merchants to pass between Tibet and this country, I was helpless; and what could the Governor and what could the Deb Rajah do?

He (Deb Rajah) desired me to remember all what he had said to me; so that it might not in future breed any disturbances. "If the goods of any merchants," says he, "should be lost or stolen, I and my officers will readily do all in our power to find them and to seize the offenders; but if we cannot, I am not to blame. As far as my dominions extend, I will according to the Governor's desire, allow merchants to pass. I hope as you say my country will be the better for it; but I can only conduct them to the frontier of Tibet, and cannot answer for the Government at Lhasa who are masters in their territories as I am master in mine. However, I will also write to Tashi Lama upon the subject." I replied that I was perfectly satisfied with his answer and approved much of his writing to Tashi Lama, who as he was very desirous of encouraging merchants and trade, would be much pleased with this resolution.

He then turned the conversation to [Cooch] Behar. He said the Rajah was perpetually writing to him of the distress he was in to pay the Company's revenue, and he hoped the Company would lighten it. He then mentioned the actual footing which the Bhutanese were on with regard to [Cooch] Behar, in much the same manner as his Donyer had done; and I gave him much the same advice as I had given him before, to write to the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar to send down a wakil along with the Buxa Subah, and to instruct the latter to represent everything to the Governor, whom I was convinced would, as far as in his power, listen favourably to any representations from the Deb Rajah. He then asked me to assist his wakil in his applications at Calcutta, which I promised to do, for there is no

negotiating without confidence. He next spoke to me about the lands which anciently belonged to the Bhutanese and had been unjustly taken possession of by the Rajah of Baikuntpur. He said it was a small matter; but as the Company had agreed to restore all the lands held by the Bhutanese before the war, it was no more than their right. As to this I also gave him assurance.

I was now dressed in a red satin khilat. Two chests of walnuts and a large copper kettle were set before me, and having taken my leave I was carried to look at three Tangun horses which the Deb Rajah had bestowed upon me.

I had this day [28 May] my audience with Lama Rimpoché. The conversation was formal except that he told me he had been informed of my business, and had given orders to the Deb Rajah to listen to it favourably, and desired me in case I met with any difficulty to apply to him.

As his Dewan had left Tashichodzong, I informed his [Lama Rimpoché's] cousin who then came to see me of my proposals in regard to trade and everything that passed. The Lama Rimpoché afterwards wrote me two letters in which he said a great deal about the Governor's friendship; throwing out abundance of invectives against Deb Judhur [Zhidar]; said that he had ordered the Deb Rajah to settle my business, and did not fail to assert his superiority and his being Chief of Bhutan. But as he desired me not to let the Deb Rajah or any other body know that he had written me, and the letters were only explained to me by his cousin, I cannot pretend I put down a translation of them. The truth is he considers himself in the same light as Dalai Lama or Tashi Lama, and begins to copy after them, admitting every body into his presence, consulting and appearing to give orders about all the affairs of government, and yet after having passed so many years as a cipher, and in a state of imprisonment, he is almost afraid to avow the powers he has assumed: while he looks upon the Deb Rajah in the light of Chanzo Cusho, he dare not treat him as such.

In the evening I waited upon all the officers in Tashichodzong, and last of all upon the Donyer. He told me the Deb Rajah had written to the Governor about merchants, and repeated the substance of his letters. He then spoke about Cooch Behar. There was little new. He said [Cooch] Behar of old continued subject to the Bhutanese, until Deb Judhur [Zhidar] lost it by his ill judged war. I begged leave to differ from him. I said the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar was formerly independent being subject neither to Bhutan nor Bengal, that he occasionally sent presents to the Deb Rajah in consideration of the friendship between them, and the Deb Rajah

sent presents in return. In the same manner the Deb Rajah sends presents of cloths every year to Tashi Lama, who in return sends tea, etc.; but if Tashi Lama were therefore to order his troops into this country, to seize the Deb Rajah at Tashichodzong and carry him prisoner to Tashilhunpo, I believe he would be rather surprised. This Deb Judhur did, and many thousand Bhutanese, a thing formerly unbeknown, settled themselves in Behar. It was upon this Nazir Deo first applied for the assistance of the English, and the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar put himself under the protection of the Company and agreed to pay them an annual revenue. "For two years the Company's forces and your forces contended whether [Cooch] Behar should be subject to the English or to the Bhutanese. The rest you know."

He replied that the annual acknowledgement from [Cooch] Behar was not a present but a tribute, and that they never appointed any Rajah without the approval of the Bhutanese government. I insisted that this was in the same manner as the administration at Tashichodzong informed the administration at Lhasa, and also Tashi Lama, of any changes in the government, "and yet you," say I, "consider yourselves as your own masters; but there is one thing which puts it past a doubt. The Bhutanese paid annually to Rajah of [Cooch] Behar a tribute of tanguns [local horses] for Chichakotta which you never would have done if he had been your vassal, and his whole country had been subject to you." He said "it was only a present, in the same way as the Bhutanese paid so much every year to Rangpur, and yet", says he, "we are neither subject to Rangpur nor is Rangpur subject to us." I replied that this was only a duty upon horses; that it was not usual to fix presents precisely, and from a particular tract of land, and beside the Deb Rajah had actually acknowledged it in his treaty with the Company as a tribute and had consented to pay five tanguns to the Company as sovereigns of [Cooch] Behar. "Come," says he, "we are talking a great deal to very little purpose, where one goes a fishing if they can take great fish, so much the better, if they cannot catch great ones, they must be content with small."

After this we had a long conversation, but I recollect nothing which has not formerly been put down.

In the morning [29 May] the Deb Rajah went to a tent about half a mile from Tashichodzong and sent for me. After eating some pork stewed with onions along with his four officers, I went to take my final leave. He desired me to remember well everything that he had said to me, and promised to remember what I had said to him. He spoke a great deal about preserving the friendship of the Company; and after wishing me a

good journey, I retired.

After this I took leave of all the officers at Tashichodzong; and next morning [30 May] set out for Bengal in the company of the Deb Rajah's wakil.

## 12

### **Bogle to Hastings, 9 June 1775, Second Letter, Cooch Behar**

I was made very happy by the letter you honoured me with of the 10th ultimo,<sup>12</sup> and would have certainly continued some time longer with the Deb Rajah, who pressed me to it, but Tashi Lama's Gosain being anxious to get down to Calcutta, and myself out of order, with the rains ready to set in, when I would have found it almost impossible to travel, prevented me, and will, I hope, plead my excuse.

I have settled matters with the Deb Rajah in the best manner I could, though, I am afraid, not according to your wishes. There was, I beg leave to assure you, no possibility of obtaining his consent to allow Englishmen to travel into his country. The account I have given, in a separate address, of his own jealousy, and of his situation with respect to China, will serve to show this, and I know it to be all well founded. The Tashichodzong people, who are all very cautious and reserved, among the objections they at first started to my proposals never once mentioned the name of Europeans, but used their apprehensions of its breeding disturbances and misunderstandings, that it had never been the custom, and that it might give offence to the Emperor of China, and such like pretexts, to oppose my arguments and applications about trade. Nay, when I first offered to satisfy them about Europeans, which I knew to be the great bar, they pretended, insincerely, that they had no objections particularly to the English trading into their country; that they would even be glad of it, and accompanied all this with so many professions, so that I at first thought I had given up this point without gaining any advantage. My subsequent conferences, however, soon undeceived me. In short, I am convinced, if I had gone strongly upon the article of Europeans, either in Tibet or at Tashichodzong, that I should have increased their jealousy, and have been obliged to return without doing anything.

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12. This letter from Hastings to which Bogle refers would appear to be the document printed here above as No. 7. Markham, *op. cit.*, has 9 May, which would refer to Hastings' letter reproduced in this Chapter above as No. 6.

I am afraid, as I have not been able to carry this point, that my commission will gain me but little credit with the world; yet I cannot help flattering myself that it will be attended with not inconsiderable advantages to Bengal. If the Company think that commerce cannot be pushed with spirit, or carried to any extent, without the establishment of factories and the employment of English agents, they have only to consider what the trade of Bengal was before Europeans had anything to do with it; or, which is more to the purpose, to reflect what the trade between Bengal and Tibet was while Nepal continued free and independent. I am sure if your connection with Tashi Lama and the Deb Rajah serves to bring it back to that point, the benefit to Bengal will be very great. But I ask pardon for presuming to trouble you with my ideas on a subject you are so fully master of. As to myself, after having so long had the honour and satisfaction of serving you, I am only anxious that I may not, on this occasion, suffer in your good opinion.

I hope you will be pleased to approve of my reasons for not adhering strictly to the letter of your instructions. I am convinced things will soon come into the channel you seem to wish, and that the merchants, deterred by the length of the journey, and the opposition of climate between Lhasa and Calcutta, will fall into the way of selling and exchanging their commodities either at Paro or at Pharidzong, the frontier town of Tibet. But, without securing to them a freedom of going and coming from Bengal to Tibet, I was afraid that the Bhutanese, having everything in their hands, would be able to fix the prices of goods, and the trade would become trifling and languishing. When the Deb Rajah's fears of another insurrection blow over, I should think permission for the native Tibetan merchants to come to Paro may be easily obtained; but this must be done through Tashi Lama.

I could think of no way so effectual to engage the Deb Rajah's steady support and protection of traders as imposing a small duty upon their goods. I threw out this in my conversations before the receipt of your commands; but it was not taken up, and so I dropped it.

A few days before I left Tashichodzong, the Deb Rajah pressed me very much about some indulgence he wants to solicit for the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar; but as I understood nothing of the matter, and he did not seem to understand it well himself, I would make him no promises, but advised him to represent it to you by his vakil. He then asked me to represent it also, which I promised to do, after I shall know what it is; and ventured to assure him of your listening to any reasonable application from him; but further than this I would not do or say.



The Deb Rajah's vakil accompanied me from Tashichodzong to Buxaduar. I have pushed on to [Cooch] Behar, in order to prepare things for the reception of him and Tashi Lama's Gosains, and I expect their arrival here tomorrow or next day.

I never received the letter you were so good as to write me by the way of Nepal. I saw a vakil of Gorkha two or three times at Tashilhunpo, but he said nothing about it. I was supplied with what money I wanted by the old Gosain who now accompanies me, of which I will afterwards lay the accounts before you.

I gave the Deb Rajah a strong character of the Arab horses, and he is much pleased with your present, which, however, is not yet arrived here. He seems abundantly desirous of cultivating your friendship, but in such a way as may not give umbrage to Lhasa.

I am sorry for the mortality among the cattle, because it occasions the delay of a season. I have given Padma a particular memorandum to get some more goats and cows sent down after the rains; also to put Tashi Lama's people in mind of the tus [again, the animal rather than the wool], which he promised to procure for you; though, being a wild animal, I am afraid it will hardly live. We caught many musk goats, but they all died in a few days.

I am copying out the memoranda about my journey, which I shall have the honour to send you from Saibganj or Dinajpur; the other papers I beg leave to defer laying before you till my arrival in Calcutta, when I hope to have the pleasure of explaining them to you in person.

## 13

### **Bogle to Hastings, 20 June 1775, Saibganj<sup>13</sup>**

In obedience to your commands, I beg leave to trouble you with the continuation of the memorandums about my journey, and will have the honour of transmitting the sequel from Dinajpur.

The Arab horse is arrived within a few cos of this place, and I expect him up tomorrow.

I propose to leave this place [Saibganj] in two days and hope soon to pay my respects at Calcutta.

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13. Copies of Nos. 12 and 13 are to be found in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

## 14

**Bogle to Hastings, 6 July 1775, Dinajpur**

I take the liberty to enclose some memorandums about Tibet.

I am uneasy at not having your orders in answer to my letter of 9th May [No. 5 above, requesting instructions from Hastings for the purchase of gold]. I hope to be favoured with them on my arrival at the City [Calcutta].

I was honoured with your commands of 21st May [letter apparently missing] along with the Arab horse, and despatched him in good health from Saibganj on the 25th ultimo under charge of my harkara and the syces [grooms] who came with him from Calcutta.

[Bogle was back in Calcutta by 31 July 1775: on that day he wrote to his father, George Bogle (Senior), to announce his return from Tibet.]

## CHAPTER XIII

### Reactions to the Bogle Mission

#### 1

**Hastings to Bogle, undated [? July 1775], Fort William<sup>1</sup>**

My dear Bogle,

I have just received yours of the 6th [? July, see above Ch XII, No. 14]. Your other letters have come safe to hand. I have not answered them, expecting so soon to see you. But as you express an anxiety on this account, I wish to remove it as early as I can by telling you that I am perfectly satisfied and pleased with every circumstance of your conduct, and equally so with the issue of your commission. I wanted an open communication of trade between Tibet and Bengal, but I *do* not wish for leave to establish English residents. Whatever I might have thought of this point, I am now better pleased in having failed in it. I have hired two houses for your Ambassadors. I have many thanks to make for your journal which the world must have. Its merit shall not be lost where I can make it known. I have not yet read your last section, having had it only half an hour.

I am with the heartiest affection,  
Dear Bogle,

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1. Reproduced in facsimile, but undated, in Markham, *op. cit.*, p. cxlv.

Yours,  
Warren Hastings.

P.S.

Since writing the above I have read through the last chapter of your journal. I am pleased, exceedingly pleased, with all your proceedings, but most with this; and have had the satisfaction of discovering while I read it the place of your late residence Tashilhunpo in an old map of Tatory.<sup>2</sup>

## 2

### Extract from Warren Hastings to Dr. Samuel Johnson, 7 August 1775, Fort William<sup>3</sup>

An opportunity has lately presented itself for a search of a different nature, the result of which I take the liberty to present you with in accordance with the accompanying sheets, and beg your acceptance of them. They contain the journal of a friend of mine into the country of Tibet, which, though bordering on this, has till lately been little known to the inhabitants of it as if it was at a distance of many degrees. The people, their form of government, their manners, and even their climate differ as much from Bengal as Bengal does from England. When I read your account of

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2. It is not clear to which map Hastings is referring. Tashilhunpo does not appear on d'Anville's map; but it does on another French map, that of Delisle of 1705, which in turn was used by a number of English cartographers in the first half of the 18th Century.

3. Printed in Gleig, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 17-18, the whereabouts of the original not known to me. It is probable that the collection of Bogle papers presented to Dr. Johnson was very similar to that found in the De Lancey MS in the India Office Records (Mss Eur E 226/54), rather hastily compiled and containing nothing later than July 1775. It would seem that copies of this collection circulated not only in London but also in Paris and elsewhere, including India. A copy may well have been presented to the Royal Society, but if so, recent enquiries have failed to reveal any trace of it. It could well be to this collection that George Nesbitt Thompson is referring in his letter to Warren Hastings of 31 August 1798 (see: W.K. Firminger, ed., "The Nesbitt Thompson Papers", *Bengal Past & Present*, XX, January-June 1920).

Between 1765 and 1769, while he was in England, Warren Hastings made Dr. Johnson's acquaintance. It seems that Hastings tried to interest Johnson in the idea of establishing a Chair of Persian in the University of Oxford. In later years Johnson sent to Hastings his *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* (which was published in early 1775 and to which Hastings makes reference in this letter) as well as a copy of Sir William Jones' *Persian Grammar* (London 1772).

your visit to the Hebrides, I could not help wishing that a portion of that spirit which could draw so much entertainment and instruction from a region so little befriended by nature, or improved by the arts of society, could have animated Mr. Bogle, the author of this journal, but I flatter myself that you will find it not unworthy of your perusal. I confess I received great pleasure from it, and I assure myself that whatever originality you may discover in the description of the countries and inhabitants of which it treats, you will at least be pleased with the amiable character of the [Tashi] Lama, which has been confirmed to me by the testimonies of other travellers, who have visited his capital. I have added to the journal two letters from him, one of which furnished me with the first hint of deputing Mr. Bogle to his presence, and the other contains the issue of his negotiations. On these I shall make no comment.

I am afraid it may look like an ill compliment, after having desired your acceptance of this production, to tell you that I have endeavoured to prevail on the writer of them to put them into a more connected form, and to send them with some additional materials to England for publication. If it would not be assuming too great a liberty, I should request to be favoured with your opinion upon the propriety of this intention. The first copies of these sheets were taken, and intended for your perusal, long before I had any thoughts of making them public, and I cannot now deny myself the satisfaction of accomplishing that design whatever may be their future lot.

### 3

#### **Bogle's General Report on his return from Tibet, dated 30 September 1775, Calcutta**

The commission for opening a free intercourse between the inhabitants of Bengal and Tibet with which you were pleased to entrust me being now finished, I beg leave to lay before you an account of the course and issue of my negotiations.

But as the state of the countries which I lately visited is little known, it may not be improper to premise some circumstances regarding their situation and government. In doing this, however, I shall endeavour to avoid entering into those minute details which might swell this address to an improper length.

The range of mountains which stretches from the Morung country to the banks of the Brahmaputra and the north-east frontier of Bengal is

inhabited by a people known in Bengal by the name of Bhutanese. These mountains are divided by glens or deep valleys, with rapid rivers running through them. They are covered with the loftiest trees, and the snow lies upon the tops of some of them all the year round. The valleys and least steep parts of the mountains are cultivated, producing wheat, barley, and rice, sufficient not only for the support of the people, but even to form a considerable article in their commerce with their northern neighbours.

About two hundred and sixty years ago, this country, which I shall distinguish by the name of Bhutan, is said to have been united under one government by Noanumgay<sup>4</sup>, a disciple of the Lamas of Tibet. Before that time it was parcelled out among a number of petty and independent chieftains, who were engaged in perpetual wars and commanded fierce and barbarous vassals. Noanumgay, by forming laws and introducing religion, in concurrence with other causes, rendered the people obedient to a strict and regular administration. He was revered by his subjects during his lifetime as a great Lama, and is still worshipped by his descendants. His fame, however, is confined to Bhutan, and his spirit is considered only as an emanation from the Pontiffs of Tibet.

Upon his death his soul was supposed to be divided into equal portions, and to animate three different children, who were regarded as Lamas, and the supreme power was jointly vested in them, assisted by the clergy, to whom they owed their elevation [multiple reincarnation]. The same ingenious device furnished them with successors, and this form of government still continues. One of these Lamas, named Lama Giassatu, died about twelve years ago, and the person into whom his soul passed is not yet discovered; another, Lama Shabdong [Shabdrung], is a boy seven years of age, so that the whole authority of this priestly government at present resides in Lama Rimpoché [the Je Khenpo]. The executive administration is entrusted to an elective officer, styled Cusho Debo, who is known in Bengal by the name of the Deb Rajah.

The abilities of Deb Judhur [Zhidar], the last person who held this office, enabled him to render himself independent of the Lamas and the clergy, and he ruled Bhutan during five years with an absolute sway; but the oppression of his government, his violent measures in regard to [Cooch] Behar, and the unfortunate war with the English in which this engaged him, afforded the clergy an opportunity of deposing him, of driving him into exile, and of electing a new Chief in his stead. Upon this revolution Lama Rimpoché came to be considered as supreme, and

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4. Presumably Ngawang Namgyal, in which case the date should have been about one hundred and sixty years ago.

regained that authority in the government to which by the ancient constitution he thinks himself entitled.

The kingdom of Bhutan is far from being populous. The natives in the interior part of the country are generally above the middle size, of a robust and muscular make, and of a light copper complexion. They are of a hasty and quarrelsome temper, and addicted to the use of spirituous liquors. Theft and robbery, except in time of public disturbances, are little known. The higher class of people are formal and ceremonious in their manners, fond of long speeches, and although often acute and judicious in the affairs of their own state, yet having almost no intercourse with strangers, are reserved and difficult in business.

The country is defended by the inhabitants, who are all trained to the use of the bow or of the matchlock, and its steep mountains and arduous roads, leading over precipices and covered with thickets, form a barrier which an enemy might find it difficult to surmount.

The revenue of Bhutan is paid chiefly in rice, butter, and other articles, which are consumed by the priests and servants of government: or hoarded up in storehouses. The low countries which they possess on the borders of Bengal yield some money, and the custom by which upon the death of a public officer his estate escheats to the government, opens another source of revenue. But the people, although enjoying all the necessaries of life, are possessed of little wealth, and, indeed, have little occasion for it. The taxes upon the inhabitants are light; their possessions are hereditary; they hold their lands upon military tenures, being bound to fight, to carry burdens, and to perform other services for the government.

The kingdom of Tibet lies to the northward of Bhutan. The frontier town is Pharidzong. Tibet is called by the natives *Pu* - pronounced as in French. Tibet is full of mountains, inferior in height to those in the Deb Rajah's country, though they take their rise from a more elevated plain, which are intermixed with more extensive valleys. As Bhutan is the most woody country I ever saw, Tibet is the most bare and unsheltered; except in the neighbourhood of villages, a tree is seldom to be seen. The hills are covered with sand, stones, and gravel. The soil of the villages, though poor, is rather better, and produces, with good management, wheat, barley, and some peas, but no rice.

The climate is extremely cold; the lakes and rivers are covered with ice. The thermometer, in the month of December, at Chamnamring, which is in latitude  $31^{\circ} 39'$ , and about half a degree to the northward of Lhasa, used sometimes to be within  $3^{\circ}$  of the bottom of the scale, or  $29^{\circ}$  under

freezing point; and even in the middle of April, and in a more southern situation, heavy showers of snow fell, and standing water froze. The great elevation of the country above the sea, and the northerly winds which blow over Tatory, probably occasion this severity in the climate.

The Tibetans are of a smaller size and of a make much less robust than their southern neighbours. Their complexion is naturally as fair as the people in the south of Europe, and many of them have colour, some are quite ruddy: they are of a mild and cheerful temper. The higher rank of people at Tashi Lama's court are polite, and entertaining in conversation, with which they never mix any compliments or flattery.

Tibet was formerly independent, being governed by a succession of hereditary kings. About sixty years ago the ministers, conspiring together, put their king to death, and assumed the administration into their own hands. Mewan Cusho, his cupbearer, escaped towards Ladakh, and having spent some years in engaging the interest of the neighbouring chiefs, returned with a powerful army, defeated the ministers, and engaged, in consideration of protection, to hold his crown under the Emperor of China. After a wise and prosperous reign of thirty years he was succeeded by his son Wang Cusho.

The Lamas had long before this established themselves and their religion in Tibet. By the liberality or superstition of its kings, or by their influence with the Tatars, who often invaded the country, they procured grants of lands and villages, where they founded temples and monasteries. They were considered as sovereign Pontiffs, and adored as God's Vicegerents. Pilgrimages were made to them from different parts of Tatory, offerings of considerable value were presented to them, but they enjoyed not that degree of temporal power which the imprudence of Wang Cusho enabled them to obtain.

The tyranny and oppression of his administration, the murder of his brother, and, above all, his intention of becoming independent of China, were represented by Dalai Lama in the strongest colours to the Court of Peking, which accordingly issued orders to its officers at Lhasa; and Wang Cusho, betrayed by false promises, suffered death while he expected to be honoured with marks of the Emperor's favour. The tumult raised by his dependents, in which a great number of the Chinese were slain, was soon quelled. Their attempt to place his son in the government was defeated by the timidity and flight of the mother, and, according to the severe policy of the Chinese, every branch of the family was extirpated.

In consequence of this revolution the Lamas acquired fresh power and rose to political consequence. The Emperor, either in consideration of



Dalai Lama's pacific character, or as a reward of his fidelity, committed the administration into his hands, and his mild and popular government continued to the end of his life. Upon this event, which happened about eighteen years ago, Tashi Lama, the next in dignity, came to be considered as the chief man in the country. His character and abilities had secured him the favour of the Emperor, and his representations had great weight at the Court of Peking. About two years after Dalai Lama's death he discovered the child into whose body, according to their belief, the soul of the departed Lama had passed, and placed him in the chair of Potala, and his influence with the Emperor procured for Gesub Rimpoché, the cupbearer of the former Dalai Lama, the executive administration during his minority.

Two Chinese viceroys, with a guard of a thousand soldiers, are stationed at Lhasa, and are changed every three years. The Emperor of China is acknowledged as the sovereign of the country; the appointment to the first offices in the state is made by his order, and, in all measures of consequence, reference is first had to the Court of Peking; but the internal government of the country is committed entirely to natives; the Chinese in general are confined to the capital, no tribute is exacted, and the people of Tibet, except at Lhasa, hardly feel the weight of a foreign yoke.

The executive administration is in the hands of Gesub Rimpoché and four other ministers, styled Kalons. The governors of forts and provinces are appointed by them, and the revenue is collected by persons sent annually from Lhasa. But as Dalai Lama is now nearly of age, it is expected that the Emperor of China will invest him with the supreme authority which his predecessor enjoyed.

The influence of Tashi Lama in the government proceeds chiefly from the veneration that is paid to his character and the weight of his abilities. The Emperors of China being of Tatar extraction, profess the religion of the Lamas, and reverence them as the head of their faith; and the present monarch undertakes no expedition without consulting Tashi Lama, and sending him offerings to engage his prayers for its success. The influence which an able Pontiff may derive from this is obvious, and although Gesub Rimpoché is jealous of it, yet he is obliged to pay attention to the advice of Tashi Lama.

Any one that would give himself the trouble, might draw a striking parallel between the Lamas and the ancient Roman Pontiffs. The situation of the former, with respect to the monarchs of China, might well be compared to the protection and authority, which the successors of St. Peter derived from the German Emperors. Their pretensions to infallibility, the

reverence in which they are held by the people, the wide extent of their spiritual dominion, reaching over all Tataria and a great part of China, are perfectly similar. But this influence over the minds of the people, possessed by both, has been exercised by the Lamas, perhaps, in a manner more conducive to the happiness of mankind. The oblations of their followers are voluntary; their government is mild and equitable; they enter into no wars, but, on the contrary, often exert their authority in settling the quarrels among contending states. In their private character they are decent and exemplary, and, if I may judge of others by one under whose roof I lived, they are humane, charitable, and intelligent.

The religion of the Lamas is either derived from that of the Hindus, or improved by it. They retain, therefore, the greatest reverence for the Ganges and the places held holy in Hindustan. Before that country was invaded by the Mussulmans, the Lamas had monasteries and other religious foundations in Bengal, to which the Tibetan clergy used to resort in order to study the doctrines and learning of the Brahmans. But the conquest of the Moghul put an end to the intercourse. The Lamas' temples were plundered and destroyed, and their people driven out of the country; since which there has been little connection between the inhabitants of Tibet and Bengal.

The trade, however, which used to be carried on between the two countries was formerly very extensive, and the returns being made in gold dust, musk, cow-tails, and other valuable articles, it was highly beneficial to Bengal. I formerly took the liberty to represent to you the causes which of late years have occasioned the decline of the trade, and I now beg leave to lay before you an account of the steps that I took to remove them.

Although Tashi Lama is not entrusted with the actual government of the country, yet his authority and influence appear fully equal to accomplish the views which you entertain in regard to the encouragement of trade. His passports to merchants and travellers are obeyed universally throughout Tibet. He is revered by his own people, he is respected by his neighbours, and his mild and pacific character seems peculiarly suited to promote commerce. I found in Tashi Lama, therefore, the readiest disposition to co-operate with you in removing the obstacles to a free trade, and in adopting such measures as might increase the intercourse between the country and Tibet.

The tyrannical and faithless character of the [late] Gorkha Rajah [Prithvi Narayan], and his invasion of the territories of Demo Jong [Sikkim], a Rajah subject to Lhasa, left, however, no room for any negotiations with him towards reviving the trade through Nepal. But immediately upon the

news of his death, which arrived while I was at Tashilhunpo, Tashi Lama wrote to his successor, Pratap Singh, advising him, in the strongest manner, to allow merchants to trade through his country. His letter on this occasion was short, and I may be excused perhaps in inserting a translation of it:

To Pratap Singh,

[After a number of titles] I have heard of the death of your father, Prithvi Narayan. As this is the will of God you will not let your heart be cast down. You have now succeeded to the throne, and it is proper that you attend to the happiness of your people, and allow all merchants, as Hindus, Mussulmans, and the four castes, to go and come, and carry on their trade freely, which will tend to your advantage and to your good name. At present they are afraid of you, and no one will enter your country. Whatever has been the ancient custom let it be observed between you and me. It is improper that there should be more on your part, and it is improper that there should be more on mine.

Tashi Lama wrote also to the merchants at Lhasa and Tashilhunpo, the two principal towns in Tibet. He informed them of the security and protection which merchants enjoy at Bengal, and advised them to send gumashtas thither. The Kashmiri and Gosain merchants afterwards assured me, that in consequence of the encouragement and assistance which Tashi Lama had offered them, and the promises which I gave them of freedom and security in Bengal, they proposed, in case they could obtain leave from the Deb Rajah to pass through his country, to send gumashtas to Calcutta to purchase goods, as soon as the rains were over; and a wealthy Gosain merchant, afraid to travel through Nepal, actually embraced the opportunity of accompanying me to Calcutta. The Tibet merchants also came to visit me. But at the same time that they expressed their desire of complying with Tashi Lama's commands, they enlarged upon the heat and unhealthiness of Bengal, and declared their apprehensions of travelling into, what they considered, a distant and unknown country.

Prejudices of this kind are to be cured only by habit, and your compliance with Tashi Lama's desire of founding a monastery and temple on the banks of the Ganges will probably tend to remove these strong prepossessions against the climate of Bengal, and to produce an intercourse with the northern nations. The safe return of the people whom Tashi Lama proposes to send next winter to visit the holy places in Bengal will serve to inspire their countrymen with confidence; the fondness of the Tibetans for everything strange or curious, strengthened by religion, will probably lead many others to undertake so meritorious a journey; and

these pilgrimages, like the Haj at Mecca, may in time open a considerable mart for the commodities of Bengal.

Nor is the benefit which Bengal may derive from the resort of Tibetans the only advantage which the Company may obtain by their connection with Tashi Lama. He has written to the Changay Lama [Changkya Hutukhtu], who is the high-priest at the Court of Peking, and in great favour with the Emperor, advising him to send his people to visit the temples in Hindustan. He has also promised to use his best offices with the Emperor of China to procure leave for the Company to send a deputation to Peking. The first, I am convinced, will take place; and although, from the cautious and jealous policy of the Chinese, I am not too sanguine as to the last, yet the advantage of opening even an indirect communication with the Court of Peking is, I humbly apprehend, an object of some importance to the Company.

I could have wished, while I was in Tibet, and within a few days' journey of Lhasa, to have proceeded to that city, in order to have formed a connection with Gesub Rimpoché, and the rest of the administration there. But their jealousy rendered them averse from it. I could not have seen them, considering the public character I bore, without a considerable expense for presents; and while the Company's views in a communication with Tibet are only to an extension of commerce, I am inclined to think that Tashi Lama's influence is fully sufficient to accomplish them.

After passing five months in Tashi Lama's palace I returned to Bhutan. Tashi Lama at the same time wrote to the Deb Rajah on the, subject of merchants, and sent one of his people to assist me in my negotiations at Tashichodzong.

But I had now to prosecute my commission under circumstances very different from what I had experienced in Tibet. Tashi Lama, accustomed to an intercourse with strangers, fond of negotiation, and attentive to everything that can raise his character, entered warmly into views which coincided with his own. He had long wished for an opportunity of forming a connection with some of the powers in Hindustan. The authority of the Company was well known to him, and he had already got great reputation by the peace which his mediation had procured for the Bhutanese. His desire, therefore, of cultivating a friendship which tended to increase his influence, led him zealously to second your application, while his endeavours for the ease and convenience of merchants served to extend his fame. As he speaks the Hindustan language, and possesses a great degree of candour and affability, he conversed with me freely on every subject, and desired me to make my application immediately to him. He com-

municated to me the opposition which the government at Lhasa had made to my journey; he gave me their correspondence to read; he explained to me the letters which he wrote to them about trade, and told me plainly what could be accomplished and what could not.

The Deb Rajah, on the contrary, secluded from any connection with foreigners, is difficult of access, stiff and ceremonious in his manners, and indecisive in business. He is guided entirely by his officers, who are suspicious, and evasive; and in every matter of consequence the humour of several hundred priests is to be consulted, and the opinion of Lama Rimpoché, who, without experience or abilities, considers himself as supreme in the government, is to be received.

The administration at Tashichodzong accordingly made many objections to allowing merchants to pass through Bhutan, insisting that it had never been the custom for strangers to come into their kingdom; that the inhabitants were of a hot and violent temper, and the country woody and mountainous, and, in case of a merchant being robbed, it might occasion disputes and misunderstandings between them and the Company's government. I will not here take up your time with a repetition of the arguments I employed in combating their objections, and in endeavouring to convince them of the benefit which their country would derive from the resort of merchants; for I was sensible, while I used them, that the opposition of the Bhutanese to my proposals proceeded from motives which they industriously concealed. They were apprehensive that the admission of foreign merchants into their country would lessen the profits which they at present derive from their trade with Tibet, and they were still more afraid that by allowing strangers to come into Bhutan they would open a door to the introduction of Europeans.

Neither of these reasons, however, were ever avowed, or even mentioned by the Bhutanese, but they were on this account more difficult to overcome. Without quieting their scruples about Europeans, I foresaw that it was impossible to obtain a communication with Tibet through their country, or to procure the aid and concurrence of the ministry at Lhasa in encouraging and extending the trade with Bengal. I therefore gave up a point which it was impossible to carry, and gave them assurances that no European merchants should enter Bhutan.

Some time after my arrival at Tashichodzong I received your commands of the 9th of May [Ch. XII above, No. 6], in which you direct me to endeavour to render the Deb Rajah's capital the centre of communication between Bengal and Tibet. As I found it necessary to deviate in some measure from the letter of these orders, I hope you will believe that it

proceeded only from my desire to accomplish more effectually the purpose of my commission, and that the following reasons will serve to justify my conduct.

If the Deb Rajah allowed freedom of trade through his dominions, and permitted the merchants at Tibet to come and purchase goods in his country, I should only have had occasion to have applied for permission for merchants to bring the commodities of Bengal to Rinjipu [Paro], which, being the capital of this region of Bhutan, being situated on the road from Pharidzong, and having a communication with Bengal by Lakhiduar, Dellamkotta [Dalingdzong], and Buxaduar, is well adapted for a central market for the merchandise of Bengal and Tibet. But the whole trade in the more valuable sorts of goods is engrossed by the Deb Rajah and his officers, who are in fact the merchants of Bhutan. The few Tibetans who come to Rinjipu [Paro] are allowed only to exchange the salt and wool of their country for the rice of Bhutan. Had I, therefore, procured permission for merchants to bring their goods only to Rinjipu [Paro] without obtaining leave for those of Tibet to come and trade to that place, the Deb Rajah and his officers - men not wealthy, and who being engaged in the affairs of government carry on their commercial concerns but to a small extent, and without that enterprising spirit which merchants possess - would in fact have been the only purchasers, and the trade would have remained on much the same footing as formerly, only that Rinjipu [Paro] instead of Rangpur would have become the market for the commodities of Bengal. The consumption of Bengal goods, except tobacco, betel nut, and other bulky articles, is very small in the Deb Rajah's dominions, and while the people remain poor, and preserve their present simple manners, will probably continue so. It is no object to Bengal, and their only commodities for exportation are musk, horses, munjit [madder], blankets, and some thin twilled cloths. The first three have always been monopolised by the rulers of Bhutan, and they would reluctantly part with them; the importation of the last ought rather to be discouraged.

In the dread which the administration at Tashichodzong was then in an insurrection in favour of Deb Judhur, supported by the administration at Lhasa, I could not have applied for permission for Tibetans to trade freely to Rinjipu [Paro] without awakening suspicions of treachery, and I therefore judged it best to refer everything in regard to the merchants of Tibet entirely to Tashi Lama.

After many tiresome conferences and fruitless negotiations, in which I was assisted by Tashi Lama's people, I at length obtained the Deb Rajah's consent to allow Hindu and Mussulman merchants to pass through

Bhutan under some restrictions and concessions, which I have now the honour to submit to you, together with the reasons upon which they are grounded.

I transmitted a copy of those articles to Tashi Lama from Tashichodzong, requesting him at the same time to give them all advantages with the government at Lhasa, and to write to the Deb Rajah on the subject. I have since received a letter from him, written in answer to the accounts which his people sent him, of the difficulties that the Deb Rajah started to my proposals, of which I beg leave to lay before you a translation, as it strongly mark the earnestness and zeal with which the Lama interests himself in the success of the different objects of my commission.

In regard to procuring permission for Europeans to trade into Tibet, it was a point which I have already mentioned impossible of obtaining. In former times, when Europeans were settled in Hindustan merely as merchants, there would have been no difficulty in establishing factories and freedom of trade; but the power and elevation to which the English have now risen render them the objects of jealousy to all their neighbours. The opposition which was made to my proceeding into Tibet, as well as the many difficulties I had to encounter in the execution of my commission, arose from this source. The government at Lhasa considered me as sent to explore their country, which the ambition of the English might afterwards prompt them to invade, and their superiority in arms render their attempt successful.

I was at much pains during my stay among the inhabitants of Bhutan and Tibet to remove their prejudices; but I am convinced they can be effectually conquered only by the opportunities which a greater intercourse and more intimate acquaintance with the English may afford them of observing their fidelity to engagements, and the moderation of their views, and by an interchange of those good offices which serve to beget confidence between nations as well as between individuals. The increase of influence which Tashi Lama will derive from the government of Tibet being committed to Dalai Lama, and other circumstances which your connection with him may enable you to improve, will perhaps open the way to a privilege which at present I could not obtain.

While I was at Tashichodzong the Deb Rajah complained to me that he had not obtained full possession of all the lands which belonged to the Bhutanese before the war with [Cooch] Behar, and which by the late peace are to be restored to him; that Durrup Deo, the Rajah of Baikuntpur, has seized part of Kyranty which is particularly mentioned in that treaty, together with some villages on the border of his country. "I could easily",

said he, "oblige him to restore them, but he considers himself a vassal of the Company, and by attacking him may involve myself in a quarrel with the English." He desired me therefore to represent this to you, and to request that orders may either be issued to restore him to full possession of his lands, or that the Company may not interfere if he attempts to wrest them from the Rajah of Baikuntpur.<sup>5</sup>

He also spoke to me a great deal about [Cooch] Behar, alleging that it had formerly been dependent upon the Bhutanese, and that the strictest friendship had formerly subsisted between them and the Rajahs of that country; that his predecessor, Deb Judhur, by his unjust and precipitous measures, had now thrown [Cooch] Behar under the Company's protection, that the country was unable to pay the revenue which the Company demanded, and that the Rajah had beseeched him to apply to you [Warren Hastings] on this subject. He asked me at the same time if I imagined the Company would upon any terms restore Behar to its former state, and desired me to represent all this upon my arrival at Calcutta. I told him, in reply, that I did not imagine the Company would ever consent to relinquish the sovereignty of [Cooch] Behar and it was a proposition which I could not make. If the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar had any representations to offer either in regard to the internal government of his country or grievances, which he wished to have redressed, I had no doubt of your attending to the Deb Rajah's recommendations on these subjects, and that you would comply with them as far as was reasonable, or in your power. As the Deb Rajah was not sufficiently informed to enter into particulars, and proposed to send a vakil to Calcutta, he said he would write to the

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5. This, and the following four paragraphs, relating to Bhutanese involvement in and with the politics of Cooch Behar and its neighbours, are omitted by Markham.

Article I of the 1774 (25 April) Anglo-Bhutanese Treaty reads:

That the Honourable Company, wholly from consideration for the distress to which the Booteahs represent themselves to be reduced, and from the desire of living in peace with their neighbours, will relinquish the lands which belonged to the Deb Raja before the commencement of the war with the Raja of Cooch Behar, namely to the eastward the lands of Chichacotta and Pangolaghaut, and to the westward the lands of Kyrantee, Maraghaut and Luckeepoor.

As we shall see (Ch. XIV below, No. 25), this Article was not without, at least in Bhutanese eyes, its ambiguities, and was to give rise to further negotiations.



Behar Rajah to send one of his people along with him who would explain the points he wished to obtain.

I arrived at [Cooch] Behar with the Deb Rajah's servants; two days afterwards the young Rajah [Darendra Narayan] died. A vakil was not sent, and the Bhutanese who was with me had no opportunity of informing himself on this subject; saying, with the pride of his nation, "it was the business of the [Cooch] Behar people to apply to him, not his to apply to them." He has since written to the Deb Rajah on this subject; but has received no answer.

The assurances which I gave the Bhutanese, of their representation in favour of the [Cooch] Behar Rajah being attended to, were guarded and only general: yet I must confess that they had some influence in bringing them to consent to my propositions in regard to trade; and you may perhaps excuse me when you consider that I had scarcely any object of inducement by which I could interest them in my views. The right of trading to Rangpur was ancient and confirmed to them. The privilege of being allowed to trade to other parts of Bengal was a matter about which they seemed in general indifferent; and their narrow way of thinking, or the interest of the officers of the administration, rendered them blind to the benefits that might result to the country from the resort of merchants. Assurances of getting the borders of their kingdom adjusted, and the hopes of advantage and security which a close connection with the Company might afford them, were the only means I could use in order to bring the Bhutanese to my purpose.

From my acquaintance with the nature of the Bhutanese Government I can venture to assure you that there is no hazard of their again opposing their forces to those of the Company or creating disturbances on the borders of Bengal. The exactions which they made in the late war were entirely owing to the power and abilities of the Deb Judhur. The ill success that befell them has left a strong impression, and the administration having now reverted into the hands of the priests whose pacific character renders them averse from violent measures, the frontiers of Bengal towards Bhutan appear perfectly secure.<sup>6</sup>

I will now beg leave to submit to you my ideas on the nature of the trade between Bengal and Tibet, and on the measures which appear most likely to revive and extend it.

The most important commodity in this traffic is broadcloth; all the Tibetans of a station elevated above the populace are fond of wearing

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6. From this point Markham resumed the reproduction of Bogle's report.

gowns of it, and it forms also an article of their commerce with the neighbouring tribes of Tatars. The sale of broadcloth, however, from the causes which I have already mentioned, has greatly decreased of late years, and even of what is now consumed, a large portion is of French manufacture. I had occasion to buy several pieces in Tibet to give away in presents, and, except once, I never could meet with any English cloth.

The article of next importance is coral beads; great quantities of these are used in Tibet, and from thence also sent into Tataria. The want of supplies, and the consequent enhancement of the price, have affected this commodity in the same manner as the former.

I will not here particularise the different kinds of merchandise which have hitherto been exported from this country to Tibet, but beg leave to refer you to the accompanying list, in which I have put down the prices of the principal articles, together with the expense of transporting them. I must observe, however, that most of them were not to be had. The Bhutan caravan, on its return from Rangpur, would no doubt carry a supply of goods from Bengal, but in no degree equal to what the consumption of the country used formerly to take off.

But besides the articles hitherto employed in the trade with Tibet, there appears room to introduce or extend the sale of many new ones. The inhabitants are fond of everything that comes from a strange country, and even the lowest class of people possess a curiosity seldom to be met with. This promises a good opening for the sale of cutlery, glassware, and many other European manufactures.

The most eligible and effectual way in my opinion of extending the sale of British broadcloth in opposition to that of France, of increasing the sale of those goods which have usually been exported to Tibet, and of opening a mart for new articles of commerce, is to encourage the resort of Kashmiris, Gosains, Bhutanese, and Tibetans to Calcutta during the winter time; by making a sale of English broadcloth at that season they will be enabled to procure it at the lowest rate; and by granting them passports and escorts to the northern frontier of Bengal, they will be engaged to purchase the Company's cloth in preference to any other; while the variety of unknown merchandise which they will here find will naturally create a desire of carrying them with them on their return to their own country.

To remove the dread which the natives of Bhutan and Tibet entertain of this climate may, no doubt, require time and use. But when curiosity, religion, and interest conspire to prompt them to visit Bengal, nothing further appears necessary but the encouragement and protection of government.

The Kashmiri and Gosain merchants who propose to come to Calcutta during the next winter will, when furnished with Tashi Lama's passports, find no difficulty in travelling through Tibet; and the Deb Rajah, from the assurances he has given me, will, I am persuaded, readily grant them a passage through his kingdom from Pharidzong to the frontier of Bengal. But as the road has never yet been frequented by merchants, it may be necessary, on their arrival on the borders of [Cooch] Behar, that they should receive countenance and assistance, and that orders for that purpose should be issued.

The opening of the road through Nepal, and obtaining the abolition of the duties and exactions which have lately been imposed on trade in that country, appears an object of great importance towards establishing a free communication between Bengal and Tibet. The death of Prithvi Narayan, the late Rajah of Nepal, seems to afford a favourable opportunity of effecting this point. Tashi Lama is ready to second your endeavours for that purpose; and a proper management of the different interests which prevail among the chiefs on the borders of Nepal will, I am convinced, easily accomplish it. The steps which it may be proper to pursue it becometh not me to point out. But I may be excused, perhaps, in suggesting the advantage which you may derive, in all your negotiations with the people who possess the mountains to the northward of Bengal, by taking your measures jointly with Tashi Lama. His acquaintance with the state of those countries renders his opinion of much weight, and the influence which his holy character gives him among the different chiefs, being employed only to settle disputes and promote harmony, may enable you to accomplish by negotiation and peaceful means what that jealousy of the people and the strength of their situation might otherwise render it difficult to obtain.

When a road is opened through Nepal as well as Bhutan nothing further appears to me necessary towards accomplishing the business upon which I have lately been employed. In matters of commerce I humbly apprehend that freedom and security is all that is required. Merchants, left to themselves, naturally discover the most proper manner of conducting their trade, and, prompted by self-interest, carry it on to the greatest extent.

The disadvantages to which the novelty of my journey and the jealousy of the natives subjected me may, perhaps, entitle me to indulgence. I have executed my commission to the best of my abilities, and I now wait in solicitude for the judgment which may be passed upon my conduct.

## 4

**Bogle's Memorandum on the Money and Merchandise of Tibet  
appended to his General Report**

The only specie current in Tibet is the coin of the former Rajah's of Nepal called Indermilles [Mahendramalli].<sup>7</sup> These are of a base quality, much worn, but not having been imported since Gorka's conquest of Nepal they have rose to an exorbitant value. The bullion is brought from China in lumps of silver called Dozahs, which I believe are of a standard superior to the currency of Bengal, yet when weighed against Indermilles they were not equal to them in value by ten per cent. A Dozah which

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7. Named after the ruler of Kathmandu, Mahendra Malla of the Newar Malla Dynasty, who first struck silver coins in c. 1560. In Tibet, where an indigenous coinage did not exist, these coins soon began to circulate along with coins minted by the Moghuls and in Cooch Behar and, in the 17th century, in Assam. Around 1650 the Newar Ruler of Kathmandu was able to force upon the Tibetans a Nepalese monopoly for the minting of coins. Over time this coinage tended to become debased with a reduced silver content. When Prithvi Narayan took over the Newar states of the Kathmandu region, completed in 1769, he introduced a new and purer coinage, in the process diminishing the value of coins already circulating in Tibet to the great loss of the merchants. In 1775 Pratap Singh resumed the practice of issuing a coinage with a reduced silver content, and a treaty between Nepal and Tibet on this matter was negotiated at this time (but, it would seem, never fully accepted, let alone implemented: see, for example, the paper presented at the History of Tibet Conference, at St. Andrews, September 2001, by T.P. Mishra, "A Critical Assessment of the Nepal-Tibet Treaty 1856", p. 2; also Ch. XV below, No. 10). Arguments between Nepal and Tibet about coin values, however, continued, the Nepalese emphasising the bullion content and the Tibetans insisting that the older, debased, coins possessed the same monetary value as newer coins with higher bullion content. The Tibeto-Nepalese dispute over this question resulted in an outbreak of hostilities after 1789 culminating, in 1792, in the Chinese despatch of a large army in defence of the Tibetans.

According to Bogle the Indermille was worth somewhere in the general region of Rs. Sicca one to two; though his memorandum makes it clear that it was not easy to establish a definitive table of values for this category of currency. 6 or so Indemilles, so Bogle reported, equalled a unit of weight known in Tibet as a tank (tangka). 100 tanks equalled a call (? Bogle's caal) or about 30 seers, each seer being equal to 80 tolas, one tola being the weight in silver of a Sicca Rupee.

On the question of Tibeto-Nepalese coinage, see: N.C. Rhodes, "The Development of Currency in Tibet", in Michael Aris & Aung Sang Suu Kyi, *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*, Warminster 1979; Lucette Boulnois, *Poudre d'Or et Monnaie d'Argent au Tibet (principalement au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Paris 1983.

weighs 340 or 350 Indermilles was purchased with 320, 310 and even 300 Indermilles. The few Rupees of Bengal carried by the Gosains into Tibet were valued at 2 Indermilles to a Sicca Rupee. A bulse of gold dust, called a Gaitong and weighing  $9 \frac{1}{3}$  Indermilles was valued from 120 to 130 Indermilles. Thus the value of this coin, when compared with silver or with gold dust, is not fixed. The rate in the market during my stay in Tibet was daily rising. It may be difficult to reconcile the high value of the Indermilles in proportion to its intrinsic worth. I have noted the fact: to assign the cause would be rather curious than useful.

The broadcloth of five colours is esteemed before any other. There was none at market. The colours most prized are red, yellow and blue. The prices of these and other usual articles of trade were as follows:

broadcloth, coarse,	12 tank per yard - 80 Indermilles
Chank, male,	each 6 to 10 Indermilles
Cloves,	per seers, 54 Indermilles
Nutmegs,	5 or 6, 1 Indermille
Malda striped cloth, Mushroos [silk and cotton],	per piece, 40 Indermilles
Otter skins,	per score, 70 to 80 Indermilles
Coral, middling size,	per sicca weight, 15 to 18 Indermilles

Very large beads. Twice its weight in gold dust.

Cutlery, hardware and glass and many other commodities not being staple articles, it is impossible to ascertain the price. Small quantities are sometimes brought into Tibet by the Gosains which are much esteemed.

Amber beads, pearls and diamonds. The price of them depends entirely upon their size and goodness. The first is an article of common consumption and ready sale, the last two being purchased only by the people of high rank or by the Chinese. The price is high but the sale slow and uncertain.

It might be necessary to remark that the scarcity of Bengal and European goods while I was in Tibet no doubt served to enhance their value.

The returns from Tibet are made chiefly in gold dust, musk and cow-tails. The price of gold dust I have already mentioned.

Musk is generally brought in bags with a considerable portion of skin adhering to them. The price is from one half to three fourths its weight in Indermilles. The superfluous skin is from a sixth to a fourth of its weight, and if the musk is fresh, it loses by evaporation about a fourth part.

Cow-tails are from two to four Indermilles each.

The charges on transporting goods from Bengal to Tibet I estimate as follows:

One maund from Rangpur to Buxaduar	4 Indermilles
From Buxaduar to Paro	12 Indermilles
From Paro to Pharidzong	4 Indermilles
From Pharidzong to Lhasa or Tashilhunpo	4 Indermilles
Total	24 Indermilles

## 5

### Bogle to Hastings, Calcutta, 11 December 1775<sup>8</sup>

**Note.** On his return to Bengal, Bogle found his own situation extremely difficult because of the conflict then in progress between Hastings and his only ally, Richard Barwell, one the one hand, and the remaining three members of the Council, Francis, Monson and Clavering, on the other. Bogle was denied any salaried appointment in the Company service to which Hastings might propose to appoint him; and it is evident from the letter below that there was a critical, and unfriendly, examination of the expenses which he had incurred during his Tibetan and Bhutanese missions. The matter of expenses was soon cleared up and the accounts approved; but it was not until the end of 1776 that Bogle would occupy any Company salaried position other than that of assistant to Warren Hastings. Meanwhile his brother, Robert, had run into financial difficulties in Scotland; and the bulk of the *per mensem* allowance which Bogle was granted for the duration of his mission was sent home to help discharge Bogle family debts.

I have already laid before you a report of my late mission into Tibet. As it was impossible at the time of my appointment to foresee any probable expenses in countries hitherto unknown, and on business entirely new, no fixed allowance was made for them. They were left to be defrayed by me as the circumstances should require, and I was ordered to give an account of them on my return, which I now have the honour to submit to you.

Except the charge of servants' wages, they consist chiefly of presents: the other expenses of my journey being very inconsiderable. For according to the practice in Bhutan and Tibet, accommodations of all sorts were provided for me on the road. During my stay in the first of these countries I had a house allotted for my residence and provisions supplied me by the Government. While I remained with Tashi Lama I lived in his palace, and every necessary was provided for me by his orders.

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8. See: D.B. Diskalkar, "Bogle's Embassy to Tibet", *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, IX, Calcutta 1933.

A sense of hospitality, a regard to the character of the nations I represented, and above all the desire of forming a connection and good understanding with people hitherto strangers to the Company, and of facilitating my negotiations as to trade, rendered presents on my part necessary. These I have charged; and at the same time have given credit for such gold dust etc. as I received in return. But I have taken no notice of some pieces of silk, blankets and tangun horses as they were of little value and rather entailed upon me an expense. Neither have I charged such of my own effects as I gave away, or other expenses merely personal.

I have only to add that as you were pleased to prohibit me, and Mr. Hamilton who accompanied me, from engaging in trade, these charges were incurred only on the public service upon which I was deputed.

I take the liberty of troubling you with these particulars for the information of the Honourable Board. The circumstantial manner in which the accompanying accounts are stated precludes, I imagine, the necessity of any further explanation, and will serve to point out the propriety or impropriety of the disbursements.

## 6

### **Extract from Bengal Secret Consultations, 13th December 1775**

The Governor-General. It is my duty to express to the Board the sense I entertain of Mr. Bogle's services in his late deputation which has been conducted with great prudence and perseverance and produced all the effects which could be expected. The means being now furnished for a free communication of trade between this country and Tibet which has long been an object of the Company's attention and earnestly and repeatedly enjoined in their general letters. The accounts which have now been laid before the Board contain an exact account of his expenses. The presents which he has made and received besides which he has assured me that he has parted with many things of value belonging to himself and which he has not charged in the account. It must rest with the Board to determine in what mode his services on this expedition shall be rewarded. By the abolishing of the Select Committee [by the Regulating Act of 1773] and lately of the Sadar Diwani Adalat [Court of Appeals for Indian law, to which Bogle was appointed in March 1773 as Registrar] he has lost the only offices which he held in the service and he has now no other employment than that of acting as one of my assistants. I submit it to the

consideration of the Board whether a monthly allowance may not with propriety be granted him from the date of his appointment to proceed on his deputation to Tibet to the day of his return. The sum I leave at large to the determination of the Board.

Mr. Francis. I think he ought to be allowed a monthly salary and I dare say the Governor-General will not propose any salary in which I shall not be ready to acquiesce.

Mr. Barwell. Thinks Mr. Bogle should have a monthly salary allowed him.

Col. Monson. Thinks he should be allowed a monthly salary.

General Clavering. Thinks the same.

The Governor-General. Proposes that he be allowed a salary of 1200 Rupees *per mensem* during the period of his service, to wit from May 1774 to August 1775 inclusive.<sup>9</sup>

Agreed that the sum of Rupees 1200 *per mensem* be accordingly allowed Mr. Bogle during his absence.

## 7

### **Extract of the Secret Letter from Bengal, dated the 15th January 1776**

Mr. Bogle has laid before us the account of travelling charges on his expedition to Tibet, from which he deducted the amount of presents made to him by the Lama, and other persons. Being well satisfied with the manner in which Mr. Bogle has executed the hazardous and extraordinary service on which he was deputed, means being thereby furnished for a free communication of trade between this country and Tibet which has long

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9. The records do not leave it entirely clear quite when the Bogle mission ended. Bogle was back in Cooch Behar on 8 June 1775; but he may have delayed his final return to Calcutta for some time after that. There are grounds, though far from firm, for argument that Bogle did not get back to Calcutta until the very end of July 1775 at the earliest; and Hastings makes it clear here that the formal end of the mission was in August 1775.

The total cost of the Bogle mission was Rs. 34,368 and 6 annas, from which must be subtracted the sum of Rs. 6,498, being the value of gifts of silver and gold dust given by the Tashi Lama. The silver was valued at Rs. 1203 and the gold dust at Rs. 5295. All these were in Sicca Rupees. The exchange of Narraini Rupees for Sicca Rupees was 12,000 Narraini for 8,800 Sicca.

These accounts, of course, do not include the Rs. 1200 *per mensem* allowance. The Bogle Mission accounts are to be found in the India Office Records, Mss Eur E 226/58-60.



been an object of your attention, we agreed to allow him a salary of 1200 Rupees a month for the period of his absence.

## 8

### Extract from Public Letter from Bengal to the Court of Directors, 15 January 1776.

The Governor-General has received in presents from the Tashi Lama some ingots of gold and silver bullion, also some gold dust, and being desirous of sending them to you as samples of the product of mines in the Tibet country, we forward them in a box which makes a number in the book packet.<sup>10</sup>

## 9

### Persian letters relating to the affairs of Tibet

#### A

Received at Fort William on 22 March 1776: a complimentary letter from the Tashi Lama.<sup>11</sup>

#### B

Received at Fort William on 8 April 1776 from the Tashi Lama which:  
offers thanks to the Governor-General for having granted him permission to erect a house on the bank of the Ganges.<sup>12</sup>

#### C

Sent by Warren Hastings, at Fort William, to the Tashi Lama on 22 August 1776 which:

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10. A present of bullion from the Tashi Lama arrived in the latter part of 1775, presumably brought by Purangir Gosein. It was sent off to London for assay.

11. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. V, 1776-80, No. 91, Imperial Record Department, Calcutta 1930.

12. *Loc. cit.*, No. 108.

acknowledges the receipt of his presents. Both Mr. Bogle and Purangiri Gosain brought his letters expressing his satisfaction at the new of peace with the Deb Raja. Has learnt that he desires to obtain a house and a piece of land in this country on the banks of the river for religious purposes, and that he intends to send some of his men together with those of Changia Lama, High Priest of the Emperor of China, to visit the temples in Hindustan. His letters commending Sukhdeogiri, Denosipuri and Kishenpuri to his [Hastings'] favour and one by the dak bearing news of his good health have also been received. Is glad to hear from Mr. Bogle of the favour he [Tashi Lama] has shown to him and of his sincerity of friendship for the Governor-General and considers his presents as a token of that friendship. Says that his efforts to enlighten mankind and to lead them in the paths of virtue and happiness and to banish discord and enmity from their minds by implanting the principles of peace and harmony in them constitute a true worship of God. The writer [Hastings] in like manner is averse to wars and quarrels and has orders from his superiors to cultivate a good understanding with the different nations inhabiting on the borders of this country. Is therefore always disposed to act agreeably to his [Tashi Lama's] inclinations. Now that according to his desire and through his mediation peace has been made with the Bhutias he [Hastings] will try his best to maintain it. In compliance with his request has granted to him a hundred bighas of land on the banks of the Ganges opposite to Calcutta and on it has caused a house to be built and gardens to be laid out. Has written to the Company for proper sanads<sup>13</sup> which will be forwarded to him [the Tashi Lama] later. As his [Tashi Lama's] men were expected to visit the temples in Hindustan last year, Dr. Hamilton was sent to Bhutan with a view to conducting them to Calcutta. But as they did not come, the Doctor has been directed to await them on the borders till the advent of winter and upon their arrival to afford them every assistance and provide for them every accommodation on their journey to Calcutta. Sukhdeogiri after a short stay at Calcutta took leave and proceeded to Benares and Denosipuri also followed him thither. Mr. Bogle was asked to represent that the opening of a free communication for merchants between his country [Tibet] and Bengal was desirable, so that they might travel in security in the same manner as formerly. Says that commercial intercourse is for the advantage and improvement of the country and as he [Tashi Lama] himself is anxious to promote the general good of mankind hopes he [Tashi Lama] will join with him [Hastings] in bringing the proposal to a happy conclusion by obtaining the concurrence of the Chiefs of Oterakund. Longs very much to have an interview with him [Tashi Lama] but the distance of his place of residence and the almost impassable mountains which separate Bengal from his country and his own indispensable duties prevent him from doing so. Has the greatest confidence in Purangiri [Purangir Gosain] and has therefore entrusted to him some important matters which he will represent

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13. A sanad was a grant, diploma, charter or patent, a document conveying to an individual emoluments, titles, privileges, offices, or the government rights to revenue from land, &c., under the seal of the ruling authority. See: Wilson, *Glossary, op. cit.*, p. 460.

to him. Has also given Purangiri some presents for him ... and requests him accept them. Hopes to hear from him [Tashi Lama] every now and then.<sup>14</sup>

#### D

From Raja Chait Singh of Benares to Warren Hastings, received at Fort William on 30 December 1776, reporting that:

has received his [Hastings'] letter relating to the charge of theft against Sukhdeogiri Gosain of the conch-shell belonging to Dhanavart. The case was referred to the Governor-General by the Tashi Lama. According to the request of the Lama the case has been tried by the mahants and sanyasis of Benares and they have found him innocent. The proceedings of the case have been sent to the Lama. Hopes that the Governor-General will also write to him [Tashi Lama] that Gosain has been found innocent.<sup>15</sup>

#### E

From Raja Chait Singh of Benares to Warren Hastings, received at Fort William on 1 January 1777 which:

says that Sukhdeogiri is innocent of the charges brought against him by the Tashi Lama.<sup>16</sup>

#### F

From the Tashi Lama and received at Fort William on 5 February 1777, sending some presents.<sup>17</sup>

#### G

From the Tashi Lama's Dewan, or Chief Minister, and received at Fort William on 5 March 1777, which notifies Hastings that Tashi Lama has sent a vakil to Calcutta.<sup>18</sup>

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14. *Loc. cit.*, No.253.

15. *Loc. cit.*, No. 436.

16. *Loc. cit.*, No. 445.

17. *Loc. cit.*, No. 478.

18. *Loc. cit.*, No. 481.

## H

Hastings to the Tashi Lama, dated Fort William, 1 October 1778, which:

acknowledges the receipt of his letter. Says that the rumours of war which he had heard are baseless and that since the conclusion of peace with the Bhutanese agreeably to his wishes, he has been living on good terms with all the Chiefs of Hindustan. There was certainly a skirmish between his troops, who were on their way to Bombay, and a chief in the neighbourhood of Kalpi in which three of the Company's sepoy had been killed. News was then received that war had broken out between England and France and consequently he was obliged to seize the French factory in Bengal and to order an attack on their coast settlements. The Company's troops have accordingly besieged Pondicherry. Gosain has now had his leave to return; he was detained for a few days in order that a full account of these events might be communicated to the Lama through him. Requests him [Tashi Lama] to send Purangiri Gosain. Will ask his [Hastings'] men to attend on him and to make arrangements for his accommodation.<sup>19</sup>

## I

Hastings to the Tashi Lama, dated Fort William, 12 May 1779, reporting that:

the Lama's wakil, Purangiri Gosain, arrived in Calcutta with a letter from him [Tashi Lama]. The wakil desires to acquire a plot of land on the bank of the Ganges at Benares and to build a gonpa [temple] thereon after the model of the gonpas of Uttarkhand. He [Hastings] has therefore written to the Raja of Benares to grant the wakil a piece of land for this purpose.<sup>20</sup>

## J

Hastings to the Tashi Lama, Fort William, 12 August 1779, reports that:

Has received his [Tashi Lama's] letters accompanying presents. It appears from his writings that the Emperor of China sent the Lama some curious presents from his country and expressed a desire to have an interview with him in China. The Lama has accordingly sent to the Governor-General 450 tolas of gold with a request to purchase coral and pearls of large size and good lustre so that he may present them to the Emperor and to his other friends. He also desired to be supplied with an account of the expenses that may be incurred in the purchase of the required articles so that anything spent in excess may be reimbursed to the Governor-General. Says in reply that immediately after the receipt of his [Tashi Lama's] letters he [Hastings] ordered his men to look for the desired articles and with this end in view

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19. *Loc. cit.*, No. 1119.

20. *Loc. cit.*, No. 1486.

also wrote letters and despatched his men to Benares, Patna, Madras and other parts of India. Coral of such quality as is wanted by him [Tashi Lama] is not available at Calcutta or anywhere in Bengal as it is not commonly used by the people of those places. The merchants who formerly exported such articles to Tibet, being discouraged by the difficulties of the road, have given up their business. However, the men who have been sent to Madras are expected to procure the required articles. As the Lama will start for China in the month of September it is no use detaining Purangiri Gosain any longer. Has therefore given him leave and is sending through him two strings of coral and eight strings of pearls being all that he has hitherto procured. Has also ordered some beautiful and swift Arab horses which will be worth presenting to the Emperor. May his journey to China and his interview with the Emperor be prosperous and auspicious!

## 10

### Extract from the Company's General Letter to Bengal dated 16th April 1777

Para.10. As we wish to embrace all opportunities of cultivating such a friendship and good understanding with every nation of Hindustan, as may contribute to extend our commerce, enlarge our interests and add respect to the English name, we are glad to find that effectual methods have been adopted to open a communication with the Government of Tibet by the agency of Mr. Bogle, who appears to have been a person well qualified for the employment and to have acquitted himself to your satisfaction. We are pleased to see that he has punctually accounted for such presents as were received by him in his embassy, and we fully approve of the salary of Rupees 1200 per month allowed him during his absence, and we doubt not but that you will take ever occasion to continue a correspondence so happily begun with the Lama.

Para.11. We cannot but concur in your design of complying with the Lama's request of Buddhist temple on the banks of the Ganges, and for that purpose to accommodate him with a convenient spot of ground. We therefore direct you to make the grant in such a manner as may be most expressive of our good intentions towards him.

[This was transmitted to Bogle on 1 December 1777.]

## 11

*An Account of the Kingdom of Thibet,*

by John Stewart, FRS,

(communicated in a letter to Sir John Pringle, 20 March 1777)

**Note.** Communicated to the Royal Society in 1777 and published in that year in its *Philosophical Transactions*. This was the first published account of Bogle's visit to Tibet to appear; and it clearly contains much information from Bogle's journals and memoranda and other official sources. In addition, it is probable that Stewart was able to question Bogle on his Tibetan and Bhutanese experiences. No doubt Warren Hastings, who was then fighting for his career against enemies both in India and in England, was pleased to let it be known in England that he was so energetically seeking out alternative outlets for British trade. John Stewart, a Senior Merchant of the East India Company in Bengal, was a good friend of both Hastings and Bogle (not least because he was a fellow Scot). He returned to England from Calcutta in 1776 after having served for four years in senior Company legal posts. A French translation of Stewart's communication appeared in 1780.

The kingdom of Thibet,<sup>21</sup> though known by name ever since the days of Marco Paolo and other travellers of the 12th and 13th centuries, had never been properly explored by any European till the present period. It is true, some straggling missionaries of the begging orders had, at different times, penetrated into different parts of the country; but their observations, directed by ignorance and superstition, placed in a narrow sphere, could give no ideas but what were false and imperfect. Since them, the Jesuits have given the world, in Duhalde's *History of China*,<sup>22</sup> a short account of this country, collected with their usual pains and judgment, from Tartar relations, which, as far as it goes, seems to be pretty just.

This country commonly passes in Bengal under the name of Boutan. It lies to the northward of Hindostan, and is all along separated from it by a range of high and steep mountains, properly a continuation of the great

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21. Throughout Stewart's paper the original spelling has been retained.

22. Père J.B. Du Halde, *Description géographique, historique, chronologique et physique d l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*, 4 vols., Paris 1735. An English translation appeared in 1736. Vol. IV contains a version d'Anville's map of Tibet (based on Jesuit missionary sources) which it seems Bogle had with him on his Tibetan mission. There is evidence that the English translation of this work was undertaken, at least in part, by the young Samuel Johnson.

Caucasus, which stretches from the ancient Media an the shores of the Caspian sea, round the north-east frontiers of Persia, to Candahar [in Afghanistan] and Cassamire [Kashmir], and thence, continuing its course more easterly, forms the great northern barrier to the various provinces of the Mogol empire, and ends, as we have reason to believe, in Assam or China. This stupendous Tartar bulwark had ever been held impassable by the Mogols [Moghuls], and all other Mussulams conquerors of India; and though in the valleys lying between the lower mountains, which run out perpendicular to the main ridge, where reside various Indian people, whom they had occasionally made tributary to their power, they never had attempted a solid or permanent dominion over them. It was on occasion of a disputed succession between the heirs of one of the Rajah's or petty sovereigns of those people, that the Boutaners were called down from their mountains to the assistance of one of the parties; and our government engaged on the opposite side. The party assisted by us did not fail in the end to prevail; and in the course of this little war two people became acquainted who, though near neighbours, were equally strangers to each other. At the attack of a town called Cooch Behar, our troops and the Boutaners first met; and nothing could exceed their mutual surprize in the rencounter. The Boutaners, who had never met in the plains any other thin the timid Hindoos flying naked before them, saw for the first time, a body of men, uniformly clothed and accoutered, moving in regular order, and led on by men of complexion, dress, and features, such as they had never beheld before: and then the management of the artillery, and incessant fire of the musketry, was beyond any idea which they could have conceived of it. On the other hand, our people found themselves on a sudden engaged with a race of men unlike all their former opponents in India, uncouth in their appearance, and fierce in their assault, wrapped up in furs, and armed with bows and arrows and other weapons peculiar to them. The place was carried by our troops, and a great many things taken in the spoil, such as arms, clothing, and utensils of various sorts. Images in clay, in gold, in silver, and in enamel, were sent down to Calcutta; all which appeared perfectly Tartar, as we have them represented in the relations and drawings of travellers; and there were besides several pieces of Chinese paintings and manufactures. While those things continued to be the subject of much conversation and curiosity to us in Bengal, the fame of our exploits in the war had reached the court of Thibet, and awakened the attention of the Tayshoo [Tashi] Lama, who (the Delai Lama being a minor) was then at the head of the state. The Dah Terriah, or Deb Rajah as he is called in Bengal (who rules immediately over the Boutaners, and

had engaged them in the war) being a feudatory of Thibet, the Lama thought it proper to interpose his good offices, and in consequence sent a person of rank to Bengal, with a letter and presents to the Governor, to solicit a peace for the Dah [Deb], as his vassal and dependent.

Mr. Hastings, the Governor, did not hesitate a moment to grant a peace at the mediation of the Lama, on the most moderate and equitable terms; and, eager to seize every opportunity which could promote the interest and glory of this nation, and tend to the advancement of natural knowledge, proposed in council to send a person in a public character to the court of the Tayshoo Lama, to negotiate a treaty of commerce between the two nations, and to explore a country and people hitherto so little known to Europeans. Mr. Bogle, an approved servant of the company, whose abilities and temper rendered him every way qualified for so hazardous and uncommon a mission, was pitched on for it. It would be foreign to my purpose to enter into a detail of his progress and success in this business: it will be sufficient to say, that he penetrated, across many difficulties, to the centre of Thibet; resided several months at the court of the Tayshoo Lama; and returned to Calcutta, after an absence of 15 months on the whole, having executed his commission to the entire satisfaction of the administration.

Mr. Bogle divides the territories of the Delai Lama into two different parts. That which lies immediately contiguous to Bengal, and which is called by the inhabitants Docpo [Druk], he distinguishes by the name of Boutan; and the other, which extends to the northward as far as the frontiers of Tartary, called by the natives Pû, he styles Thibet. Boutan is ruled by the Dah Terriah or Deb Rajah, as already remarked. It is a country of steep and inaccessible mountains, whose summits are crowned with eternal snow; they are intersected with deep valleys, through which pour numberless torrents that increase in their course, and at last, gaining the plains, lose themselves in the great rivers of Bengal. These mountains are covered down their sides with forests of stately trees of various sorts; some, such as pines, &c. which are known in Europe; others that are peculiar to the country and climate. The valley and sides of the hills which admit of cultivation are not unfruitful, but produce crops of wheat, barley, and rice. The inhabitants are a stout and warlike people, of a copper complexion, in size rather above the middle European stature, hasty, and quarrelsome in their temper, and addicted to the use of spirituous liquors; but honest in their dealings, robbery by violence being almost unknown among them. The chief city is Tassej Seddein [Tashichodzong] situated on the Patchoo. Thibet begins properly from the top of the great ridge of the



Caucasus, and thence extends in breadth to the confines of Great Tartary, and perhaps to some of the dominions of the Russian empire. Having once attained the summit of the Boutan mountains, you do not descend in an equal proportion on the side of Thibet; but, continuing still on a very elevated base, you traverse valleys which are wider and not so deep as the former, and mountains that are neither so steep, nor apparently so high. On the other hand, Mr. Bogle represents it as the most bare and desolate country he ever saw. The woods, which every where cover the mountains in Boutan, are here totally unknown; and, except a few straggling trees near the villages, nothing of the sort is to be seen. The climate is extremely severe and rude. At Chamnàning, where he wintered, though it be in latitude  $31^{\circ} 39'$ , only  $8^{\circ}$  to the northward of Calcutta, he often found the thermometer in his room at  $29^{\circ}$  under the freezing point by Fahrenheit's scale; and in the middle of April the standing waters were all frozen, and heavy showers of snow perpetually fell. This must doubtless be owing to the great elevation of the country, and to the vast frozen space over which the north wind blows uninterruptedly from the pole, through the vast deserts of Siberia and Tartary, till it is stopped by this formidable wall.

The Thibetians are of a smaller size than their southern neighbours, and of a less robust make. Their complexions are also fairer, and many of them have even a ruddiness in their countenances unknown in the other climates of the east. Those whom I saw at Calcutta appeared to have quite the Tartar face. They are of a mild and cheerful temper; and Mr. Bogle says, that the higher ranks are polite and entertaining in conversation, in which they never mix either strained compliments or flattery. The common people, both in Boutan and Thibet, are clothed in coarse woollen stuff of their own manufacture, lined with such skins as they can procure; but the better orders of men are dressed in European cloth, or China silk, lined with the finest Siberian furs. The ambassador from the Deb Rajah, in his summer-dress at Calcutta, appeared exactly like the figures we see in the Chinese paintings, with the conical hat, the tunic of brocaded silk, and light boots. The Thibetian who brought the first letter from the Lama was wrapped up from head to foot in furs. The use of linen is totally unknown among them. The chief food of the inhabitants is the milk of their cattle, prepared into cheese and butter, or mixed with the flour of a coarse barley or of peas, the only grain which their soil produces; and even these articles are in a scanty proportion; but they are furnished with rice and wheat from Bengal and other countries in their neighbourhood. They are supplied with fish from the rivers in their own and the neighbouring provinces, salted and sent into the anterior parts. They have plenty of

animal food, from the cattle, sheep, and hogs, which are raised on their hills; and are not destitute of game. They have a singular method of preparing their mutton, by exposing the carcass entire, after the bowels are taken out, to the sun and bleak northern winds, which blow in the months of August and September, without frost, and so dry up the juices and parch the skin, that the meat will keep uncorrupted for the year round. This they generally eat raw, without any other preparation. Mr. Bogle was often regaled with this dish, which, however unpalatable at first, he says, he afterwards preferred to their dressed mutton just killed, which was generally lean, tough, and rank. It was also very common for the head men, in the villages through which he passed, to make him presents of sheep so prepared, set before him on their legs as if they had been alive, which at first had a very odd appearance.

The religion and political constitution of this country, which are intimately blended together, would make a considerable chapter in its history. It suffices here to say, that at present, and ever since the expulsion of the Eluth Tartars<sup>23</sup>, the kingdom of Thibet is regarded as depending on the empire of China, which they call Cathay; and there actually reside 2 mandarines [the Ambans], with a garrison of 1000 Chinese, at Lahassa the capital, to support the government, but their power does not extend far: and in fact, the Lama, whose empire is founded on the surest grounds, personal affection and religious reverence, governs every thing internally with unbounded authority. It is well known that the Delai Lama is the great object of adoration for the various tribes of heathen Tartars, who roam through the vast tract of continent which stretches from the banks of the Volga to Correa on the sea of Japan, the most extensive religious dominion perhaps on the face of the globe. He is not only the sovereign Pontiff, the vicegerent of the Deity on earth: but, as superstition is ever the strongest where it is most removed from its object, the more remote Tartars absolutely regard him as the Deity himself. They believe him immortal, and endowed with all knowledge and virtue. Every year they come up from different parts, to worship and make rich offerings at his shrine; even the emperor of China, who is a Mantchou Tartar, does not fail in acknowledgements to him in his religious capacity, and actually entertains at a great expence, in the palace of Pekin, an inferior Lama, deputed as his Nuncio from Thibet. Mr. Bogle says, that the Lama often distributes little balls of consecrated flour, like the pain benit of the Roman catholics, which the superstition and blind credulity of his Tartar votaries

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23. The Dzungars, who occupied Lhasa in 1717, were expelled by a series of expeditions by the Manchu of Ch'ing Dynasty of China from 1718 to 1720.

may afterwards convert into what they please. The orthodox opinion is, that when the Grand Lama seems to die, either of old age or of infirmity, his soul in fact only quits an actual crazy habitation, to look for another or better, and it is discovered again in the body of some child, by certain tokens known only to the Lamas or Priests, in which order he always appears. The present Delai Lama is an infant,<sup>24</sup> and was discovered only a few years ago by the Tayshoo Lama, who in authority and sanctity of character is next to him, and consequently, during the other's minority, acts as chief. The lamas, who form the most numerous as well as the most powerful body in the state, have the priesthood entirely in their hands; and besides fill up many monastic orders, which are held in great veneration among them. Celibacy is not positively enjoined to the lamas; but it is held indispensable for both men and women, who embrace a religious life: and indeed their celibacy, their living communities, their cloysters, their service in the choirs, their strings of beads, their fasts, and their penances, give them so much the air of christian monks, that it is not surprizing an illiterate capuchin should be ready to hail them brothers, and think he can trace the features of St. Francis in every thing about them. It is an old notion that the religion of Thibet is a corrupted christianity. The truth is, that the religion of Thibet, whencever it sprung, is pure and simple in its source, conveying very exalted notions of the Deity, with no contemptible system of morality; but in its progress it has been greatly altered and corrupted by the inventions of men. Polygamy, at least in the sense we commonly receive the word, is not in practice among them; but it exists in a manner still more repugnant to European ideas; viz. in the plurality of husbands, which is firmly established and highly respected there. In a country where the means of subsisting a family are not easily found, it seems not impolitic to allow a set of brothers to agree in raising one, which is to be maintained by their joint efforts. In short, it is usual in Thibet for the brothers in the family to have a wife in common, and they generally live in great harmony and comfort with her; not but sometimes little dissensions will arise, an instance of which Mr. Bogle mentions in the case of a modest and virtuous lady, the wife of half a dozen of the Tayshoo Lama's nephews, who complained to the uncle, that the two youngest of

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24. The VIIIth Dalai Lama, Jampal Gyatso, was born in 1758. He took his first set of vows before the 6th Panchen (Tashi) Lama in 1765, and was ordained as a monk by him in 1777. He assumed full power as Dalai Lama in 1781. He died in 1804 at the age of 47. He was, in fact, the last Dalai Lama to survive into significant adulthood until the birth of the XIIIth Dalai Lama in 1876. See for example: Ya Hanzhang, *Dalai Lamas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-87.

her husbands did not furnish that share of love and benevolence to the common stock which duty and religion required of them. In short, however strange this custom may appear to us, it is an undoubted fact that it prevails in Thibet, in the manner here described.

The manner of bestowing their dead is also singular: they neither put them in the ground like other Europeans, nor burn them like the Hindoos; but expose them on the bleak pinnacle of some neighbouring mountain, to be devoured by wild beasts and birds of prey, or wasted away by time and the vicissitudes of weather in which they lie. The religion of Thibet, although it be in many of its principal dogmata totally repugnant to that of the Bramins or of India, yet in others it has a great affinity to it. They have, for instance, a great veneration for the cow; but they transfer it wholly from the common species to that which bears the tails, spoken of hereafter. They also highly respect the waters of the Ganges, the source of which they believe to be in Heaven; and one of the first effects which the treaty with the Lama produced, was an application to the Governor-General, for leave to build a place of worship on its banks. This it may be imagined was not refused. On the other hand, the Sunniasses, or Indian pilgrims, often visit Thibet as a holy place, and the Lama always entertains in body of 2 or 300 in his pay.

The residence of the Delai Lama is at Pateli [Potala], a vast palace on a mountain near the banks of the Barampooter, about 7 miles from Lahassa. The Tayshoo Lama has several palaces or castles, in one of which Mr. Bogle lived with him five months. He represents the Lama as one of the most amiable as well as intelligent men he ever knew; maintaining his rank with the utmost mildness of authority, and living in the greatest purity of manners, without affectation. Every thing within the gates breathed peace, order, and dignified elegance. The castle is of stone or brick, with many courts, lofty halls, terraces, and porticos; and the apartments are in general roomy, and highly finished in the Chinese stile, with gilding, painting, and varnish. There are two conveniences to which they are utter strangers, staircases and windows. There is no access to the upper rooms but by a sort of ladders of wood or iron; and for windows they have only holes in the ceilings, with penthouse covers, contrived so as to shut up on the weather-side. Firing is so scarce, that little is used but for culinary purposes; and they trust altogether for warmth in their houses to their furs and other clothing. The Lama, who is completely conversant in what regards Tartary, China, and all the kingdoms in the east, was exceedingly inquisitive about Europe, its politics, laws, arts, and sciences, government, commerce and military strength; on all which heads Mr. Bogle endea-

voured to satisfy him, and actually compiled for his service a brief state of Europe in the Hindostan language, which he ordered to be translated into that of Thibet.<sup>25</sup> The Russian empire was the only one in Europe known to him: he has a high idea of its riches and strength, and had heard of its wars and success against the empire of Rome, for so they call the Turkish state, but could not conceive it could be in anywise a match for Cathay. Many of the Tartar subjects of Russia come to Thibet; and the Czar has even, at various times, sent letters and presents to the Lama. Mr. Bogle saw many European articles in his hands; pictures, looking-glasses, and trinkets of gold, silver, and steel, chiefly English, which he had received that way, particularly a Graham's repeating watch, which had been dead, as they said, for some time. While he was there, several Mongols and Kalmuks arrived from Siberia, with whom he conversed.

The city of Lahassa, which is the capital, is of no inconsiderable size, and is represented as populous and flourishing. It is the residence of the chief officers of government, and of the Chinese mandarins and their suite. It is also inhabited by Chinese and Cassemirian [Kashmiri] merchants and artificers, and is the daily resort of numberless traders from all quarters, who come in occasional parties, or in stated caravans. The waters of the Great River, as it is emphatically called in their language, wash its walls. Father Duhalde, with great accuracy traces this river, which he never suspects to be the Barampooter [Brahmaputra], from its origin in the Cassemirian mountains (probably from the same spring which gives rise to the Ganges) through the great valley of Thibet, till, turning suddenly to the southward, he loses it in the kingdom of Assam; but still, with great judgment and probability of conjecture, supposes it reaches the Indian sea somewhere in Pegu or Aracan.<sup>26</sup> The truth is however, that it turns suddenly again in the middle of Assam, and traversing that country westerly, enters Bengal towards Rangaimatty [Rangamati], under the above mentioned name, and thence bending its course more southerly, joins the Ganges, its sister and rival, with an equal, if not more copious stream; forming at the conflux a body of running fresh water, hardly to

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25. This is reproduced in Ch. VIII above, No. 2. Bogle wrote it originally in English, and then translated it, or arranged for its translation, into Hindostani, a language which the Tashi Lama spoke - it was his mother's tongue. It has been said that the Tibetan version remained the standard work on Europe until at least the time of the Younghusband expedition of 1904. It is interesting that Stewart should make a special point of this work. It was not printed by Markham.

26. Du Halde is relying on d'Anville's map, which he reproduced in Volume 4 of his great work.

be paralleled in the known world, which disembogues itself into the Bay of Bengal.<sup>27</sup> Two such rivers uniting in this unhappy country, with all the beauty, fertility, and convenience which they bring, well entitles it to the name of the Paradise of Nations, always bestowed on it by the Moguls.

The chief trade from Lahassa to Peking is carried on by caravans, that employ full 2 years in the journey thither and back again; which is not surprising, when we consider that the distance cannot be less than 2000 English miles: and yet an express from Lahassa reaches Peking in 3 weeks, a circumstance much to the honour of the Chinese police, which knows to establish so speedy and effectual a communication through mountains and deserts for so long a way. The trade with Siberia is carried on by caravans to Seling [Sining], which is undoubtedly the Selinginsky of the Russian travellers on the borders of Baykal Lake. The Indians have an admirable method of turning godliness into great gain, it being usual for the Faquiers to carry with them, in their pilgrimages from the sea coasts to the interior parts, pearls, corals, spices, and other precious articles, of small bulk, which they exchange on their return for gold-dust, musk, and other things of a similar nature, concealing them easily in their hair and in the clothes round their middle, and carrying on, considering their numbers, no inconsiderable traffic by these means. The Gosseigns [Gosains] are also of a religious order, but in dignity above the Faquiers; and they drive a more extensive and a more open trade with that country.

Besides their less traffic with their neighbours in horses, hogs, rock-salt, coarse cloths, and other articles, they enjoy 4 staple articles, which are sufficient in themselves to procure every foreign commodity of which they stand in need; all of which are natural productions, and deserve to be particularly noticed. The first, though the least considerable, is that of the cow-tails, so famous all over India, Persia, and the other kingdoms of the east. It is produced by a species of cow or bullock different from what is found in any other country [Yak]. It is of a larger size than the common Thibet breed, has short horns, and no hump on its back. Its skin is covered with whitish hair of a silky appearance; but its chief singularity is in its tail, which spreads out broad and long, with flowing hairs, like that of a beautiful mare, but much finer and far more glossy. Mr. Bogle sent down 2 of this breed to Mr. Hastings, but they died before they reached Calcutta. The tails sell very high, and are used, mounted on silver handles, for chowras, or brushes, to chase away the flies; and no man of consequence

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27. Stewart was correct in supposing that the Tsangpo River of Tibet flowed into the Brahmaputra River in Assam, a conclusion which was not to be confirmed beyond doubt until the 20th century.

in India ever goes out, or sits in form at home, without two chowrawbaders, or brushers, attending him, with such instruments in their hands.

The next article is the wool from which is made the shawl [shawl], the most delicate woollen manufacture in the world, so much prized in the east, and now so well known in England. Till Mr. Bogle's journey, our notions on that subject were very crude and imperfect. As the shawls all come from Cassemire [Kashmir], we concluded the material from which they were fabricated to be also of that country's growth. It was said to be the hair off a particular goat, the fine under hair from a camel's breast, and a thousand other fancies; but we know it for certain to be the produce of Thibet sheep. Mr. Hastings had one or two of these in his paddock when I left Bengal. They are of a small breed, in figure nothing differing from our sheep, except in their tails, which are very broad; but their fleeces, for the fineness, length, and beauty of the wool, exceed all others in the world. The Cassemirians engross this article, and have factors established for its purchase in every part of Thibet, whence it is sent to Cassemire, where it is worked up, and becomes of great wealth to that country, as well as it is originally to Thibet.

Musk is another of their staple articles, of which it will be needless to say much, as the nature, quality, and value, of this precious commodity are so well known in Europe. The deer which produces it is common in the mountains; but being excessively shy, and frequenting solely the places the most wild and difficult of access, it becomes a trade of great trouble and danger to hunt after. We have the musk sent down to Calcutta in the natural bag, not without great risk of its being adulterated; but still it is far superior to any thing of the kind that is to be met with in sale in Europe.

The last of the articles which I reckon staple, is gold, of which great quantities are exported from Thibet. It is found in the sands of the Great River, as well as in most of the small brooks and torrents that pour from the mountains. The quantity gathered in this manner, though considerable with respect to national gain, pays the individual but very moderately for the labour bestowed on it. But, besides this, there are mines of that metal in the northern parts, which are the reserved property of the Lama, and rented out to those who work them. It is not found in ore, but always in a pure metallic state (as I believe it to be the case in all other mines of this metal) and only requires to be separated from the spar, stone, or flint, to which it adheres. Mr. Hastings had a lump sent to him at Calcutta, of about the size of a bullock's kidney, which was a bard flint veined with solid gold. He caused it to be sawed in two, and it was found throughout inter-

larded, as it were with the purest metal. Though they have this gold in great plenty at Thibet, they do not employ it in coin, of which their government never strikes any; but it is still used as a medium of commerce, and goods are rated there by the purse of gold, as here by money. The Chinese draw it from them to a great amount every year, in return for the produce of their labour and arts. I hope the society will accept as a rarity the translation of the original letter which the Tayshoo Lama wrote to Mr. Hastings, by the envoy whom he sent to solicit a peace for the Deb Rajah. It came into my hands in the course of my office, and by the permission of the Governor-General I retained a copy. [This letter is omitted here as it has already been reproduced in Chapter II above as No.7.]

## 12

### **The Buddhist Monastery at Ghusari and Purangir Gosain<sup>28</sup>**

Soon after Bogle's return to Calcutta in 1775, Hastings honoured Bogle's promise to the Tashi Lama to provide land near Calcutta for a monastic establishment. On 4 December 1775 the Revenue Board's Proceedings recorded the grant of a pottah, or lease or conveyance, to Purangir Gosain, described as "agent of Maharajah Tashi Lama", of a tract of land, 100 bigars and 8 cottas, about 30 acres in all. This was on an annual lease of Rs. 291-13-2; but it was the expressed intention of Hastings that the land might possibly be granted to the Tashi Lama as a freehold, subject to the approval of the Directors of the Company. This grant was duly made on 12 June 1778. In February 1783 a further 50 bigars were added to the grant.

Ghusari was situated on the west bank of the Hugli at Howrah opposite Calcutta. The construction of a suitable establishment there was the task of Purangir, the first head of the place known as Bhot Mandir at Bhot Bagan ("Tibet garden"). While Purangir was away in 1785 on a mission to Tibet, one of the local zamindars, Rai Chand Roy, decided to recover some of the land which had been granted to the Tibetans in 1783 (the 50 bigars) some of which had originally been under his control (the remainder having come from the estate of his brother Raja

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28. See: G.D Bysack, "Notes on a Buddhist Monastery at Bhot Bagan (Howrah), on two rare and valuable Tibetan MSS. discovered there, and on Puran Gir Gosain, the celebrated Indian Acharya and Government Emissary at the Court of the Tashi Lama, Tibet, in the last century", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LIX, Pt.I, Calcutta 1891; S.C. Sarkar, "The Buddhist Monastery at Ghosery", *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XXVI, Pts. I & II, Calcutta 1923; S.C. Sarkar, "A Note on Puran Gir Gosain", *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XLIII, Pt.I, Calcutta 1932..



Ram Lochan). Rai Chand Roy and Raja Ram Lochan were sons of Ramacharan Rai who had acquired great wealth under the Governorship of Henry Vansittart in the early 1760s; and no doubt they much resented the transfer of some of what they considered their patrimony to the Tibetans. The retirement of Warren Hastings perhaps gave the brothers an opportunity to act. In the event it would seem likely that, through the mediation of Samuel Turner with Hastings' immediate successor, John Macpherson, the 50 bigars were restored to the Tibetans.<sup>29</sup>

Purangir Gosain was a remarkable figure in the history of British India, a trusted envoy of the East India Company who executed diplomacy on its behalf at the highest level for more than 15 years, combining this activity with considerable trading on his own account or, at least, that of his religion. A member of a Saivite ascetic sect, Purangir Gosain first appeared in the British records when, in early 1774, along with Padma he brought to Bengal the Tashi Lama's letter to Warren Hastings in which the Lama sought to mediate in the Anglo-Bhutanese conflict over Cooch Behar. He was then some 25 years of age. For more than fifteen years he served as the major intermediary between the East India Company and the authorities in Tibet. After the Bogle mission he travelled on many occasions between Calcutta and Tashilhunpo; and in 1778 or 1779 he made have made a pilgrimage to Mount Kailas and the sacred lakes. He went with the Tashi Lama on his journey to Peking in 1779-80, when he was presented to the Ch'ien-lung Emperor. He accompanied Samuel Turner, Hastings' second envoy to Tashilhunpo, in 1783; and in the years immediately after that mission he worked hard in endeavours to promote an active experiment in Indo-Tibetan commerce first by helping bring Indian traders to Tibet by way of Bhutan and subsequently by encouraging Tibetan traders to attend an annual fair at Rangpur in Bengal. In 1789 serious consideration was given in Calcutta to his despatch on behalf of the Company to Peking as an alternative to a formal British Embassy to the Manchu Court. In January 1790, when it was learnt that he was planning a journey to Lhasa on private business, the East India Company commissioned him to obtain from or through Tibet seeds of the Chinese tea plant: whether he did this is not recorded. In 1792, in the midst of the crisis brought about by Sino-Nepalese conflict in Tibet (see: Ch. XV below, No. 10), Purangir was carrying letters between both Lhasa and Tashilhunpo and the Governor-General Lord Cornwallis (some at least by way of the Company Resident in Benares, Jonathan Duncan).<sup>30</sup>

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29. Purangir's trouble over the 50 bigars is mention by Samuel Turner in a letter to Macpherson dated 6 February 1786. See: S. Turner, *An Account of an Embassy to the Court of the Teshoo Lama in Tibet, etc.*, London 1800, pp. 431-432.

30. See: D.B. Diskalkar, "Tibeto-Nepalese War, 1788-1793", *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. XIX, Pt. iv, 1933, letter no. 18, which refers to correspondence from Lhasa and Tashilhunpo in the first part of 1792 carried by

Purangir was not only a man devoted to religious pilgrimage: he was a considerable trader in his own right with a great interest in the commerce between Tibet and Bengal. It is probable that he possessed trading relationships both with Kashmiri merchants settled in Tibet and with Kashmiri bankers in Bengal and Bihar. In the British sources he appears very much as the Company's agent. It is more than likely, as Cammann has pointed out, that in the eyes of the Tashlhunpo authorities at least, he was perceived to be acting in the interests of the Tibetans.<sup>31</sup>

In 1795 the Bhot Bagan was attacked by dacoits (who, some suspected, were inspired by the original owners of the land) and Purangir Gosain killed. His tombstone bore the date equivalent to 3 May 1795. He was succeeded by his chela [disciple] Daljit Gir Gosain (who had also been used by the Company in the transmission of letters to and from Tashilhunpo).

In 1890 the main building of the establishment, complete with an assortment of deities, could still be seen; but the neighbourhood had long lost its holy character and, indeed, had the reputation of being a hiding place for thieves.

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Purangir Gosain ("Poorun Geer Gosayum") and eventually received by Lord Cornwallis on 22 August 1792. Cornwallis' reply to the Dalai Lama, dated 25 September 1792, may well have been carried by Purangir's disciple Daljit Gir Gosain. It was Daljit Dir Gosain who brought Cornwallis a letter from Tashilhunpo (in the name of the Panchen Lama) and received on 28 June 1793, which Dikalkar printed as no. 18.

31. Cammann, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

## CHAPTER XIV

### Alexander Hamilton in Bhutan, 1775-1777

#### 1

##### Alexander Hamilton

Not much is known about the early life of Alexander Hamilton. He was born in Scotland in about 1750, and died at Buxaduar (Baksa Duar) on the Indo-Bhutanese border in October 1777. Lt.-Colonel D.G. Crawford, in his *Roll of the Indian Medical Service 1615-1930*, London 1930, (p. 19), records that Hamilton, who from other evidence we know acquired his medical training in Scotland, was in 1771-72 Surgeon on the *Lord North*, and in 1773 served in the same capacity on the *Bridgewater*. He was appointed Assistant Surgeon in the East India Company's Bengal Establishment on 6 December 1773. He evidently joined the *Bridgewater* in India, for we know that in 1772 he sailed to India on *The Marquess of Rockingham*, from which he wrote, dated Joanna Roads, 25 July 1772, the following letter to Warren Hastings:

my friends in England having favoured me with letters recommending me to your notice, I take liberty to enclose them to you, and hope I shall have your excuse in expressing my wishes, that they may meet a favourable reception.

My ship not leaving England till after the India House election, and the Bengal ships being then all sailed, I beg to remit you lists by Captain Gore of the Court as it now stands. The Proprietors differed from the House only in proposing Mr. Dempster in the room of Mr. Chambers; and they carried

their point. Sir Geo. Colebrook is Chairman and Mr. Sullivan Deputy. Early in November I hope the honour of waiting on you in Bengal.<sup>1</sup>

This communication helped bring Hamilton to the notice of Warren Hastings; and it no doubt contributed to Hasting's decision to appoint Hamilton as Bogle's companion in 1774.

Hamilton's letters to Bogle have survived among Bogle's papers. Many of Bogle's letters to Hamilton, however, would seem to have disappeared.

## 2

### Hamilton to Bogle, 5 May 1775, "Thirpata"

**Note.** Hamilton is on his way down to India from Tibet ahead of Bogle.

I arrived here safely today about noon and find the pain in my side not the worse of my journey. The horses and Bhutanese set off from this just as I arrived, the first in good case, amongst the latter two bundles of cow-tails are missing: the Paro Penlop's people are gone to enquire about them at their last stage and I hope will find them. Our old friend Moskee has just now left me, he has been these three months past under the care of the most celebrated physician this country can afford for the cure of his complaint: he is much reduced but says he is getting better. He will be very happy to see you again.

The Buxa Subah has resided at Murijong for some time past for the recovery of his health which he lost during his stay at Chichakotta. His Dewan died three days ago of an illness contracted at that place. I hear the Subah is to meet me tomorrow at Chuka.

Mamdees's dog broke loose from us at Soona [Sana], and I suppose is returned to Pharidzong: if so, I beg you will let it come down along with yours.

I forgot to get from Padma two or three ounces of saline substance which they use with their tea. Be so good as ask him for it: they call it *phoor* or some such name.

Just now two servants of the Buxa Subah's brought the accompanying letters from their master. I opened the outer cover in expectation of some addressed to me but was disappointed. I will despatch them directly and enclose this for speedy conveyance.

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1. See the Hastings Papers, BM Add Mss 29,133.

## 3

**Hamilton to Bogle, 17 May 1775, Cooch Behar**

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 9th inst. two days ago and am glad to learn of your arrival at Tashichodzung, though I could have wished that the enclosed note had given me a more favourable account of your complaints. By my last I acquainted you of no surgeon being allowed the troops in this province: it is therefore impossible for me to procure those medicines I wish to prescribe you. All that is in my power to do is forwarding you another dose or two of salts which with a low diet I flatter myself will so far alleviate your present symptoms as to allow your coming down here without any aggravation of your complaints. If the running is of a thinner consistence and a greenish colour would recommend taking the full as directed, which if catching cold is avoided with care will not affect the mouth. The other symptoms which proceed entirely from a slight inflammation of the urethra will be much relieved if not entirely removed by an abstemious diet, the cooling purgatives I sent you and the application of the poultices in which a small quantity of mercurial ointment is dissolved. If the inflammation of the glans or prepuce should increase, frequently bathing these parts in warm milk and water and removing any matter lodged under the prepuce will prevent any bad consequence occurring. I beg however above all things you will make what haste you can down, as prescribing for contingencies where medicines are to be had is rather a different matter.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Dacosta who is at present in command here [of the Company troops in Cooch Behar] insists upon sending you a small supply of ½ dozen Madeira and 1 bottle of brandy and a basket of biscuits. He desires you will inform him of the day you propose leaving Buxaduar, and a palanquin with horses shall be waiting at Pant Ghur about half a cos [in Bengal generally about two miles] from the foot of the hills; and relays shall be laid upon the road so as to bring you home in one day provided you set out early in the morning. The accommodations at Chichakotta are much more convenient than when you saw them, and I should imagine the Gosain and company may pass a night there very comfortably. I expected some tanguns [local horses] would come down along with you and that sending horses from here would have been unnecessary; however, if that is not the

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2. It rather looks as if Bogle had contracted a venereal infectio, presumably while in Tibet..

case, the Subah will readily allow his horses to bring your retinue this length, and I shall have horses from Saibganj to relive them here. The Subah will likewise take care that rafts are provided upon the Bowaniganj river [just south of Chichakotta on the road to Cooch Behar] and other necessary places if you acquaint him beforehand. Accommodation for the Gosains would be ready for their arrival here. Boats, presents, etc., etc., I can say nothing about till I see [Lieutenant] Williams.

Vast alterations have taken place since our leaving Cooch Behar [for Tibet in 1774]. The Supreme Council confine themselves to the revenue branch and the government of the country. A board of trade of which Middleton is president has the management of investments etc., and a separate chief and council is appointed by each at their different residences. A damned rascally affair which would take a couple of pages to tell you, Nunkomar [Nandakumar] forgery, it is thought he will be hanged.<sup>3</sup> I have given you all the news I can pick up here. The Brigade on its return to our province has done nothing these many months, your friend Maclean resigned and it is said gone home, Dawes appointed in his room. A speedy prospect of a French war. I wish our Europe letters had been sent the last ship the beginning of this month.

#### 4

#### Hamilton to Bogle, 6 November 1775, Balatunghee<sup>4</sup>

I shall have it in my power by the time we get to Dinajpur to supply you with the remarks upon the state of medicine in Tibet which you have often

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3. The reference here is to the Regulating Act of 1773 by which the British Parliament imposed a constitution of sorts upon the British establishment in India with Hastings not only as Governor of Bengal but Governor-General of the other two Presidencies, Bombay and Madras. The effects of the reorganization arising from the Act only began to be felt in Bengal after Bogle's departure for Tibet. The Regulating Act set up a Supreme Court applying the English legal system under a Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey, an old school mate (at Westminster) of Warren Hastings. It was this Court which sentenced an enemy of the Governor-General, Nandakumar (formerly one of the Naib-Dewans of Bengal, acting as an Indian buffer between the Company and the Moghul Empire before the Company decided to rule directly), to death on a charge of forgery, an act which many commentators have subsequently described as judicial murder. There was undoubtedly a powerful personal animosity between Hastings and Nandakumar. One effect of the Regulating Act was to abolish those offices upon which Bogle had depended for his salary.

4. Between Rangpur and Dinajpur.

wished me to give you. I am however afraid this science will benefit but little by any knowledge of the Tibetan practice as the inhabitants of that country seem to be much further behind the Europeans on the progress they have made towards the advancement of medical knowledge than in most other arts or sciences. Though their method of treating some disorders of the eye is more successful than the one we follow, we cannot infer from thence that they have a more powerful knowledge of the nature of the disorder or are better acquainted with the structure of the organ upon which they operate than we are; in reality they are entirely ignorant of both, this remarkable success which attends their method of couching the cataract being solely owing to their instruments being much better calculated for that purpose than those we use. Inclosed I send you the only two instruments used in the operation. The copper one, for depressing the crystalline lens, I believe may be made in Calcutta. I could wish to have three or four of them in silver as that metal is less liable to be corroded than copper, and I should be happy to have two or three lancets like the enclosed which is used for dividing the external coats of the eye. Any of your sircars [senior servants]<sup>5</sup> could get both in the [Calcutta] Bazaar. I shall send you an account of the operation for the Governor from Dinajpur and wish to send him the instruments at the same time.

I expect to have the pleasure of hearing from you on my arrival at Dinajpur, and I flatter myself no part of any future conduct will give occasion for writing me another letter in the same style with your last. Being anxious to set out on my journey, and charged with the repeated trifling delays and disappointments I had met with, will easily account for my leaving Calcutta in such a hurry. Indeed I think it is too slight to found a charge of want of friendship or ingratitude upon, as it was evidently my intention to return from Barnagore in order also to have an opportunity of seeing you before my departure. Though I have not perhaps been as alert in making acknowledgement for the good offices I have received from you as some others might have been, yet allow me to assure you, that had I even thought verbal ones (which I am sorry are the only ones I have to offer) would have been acceptable, Mr. Bogle should long ere now have been convinced that nobody was more sensible of his intentions to serve him or of his having really and effectually done so, than his.

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5. The term Sircar was sometimes used to mean the Supreme Government, notably the East India Company, and its senior officers. In Bengal (as is the case here) it was also applied to Indian servants who possessed the authority to keep household accounts and spend money on behalf of their European wmployer.

## 5

**Hamilton to Bogle, Kiranty, 26 December 1775**

**Note.** In in reply to Bogle to Hamilton, 12 December 1775. Hamilton is clearly on a mission to both Cooch Behar and Bhutan to investigate the state of their relations over various border disputes. The details of this venture are not adequately documented: on the whole they have to be inferred from Hamilton's comments in this essentially private correspondence with Bogle.

Deb Judhur's death I heard of at Saibganj. As my intelligence is derived from those on the same side of the question it cannot in every respect be depended upon. It is said he was executed publicly for attempting to raise some commotion in Tibet in order I should suppose to obtain his liberty and reinstate himself in his former authority at Tashihodjong. I should not be surprised to find that it was for endeavouring to escape into Nepal, with the Rajah of which country I hear he had carried on some correspondence. Whatever may have been the ostensible reason given for his execution, I doubt it will be difficult to exculpate our friends in Tibet for the part they have acted, their violating the most sacred laws of hospitality which are held in veneration by nations much more barbarous in your opinion than the Tatars, under pretence of a conspiracy against the Government which it is impossible to conceive an old man of seventy overwhelmed with misfortunes capable of concerting, far less of executing. It throws a blemish upon the character which will require all their good qualities to extenuate; but if we take a retrospective view of the transactions which have occurred in Bhutan during these five or six years past they will stamp with a deeper dye the national character of the Tibetans. It was at their instigation that Deb Judhur engaged in a war with us, it was by their advice he endeavoured to render his authority absolute in Bhutan, it was in consequence of having adopted these measures that he was deprived of his crown and driven an exile from his native country and reduced to the disagreeable necessity of imploring protection from those whom he knew by experience to be lukewarm allies but not till too late deceitful friends.

I have heard nothing of letters from Tashi Lama, but shall forward instantly any that come to hand. Yours for the Buxa Subah shall be sent immediately. My friend the Pinzang Chumbo will I dare say be much obliged to you for the plates. I shall explain their use at a meeting which I don't despair of accomplishing before my return to Calcutta. Should any Kashmiri merchants come in my way you may depend upon their being



taken care of. Your directions about blankets, hand-kerchiefs, seeds, strawberry plants, etc., etc., shall be observed.

I mentioned in my last the method Mr. Harwood [Chief of the Company Factory at Dinajpur] had adopted for settling the disputes about the boundaries. [This letter appears to be missing]. The Baikantpur Rajah's wakil is now with me, the Dellamkotta [Dalingdzong] Subah [and another] on the part of the Deb Rajah; and I expect tomorrow a man to take the depositions in consequence of an order to that effect sent by Mr. Harwood. I intend sending an authenticated copy of the depositions on both sides to Dinajpur and another to Calcutta, from which this affair may be determined. I hope the examination will be finished before the end of the month when I propose setting out for Lakhiduar. I have received an invitation from the Paro Penlop to spend the holy days with him but it came too late for that purpose. I hope, however, to be at Paro by the 15th of next month. I have had no answers to my letter from the Deb Rajah which surprises me not a little as I am certain he must have received mine. Your letter for Tashi Lama is gone with my baggage to Lakhiduar from which place I propose addressing him and despatching them together by way of Pharidzong.

I can't help lamenting your situation at Melancholy Hall,<sup>6</sup> not only on your own account but from the loss that the world is likely to sustain by it. Who the deuce would ever think of sitting down to compose anything but homilies and elegies by the walls of a churchyard? Let me advise you only to write an account of the Tibet funerals while in that gloomy mansion and choose for the rest some spot where you have more pleasing objects in view and where you may now and then enjoy the company of your friends.

I have been now four days here by myself and find it rather dull especially when I think of the festivity going on everywhere else at this season. I do the best I can. Having plenty of dogs and horses I generally go hunting every day and in the evening entertain the Bhutanese with a *nautch*;<sup>7</sup> but what grieves me most is the deplorable state of my Madeira in which the Bhutanese during our passage have made such a hole as puts me to short commons already.

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6. Melancholy Hall, the state of depression into which Bogle appears to have descended on his return from Tibet. It was this condition which, no doubt, prevented Bogle from completing the task of writing up his Tibetan adventures in a form suitable for publication.

7. Ball, feast with music, banquet.

## 6

**Hamilton to Bogle, 7 January 1776, Doonga (? Doongaghat)**

I do myself the pleasure to acquaint you with Kishenpuri Mull's wakil and several other natives of Benares being arrived here on their way to Calcutta.<sup>8</sup> They have brought despatches for the Governor and some packets from Tashi Lama for you. I have likewise received a very kind letter from Tashi Lama; they are all well and in other respects much as we left them. Tashi Lama expresses great anxiety on our account from his having had no letters from you since leaving Bhutan.

The Chinese have gained an important victory over the Khampas and taken the capital of their country. A party of the Chinese pursued a fugitive Khampa chief to Ringenzy where they came up with him. Tashi Lama's wakil is returned from Peking where he was very graciously received; and I hear nothing but that your embassy has given pleasure to the Chinese court. Gesub Rimpoché is still is at the head of affairs in Lhasa; and the Pinzang Chumbo dismissed the Lama's service.

Accounts have been received of a Russian nobleman with a retinue of 300 peoples coming on an embassy to Tashilhunpo. Deb Judhur was invited by the present Deb Rajah to reassume the reins of Government in Bhutan; and he like an old fool believing him in earnest made his escape out of prison. Upon crossing the frontier he was met by some of the present Deb's people who soon made him shorter by the head which they have fixed upon a pole at Punakha as a memorial of the late Rajah's folly and of the present's perfidy. I have wrote for Padma to meet me at Paro. I expect an invitation by him from Tashi Lama to visit him in Tashilhunpo.

I have extracted the *oleum essentialis* of the Tibet news and since you don't think I richly deserve a huge packet of Calcutta *nouvelles*, I positively will put my threat in execution if you don't send me a long letter and that speedy.

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8. Kishenpuri Mull appears to have been a Kashmiri banker (associated with Kashmiri Mull) with financial relations with Chait Singh, Rajah of Benares. See also Ch. XII, No. 6, above. By now Chait Singh had become to all intents and purposes a dependent of the East India Company.

As these people wanted some cash for their travelling charges, I have wrote Captain Popham<sup>9</sup> to advance them 200 Sicca Rupees and have given him a draught on you to that amount. I have likewise wrote to Mr. Graham to supply them with boats and to draw upon you for whatsoever expenses may be incurred on that account as they have a number of things for the Governor, dogs, sheep etc.. I make no doubt but that he will very readily defray their travelling charges. I have wrote to the Burrah [big] and Chota [little] Harwoods in their favour, to Captain Popham, to Mr. Hinchman and to your friend Anderson at the City in case the Gylongs being held up on their arrival there. They wish much for some of your people to meet them at the head of the Jelingy. I think you might send Govind Ram or Gulab Singh to wait for them. I send along with them a couple of my harkaras [messengers] and Popham sends two or three sepoys.

I have received a long letter from the Deb Rajah. The old gentleman intends adopting me for his son. You cannot conceive what a vast deal of pleasure my return to his country has given him. You must know they take me for a very great man, and faith I keep up the appearance tolerably well as there is no greater here at present. I send the Dellamkotta Subah away from me today as if his nose had been bleeding. The son of a bitch had the insolence to tell one if the Governor would not give him up the disputed villages he would come and take them by force. However, I chided the gentleman presently by only reminding him of what happened at Behar, Chichakotta and Bowaniganj about two years ago.

I set out on my road to Punakha tomorrow. I shall write you from Lakhiduar in a few days. I sent off a harkara some days ago with a boat load of walnuts and oranges. I hope they will all arrive in good cases.

## 7

### Hamilton to Bogle, 15 January 1776, Cantalbary

I yesterday received from Buxaduar two boxes of pears which the Subah writes me are from the Punakha Dzungpon for you. He desired me to send them you by the dak, however as I think it hardly worth while putting you to so great expense for so paltry a present will take the liberty of dispensing with his advice in that respect. I despatch them to Saibganj

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9. William Popham, 1739-1821, served in Cooch Behar until early 1778. He subsequently distinguished himself in the Mahratha campaign of 1780 and, eventually, attained the rank of Lieutenant-General.

under charge of an orderly and harkara of Captain Popham's and have requested him to send them off immediately, in hope that they will be able to overtake Tashi Lama's people either at Consumaganj or Dinajpur. If they should not, have wrote your friend Robertson to convert them to his own use as if a convenient opportunity does not offer they are not worth sending a boat or harkara to Calcutta.

Upon examining the boxes I found several of the pears spoiling from their being packed up so close with sawdust. I therefore have put them with straw and hope that they will arrive safe. I think there are about 240 [pears] in all. There were four of the large citrons so entirely rotten that I threw them away.

You will receive a letter from the Punakha Dzongpon enclosed. It was wrapped up in a along with a pod of musk. As should these be sent by the dak, they would only serve to enhance the postage. I shall write to you in a few days.

## 8

### **Hamilton to Bogle, 27 January 1776, Cantalbury**

I have wrote the Governor by this opportunity and sent him the depositions of the Bhutanese concerning the disputed villages, with an abstract of the most material circumstances that appear on the examination and the arguments used by the Deb's representatives to confirm the validity of their claim.

Upon the whole, the pretensions of the Bhutanese seem to be founded upon justice and independent of any favour which this Governor may be inclined to show them. Should their cause be determined by equity alone, to me it seems clear that the greater number if not the whole of the villages will be restored to them. I dare say however the Governor will show you the papers I have sent him from which you will be better able to judge of the matter than from anything I could inform you.

The Lakhiduar Subah has applied to me to request Mr. Harwood to send a person in order to determine some disputes he has with Nazir Deo [the hereditary military chief of Cooch Behar] concerning his frontier. The two pargannas [districts] Chuklygurree and Sonapore and the taluk [revenue sub-district, sometimes tehsil] of Rychunga [all in the region of Chichakotta] now in possession of the Nazir Deo are said by the Bhutanese to have been their property before the war, they wish to have it determined by an examination similar to that at Doonga, and I have wrote

to Mr. Harwood to that effect. They also complain of the imposts levied by the Behar Government upon the trade of their country, and I have applied to Mr. Harwood for a parwannah [judicial edict] to remedy this grievance.

We have no news in this part of the country, but talk of an invasion from Morung and Nepal, though there seems to be a good deal of foundation for the report. Either the little credit given to it by the Bhutanese or the despicable opinion they have of their opponents has hitherto prevented them from preparing for their reception. I have given the Governor all the intelligence of it I have yet picked up and my conjectures as to their intention.

As I have a prospect of remaining in this country some time, I wish you would procure for me from the Governor a letter of credit on Mr. Harwood for 12 or 1500 Rupees, as the expenses I have been at on account of the Bhutanese and myself has almost exhausted my cash, and I find it absolutely impossible to dispose of my investment here but a considerable loss. The Kazi has promised to pay his debt to you in a few days. I shall probably make use of the money to keep off the evil day as long as possible and upon receiving it shall request you to place this amount to my debit. I wish I could know the state of our account. You will probably now have leisure to settle it as I left a copy of my claims with you when in Calcutta.

The Kazi has spoken to me again about three horses left with you.

Tashi Lama's people I hear have left Consumaganj. Let me know the news from Tibet by your letters as I sent all I could pick up by acquainting you of their arrival. Is there any news by the *Granville* or when is the other packet expected? Let me know how all your friends are and what ships are from Europe and when.

## 9

### **Hamilton to William Harwood [Chief of the East India Company Factory at Dinajpur], 1 March 1776, Cantalbary**

I was honoured with yours of the 6th ult. some time ago, and in consequence of your directions have represented to the Deb Rajah to advantages he would derive from stationing a wakil at Dinajpur. He seems convinced of its expedience, but declines taking any further steps in the matter till my arrival at Punakha when you may depend upon my using every argument to confirm him in his resolution.

Nazir Deo [of Cooch Behar] has in my opinion been rather backward in showing a proper respect to your parwana, as it is only within these three days he has agreed to send a vakil to attend during the examination concerning Rychunga, Chukly-gurree and Sonapore notwithstanding the Deb Rajah's people repeatedly solicited him for that purpose: the Nazir has nominated one Maticappa as his representative on this occasion, a man of a very turbulent character and against whom the Bhutanese have the justest grounds of complaint. The Buxa Subah in a letter to me has accused him amongst a variety of other crimes of having put one of his people to death and applied to me for advice how to obtain redress. I have recommended him to commence a prosecution in the Court at Dinajpur, and have assured him of their meeting with full and ample satisfaction. This appointment of this person, however, as an arbitrator to settle amicably the Nazir Deo's differences with the Bhutanese is very justly considered by the latter as a high indignity, and I have the greatest reason to be apprehensive that instead of accommodating their disputes the present congress may give rise to others of a more virulent, perhaps, of a more serious nature. Agreeable to your directions, I have declined being present during the insuring examination notwithstanding the importunate request of the Deb Rajah to that purpose. His vakils, upon being informed of Maticappa's nomination, at first positively refused to proceed upon the enquiry with a man of so profligate a character whose animosity to the Bhutanese was so publicly known. By representing to them the favourable impression which their compliance with every proposal for the accommodation of their disputes would make upon you and the other Gentlemen at Dinajpur, I have at length prevailed upon them to attend; and I shall only interfere so far in the settlement of their differences as by exerting my influence with the Bhutanese to afford the Nazir's vakils while acting in a public capacity what little protection it is in my power to give them.

As I have some reason to think that insinuations to my prejudice have been carried to Dinajpur, I would gladly embrace any opportunity of refuting them: being however totally ignorant of their nature, it is not in my power to do it so satisfactorily as I could wish, being at a loss to conjecture in what respect my conduct has been deemed blamable. If it is imagined that I have been wanting in that deference to Mr. Harwood and the other Gentlemen at Dinajpur which their rank in the service and authority in this part of the country entitle them to, I flatter myself that a candid enquiry into the circumstances will exculpate me from any suspicion of this kind. Instead of attempting anyhow to lessen their

influence in this country by referring the decision of the Bhutanese disputes to Calcutta, it has been my sole wish and endeavour to have them formally determined at Dinajpur, and excepting the proceedings at Doonga with which dispute the Honourable Board were well acquainted before my coming into this country, no other differences of the Bhutanese with their neighbours have been laid before them by me when I could compromise them amicably by this method: when not, they have always been referred to you. Was it in my power, Sir, any how to extend the influence of the Dinajpur Council beyond the Company's limits, so far as it was conducive to the interests of the service, nothing would give me a greater pleasure in promoting. Conscious of Mr. Harwood's impartiality and the integrity of my own intentions I am writing to appeal to him, and will cheerfully embrace any opportunity of exculpating myself from such aspersions, I doubt not to his satisfaction.

I have now, Sir, only to request that should in future any suggestions against me be conveyed to Dinajpur, you will be so kind as judge of my conduct from facts, and not from opinion to my prejudice without allowing me an opportunity of refuting any partial representation of my transactions which may be laid before you.

## 10

### Hamilton to Bogle, 1 March 1776, Cantalbury

I have been favoured with your two letters of 2nd and 8th ult., the latter of which was not despatched from Dinajpur till the 22nd and only came to hand yesterday. I return you many thanks for the pack of news by your first letter and for the liberal supply of shrab [sherbet] by Gulab Singh which I likewise received yesterday. I shall do my utmost to procure your sundry commissions and I shall set about it immediately. I wrote to the Sokpo Chumbo and Pung Cusho about the Governor's cattle the beginning of January and am a little surprised at having had no answers from that country. The Paro Penlop assured me of having forwarded the letters and I can only account for not receiving an answer by supposing it comes in company with the cattle. I acknowledge myself a sad fellow as you very justly call me for not having before this sent you the remarks I promised on the diseases and the state of medicine in Tibet. When I engaged to do it I thought nothing would be more easy but upon making the attempt found it a much more arduous undertaking than I at first imagined, in short I have never been able to please myself from which I conclude that

my performance will be far from pleasing you and other better judges. I have already committed to the flames a quire or two of paper sullied with those impotent efforts, and I believe I shall at last be under the necessity of supplying you with materials and you may work them up the best way you can. I am determined, however, to make one more attempt, so soon as I am free from the sea of troubles and perplexities I have constantly been involved in since my arrival here. The many difficulties I have had to struggle with have in a great measure been owing to that scoundrel of a Kazi who came up with me without my knowledge or my having any suspicion of the kind he wrote his master from Balatungi and Dinajpur, that I was sent up to this country by the Governor, to settle all the disputes about the frontier. It was some time before I discovered him to be the author of this report, and when I taxed him with it, he had the impudence to assert that the Governor had informed him that I was authorised to determine all their differences, and in this assertion he was backed by several of the Bhutanese who were present. I have wrote to the Deb Rajah, to the Paro Penlop, to everybody. I have protested, I have swore, I have stormed, I have cursed, I have done everything it was in the power of a man to do, to convince them that the Kazi was a liar and a villain; but all to no effect, and had not the Deb Rajah sent down Tooyi Nenzom, your old interpreter, who was at some pains to enquire into the matter, I should have been known amongst the Bhutanese by those appellations I so freely bestow upon the Kazi. You may figure to yourself my situation, railed at, even threatened, by the Bhutanese, for not exerting myself in settling their disputes. Restrained from serving them and probably the Company by a principle of delicacy which prevented me from interfering with the province of others, it would have required the wisdom of Solomon and the patience of Job to have satisfied both parties. How then can you possibly suppose that I who am endowed with a very moderate share of either, should accomplish so arduous an undertaking? By endeavouring to steer a middle course I have got into bad bread with both, but on what respect I have given offence to Mr. Harwood I am really at a loss to conjecture. I have been uniformly cautious in my conduct not to displease the Dinajpur Gentlemen, and unless it is from my wishing an equitable decision in favour of the Bhutanese (to whom I have the greatest reason to believe Mr. Harwood is an inveterate enemy) I know of nothing else they can possibly find fault with. As an instance of the great care I have taken to avoid giving offence, immediately upon receipt of his letter, wherein he disapproved of this agreement the parties had come to of deferring the Collections till the dispute was finally determined, I wrote to Durrapp Deo [of Baikuntpur]



and released him from his promise made by his vakil at my recommendation of the compromise, and at the same time wrote the Dellamkotta Subah and requested him as he valued his own and his masters interest to recall every Bhutanese from the disputed parganas [districts] and not allow his people to give Durrap Deo's officials the smallest molestation in the execution of their duty, which request he really contrary to my expectations has complied. I had reason to suspect the recommencement of the Collections would not have been submitted to by the Bhutanese without some disturbances ensuing. As I had hints of Mr. Harwood having taken amiss some of my transactions from a different channel, I thought proper to take some notice of them in my letter of today, a copy of which I send you. I don't however like to address him myself but wish you to inform him of any particular paragraphs in my letter which you think necessary.

Your letter mentioning the Governor's approbation of the steps I have taken in this affair gave me considerable pleasure: it shall always be my wish and my endeavour to merit it, and I flatter myself that my conduct not subjected to the partial testimony of others will in some measure entitle me to it.

## 11

### Hamilton to Bogle, 25 March 1776, Buxaduar

I wrote to you the beginning of this month from Cantalbary, in answer to your letter of 6th ultimo. I hope mine arrived with you in course of post, and I flatter myself the account I then gave of my transactions, and of the difficulties I had to encounter with, has removed your suspicions of my wishing to engage in an altercation with the Dinajpur Chief [Harwood]. Since the receipt of your letter I have totally declined interesting myself in the fulfilment of the Bhutanese disputes, having only interfered by advising the Bhutanese to moderate the violence of their passions, pay a proper deference to the vakil from Dinajpur, and acquaint me with the result of the examination of anything particular which may occur while the matter is investigating. As Ram Kant Kazi was left sick at Cantalbary, the Deb Rajah's vakil requested that my sircar [trusted servant, see Note 5 above] might attend the vakils in order to take memorandum of the depositions, which (on condition that he should appear there only in the character of a Bhutanese Kazi and as no way whatever connected with me), I thought proper to agree to. The vakils are now met and the enquiry is

carrying on, what the event may be is as yet uncertain, but I suspect it will not be partial to the Deb Rajah from the fresh transaction that occurred upon opening the *Congress* - a splendid word is not it - which was a demand on the Buxa Subah by Nazir Deo [of Cooch Behar] to relinquish possession of several taluks [revenue sub-districts] which have hitherto been considered as Bhutanese property. The Subah applied to me for advice on this occasion. I told him that I did not conceive the present vakils were authorised to take any other examination than that concerning the lands about which his master had complained to the Governor; and thought he had better decline submitting the matter to their arbitration, unless a special mandate for that purpose was sent him either from the Supreme or Subordinate Council at Dinajpur. He has accordingly wrote Nazir Deo to that effect. I don't know whether in consequence of my representation to Mr. Harwood or some other cause but the Nazir Deo has nominated another person as his vakil and withdrawn his commission to Maticappa which gave the Bhutanese so much offence.

The Deb Rajah is highly displeased with me for interesting myself so little in the accommodation of his disputes: he threatens to complain of any remissness to the Governor. I hope you will stand my friend on the occasion. He proposed to me sending some of his people to complain of the dilatoriness of the vakils and the oppression of Nazir Deo and the Baikuntpur Rajah who is he says very conscious of the invalidity of their pretensions to the parganas [districts] in dispute, endeavour to make all they can of the present opportunity by squeezing the poor ryots [peasants]. As I saw no advantage which could accrue from this measure, I have dissuaded him from it and have engaged to represent to the Burra Sahib [literally "Great Man", Warren Hastings] any cause of complaint he may have against his neighbours. I am really ashamed to be under the necessity of troubling the Governor so often on their account, but if I wish to live on terms of common civility with the people here it is absolutely impossible for me to avoid it. I beg you will represent my situation in this respect to his Honour, from your own experience of their obstinacy and importunity, I doubt not you will be able to do it to his satisfaction, and if my representations on the Deb Rajah's account should be at any time thought frivolous, troublesome, or such as my profession and character here by no means entitle me to interfere with, be so good as make an apology for me and request the Governor by no means to ascribe them to my inclination but to the indispensable necessity of any situation which obliges me to it.

I yesterday received a large packet from Tashilhunpo. Tashi Lama has sent a Gylong to meet me at Punakha and has referred me to him for all

kinds of information. I intend setting out for that place tomorrow. I am a good deal vexed about not having done so sooner. Although the Deb Rajah a month ago sent his instructions, my going now is opposed by the Buxa Subah as he imagines I may still be prevailed upon to interest myself in the settlement of his disputes. However, as I have assured him of any positive resolution to have nothing to do with them and threatened to complain to the Deb Rajah if he refuses obedience to his parwannah [edict], he has consented to supply me with coolies and to let me proceed. Tashi Lama in answer to my request to be allowed to visit him at Tashilhunpo replies that he will be exceeding happy to see me and that he has wrote to Lhasa for the necessary passports, so that I hope to make such a trip to Tibet before my return to Bengal.

Along with my letters there came a large packet for the Governor and four for you. I have forwarded his as it came to hand, yours being much too bulky to be sent by the dak [mail carrier], I opened them, took out the letters and now enclose you them, one from Tashi Lama, one I should imagine by the superscription from the Emperor of China which was enclosed in a box said to contain presents from him, one from the Sokpo Chumbo and the fourth from the Pung Cusho. Two of them came to hand fixed with paste as they still are, the other two being unsealed I fixed with wafers without opening the envelope and have made my munshi [secretary or translator] copy the superscriptions from the covers for the packages in which they were contained. The box which is said to contain the Emperor's presents with the pieces of silk sent you by Tashi Lama, Sokpo Chumbo and Pung Cusho I have sent under charge of Gulab Singh (one of my harkaras) and two stout Bhutanese well armed to Captain Popham, and have requested him to send a couple of sepoy's with them to Calcutta. As it is probable the Emperor's presents are intended for Mr. Hastings, I have addressed the box to him. This will at least secure it being forwarded with expedition and care and will more readily induce Popham to send an escort with it to Calcutta.

In this box there were originally four parcels which once had all been sealed. One of them, however, came to hand quite open and another right open at the end. I have forwarded them exactly in the condition they were received. The literati at Buxaduar have not been able to explain the Tibet superscription to my satisfaction. They tell me it is an offering for prayers of the Godly, but from whom or whence I can only conjecture from the Persian address on the cloth in which the box was wrapped and which my munshi has copied upon the letter. I have inclosed in this box a small quantity of silver and a small parcel of gold dust, which came with the silks

mentioned for you in the list from Tashi Lama. It is wrapped in paper and directed in Persian. I have sent everything that came for you in the other parcel but that which I claim for my fee as Postmaster of Buxaduar. I tell you no news from Tibet, indeed have received none. I suppose Tashi Lama has been more particular in his letters to you. I have sent you the Sokpo Chumbo's letter to me in which he mentions some disputes they have lately had with [Gorkha's] numerous and well disciplined army in Morung. Be so good as to acquaint the Governor with what particulars relate to that affair.

I have made a number of enquiries in order to supply your commissions but have hitherto been unsuccessful. Not a syllable mentioned in any of the Tibet letters about the Governor's cattle though I wrote to the Sokpo Chumbo and Pung Cusho particularly on their account; they are too late to come this season. I shall certainly bring them with me next.

You have probably had accounts from Europe. Do let me know all the *nouvelles* as soon as you can after their arrival.

I am much in want of cash as I wrote you before. The *foutres* here won't give me the Calcutta price for my broadcloth, and the Rajah shall go without an A---e clout before he has it at that. I can't however think of getting more into your debt by taking up money from Robertson, so shall make the best I can as think a demand of my arrears from the Company would be improper.

Post script.

The clock you gave Lama Rimpoché comes under Gulab Singh's care to be repaired. Pray did you receive a letter from his Holiness since leaving this country? He is surprised at not having an answer from you. The Sokpo Chumbo wrote me he sent two letters for me to Calcutta, you will take care of them if they come to hand.

## 12

### Hamilton to Bogle, 10 April 1776, Punakha

I wrote to you from Buxaduar on the 25th ult. and enclosed several letters from Tashi Lama all of which I hope by this time safely come to hand. I then informed you of my intention to leave Buxaduar next day. I was, however, detained till the 27th, the Subah not having supplied me with a single coolie on the 26th and even next day was obliged to load my

own horses and servants with what things were most necessary for my journey, the Subah obstinately refusing to assist me notwithstanding I repeatedly showed him the Deb Rajah's parwannah for many more coolies than I had occasion for and as far as was necessary explained to him the necessity there was for my travelling expeditiously. From being certain that at the time I made my application the Subah had plenty of coolies at command and from some circumstances which occurred soon after, I have great reason to suspect that the Subah's refusal was in consequence of private orders he had from the Deb Rajah to that purpose, and the great object they had in view was to prevent an interview with Tashi Lama's Gylong, which I am sorry to acquaint you they have unluckily succeeded in, he having set out on his return to Tibet about the time I left Buxaduar. The first intelligence I received of his departure was at Kepta, immediately upon which I posted to Tashichodzong to try if possible I could overtake him before he quitted Bhutan. They had left Pharidzong three days before my arrival at Tashichodzong which obliged me to drop the pursuit. You will perhaps think my suspicions of the Deb Rajah's wishing to prevent any meeting with the Setson Toongee precipitate, especially at a time when he is soliciting favours of our Government and instead of thwarting should rather wish to promote their intentions, the circumstances which led me to think so may perhaps induce you to be of the same opinion. The Rajah in answer to my frequent enquiries about Tashi Lama, repeatedly assured me that he would transmit me the earliest information from that quarter, and in case any person should come from him would acquaint me immediately upon their entering the Bhutan territories that I might come directly to meet them at Punakha. He took not the smallest notice of their arrival in any of his letters although he must have known of their journey some time before: to my certain knowledge Tashi Lama's letters were detained at Punakha several days after delivery - they were double the time in coming to Buxaduar that despatches usually are. They arrived at Buxaduar about noon. I by accident got intelligence of it and was obliged to insist positively on their delivery as the Subah by a number of evasions wanted to put it off till next day. The Deb Rajah in answer to a letter I wrote him from Murijong representing the Buxa Subah's behaviour in pretty strong terms, endeavours to apologise for him and desires me to take no further notice of it. Do you think his Debship would have wrote in this style had obedience to his parwannah been refused on any other occasion? No surely. As I am very little of a politician, I shan't puzzle my brains to account for the Rajah's motives: it is possible that they may be owing to that jealousy which all petty states are affected with when

confederacies are formed between their more powerful neighbours: this, considering the nature of the Government and national bent of their disposition, that may perhaps clear it up.

I am in excellent temper for drawing a national character of the Bhutanese. I think I could paint in strong and lovely colours. You would probably say I was under the influence of passion and prejudice against them. It may be so. I will therefore defer it till I am in better humour.

I have not yet seen the Deb Rajah though I have been here four days. He is offering up his prayers to Gog and Magog about 12 miles hence. About 15 out of 60 [loads of goods] belonging to me have arrived, the rest I believe I shall have a very flimsy account of. All my servants and horses are knocked up. My feet are so swelled and painful notwithstanding four days rest that I can hardly walk or wear a shoe. These distresses I hope soon to get the better of. I must however guess will as before use the Governor to procure an interview with Tashi Lama's messenger or to promote that good understanding which subsists between him and the different powers in this part of the world.

I have got some fine apricot, peach, pear, walnut and rose plants for him: as soon as they have taken well root in the baskets will send them down.

The Punakha Dzungpon desires his compliments to you and will thank you for some more potatoes. They were so fond of those they gathered from your planting that they ate all those intended for seed.

I wish you could send me some garden seeds, but above all a great deal of news. If there is none stirring, can't you invent some. It wont be in my power to detect you and will entertain me every bit as well as what is true. I endeavoured to exert my poor talents in this way when at Behar for your amusement while at Tashichodzung.

Poor Lady Anne [Monson] I hear is dead which I am very sorry for. They say Hancock and Banks are likewise dead, for aye are February and March become your sickly months in Bengal.

## 13

### Hamilton to Bogle, 30 May 1776, Tashichodzung

I have wrote you a number of times since I heard from you last, which makes me suspect that either all my letters must have miscarried or that their frequency begins to be troublesome. If the latter is the case, you have

yourself only to blame for encouraging me to write you by every opportunity.

By my last from Punakha I acquainted you with my disappointment in not meeting the Gylong sent from Tashilhunpo, and with the share I suspected the Deb Rajah to have had in frustrating my expectations. About the time I wrote you I likewise addressed Tashi Lama and a few days ago a servant of his arrived with the answer. From the genteel manner in which the Governor is mentioned by Tashi Lama and the friendly means he uses for conciliating the esteem of the Lhasaites and others by representing the Governor's character and administration in their genuine colours I doubt not that his Honour will be highly pleased with so convincing a proof of Tashi Lama's friendship. I have therefore in mine of today enclosed Tashi Lama's letter for his perusal.

The hopes I had of visiting our friends in Tibet are now no more. Tashi Lama writes me that the presence of the Emperor's vakils, Kalmuk chiefs, and daily solicitation of the Lhasa Government to drop all communication with Bengal are the only reasons which prevent him sending for me to his court. He has however so buttered his refusal with sweet words, and seems so vexed at being under necessity of denying my request, that it is impossible for me to grumble.

As you will probably see Tashi Lama's letter it will be needless for me to recapitulate its contents. I shall therefore only mention such paragraphs as I have particularly replied to; his intention of sending vakils to wait upon the Governor when the rains are over; his proposal of building a house of residence on the frontier of Bengal and Hindustan; and his ordering me to inquire for a road from his country. In my answer I repeated to Tashi Lama that as the sole intention of my coming to this country was to accommodate his people with every convenience, and as far as in my power alleviate the difficulties attending their journey to Calcutta, he might depend on my assisting them in every respect to the utmost of my abilities; and that in order to meet them on their arrival would either remain here or fix my residence on the Bengal frontier whichever was most agreeable to him.

I was apprehensive there was no place in Bengal or Hindustan but would prove unhealthy to his people during the hot and rainy season, that in my opinion his vakils for the 1st and 2nd years till their constitutions were habituated to the climate had better come down in the cold weather and return to their own country on the commencement of the hot. However, if he chose to pitch upon any particular spot I would acquaint the Governor and doubted not his immediately ordering accommodation

to be prepared for them. As to a road [through eastern Nepal or Sikkim] I knew of none but through Nepal and Morung, and that the warlike preparations and disposition of the Rajah of those countries gave me no room for hope that he would allow of a communication being established through his country with Bengal.

I was much concerned to learn by a small note accompanying Tashi Lama's letter and by the return of one of mine that the Pung Cushos were both dead. It seemed they died within a few days of each other soon after writing the letter I transmitted you.

I refer you to Tashi Lama's letter for all written news from Tibet. Its bearer informs me of some circumstances which merit attention. He says the Lhasa and Bhutanese Governments are at present closely united in alliance, that Gesub Rimpoché in order to convince the Deb Rajah of his sincerity and bind him faster, has banished from Lhasa the adherents of Deb Judhur, and that Tashi Lama actuated mostly by humanity had granted them asylum in his dominions. The Bhutanese seldom in their own conduct influenced by motives of justice, never by those of generosity, conceive no other idea of the protection afforded the unfortunate men by Tashi Lama but that he intends raising disturbances in Bhutan on the first favourable occasion. To those, however, who are better acquainted with Tashi Lama's character I am persuaded they will appear in a very different point of view, and if it is supposed he was anyhow actuated by political motives, I am convinced they are diametrically opposite to what the Bhutanese suspect. If you consider the unhappy situation of those people exiled from their native country drove to despair by the unparalleled baseness and perfidy of their former associates and how readily they would embrace any remedy however desperate for their present ills, I doubt not you will conclude with me that Tashi Lama has afforded them an asylum, merely to prevent them from joining Nepal or from other ambitious Rajahs who could and would support their cause. It is impossible however to make the Bhutanese view Tashi Lama's conduct in this light, nor would my endeavouring to explain it to them be of any signification.

The other piece of intelligence Tashi Lama's messenger gave me you are more particularly interested in. Some months ago the Sokpo Chumbo employed an ameen [trusted agent] to purchase Bengal and Europe articles for him at Rangpur, several other Kashmiri and Gosain merchants embraced the opportunity of bringing their gold and silver to market. They arrived at Paro either in company with or soon after the Gosains who came to me at Doonga. The Penlop retained them there till he wrote the Deb Rajah and on receiving his answer obliged them to return to Tibet. I



have mentioned this circumstance in my letter to the Governor, as also a kind of proposal some of them have made of coming here if in my power to settle the terms with the Deb Rajah on which they may be allowed to trade with Bengal through Bhutan. I am not a little anxious to have his answer soon as I have some reason to think could I be authorised to determine this matter, that the Deb Rajah on condition of having the lands he claims in Behar given up to him (which equity alone would determine in his favour) and his trade to Bengal protected, would agree to settle on very moderate terms the duties and other charges of transporting goods through his country. In the agreement he made with you on the subject I believe no particular rates were fixed, it will therefore always remain in his option to prevent merchants trading through his country by loading their commerce with exorbitant duties and charges, still however he may maintain that he acts in conformity to the agreement made with you. Was it possible to convince the Bhutanese that allowing a free commerce through their country would prove very beneficial to it, there could be no occasion for any speculations on the subject: but the avarice naturally inherent in a sacerdotal and elective government is too powerful a passion to be counter-balanced by any prospect of future advantage however great, and from the experience which I have had of the Bhutanese Government's avidity even to meanness I am convinced that unless this matter is determined no merchants will find advantage in trading to Tibet through Bhutan.

I have taken notice in my letter to the Governor of the Deb Rajah being very much dissatisfied that no fulfilment of his difference with the low country Rajahs has yet taken place and he on this subject expressed himself to me in such terms as excited my contempt for his ignorance and detestation for his ingratitude. I have likewise mentioned two other complaints he has against the [Cooch] Behar Rajah, the one that he won't fulfill a contract made by his father for supplying Punakha and Tashichodzong with dry fish, oil etc.. Upon enquiring into this matter I find it was a verbal agreement made by the Behar Rajah while in confinement here during Deb Judhur's time, from the terms I should suspect it to have been extorted by violence and its execution enforced by the superior power of the Bhutanese in those days, at least I am certain that no person now could supply them with those articles for double the money. His other complaint is that the Behar Rajah refuses to coin the bullion sent from Bhutan, which refusal as it is contrary to the interests of the Behar people, I suppose owing to our Governments limiting the Rajah to coin only a certain sum annually. I proposed an expedient for this, which however the

Rajah did not agree to, viz., supplying him with Narranies<sup>10</sup> to any amount in exchange for his bullion on the same terms he formerly had it coined at in Behar; had he wanted any considerable sum I intended applying for an order on the Rangpur treasury, where a number of Narrani Rupees are lying useless. The Deb Rajah received from the Behar mint Narranies equal in weight to his bullion. The Chinese Dozas, the only silver hence are rather inferior to Siccas in purity. Narrani Rupees 122 are equal in weight to Sicca Rupees 100. Mr. Harwood exchanges them at 36 1/4 per cent batta [difference of exchange], so that had my scheme taken place the Company would have got quit of their Narranis at 14 1/4 per cent higher value than what they now exchange them for.

Ram Kant Kazi is not yet arrived so that I have not got your money. I am now determined to have it as he has behaved like a dirty rascal. I have just detected him in a theft of 7 pieces of cambric which he stole from me some months ago. I shan't however be able to recover all as he has then sold part. As for my adventure here, I have virtually, literally, been so plundered by Lamas, Rajahs, Dzungpons, Subahs, Gylongs etc., etc.. I mentioned in my last letters to the Governor what was going on in Morung. We shall no doubt have the devil to pay in a few days. Yesterday a Kazi from Dellamkotta brought accounts of 1,000 Gorkha's soldiers moving eastwards through Morung and that the ryots on the frontier had all decamped. Nobody knows on whom the blow will fall but from Durrapp Deo's nephew, the true heir to the Baikuntpur Rajahship, having a considerable command among them I imagine their first attempt will be on that country. Some time ago Captain Popham wrote me that if he goes on active service he would be glad to have me along with him. If the Governor does not choose to employ me here and we are likely to have a finger in the pie I should like the scheme much at least till Tashi Lama's people arrive.

I must request you will not delay writing me on learning the Governor's intents as to my proposal about the Kashmiris if it is like your last only three lines it will be a great favour, but if you'll give me the Calcutta and Europe news it will be still a greater one.

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10. Narraini Rupees, coined by Cooch Behar, were of lower value than Sicca Rupees, the ratio varying with time (Alexander Hamilton gives here a rate of exchange of one Sicca Rupee to 1.22 Narraini Rupees). By 1838 Narraini Rupees were in fact being coined in Bhutan using dies which the Bhutanese had captured in Cooch Behar in 1772: these Bhutanese Narraini Rupees were often called Deb Rupees. See, for example: Rennie, *Bhotan, op. cit.*, p. 48.

N.B. The vakil sent by the D.C. [Dinajpur Chief] to examine into the Deb Rajah's claims did not so much as call a single Kazi or Zamindar, but drew up a state of the matter from the account given by the [Cooch] Behar Rajah's and Buxa Subah's agents. Oh tempora oh mores.

## 14

### Hamilton to Hastings, 30 May 1776, Tashichodzong

Honourable Sir,

I had the honour of addressing you from Buxaduar on the 24th March last, and at the same time transmitting you a packet from Tashilhunpo: as Tashi Lama's particular directions to forward it expeditiously give me reason to think it might contain intelligence of some consequence, I am not a little uneasy lest any accident should have happened to it on the road from my having as yet received no account of its arrival.

By that opportunity I did myself the honour of acquainting you with Tashi Lama's having sent a person to meet me at the Deb Rajah's capital and his referring me to him for information as to the time he proposed sending his people to wait upon you in Calcutta. My journey to Punakha was so much retarded by the difficulties thrown in my way by the Deb Rajah's officers that it was not in my power to arrive there before the departure of Tashi Lama's messenger for his own country. Being thus disappointed in procuring the intelligence I wanted, my only resource was addressing Tashi Lama which I did soon after my arrival at Punakha; and a few days ago was with this answer favoured which I now take the liberty of enclosing you.

From the particular situation of affairs at Tashilhunpo and the unreasonable jealousy of the Lhasa Government, the expectations which I had formed of visiting Tibet are now at an end. Tashi Lama informs me that he does not propose sending his people to Bengal till the rains are over but seems to wish that on their arrival they should meet with me. If it has your approbation I would prefer fixing my residence at Saibganj or Behar during the intervening months to remaining in this country, as from the disposition of the Deb Rajah's Court I see no prospect while in my present capacity of promoting those views I had the honour of mentioning in my last as my sole inducement for requesting leave from the Deb Rajah and Tashi Lama to wait upon them.

The obstacles which the Bhutanese threw in the way of my journey when hastening to meet Tashi Lama's messenger gave me some suspicion

that they were not fond of a free intercourse being established between Tibet and Bengal; the bearer of Tashi Lama's last letter has still further confirmed this conjecture by informing me that several Kashmiri merchants, some of them employed by the principal people at Tashilhunpo, had arrived at Paro on their way to Bengal, but were obliged to return from thence to Tibet in consequence of the Deb Rajah's refusing them a passage through his country. This I likewise suppose has occasioned Tashi Lama's ordering me to enquire for a road from his country by way of [Sikkim], being apprehensive I imagine of meeting with a refusal to his application for a passage through Bhutan. Tashi Lama's messenger also mentioned that if it was in my power to settle with the Deb Rajah the terms on which the Tibet merchants should be allowed to trade to Bengal by way of his country, he believed several of them would gladly come here for that purpose. I replied that the Deb Rajah's refusal surprised me not a little as he formerly had agreed with Mr. Bogle to allow a free passage through this country to any merchants from Tibet; that I was not honoured with any instructions how to proceed in such a case, but should immediately represent the matter to you, and on being favoured with an answer, would inform the Kashmiris how far I should be able to serve them; that in the mean time if any of them chose to come here they might depend on every good office in my power, or if their intention was to proceed to Bengal, on hearing from them, should immediately apply to the Deb Rajah for a safe conduct through his dominions.

I have now, Honourable Sir, laid before you the circumstances which induce me to suspect the Deb Rajah averse to any communication being established through his country with those to the northward. If you think proper to honour me with any command on this subject, I shall with the greatest pleasure exert myself to do the utmost in promoting the commercial views of the Tibet merchants.

As the Kazi who in the Deb Rajah's name paid his respects to you in Calcutta is not yet arrived with your presents and letter to his master, the Deb Rajah declines addressing you till a future opportunity. He seems much dissatisfied that no settlement of his disputes with the Behar and Baikuntpur Rajahs has yet taken place, and on this subject expressed himself to me in such terms as I thought very unbecoming and very ungrateful for the many obligations he lies under to you. He has likewise complained of the Behar Rajah's refusing to fulfill a contract made by his father for supplying Bhutan with several necessary articles of life, and that he has of late refused to coin the bullion sent by the Deb Rajah to the Behar mint. As the remedies which I recommended of allowing the Bengal

merchants liberty to bring and dispose of their commodities in his country, and of his procuring my sum of Narrani Rupees in exchange for his bullion on the same terms he formerly had it coined at in Behar, were not approved by the Rajah, I presume he will mention these grievances in his next letter to you.

Should I receive any further accounts from Tashi Lama, or should a Kashmiri arrive with one from Tibet, I will again use the freedom of addressing you, till when I have the honour to be with the greatest respect, etc., etc.

## 15

### **Bogle's draft instructions, undated (probably June 1776), to Hamilton on his mission to Bhutan**

I deserve many reproaches for allowing your obliging letters to remain unanswered. I am myself to blame. But one cause of it was my expectations of having heard from you more fully when you have been able from your residence at the Deb Rajah's Court to inform me of the real state of affairs, and substitute certainty for conjecture, and as to Europe news we have yet had none decisive concerning this country.

I have now received your obliging letter of 30 ultimo [? May], which gives me much insight into the temper of our friends, and I will give you my ideas about them.

I would advise you by all means to avoid disputes, controversies and quarrels with anybody, or if you think a man a rogue, to tell him so, or even give him reason to suspect your thoughts; it will only serve to throw difficulties in your way, whatever you have to do. The warmth of your temper, and your natural aversion from deceit and artifice may render this advice not unnecessary. But in dealing with the Bhutanese you must follow the rule of the Apostle Paul, of being all things to all men. If they are cunning you must be cautious. But although I would advise you by all means to avoid giving anything that can disgust them as men, yet I think you ought strongly but dispassionately to represent to them the impropriety of their conduct as politicians. They should be convinced of the friendship of the English, and at present it seems more their interest to cultivate it than at any other time. These preparations of the Nepal Rajah are most probably directed against their country. The command which the nephew of Durrup Deo holds in the army serves to strengthen this idea; and they know best whether they are in a state to defend their country at

the bottom of the hills from a powerful army. At present however there is no such thing as procuring you any authority to carry this subject a bit farther, and however impolitic it might be to allow the Nepal Rajah to make farther conquests on the borders of Bengal, there is nothing at present which should lead the Board to consider the matter as pressing. As to the liberty for merchants to pass through his country, it was a point the Deb absolutely consented to, under certain restrictions. I send you a copy of his agreement. You will observe that it is particularly stipulated that no Englishmen or Europeans shall enter the country to trade. He has a copy of this in the Bhutanese language, and I wish you would ask whether he intends to comply with this agreement or not. As to the terms you mention of having the lands he claims in Behar given up to him, I do not understand. He never represented to me his claim to any particular lands. He urged his claim to superiority to the whole country of Behar, which I am sure is not well founded, and surely you cannot imagine that this could be allowed, or that a Province now subject to the Company will be ceded to him. Upon this subject I had many and long conversations with the Rajah's officers at Tashichodzong. The article of the treaty of peace with the Bhutanese stipulates that he should have possession of all the lands he held prior to the war, and if the village of Kiranty etc. on the borders of Baikuntpur, or any others, on the borders of [Cooch] Behar did belong to him before the war, they will certainly be restored to him and full satisfaction be made him. Upon all these subjects the Governor wrote him fully, and I cannot conceive the reason of his letter and presents not having arrived. It must be an evasion. I would advise you to converse always fully with the Donyer who you know is by far the cleverest man at Tashichodzong, at the same time speak to the others so as to preclude any reason of jealousy. You will gain nothing by conversing immediately with the Deb Rajah, till you have brought a point to bear with the others. In all this, however, you will observe that it is rather to know the real sentiments of the Bhutanese than anything else that I write you. For the Deb Rajah absolutely engaged to allow merchants to pass and repass through his country, free from duty, and this is a point which there is no giving up. Let him say that he will keep to his engagement or that he will break it, and then we shall know how to act. Whatever you say in consequence of my letter let it be from yourself; that you have understood so and so from me, and that you mention it from your friendship to the Bhutanese. Whatever the ameen may have done, there is no doubt of their right being restored to them on a proper representation; but after all the instances of friendship which the Company have shown to them, it is their business to make

some return on their part. Pray write me fully on this subject. I should imagine it is not likely that Captain Popham will go on service during the rains. You are best to judge how far it would interfere with your other views, and commission. One thing I am afraid of that your becoming a warrior will knock you up for a traveller and a pilgrim among the hills. You had best weigh these things and the advantages you will derive from it.

Should the Deb Rajah have any thoughts of sending a wakil to Calcutta, speak to the Donyer to let it be through the tall Gylong with hair as white as snow and black eyebrows and whiskers. He is a man of the Donyer's, so you must do it through him *and him alone* [Bogle's italics]. I met him at the village between Paro and Tashichodzong on my return. He was going to Tashi Lama. These marks will prevent your mistaking him. You may remember also that he came to meet us at Paro along with the Donyer. He is a very clever man and is fitted to go upon an Embassy. Unless they send a clever man they had better not send any. But understand well what their views are. It is the Devil and all negotiating with people of stiff necks and contracted ideas.

The principal animals that the Governor is desirous of having is the smooth fine woolled goat, and a particular kind of sheep [one of these would be tus]. The sheep that were sent down from Tibet are good for nothing. The wether which you may remember travelled with us from Tashilhunpo is the kind he wants.

## 16

### Hamilton to Bogle, 27 December 1776, Saibganj

I had myself the pleasure of addressing you some 12 or 15 days ago, in order to introduce my friend Captain Popham to your acquaintance and then promised to write you again in a few days. I expected to have been able on my return from the hills to have given you some account of our Tibet friends, but unfortunately I have hitherto received no intelligence from that country. There was a report that the Deb Rajah had refused a passage through his country of a Caravan (as it is called) from Tibet. My authority however is dubious.

My letters for Tashi Lama were despatched from Buxaduar the latter end of October: an answer according to the ordinary course of things should have been received long ere now. I set off for Bhutan tomorrow and on my arrival at Buxaduar will again despatch letters by one of my

own people for Tashilhunpo. Should no account of any deputation from thence be received shortly, I shall be at a loss what to do. Three Budgerows [kind of barge used on the Ganges for bulk transport] have been laying here idle these two months which should there be no prospect of their being employed had better be discharged. I wish you could inform me how long the Governor would wish them to be detained here in case no accounts are received from Tibet.

I am really vexed at being able to do so little in promoting the wish for intercourse between Tibet and Bengal, but as all in my power has been done to forward it, I can accuse myself of nothing. I wish, however, to put an end to the extraordinary expense which the Company are at on this account as soon as possible: it was partly from these motives I formerly proposed to you my being appointed to act as surgeon to the troops in this country. My scheme at that time not meeting with your approbation was laid aside but should there be no probability of Tashi Lama's vakils coming down this season, I still should think it better to have an appointment where I shall be constantly at hand to lend assistance to anybody coming from the northward than in my present unsettled situation. I have today mentioned this subject in a letter to Captain Popham and have requested him to learn from you whether or not my application for such an appointment would be agreeable to the Governor without his approbation: I never should think of soliciting for it.

Mr. Harwood was at Behar some days ago but nothing that I have yet heard of has been determined on the Bhutanese disputes.

I sincerely congratulate you on your late appointment [to a Commission to revise the Bengal revenue structure, jointly with David Anderson]. It will, I suppose, occupy all your time. If not, a line or two from you will oblige me highly.

## 17

### Hamilton to Bogle, 27 April 1777, Mirzapur

This morning the Buxa Subah with his retinue arrived here. I have endeavoured to persuade most of them to return with me but hitherto with little success as I have only prevailed on three of them to accompany me. From my conversation with him I find Lama Rimpoché is now possessed of the whole authority in Bhutan, no new Deb Rajah having been elected [Kunga Rinchen having died in late 1776 or early 1777: he was followed by Desi Chhotul Jigme Singye]. If the Subah's account can be



depended upon, Lama Rimpoché is well disposed to cultivate the Governor's friendship and principally with that view has asked this numerous deputation to wait upon him. The settlement of their frontier is another capital object of their embassy. I have acquainted him with the terms on which the lands they claim to will be given up. The great point to be gained is a passage for the merchants to and from Tibet. In our several *tête à têtes* on this subject I have mentioned as my opinion that it would be less difficult to obtain the compliance of the Bhutan government with this proposal than afterwards to prevent their eluding the agreements. As the most probable means of enforcing its execution I recommend the appointment of a Resident or Consul in Bhutan through whom the Kashmiris and other merchants might make their applications to the government of the country. You seemed convinced of the expediency of such occasions but was apprehensive it would be impossible to bring the Bhutanese to consent to it. With a little address I believe Lama Rimpoché might be brought to make an application for such a person. The intercourse between Bhutan and Bengal you will know is liable to many obstructions. These principally proceed from the knavery and chicanery of the inferior officers of Government in [Cooch] Behar and Rangpur. Partly through their influence and representations and partly from the seemingly little consequence of the Bhutanese complaints, it has hitherto been impossible for the merchants to obtain any redress of their grievances from the Council at Dinajpur, indeed it can hardly be expected from the accounts of their situation and the more important objects which engross the whole of their attention that these gentlemen should find time to enquire minutely into these matters. A person residing upon the spot invested with sufficient authority to protect the trade and settle any disputes which might occur would probably be the means of considerably increasing the exports from the country; and by giving the Bhutanese an additional security for their trade would induce them the more readily to agree to what proposals might be made them from our Government. When last at Tashichodzung I had some conversation with Lama Rimpoché on the subject, he was so thoroughly convinced of the advantages the Bhutanese trade would derive from such a protection that he at that time proposed applying for such a person; but matters then being not ripe for this scheme being carried into execution, I solicited him not on the subject. Now is the season, and if the Governor approves of my making this a secondary object of my little negotiations I am almost confident of success.

I expect from what passed between us before my leaving Calcutta that the Subah will be referred to me for an answer as to their frontier. If that matter is determined in Calcutta I shall despair of success as to what the Governor wishes to obtain.

It is absurd in me who is in the same predicament to ridicule the Bhutanese envoy, but I can't help laughing at his having come thus far without any credentials or letters for the Governor. I hope nevertheless you will see him well treated as my reception in Bhutan will probably correspond with his in Calcutta.

Our Tibet friends are all in good health and desire to be remembered.

## 18

### Hamilton to Bogle, 31 May 1777, Saibganj

Captain Popham informs me he wrote to you on the 21st and acquainted you with the accident I met with that day, the consequences of which have confined me to my bed ever since. As the wounds on my face and thigh now discharge freely, and the swelling and inflammation much gone, I hope in a few days to be able to go about again and most probably to proceed on my journey to Tashichodzong long enough before the letters and papers you promised to forward me upon the road arrive here.

I have this morning taken leave of our friend the Gylong who with his retinue set out from hence for Buxaduar under care of my munshi. They have an escort from Captain Popham that length, and horses to convey them [onwards] attend them. They left me this morning all in good health and high spirits and of their professions may be credited very grateful for the polite reception and treatment they have met with in Bengal.

The Gylong complains of no body but you. He says he delivered Mr. Bogle several letters from Chanzo Cusho, Sokpo Chumbo etc., none of which has he deigned to answer, and that on leaving Calcutta he was told these letters should overtake him on the road either before or on his arrival here, which, however, has not been the case. He is now therefore apprehensive those who entrusted their letters to his care from Tibet may suspect he has made away with them on account of the presents which accompanied them. Influenced by this suspicion he has begged me to request you will send the answers immediately and at the same time inform him for whom the microscope, the magic lanthorn, etc., etc., are intended.

By my letter of yesterday to Tashi Lama I acquainted him with my intention of proceeding to Tashichodzong in a few days and with the

object which the Governor wishes to accomplish in Bhutan in the success of which he is equally interested with us. I have represented to him the greater probability there is of my proceeding if assisted with the advice and influence of an Envoy from him to the Bhutan Durbar, and if the declarations of my travelling companion may be relied on he will represent my requests in such a light to Tashi Lama as will ensure it being complied with. This being the case, let me request you to favour me by the first opportunity with a copy of the treaty you concluded with the Deb Rajah, with the Governor's present sentiments on the matter and with every other circumstance it may be necessary to know in the transaction of this affair.

## 19

### Hamilton to Hastings, 15 June 1777, Saibganj

I do myself the honour to acquaint you with the arrival of the Tibet wakil and his retinue at Buxaduar on the 7th instant, all of them in good health. They were escorted that length by several of my servants and two sepoy from Captain Popham's Battalion. By the accounts I have received from Buxaduar, they have left Bengal highly pleased with the attention and civilities that have been shown them during their stay in this country.

At the same time with these letters from Bhutan I had the honour of receiving one from Tashi Lama dated March last, who, solicitous about the state of his servants, strictly enjoins me to be attentive to their ease and convenience. My endeavours for that purpose I flatter myself will give him satisfaction. He likewise mentions that the Court at Lhasa are in expectation of being visited by a Mandarin of high rank from the Emperor of China. Tashi Lama proposes meeting him at Lhasa, I presume with an intention of investing Dalai Lama with the Government of that country.

An unlucky accident I met with soon after my arrival here, by depriving me of the use of one of my legs, has hitherto prevented me from proceeding on my journey to Bhutan. I hope, however, to be able to set out before the end of the month, and on my arrival at Tashichodzung will do myself the honour of laying before you my sentiments as to the most probable means of establishing an intercourse through Bhutan with the countries to the northward. Under their present system of government I should not imagine it an impracticable undertaking; but, if I am not much mistaken in the character of the present members of the administration in the country, talking to them in a firm and decisive tone will be the most likely means of insuring success in any negotiation. This I am certain may

be done without any risk of coming to a rupture, Bhutan even to the necessaries of life being to a great measure dependent on Bengal.

Since my arrival here I have by letters from Joghhighopa [on the north bank of the Brahmaputra opposite Goalpara in Assam] been informed of an incident which alarms me not a little on account of the unfortunate Majoojunna. On the 25th of last month Mons. Desblotière with another two French gentlemen and an escort of fifteen or twenty sepoy set out in boats from thence and have without opposition from the chokies [officials at the customs post] proceeded on their voyage towards the capital of Assam [?Gargaon].<sup>11</sup> I am at a loss to conjecture the motives which can

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11. Assam occupied the Brahmaputra Valley to the east of Cooch Behar for some three hundred miles up to the hills which today separate India from Burma (Myanmar). In the 13th century A.D. this region was dominated by the Ahoms, a people who are in some way related to the Shans of Burma and Thailand. Except for a brief period in the 17th century when the Moghul Viceroy of Bengal, Mir Jumla, embarked upon an energetic military demonstration up the Brahmaputra Valley (1661-63), Assam fell outside the confines of the Moghul Empire and it was but little known to Europeans when Bengal came under direct British control in the 1760s. Apart from prestige, it is possible that a major Moghul interest in this region was that it was the home of wild elephants.

By 1760 there did exist trading posts at Joghhighopa and Goalpara, respectively on the right and left banks of the Brahmaputra. The French East India Company official Chevalier set up an establishment there between 1755 and 1757 which operated at times, because of the fortunes of war, either in the interests of the French settlement at Chandernagore or in collaboration with various private English traders, notably Hugh Baillie. Some French traders remained at Goalpara until 1778, when the fortunes of war caused their withdrawal on the orders of Fort William. (On the history of early French contacts with Assam, see: Surryakumar Bhuyan, *Early British Relations with Assam. A study of the original sources and records elucidating the history of Assam for the period from its first contact with the Honourable East India Company to the transfer of the Company's territories to the Crown in 1858*, Shillong 1928.)

At the time of Bogle's mission it was clear that Assam was a factor in Himalayan politics of some importance. There was a trade route to Tibet, the exact nature unknown, which ran through it. The Assamese rulers possessed relationships both with Cooch Behar and with Bhutan, the latter state with a long border with Assam along the foot of the hills, the Assamese sector of the Duars. Assam produced a number of commodities of commercial interest including wild silk and, probably, gold.

The French gentlemen to whom Hamilton referred were part of a renewed attempt by the French factory at Chandernagore, under Jean-Baptiste Chevalier, to expand into the Assam trade. The French, of course, were at a considerable disadvantage in that the English were able with the greatest ease to cut them off from the sea (Chandernagore was upstream of Calcutta on the Hughli River). In 1778, with the outbreak once more of war with France, the English hastened to round up the French merchants at Goalpara and send them down to Calcutta.

have induced them to undertake this journey; but, interested as I am in the affairs of that country, and in the fate of Rajah Seer Singh's family, I cannot but be apprehensive lest the situation of its only representative at Hugli may have exposed him to the intrigues of Mons. Chevalier [Jean-Baptiste Chevalier, Chief of the French Factory at Chandernagore, just upstream of Calcutta], who, thoroughly acquainted with the great advantage which may be derived from an intimate connection with Assam, I make no doubt would easily adopt any measure which promised to extend his influence in that country. The vicinity of Majoojunna's residence to the French settlements [at Chandernagore] makes me tremble at the possibility of their having got possession of his person. Should this have happened, I am apt to suspect from the steps which have already been taken that their sole intention is by sacrificing him to the safety and security of the usurpers to procure a more advantageous establishment for themselves in Assam than any European power has hitherto been possessed of.

The gentlemen [of the English East India Company] at Joghichopa, unacquainted with the revolutions which have happened in Assam and totally ignorant of any application for protection having been made to you by the family of the late Rajah, attribute the journey of the French gentlemen into Assam merely to commercial motives. Deprived of every share in the trade at Joghichopa and Goalpara through the superior abilities and activity of the English merchants settled there, jealousy of their success is supposed to have been the principal inducement for these [French] gentlemen's undertaking so unprecedented a journey. I am apt, however, to suspect that previous correspondence with the present Rajah must have opened their road into Assam.

Having now laid before you the circumstances of this affair so far as they have come to my knowledge, allow me with all becoming deference to submit to your superior judgement a proposal for my proceeding to the capital of Assam. Whatever the motives may be which have induced the French gentlemen to undertake this journey, their success I presume must be incompatible with your views respecting Assam. The precedent which that Government has given by allowing Mons. Desblotière to pass their

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By the time of the travels of Bogle and Hamilton the power of the old Ahom Assamese rulers was rapidly disintegrating, a process of which the Moamaria rebellion (which began in 1769) was a visible symptom. In the early 19th century much of Assam was occupied by the Burmese. Inevitably an Anglo-Burmese conflict developed which resulted in 1826 in the British annexation of the whole of Assam. One result, of course, was to extend the Anglo-Bhutanese border to include the Assam duars.

chokies unmolested precludes their refusal of passports to any person authorised by you to undertake that journey in a public capacity. Should I be deemed worthy of this service, I shall consider the ascertaining the veracity of Majoojunna's title to the monarchy as the principal object of enquiry: secondary to that as ample a knowledge of their force, country, roads etc., as circumstances would admit of; and I am confident that with a little address and precaution satisfactory intelligence might be procured on those subjects and at the same time the only ostensible cause of this journey seem to be the endeavours to counteract the intrigues of the French gentlemen and to secure a continuance of the trade of the merchants settled at Joghichopa under the English protection. Should this proposal be favoured with your approbation, or should I be honoured from you with the execution of some more eligible plan for attaining the wished for intelligence with regard to Assam, I shall be happy to exert my utmost endeavours for insuring success to whatever measures you may do me the honour of entrusting to my management.

It now, Sir, only remains to apologise for the liberty I have taken by intruding upon you my sentiments on this subject with so much freedom. The interest which I naturally claim from my connection with Majoojunna in the process of his affairs, the honour I had of being made acquainted with you views respecting Assam, the high idea I have on the advantages which Bengal would derive from the success of these measures, and my opinion of the propriety of embracing the present opportunity for acquiring the requisite information for carrying into execution any future scheme with regard to Assam, these, Sir, joined with the lively ambition of a young man who wishes to distinguish himself in a service to which he is sincerely attached, will, I flatter myself, extenuate any impropriety that may occur in any address.

## 20

### Hamilton to Bogle, 17 June 1777, Saibganj

I have been in expectation of hearing from you in reply to mine of the 31st ult. I doubt not the answer is upon the road now. I have today wrote the Governor acquainting him with the arrival of the wakil at Buxaduar, as also with an incident which has lately occurred at Joghichopa: this last is the mother of a proposal which I have laid before him and which he will most probably acquaint you with. I am very anxious to receive his reply thereto; and it is likely I shall not be able on account of my lameness to get beyond Buxaduar for some time, may I beg you to request his Honour to

favour me with an answer as soon as may be convenient which probably will overtake me before leaving Buxaduar. Should the Governor direct me to proceed directly to Tashichodzong I must request you will forward me at the same time his letter for Lama Rimpoché and what instructions he may have to give, as to any conduct while there.

## 21

### Hamilton to Bogle, 22 July 1777, Buxaduar

I received your favour of the 27th ult. at [Cooch] Behar about ten days ago, but being then just on the eve of my departure deferred replying to it till now.

I had put off my journey repeatedly at Saibganj in the daily expectation of hearing from you there, and of being vested with powers from the Governor to do something conclusive with respect to the trade through Bhutan and the settlement of the disputes on the frontier; which, on leaving Calcutta, I was given to understand by you should overtake me there. Nothing of the kind has however as yet reached me, nor even am I authorised by any means to take this step I now do, quitting the Province without any written order from the Governor. This being the case, let me beg of you to reflect on the predicament in which I stood had Gen.. C..'s [Clavering]<sup>12</sup> attempt to assume the chair [in place of Warren Hastings] met with success, indeed it is most probable I should have been thought of too little consequence to be taken notice of, but had the C.... of D.... [Chief of Dinajpur, Harwood] chose to prefer any complaint against me - which merely from my differing in opinion with regard to the justice and validity of the Bhutanese claims, I believe him well enough inclined to do - the consequences most probably would have been my immediate dismissal from the service, to me, who, could I help it, would not even put it in the power of my brother to do me an injury, this was by no means an eligible situation. The risk of it, however, I took upon myself and set out from Saibganj at a time when we were unacquainted with the issue of your disputes.

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12. The reference here is to the attempt by Sir John Clavering to take Hasting's place as Governor-General in June 1777, following a confusion in which it was reported that Hastings had resigned. Hastings was supported by the Supreme Court, which held that he had not resigned. In August 1777 Clavering died to Hastings' considerable satisfaction. Hastings from now onwards had an effective majority in the Calcutta Council.

On my journey to this place I have had difficulties to struggle with which only the constitution of a horse and the most resolute perseverance could surmount: though I had sent Mr. Harwood's parwannah for coolies and bearers to the Tasildar at Behar and had wrote him particularly on the subject myself, he behaved with the greatest insolence, gave me coolies and porters who before they had got two cos from Behar tossed my baggage into the jungle and run off. Instead of providing me with bearers, he enticed those I provided myself to elope. I set off from Behar on horse-back; but on reaching the first river found no bridge, no boat, no plantain trees, all, or some of which the Tasildar had given me to understand were provided for my accommodation. I was here obliged to leave my horses, swim across the river, and travel the rest of the road on foot generally up to my middle in water. On the 15th I was from seven in the morning to three hours past midnight in this situation. At length I reached a deserted hovel where a bunch of straw served me for a bed, a sheaf of paddy for a pillow. A handful of dry rice and a pot of sour milk were luxuries which I could not at all time command. Travelling thus, in four days I reached Chichakotta.

I know you will endeavour to comfort me by alleging we only can enjoy with any relish the conveniences of life having had some experience of its rubs and difficulties. I allow the force of your argument; but I begin now to be pretty firmly of the opinion that in my repeated excursions to this country I have undergone hardships and met with crosses sufficient to make me relish *très délicieusement* the ease and conveniences of life for the rest of my days. Bad as they were, the obstacles which nature and the season threw in my way are now surmounted, there are some of a different kind which I believe will effectually frustrate the intention of my journey. While at Saibganj Mr. Harwood issued his parwannah deciding the long depending cause respecting the Bhutan frontier. He has ordered a line drawn from the village of Kiranty to Maraghat to be considered as the boundary between Bengal and Bhutan. By this decision the Bhutanese are not only deprived of every inch of land they laid claim to, but of double its extent in territory to which neither the Baikuntpur nor [Cooch] Behar Rajahs ever pretended any right. The Baikuntpur Rajah applied to Captain Popham for a party of sepoy to drive the Bhutanese from that part of the country allotted to him by Mr. Harwood's decision. On his refusal I suppose he would write to Purnea, and the Chief having it in his power would I make no doubt use the necessary means for informing the execution of his parwannah, so that it is possible my next letter may advise you of hostilities having commenced between the Bhutanese and a party



of the 2nd Battalion. From the circumstances you will perceive it is entirely out of my powers to be of any service in promoting the Governor's views as to the Tibet trade, and being heartily tired of the life I lead here I have in a letter of this date requested the Governor's permission to take a final leave of Bhutan in the beginning of September, as before then I shall be able to execute all the little commissions he has entrusted to my care.

I have mentioned my wish of being employed to the westward, and have pointed out the Nawab of Oudh's cavalry as a corps to which I should be happy to be appointed surgeon. I am now therefore, my dear Sir, to put your friendship to the task, in requesting your influence with the Governor to procure me this appointment. I have no doubt of success if both you and Captain Palmer to whom I have likewise wrote will speak to his Honour on the subject. Should the Governor have determined to nominate no more medical folks to the Nawab's troops, the appointment of surgeon to the Resident in Benares would equally oblige me; but rather than remain in my present situation in a country where the performance of a few superstitious rites and ceremonies is considered more meritorious than the exercise of those virtues useful to society, where human nature has arrived at a greater pitch of depravity than I have ever elsewhere experienced it, where I am precluded from all communication with the rational part of mankind, where there is no emolument whatever to be derived and where my allowances are barely equal to my expense, I will troop after a Brigade, do the duty of a regimental hospital for life, or what is equally bad, return to Scotland and have it inscribed in large characters over my door: "A.H., late surgeon in the East India Company's service, bleeds for sixpence, draws teeth for a shilling". Make my compliments to Messrs. [David] Anderson and [Claud] Alexander.

## 22

### Hamilton to Hastings, 22 July 1777, Buxaduar

I do myself the honour of transmitting you two letters from Tashi Lama's wakil, one I found on my arrival here, the other came by my servants who escorted him to the frontier of Tibet.

Since I had the honour of addressing you from Saibganj, latter accounts which I have received from Goalpara advise me of the return of the French gentlemen who attempted penetrating into Assam. It seems they were allowed to proceed no further than Gauhati about four days journey

from the frontier. Nothing that I have yet heard has transpired as to the object or the success of their expedition.

I expect in a few days passports for my journey to Tashichodzong where, after having in your name congratulated the Rajah [the new Deb Rajah, Jigme Singye] on his accession, informed myself of the views of the present administration, and of the most likely means of prevailing on them to admit of a free intercourse between Bengal and Tibet through Bhutan, I know of nothing that can detain me later than the beginning of September, when I propose setting out on my return to Bengal, if not honoured with any further instructions from you. No employment whatever could yield me equal pleasure to that of bringing to a happy conclusion those measures in the prosecution of which I have been engaged for these three years past; but if from my profession as a surgeon or from any other cause I should be deemed an improper person for concluding anything definitive on this subject, or if these circumstances should preclude me from being employed in the manner proposed in the last letter I had the honour of addressing you, allow me, Sir, your permission in the month of September to take a final leave of a country to which no other motive but the prospect of being able to promote your views could have induced me ever to return. In this case, Sir, if agreeable to you, I should be happy to be employed to the westward; and as I believe no one has been appointed to the Nawab of Oudh's cavalry, your doing me the honour of nominating me to the duty of surgeon in that Corps would add greatly to the number of obligations I now lie under to you. I have no services, Sir, to plead as entitling me to such an appointment; the difficulties and hardships I have had to struggle with here, and the satisfaction which Tashi Lama and the people in power in this country expressed with my conduct, will hardly apologise for the presumption of my application: it is not, therefore, on any merit of mine, but on the favourable sense you have more than once done me the honour of expressing for the goodness of my intentions, that I found my hopes of success.

**Note.** It is not clear whether Hamilton ever did reach Tashichodzong. There is a fascinating hint, as will be seen from No. 23 below, that he may not only have reached the Bhutanese capital but actually have gone on to Tibet to or on behalf of the Tashi Lama. He made his will on 2 August 1777, when it is probable he considered himself to be seriously ill; and in October 1777 he died at Buxaduar.

## 23

**From the Tashi Lama to Hastings and received at Fort William  
on 19 November 1777, which:**

returns thank for the English Doctor that was sent to him.<sup>13</sup>

## 24

**Extracts from the Dinajpur Factory Records relating to  
Anglo-Bhutanese relations between 1774 and 1777**

## A

**Dinajpur Consultation, 23 July 1774. William Lambert, President**

**Note.** Refers to the accounts from Cooch Behar, also papers furnished by Charles Purling at Rangpur. Cooch Behar is pleading for leniency in payment of revenue to the East India Company because of the devastation to much of its land caused by the late troubles (Bhutan, Sanyassis etc.). The Rajah of Cooch Behar argues thus:

Lenity and encouragement on our parts are very necessary to induce the inhabitants to resettle and to reconcile them to our government. That such conduct is indeed particularly necessary at this juncture after the distresses and hardships they have suffered in the war; and a peace is concluded with the Bhutanese which will open new settlements to them in their lands at the foot of the hills and without much moderation in levying the rents, draw away the present inhabitants as the Bhutanese make the condition of their ryots very favourable by receiving their ventures in kind.

[The consultation goes on to argue in favour of a fixed annual payment by the Rajah of Cooch Behar. Then all the East India Company has to do is to send some one periodically to collect the revenue from the Rajah: the alternative would be to delegate the revenue collection to tax farmers which would lead, most probably, to bad management and decline in yield. Purling thought that the Cooch Behar administration was highly corrupt. However, the Dinajpur Council note, all this has now changed. "The old Rajah and Dewandeo who were prisoners in Bhutan are now released and returned to Beyhar". The Council noted that the present

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<sup>13</sup> *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. IV, No. 727.

Cooch Behar regime was willing to post security against revenue and generally cooperate. The arrival of representatives from Baikuntpur was still awaited.]

## B

### Dinajpur Consultation 27 December 1775

The Naib of Rangpur reports:

It has been customary that prior to the arrival of the Bhutanese, parwannahs should be sent to the Subahs of Buxaduar, Lakhiduar and Dellamkotta to encourage the Bhutanese to bring down their merchandize for sale. I hope you will cause those parwannahs to be written as before.

The Board resolves:

As the Bhutanese intend coming into this country with their merchandise, this is to serve them a passport and you are directed on no account whatever to molest them, but suffer them to carry on their trade on the same footing as formerly.

## C

### Deb Rajah of Bhutan to Mr. Harwood at Dinajpur, 10 December 1776.

The Governor of Calcutta has wrote me acquainting me that any business I may have to settle I must inform you of and he has probably wrote you on the subject. The land from Kiranty to Buxaduar originally belonged to me and was afterwards confirmed mine by the Governor. Durrup Deo, Zemindar of Baikuntpur has seized on the taluks and collects and keeps the rents of them. The Subah of Buxaduar has wrote me that he has informed you of this and that you appointed an ameen but Nazir Deo [of Cooch Behar] paid no attention to him. It would therefore be proper for you to send two sepoyes to the Subah of Buxaduar to prevent further encroachment till the dispute is settled. I have now acquainted you with the circumstances and if Nazir Deo and Durrup Deo continue to commit disturbances I will redress myself.

From the Buxaduar Subah to Harwood.

I was made happy by the receipt of your letters acquainting me of your arrival at Behar and that you would inquire immediately into the dispute subsisting between me and Nazir Deo, that on this occasion my attendance would be necessary. As my residence has ever been in the hills the airs and climate of Beyhar would in all probability be detrimental to my health. My people would also be unwilling to accompany me for fear of being ill treated as others have been by Nazir Deo. I therefore send Hurry Sunder Biswas and Sitteram Sircars as my vakils who will attend you and answer for me, but during the inquiry cause Nazir Deo to withdraw his people from the taluks in dispute and I will mine and let both parties give Machulkas not to meddle with them till it is settled and till that time let an *ameen* on your part keep possession of them.

## D

**Dinajpur Consultation 20th May 1777**

To the Deb Rajah.

The dispute between you and the Rajah of Behar and the Zemindar of Baikuntpur about the boundaries of your respective districts has been settled by the Council of Dinajpur in the following manner. The land of Chichakotta Paugulaghat to the east of Lakhiduar [and] Maraghat and Kiranty to the west are the boundaries of Bhutan and belong to you. The lands to the southward of Chichakotta belong to the Rajah of Behar and those to the southward of Maraghat and Kiranty to the Zemindar of Baikuntpur; and you are further to understand from this that any encroachments made by either of the parties on the boundary of the other as above laid down will not be allowed. I have written the above particulars to the Rajah of Behar and the Zemindar of Baikuntpur that all parties concerned may act conformably to this adjustment.

[There are letters also to the Rajah of Cooch Behar and the Zemindar of Baikuntpur.

The Behar-Bhutan border is the line Chichakotta to Maraghat (on either side of Lakhiduar). The Baikuntpur-Bhutan border is the line Maraghat-Kiranty.]

## E

**Dinajpur Council to Hastings, 20 May 1777**

In compliance with your commands of the 29th April we have adjusted the disputes between the Deb Rajah and the Rajah of Behar according to

the treaty which was concluded with the former and the accounts of the Behar Histabood [hastobud, revenue statement] which were formed by Mr. Purling. Agreeably thereto the taluks of Chichakotta, Paugulaghat, Lakhi-duar, Kiranty and Maraghat are to be held by the Bhutanese in the same manner as they possessed them before the war and we have issued the necessary parwannahs to the Rajah of [Cooch] Behar and Zemindar of Baikuntpur and flatter ourselves that this adjustment will be satisfactory to all parties.

## 25

### **Bogle and Hamilton's negotiations in Bhutan bear some fruit**

**Note.** This agreement, the product of negotiations by Bogle and Hamilton, aided at times somewhat reluctantly by the Dinajpur Council, does not appear in Aitchison's *Treaties*.<sup>14</sup> It is, in fact, the second in a line of agreements between the Bhutanese and the British which began as a consequence of the Anglo-Bhutanese war in 1773.

Declaration of the Vakil of the Rajah of Bhutan under his seal, dated Calcutta, Bengal style 1185 (1778-79).

Formerly there was an extensive trade between the country of Lhasa and that of Bengal; and Hindus and Mussulmans passed and repassed and carried on their trade. But of late years the going and coming of merchants was rendered difficult from the wars and disturbances. Now Debe Durum [Dharma] Lama Rimpoché and the Company being united in strict friendship it has been written and agreed on both sides that the Deb Rajah shall in no way hinder the passage and trade of Hindu and Mussulman merchants, but that those persons shall not be allowed to bring sandalwood, indigo, gogul, skins, pawn and beetlenut. That no English or European merchants shall be allowed to enter the hills. That the Bhutanese who shall go to sell horses and other articles in Bengal shall be subject to

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14. One result of this agreement was that Bhutanese traders started in significant numbers to attend the fair at Rangpur, taking advantage of the freedom from duties agreed to by the East India Company. On 10 April 1780 Bogle, now Collector at Rangpur, wrote to his father that "a great concourse" of Bhutanese had lately been in Rangpur. Bogle's interest in the Himalayan tracts had evidently been rekindled: as he noted to his father on 1 March 1780, Tashichodzong was only a few days journey from Rangpur, and he felt very much inclined to pay the Bhutanese a quick visit (which, it would seem, he never did).

no duties. I also give this agreement in writing. In this manner without deviation it shall be carried into execution.

I agree.

(Signed) Richard Barwell,

(Countersigned) Eyre Coote.

## CHAPTER XV

### A Second Tibet Mission is Considered 1779-1783 and the end of an era

#### 1

**Bogle to Board (Council), 15 April 1779, Calcutta**

Honourable Sirs,

When I was formerly in Tibet, I had occasion to observe a species of small goats which are common in that country and remarkable for their fine wool, of the nature of that called Kerman [after the south-eastern Persian city of that name]. The animal itself nearly resembles that described in Buffon<sup>1</sup> under the name of the Chèvre d'Angora. They are mostly of white colour, some of them black. Their outward hair is coarse

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1. Buffon, George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de, 1707-1788. Buffon was perhaps the greatest naturalist of his age. His *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière* finally reached 44 quarto volumes of which 36 were published in his lifetime. The first 15 volumes appeared between 1749-67, and it is to these that Bogle is referring here. For a recent assessment of Buffon's importance in the history of science, see: Stephen Jay Gould, *The Lying Stones of Marrakech. Penultimate Reflections in Natural History*, London 2001, Part II.



and long, touching almost the ground, under which is produced a fine silky wool. The shawls of Kashmir (except those beaver coloured ones that take their name from a wild animal called Tus of the hair of which they are made) are manufactured of the wool of this goat which is imported into that Kingdom from the lesser Tibet and the other countries bordering on Ladakh. But the greater Tibet, and especially that part of it which extends along the frontier of Bhutan, is too far removed from Kashmir to have any share in this traffic; and the fleeces of the goats, as well as of the sheep which are also very fine, are there worked only into blankets or coarse friezes, or being spread out and beat into large and thick felts, serve for floor cloths or lining to tents. [See also: Chapter II above, No. 12].

My admiration of the fineness of the wool and the beauty of the animal led me no further at that time than to send some of the goats to the Governor-General, who I understand attempted to transport them to England; but I did not dream that the wool could have answered as an article of trade to Europe. I have lately learnt, however, that this kind of wool used to be exported from Bombay to England, and that it was an object with the Company to extend the investment in it. This suggested to me the idea that it might answer to import it from Tibet, and I sometime ago dispatched a person into that country to procure samples of it to be sent home. But, as the last ships are now under despatch, I am obliged to submit the subject to your Honourable Board in this imperfect manner, in order that you may in the mean time, if it seemeth good, communicate it to the Company and obtain such orders and instructions respecting the nature and qualities of the wool, the best manner of packing and preserving it, the value of the commodity and the extent to which an investment in it ought to be carried on as may appear to them proper.

Agreed [by the Board on 15 April 1779] that this subject be mentioned to the Honourable the Court of Directors in the next General Letter.

## 2

### **Extract of Bengal General Consultations the 19th April 1779**

The Secretary lays before the Board the following Minute by the Governor-General.

The constant drain of money from these Provinces is a consequence

naturally arising from the relative situation in which this country is placed with respect to Great Britain; and as the sources from which money flows into Bengal are known to be very disproportionate, this evil has been repeatedly pointed out as of the most alarming kind.

It was with this in view that an attempt was made some years ago to form an intercourse with the nations to the northward of Bengal by means of a person deputed into Tibet. From the information obtained in consequence it appeared that gold dust, musk, cow-tails, fine wool similar to that of Karamania, and other valuable commodities are procured in that country, that an extensive and beneficial commerce was formerly carried on between Tibet and Bengal by exchanging those articles for broad cloth, coral, Bengal manufactures and other goods either native of these Provinces or imported from England, and that this trade which used to furnish a very considerable source had of late years been totally lost from the vexations and exactions which merchants were exposed to during the civil wars that long prevailed in Nepal, the country through which the trade had principally been carried on.

To restore and extend this commerce by removing the obstacles which had arisen from these and other causes, and by establishing a safe passage for merchants either through Nepal or some of the neighbouring countries, was the principal object of the deputation to Tibet.

Tashi Lama to whom it was sent, and whose liberal and pacific character seemed well calculated to promote these views, received Mr. Bogle, our Deputy, in the most favourable manner, made a ready return to the overtures of friendship offered on the part of this Government, and promised his hearty assistance in encouraging and protecting the trade.

The late Deb Rajah, the temporal and elective Chief of Bhutan, a country adjoining to Nepal and lying between Bengal and Tibet, in consequence of the Lama's instances, and the representations made to him on the part of this Government, consented to allow merchants a passage through his country conformably to the terms of agreement contained in the report recorded in Consultation.

Some of the merchants availing themselves of these stipulations in their favour have actually passed from Tibet into Bengal by this route. Since the death of the Deb Rajah, which happened some time ago, Lama Rimpoché the Lama of Bhutan has assumed the secular as well as the spiritual authority into his own hands, and declining to nominate a successor to this office, administers the government by means of persons dependent on himself and removable at his pleasure.

In consequence of my applications to him as the Chief of Bhutan, and

to his Vakil or Minister who is now in Calcutta, to ratify this agreement [see Ch. XIV above, No. 25], I have received repeated assurances that he is ready to grant a passage and safe conduct through his country to the merchants; and the Vakil, having delivered to me declaration under his seal to this purpose, and cor-responding with the terms originally stipulated, I now lay it before the Board.

But although the force of these stipulations is acknowledged by the Bhutanese administration, yet having hitherto received no satisfaction in regard to their complaints about the boundaries of their country, they reluctantly comply with them, and the merchants being destitute of the aids and encouragement which are necessary to promote undertakings of this kind, have hitherto been cautious and backward in extending their commerce through this new channel. The influence of Gesub Rimpoché, who held the secular administration of Lhasa during the minority of Dalai Lama and whose situation rendered him in some measure jealous of Tashi Lama, was little favourable to the trade.

I am informed, however, by letters from Tibet of the death of this minister, that the Dalai Lama having attained to full age has been confirmed by Tashi Lama, recognized by the Emperor of China, and has taken upon himself the exercise of his office, and that this event, as was foreseen, has added much to the influence of Tashi Lama, both in the administration of Tibet, and at the Court of Peking. From these circumstances, and from the measures which I wish to submit to the Board, I am in hopes that many of the obstacles which have hitherto obstructed a liberal communication of trade may be removed, and that the expectations which the Company entertain from a commercial intercourse with Tibet will in great measure be fulfilled.

But the connection and friendship which has been formed with the Tashi Lama may eventually produce advantages of a far more extensive nature. These were pointed out in the report on the commission to Tibet. I beg leave however briefly to state them.

The country of Tibet is subject to the Emperor of China. Two Chinese viceroys appointed by the Court of Peking reside at Lhasa, and a very considerable trade is carried on between China and Tibet. The Emperor being a Tartar by extraction professes the religion of the Lamas, and considers Dalai and Tashi as the heads of his faith. The present Dalai Lama, who according to the superstitious tenets of that religion is supposed to be animated with the soul of his predecessors, having been discovered and consecrated by Tashi Lama, and educated and instructed by his dependents, is naturally under his influence. The present infant

Lama of Tatory [Mongolia] also, who is known by the name Taranant<sup>2</sup> and mentioned by different travellers, has in the same manner been appointed by Tashi Lama and resides at present in Tibet under his care. Tashi Lama's interest at the Court of China is also much strengthened by a strict friendship which subsists between him and Changea Lama [Changkya Hutukhtu], the priest immediately attendant on the person of the Emperor, and who from his great age and character is held in much respect at Peking.

By the means of Tashi Lama therefore I am inclined to hope that a communication may be opened with the Court of Peking, either through his mediation or by an agent directly from this Government. It is impossible to point to the precise advantages which either in opening new channels of trade or in obtaining redress of grievances, or extending the privileges of the Company, may result from such an intercourse. Like the navigation of unknown seas, which are explored not for the attainment of any certain and prescribed object, but for the discovery of what they may contain, in so new and remote a search we can only propose to adventure for possibilities. The attempt may be crowned with the most splendid and substantial success, or it may terminate in the mere gratification of useless curiosity; but the hazard is small, the design is worthy of the pursuit of a rising state, the Company have both approved and recommended it, and the means are too promising to be neglected; while the influence of Tashi Lama, joined to the favourable disposition which he has hitherto manifested to our nation, affords so fair a prospect, and that the only one which may be presented to us of accomplishing it.

When Mr. Bogle was in Tibet, Tashi Lama himself mentioned this subject and told him that when the Dalai Lama became of age, he hoped in concurrence with him and the Changea Lama to open a communication for this Government with the Court of Peking and to procure leave for a person to proceed thither on our behalf; but that he could not attempt it without great disadvantage while the Dalai Lama was a minor and Gesub in power.<sup>3</sup>

These obstacles being now removed,<sup>4</sup> the present season appears fav-

2. Called after the Tibetan religious historian Taranatha (born 1575), revered in Mongolia as one of the major precursors to the Urga Incarnation, the Jebtsun Dampa Hutukhtu.

3. See above, Ch. X, p. 268, & Ch. XIII, p. 354.

4. The present, VIIIth, Dalai Lama (Jampal Gyatso) being of age and there being in office a new Regent who could well be less obstructive (at least in the eyes of the optimist) than the one at the time of Bogle's visit.

ourable for the prosecution of this design. The objects of it have been repeatedly recommended by the Company, who have expressed their strongest approbation of the former commission and urged us to take every opportunity of continuing a correspondence with Tashi Lama and of cultivating a good understanding with the Government of Tibet.

On these grounds I beg leave to recommend that Mr. Bogle be appointed to proceed again into Bhutan and Tibet with instructions to cultivate and improve the good understanding subsisting between the Chiefs of those countries and this Government, to endeavour to establish a free and lasting intercourse of trade with the Kingdom of Tibet and the other states to the northward of Bengal, to endeavour by the means of the Lamas of Tibet to open a communication with the Court of Peking and if possible procure leave to proceed thither, and that the objects of this last destination be left to his own discretion in the application of such opportunities and advantages as may be presented to him.

Signed: Warren Hastings,  
Richard Barwell,  
Eyre Coote<sup>5</sup>

I agree. (Signed) Richard Barwell, (Countersigned) Eyre Coote.

Although my expectations of commercial advantages to be derived from a communication with Tibet are by no means so sanguine as those expressed by the Governor-General, I have no objection to our making the experiment proposed. (Signed) P. Francis.

I agree to the proposal. (Signed) E. Wheler.<sup>6</sup>

Resolved that Mr. George Bogle be deputed to Bhutan and Tibet for the

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5. Sir Eyre Coote (1726-83), a distinguished soldier who had been involved in the Indian wars since the time of Plassey (where he fought) and eventually rose to the supreme command of the British forces in India, took a seat on the Council after Clavering's death in 1777. At first hostile to Hastings, he eventually became an ally (having been bribed, so it was alleged at Hastings' trial, by the grant of abundant field allowances). Coote spent most of his remaining life commanding the British forces fighting Hyder Ali of Mysore. Shortly after handing over command in 1783, Coote died.

6. Edward Wheler, who was born in 1733, took a seat on the Council after Monson's death in 1776. At first he was strongly opposed to Hastings, but soon he became a Hastings supporter. He died in October 1784.

purpose of cultivating and improving the good understanding subsisting between the Chiefs of those countries and this Government, and to endeavour to establish a free and lasting intercourse of trade with the Kingdom of Tibet and the other states to the northward of Bengal.

The Governor-General:

The Board having agreed to the appointment of Mr. Bogle to proceed on the proposed deputation to Tibet, I move that he be permitted to draw the same allowances and establishment as were granted to the late Mr. Elliot [for his mission to Nagpur]: viz. Lieut. Colonel's pay and double full batta [travelling and subsistence allowances], Sonaut [Sicca] Rs.1488, [plus] fixed salary, Rs. 1000, [and] contingencies including munshis, servants etc., etc., Rs. 500. Sonaut [or Sicca] Rs. 2988

Agreed to [by the Board].

### 3

#### **Extract from the General Letter from Bengal dated 22nd April 1779**

Para.13. We have deputed Mr. Bogle to proceed again to Bhutan and Tibet for the purpose of cultivating and improving the good understanding between the Chiefs of those countries and this Government and to endeavour to establish a free and lasting intercourse of trade with these and the other states to the northward of Bengal which we hope will afford an extension to the vend of Europe and Bengal goods, and prove a source to supply the constant drain of money from the country.

Para.14. Mr. Bogle has reported to us that during his late Embassy to Tibet he observed a species of goats remarkable for their fine wool of the kind which was formally exported from Bombay, that he had been informed that it was an object of the Company's to extend the investment of it, and that he has sent a person to procure samples of this wool. We beg to be favoured with your sentiments to what extent an investment of this kind may be carried, also the nature and quality of the article, with the mode of packing it so that it may arrive in Europe in a proper state.

## 4

**Bogle's Memorandum on the possibility of visiting Peking through the mediation of the Tashi Lama, [?] July 1779<sup>7</sup>**

**Note.** It was as a result of learning of the Tashi Lama's proposed visit to China, sometime between April and August 1779, that Bogle's plan for a second mission to Tibet had to be postponed. In September 1779 Bogle was made, in succession to Charles Purling, Collector at Rangpur, which put him in a strategic position from which to set out for Tibet and, perhaps, even further afield, should the occasion arise.

The amount of the debts of the Chinese merchants to English individuals is from a million and a half to two millions sterling. Among the creditors are Mr. Bouchier, Sir Robert Harland, Sir John Lindsay, and most of the gentlemen who have gone from Madras, as well as Mr. Boddam and others at Bombay. They can get no redress: have no channel of applying for it. They have sent a Mr. Gordon to England with a representation to endeavour to interest the Government, and perhaps through them the Court of Russia,<sup>8</sup> but have little prospect of success, or

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7. Not 1778 as indicated by Markham, so internal evidence would suggest.

8. Russia did indeed possess a formal trading relationship of sorts with the Chinese Empire by way of the frontier mart at Kyakhta on the Chinese (Mongolian) border to the north-east of Uрга. In 1689, by the Treaty of Nerchinsk, an official Russo-Chinese relationship was established by means of what was in fact the first formal agreement ever entered into by Chinese Empire with a European state. In 1693 the Russians acquired the right to send every three years trading caravans, albeit limited in number, size and duration of stay, to Peking. In 1720, as Bogle well knew from his reading of his fellow Scot John Bell of Antermony, who participated, there was the Russian Embassy to Peking under L.V. Izmailov. In 1727 the treaty of Kyakhta confirmed both a stretch of Sino-Russian border and the special relationship of Russia with China including the Russian right to maintain a permanent Christian missionary establishment (Russian Orthodox) in Peking, a right still in force in Bogle's day. In 1729 the Emperor Yung-cheng (Yungzheng) sent an embassy to Moscow (where it arrived in early 1731), the first such Chinese venture with any European Power, a fact which was well known throughout Europe. In 1768 Ivan Ivanovich Kropotov negotiated with the Chinese on behalf of Catherine the Great the Supplementary Treaty of Kyakhta. At times Sino-Russian relations on this border were temporarily disrupted; but it was not completely unreasonable at this period to see here the chance, however remote, of some kind of potential access for the English East India Company to Peking through Russian mediation or assistance. See: Mark Mancall, *Russia and China. Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728*, Cambridge, Mass., 1971; C.M. Foust,

at best distant. Besides this, the Company's business is often harassed and oppressed, and its conductors are entirely without any channel of communication or representation to the Court of Peking.<sup>9</sup>

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*Muscovite and Mandarin: Russia's Trade with China and Its Setting, 1727-1805*, Chapel Hill, N. Carolina, 1969; E. Widener, *The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking During the 18th Century*, Cambridge, Mass., 1976; R.K.I. Quedstedt, *Sino-Russian Relations. A Short History*, London 1984.

9. See the end of Ch. I above for a brief discussion of the conditions under which Europeans were obliged to trade at Canton.

Canton (Guangzhou) had become the sole port of entry to the China trade for European merchants since the Chinese Imperial Edict of 1757, amplified by the regulations set out in 1760. One consequence of these arrangements was that the Chinese merchant guild, the Co-hong in western sources, which appears to have been created in c. 1720, had conferred upon it both the sole right to trade with Europeans at Canton and the collective responsibility *vis à vis* the Chinese authorities for all aspects of the conduct of that trade. This was a scheme of things which the Europeans found highly unsatisfactory, not least because it gave the Co-hong, so they thought, excessive financial power. In 1771 the European merchants managed to bring about the dissolution of the Co-hong. From the European point of view this step proved to be unfortunate in that it removed a single and clearly defined corporate entity responsible for debts owed by Chinese individuals to the foreign merchant community which, by virtue of the prevailing legal climate at Canton, was unable to pursue any Chinese subject through the existing Chinese courts to which foreigners did not have any access. Faced with this situation, there developed an increasingly strong argument on the part of the European merchants, not least the English both Company and Private, to bring about some mechanism for direct formal contact with the Chinese authorities. This, it was appreciated by the Europeans, almost certainly required some form of diplomatic contact between their own Governments and the Imperial Court in Peking.

There were, as has already been indicated above, two categories of English merchants at Canton, Company and Private. The Company merchants were represented on the China coast by a Select Committee of Supercargoes (Council up to 1779) ultimately responsible to the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London: the Private merchants sometimes employed their own resources to assert their collective interests (and some maintained a permanent physical presence at Canton), but they frequently retained members of the Select Committee of Supercargoes at Canton to act as their agents. Bogle, in this passage in the Memorandum reproduced here, is referring to the Private merchants. On 27 December 1777 a group of these Private Merchants drafted a petition to the British Government in London in which they outlined their grievances: this was entrusted to the one of their number, Charles Gordon (of, one presumes, the firm of Hutton & Gordon), who brought it back to England in the summer of 1778. Similar complaints reached the Company authorities in Calcutta and London from members of the Select Committee of Supercargoes (for example, from Matthew Raper). In London, Gordon presented his petition to the British Government, requesting it to send an Embassy to Peking. The Government referred to matter



The Emperor of China is now seventy years of age.<sup>10</sup> He is of the Tatar religion, of which the Lamas are the head. The Changay Lama [Changkya Hutukhtu], who is older than him, and resides at Peking, is said to have much influence over him. He has expressed a great desire to see Tashi Lama before his death, and has at length, after repeated applications, prevailed on him to go and meet him. The Emperor has fixed on a place about a month's journey on this side of Peking, and Tashi Lama sets out about two months hence to travel through Tatary. The journey will take up about eight months, so that he may arrive with the Emperor about May next. He will stay at least three or four months; that is to August.<sup>11</sup>

When I was in Tibet, the Lama promised to endeavour to procure for me passports to go to Peking. He has not yet succeeded, but has sent a man to assure me that he will exert himself to procure me at least a passport by the way of Canton. I propose to write him that I shall prepare myself either to go by land over Tatary, if he thinks it possible to procure me passports, otherwise to go by sea to Canton in the full confidence of his sending me some person from himself to Canton with passports, so that I might get to Peking while the Lama is with the Emperor. I propose also to send back a Gosain [presumably Purangir] who is in great favour with the Lama, and whom he has sent down to Calcutta so as to be with him before

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to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, whose Chairman, Sir George Wombwell, soon received a memorial from several of London merchants with exposure to Chinese debts. There was also a considerable amount of agitation originating in India, mainly in Madras which was an important base for Private venturers in the China trade. The total debt owing in 1779 by Chinese merchants at Canton to English Private merchants was in the order of £1,000,000 (Spanish Dollars 4,347,300) according to the figures assembled by Morse (*Chronicles, op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 46).

The major sources for this subject are listed in Ch. I above, Note .29. For the text of the petition which Charles Gordon brought back to England, as well as other documents on the Chinese debt question including the grievances outlined by Matthew Raper, see: Peyrefitte, *Anglais, op. cit.*, Chapter 4.

The question of the Chinese debts, it can be seen, was a powerful argument for the establishment of some kind of direct contact between the East India Company and the Chinese Imperial Court. In this context the Bogle scheme was timely and had a great deal to recommend it as a method of achieving such a relationship without official British Governmental participation.

10. The Emperor Ch'ien-lung, personal name Hung-li, was born in September 1711 and became the fourth Emperor of the Manchu (Ch'ing) line in October 1735. He effectively retired in 1796 and died in February 1799.

11. The Tashi Lama's schedule for his Chinese journey was clearly far from fixed at this point.

he sets out from Tibet; and that this man who is much attached to me, together with one of my servants, should accompany the Lama to China, and come and meet me at Canton. The Changay Lama, who is at Peking, is a native of Tibet, and understands that language, of which I have some knowledge, so as not to be at the mercy of interpreters.

If I succeed in procuring passports, I shall then be in a situation to urge any points at the Court of Peking with the greatest advantage. But even if I should be disappointed, I do not think it is possible for me to fail in procuring a channel of communication with the Court of Peking, and in finding some person stationed at Canton through whom representations can be made.

In order to pave the way, it is necessary that some presents should be got ready that may be acceptable at Peking. Large pearls, large coral, some best birds' nests, some Arabian horses, and some muslins, should be prepared. Most of these articles are the same as make the best remittances to China, so that in case of the negotiation failing they could be sold there without any loss. But the persons interested in the recovery of these debts are so numerous and unconnected that it is difficult to get them to contribute towards this, and still more so to do it with such secrecy as to prevent the scheme from being known, which would put the people at Canton on their mettle to counteract it.

## 5

**Hastings to the Tashi Lama, Fort William,  
12 August 1779, as summarised in  
*Calendar of Persian Correspondence*,  
Vol. V, 1776-80, No. 1555.<sup>12</sup>**

Has received his [Tashi Lama's] letters accompanying presents. It appears from his writings that the Emperor of China sent the Lama some curious presents from his country and expressed a desire to have an interview with him in China. The Lama has accordingly sent to the Governor-General 450 tolas of gold with a request to purchase coral and pearls of large size and good lustre so that he may present them to the Emperor and to his other friends. He also desired to be supplied with an account of the expenses that may be incurred in the purchase of the

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12. Imperial Record Department, *Calendar of Persian Correspondence, being letters which passed between some of the Company's servants and Indian rulers and notables*, Vol. V, 1776-80, Calcutta 1930.

required articles so that anything spent in excess may be reimbursed to the Governor-General. Says in reply that immediately after the receipt of his [Tashi Lama's] letters he [Hastings] ordered his men to look for the desired articles and with this end in view also wrote letters and despatched his men to Benares, Patna, Madras and other parts of India. Coral of such quality as is wanted by him [Tashi Lama] is not available at Calcutta or anywhere in Bengal as it is not commonly used by the people of those places. The merchants who formerly exported such articles to Tibet, being discouraged by the difficulties of the road, have given up their business. However, the men who have been sent to Madras are expected to procure the required articles. As the Lama will start for China in the month of September it is no use detaining Purangir Gosain any longer. Has therefore given him leave and is sending through him two strings of coral and eight strings of pearls being all that he has hitherto procured. Has also ordered some beautiful and swift Arab horses which will be worth presenting to the Emperor. May his journey to China and his interview with the Emperor be prosperous and auspicious

## 6

### Some final correspondence between Bogle and Hastings on Tibetan affairs.

#### A

#### Hastings to Bogle, 18 November 1779<sup>13</sup>

I have received yours dated Wednesday, with a small bag of turnip seed for which I am much obliged to you, and more for the goats which I am to have. I will not forget your shawl wool; but I must make further enquiries concerning the cinnamon before I say anything about it to the Company because I suspect it to be cassia.<sup>14</sup>

13. See: E. Cotton, "A letter from Warren Hastings to George Bogle", *Bengal Past & Present*, XLII, July-December 1931. This letter had come into private hands, as seems to have been the case with a number of other Hastings' documents of a more personal than official nature; and by the time that E. Cotton published it the whereabouts of the original was unknown. I have, as elsewhere in this work, put the text into its full modern English form. Bogle was now Collector at Rangpur.

14. Not the true cinnamon bark of the spice trade (which came mainly from Ceylon) but rather what is often known as Chinese cinnamon, less highly regarded in the British market though in fact the two, cinnamon and cassia, are frequently

The general letter by the *General Barker* has brought a formal confirmation of the present Government which has been yet more formally proclaimed. The same indisposition manifests itself towards me, with much invective, orders for the abolition of contracts and salaries, and threats of prosecution if the contractors maintain their rights at law - I mean prosecution of myself and Mr. Belli [Hastings' Secretary] -, even the 4,000 Rs. given to Elliot for his journey redemanded<sup>15</sup>, and himself, Sumner, and Sir John D'Oyley abused, and their appointments reduced. Nor have you escaped, the Commission of Law Suits being expressly ordered to be abolished.<sup>16</sup>

.....

They [the Court of Directors of the East India Company] apprise me of the desperate state of the debts at Canton.<sup>17</sup>

I wish you and I could manage this affair with the [Tashi] Lama. When are we to have his answer [on the prospects of another Bogle mission]? I have two little chanks [conch shells] for him.

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very difficult to distinguish by taste, and the barks come from closely related plant species.

15. Alexander Kynynmond Elliot, was one of Bogle's closest friends. His eldest brother, Gilbert, was created Baron Minto in 1797 and served as Governor-General of India from 1807-12. Another brother, Hugh, became Governor of Madras. While Bogle was on his Tibet mission, Alexander Elliot took over his duties with the Select Committee and the Sadar Diwani Adalat. In 1778 Alexander Elliot was sent by Hastings on a mission to one of the Mahratha chieftains, Bhonsla, at Nagpur: Elliot died on the way there. Elliot's mission is referred to in No. 2 above in this Chapter. See also: Ch. V above, No. 13, p. 127.

16. The Indiaman *General Barker* referred to in this letter was named after General Sir Robert Barker, at one time Commander-in-Chief of the Company's troops in Bengal, and one of Hastings' most outspoken opponents. The *General Barker* on this voyage brought out from London a General Letter from the Company prolonging for a year the existing system of administration set out in the Regulating Act of 1773 while being extremely critical of many of Hastings' financial measures including attempts to reform the Bengal land revenue system.

17. See Note .9 above.

## B

**Bogle to Hastings, Rangpur 2 March 1780<sup>18</sup>**

I am favoured with your letters of the 25th and 27th ultimo, and have sent the tea seeds to Lama Rimpoché. When I showed them to the Buxa Subah, he got up and danced round them like David. He says they are worth to his country a lack of rupees, considering how much money goes annually out of it for tea brought overland from China.<sup>19</sup>

## C

**Bogle to Hastings, Rangpur 29 March 1780**

I beg leave to send a few seeds just arrived by Pangla Mookée. He went as far as Pharidzong to look for the currants [berries], but brought back a different breed, although I described as well as I could the rock under which the bushes grow.

## D

**Bogle to Hastings, Rangpur 30 September 1780<sup>20</sup>**

I have received despatches sent from Tibet by the Depon who was left at Tashilhunpo, and brought by two Gosains in the service of Purangir. Owing to an accident that happened on the road from Tibet, they have been long getting to hand. I have an account of the letters from the Depon and from the Pharidzong Lama (the Prior of a monastery belonging to Tashi Lama) and also from the Gosains who arrived here.

On receipt of the letters from Tatory, they were sent from Tashilhunpo by the Gosains. At the second stage on the side of Pharidzong, the bullock that was carrying the parcels with the letters, and some things belonging to the messengers, fell into the river, by which means they were lost. They were long sought for in vain - but at length the parcels for you, having been recovered, were sent back in their wet condition to Tashilhunpo,

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18. For this and the next letter, see: BM Add Mss 29,144, Hastings Papers.

19. It is interesting that Warren Hastings and Bogle were true pioneers of the Indian Himalayan tea industry.

20. See: BM Add Mss 29,146, Hastings Papers

where the Depon took out the letters, dried them, and has now sent them, though tinged with the colour of the silk that accompanied them.

In order to save time and trouble, I have taken the liberty to open the pieces of silk in which the letters were wrapped (which shall hereafter be sent), and now enclose translations of them together with a letter to me from Purangir, which, as it came without a present, and was safe in the Gosain's pocket when the bullock went into the water, arrived under his seal untouched.

The Chanzo Cusho's letter must have come in the Tibet characters, and the enclosed is a translation into Persian by the munshi at Tashilhunpo [missing]. My letters, together with one from the Sopon Chumbo (Tashi Lama's cup-bearer) to you, have not been received. The place which Tashi Lama writes from is near Selling [Sining].<sup>21</sup>

If Tashi Lama performs what he says, and writes by dak, we may soon hear from him. Should he send Purangir, his journey in the winter season I reckon from four to six months. For my own part, I have thought so long about the business that I do not know what to think, only that at all events you have left no means untried to accomplish the liberal plan which you proposed.

## 7

### The Tashi Lama's visit to China and his death

The story of the Tashi Lama's journey to China and his death there has been told by Purangir Gosain, who accompanied the Lama for most of the journey. This narrative was published both by Alexander Dalrymple (*Oriental Repertory*, Vol. II, London 1808) and Samuel Turner (*An Account of an Embassy to the Court of the Teshoo Lama in Tibet; containing a Narrative of a Journey through Bootan and Part of Tibet*, London 1800, Appendix IV): it suffers, in the words of Schuyler Cammann, from "false or distorted statements and much hyperbole", and, accordingly, must be used with some care (see: S. Cammann, "The Panchen Lama's Visit to China in 1780: An Episode in Anglo-Tibetan Relations", *Far Eastern Quarterly*, IX, 1949). The English in Bengal at this time, however, certainly gave credence to Purangir's account of the conversations between the Lama and the Ch'ien-lung Emperor.

According to Purangir, the Emperor had asked the Tashi Lama to visit Peking in 1777, 1778 and 1779. The Lama prevaricated; but in the end he felt himself unable to resist any longer, the Emperor requesting his presence on the occasion

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21. It is interesting that the Tashi Lama took the trouble to keep in touch with Bogle during the course of his journey to China.

of his 70th birthday (according to the Chinese method of calculation). The Lama left Tashilhunpo, Purangir reported, on 15 July 1779. His journey was dilatory, with a long stay at Kumbum, a great monastery on the Kansu-Tibet border (where Purangir joined him bearing gifts from Hastings for the Lama and his associates); and he finally met the Emperor for the first time at Jehol, north of Peking, on 20 August 1780. Here the Emperor had constructed a vast imitation Tibetan architectural establishment including a copy of the Potala palace (which William Alexander would illustrate in his plates which accompany the narrative of the Macartney Embassy to China of 1793).<sup>22</sup> By September 1780 the Lama had moved, along with the Imperial Court, to Peking; and there, on 27 November 1780, he died, apparently of smallpox (though there were the inevitable rumours that he had been murdered).

The Emperor nominated the Tashi Lama's elder brother, known to Bogle as the Chanzo Cusho [Chungpa Hutukhtu] as Regent of Tashilhunpo. On 7 March 1781 it was announced that the late Tashi Lama's coffin would start its long journey under Chinese escort back to Tibet (where a Mausoleum would be built to house it at Tashilhunpo).

According to Purangir, while in China the Tashi Lama discussed with the Emperor the question of relations between Tibet and India. "In the country of Hindostan," Purangir recorded the Tashi Lama as saying to the Emperor when they met in Jehol, "which lies on the borders of my country, there resides a great prince or ruler, for whom I have the greatest friendship. I wish you should know and regard him also; and if you will write him a letter of friendship and receive his in return, it will afford me great pleasure, as I wish you should be known to each other, and that a friendly communication should, in future, subsist between you." The Emperor noted that this was a very small request which could be complied with easily enough; and he asked what was that ruler's name. Purangir, so he said, was then called in to tell the Emperor "that the governor of Hindostan was called Mr. Hastings, that the extent of the country he governed was not near equal to that of China, but superior to any other he knew, and that the troops of that country upwards of three lacks of horsemen."

Subsequently, in Peking, the Lama returned to this subject in conversation with the Emperor. According to Purangir, he then took the opportunity "to remind the Emperor, that he had some time before mentioned to him a Prince, or Governor,

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22. See: Sir George Staunton, Bart., *An Authentic Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China, etc.*, 2 vols and a folio of plates, London 1797, Plate No. 27. The original William Alexander watercolour upon which this engraving was based has been published in: Alain Peyrefitte, *Images de l'Empire immobile par William Alexander, peintre-reporter de l'expédition Macartney*, Paris 1990, pp. 98-99.

of Hindostan, called Mr. Hastings, with whom he, the Lama, held strict friendship; and repeated his wish that the Emperor should know him, and hold friendly intercourse with him also; by writing to him and receiving his friendly answers. Much more was said by the Lama on this subject; to all of which the Emperor replied, that he could only assure the Lama, he joined most heartily with him in what he wished, as it would give him pleasure to know, and correspond, with the Governor of Hindostan, his friend; and to convince him of his sincerity, he would, if the Lama desired it, cause a letter to be immediately written to the Governor, in such terms as the Lama would dictate; or, if the Lama thought it would be more effectual, towards establishing the friendship he wished, that the letter should be in readiness, when the Lama took his departure from China; and that he should take it with him and have the care of forwarding it, in such manner as he thought best, to the Governor of Hindostan. The latter mode the Lama made choice of, and expressed much satisfaction." The Lama, however, then died. Nothing more was done in this matter. No letter was ever written. Suspicions have subsequently been entertained that the Tashi Lama was murdered, perhaps because of his partiality towards the English, or perhaps because his growing political influence had aroused fear and jealousy among either the Chinese Government in Peking or the authorities, Chinese or Tibetan, in Lhasa : this is unlikely in the extreme. The Ch'ien-lung Emperor made a number of public expressions of his great respect for the departed Lama: there was an inscription in the Yellow Temple in Peking, a monument in Jehol and a further monument at the Tashi Lama's home monastery, Tashilhunpo.

Did the Lama really mention his relations with the East India Company in his conversation with the Emperor? He had promised to Bogle that he would do something like this if he ever had the opportunity; and perhaps he did. Schuyler Cammann is sceptical: if he did, it was unlikely to have taken the form reported by Purangir, which was clearly designed to be pleasing to English ears. The experience of Lord Macartney in China just over a decade later hardly suggests, any more than had the previous history of English contacts with Chinese officialdom at Canton over many years, that the Manchu Dynasty was prepared to depart from its highly structured view of its place in the world. It is possible that Bogle, had he ever been able to reach Peking, might have adopted a humble tribute-bearing posture such as would have been pleasing to the Ch'ien-lung Emperor. When the Dutch merchants, however, tried just this in 1795, they were no more successful than Lord Macartney had been in 1793.

In any case, the question is academic. Early in 1781 Bogle was offered by Hastings membership of a new Committee of Revenue at Calcutta. He promptly left Rangpur for the capital of the East India Company dominions; and there, in Calcutta, he died, probably of cholera, on 3 April 1781, aged 34. As the final



document in this collection makes clear, Warren Hastings was in no doubt that as a link with the world of Tibet, and China beyond, George Bogle could not be replaced.

On the Tashi Lama's visit to Jehol and Peking, see also: Sarat Chandra Das, "Contributions on Tibet XII: Lo-ssan Ye-se-pal-ssan-po", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, LI, Calcutta 1882, (based on Tibetan sources, this includes a detailed itinerary of the Lama's journey to China and has no mention of any discussions between Emperor and Lama over the problems of the English East India Company); Ernest Ludwig, *The Visit of the Teshoo Lama to Peking. Ch'ien Lung's Inscription*, Peking 1904; P. Amiot in, *Mémoires concernant l'histoire, les sciences, les arts, les moeurs, les usages, etc., des Chinois, par les missionnaires de Pekin*, Vols. I-XVI, Paris 1776-1814, Vol. IX; Sven Hedin, *Jehol, City of Emperors*, London 1932, especially Ch. VI.

## 8

### **Extract of Bengal General Consultation the 9th January 1783**

The Governor-General delivers the following minute.

I beg leave to call to the attention of the Board, and to recommend to their perusal my minute entered in Consultation of the 19th April 1779 and the resolution of the Board following it by which the late Mr. Bogle was deputed a second time to visit Tibet and the Court of the Tashi Lama. Some delays necessarily incident to Mr. Bogle's entrance on this commission, the departure of Tashi Lama to China, his death and the death of Mr. Bogle, which followed, rendered the design abortive. I have since that time looked for some person qualified and willing to accept of such a trust; for which, in the requisite temper, patience and understanding, though I never hoped to meet with any person equal to Mr. Bogle, yet I have now fixed my choice upon a gentleman not inferior to him in some of those qualities, and in the rest I hope and believe he will do credit to my recommendation of him and therefore I at this time bring the subject again before the Board.

From the letter which I have lately received from the brother and other ministers of the late Tashi Lama and from the report which has been made to me of the disposition of that Government and of the Court of China to countenance and to permit an intercourse between these provinces and Tibet, I am very anxious to repeat the trial. It may answer, or it may fail, from causes which are independent of any measures which this Gov-

ernment can take to insure its success and, I think that the chances are rather adverse to it than favourable; but this is no objection, and upon this subject I beg leave to repeat the words of my former minute [of 1779] applicable to the present recommendation.

The country of Tibet is subject to the Emperor of China. Two Chinese viceroys appointed by the Court of Peking reside at Lhasa, and a very considerable trade is carried on between China and Tibet. The Emperor being a Tartar by extraction professes the religion of the Lamas, and considers Dalai and Tashi as the heads of his faith. The present Dalai Lama, who according to the superstitious tenets of that religion is supposed to be animated with the soul of his predecessors, having been discovered and consecrated by Tashi Lama, and educated and instructed by his dependents, is naturally under his influence. The present infant Lama of Tatar also, who is known by the name Taranant and mentioned by different travellers, has in the same manner been appointed by Tashi Lama and resides at present in Tibet under his care. Tashi Lama's interest at the Court of China is also much strengthened by a strict friendship which subsists between him and Changea Lama, the priest immediately attendant on the person of the Emperor, and who from his great age and character is held in much respect at Peking.

By the means of Tashi Lama therefore I am inclined to hope that a communication may be opened with the Court of Peking, either through his mediation or by an agent directly from this Government. It is impossible to point to the precise advantages which either in opening new channels of trade or in obtaining redress of grievances, or extending the privileges of the Company, may result from such an intercourse. Like the navigation of unknown seas, which are explored not for the attainment of any certain and prescribed object, but for the discovery of what they may contain, in so new and remote a search we can only propose to adventure for possibilities. The attempt may be crowned with the most splendid and substantial success, or it may terminate in the mere gratification of useless curiosity; but the hazard is small, the design is worthy of the pursuit of a rising state, the Company have both approved and recommended it, and the means are too promising to be neglected; while the influence of Tashi Lama, joined to the favourable disposition which he has hitherto manifested to our nation, affords so fair a prospect, and that the only one which may be presented to us of accomplishing it.

When Mr. Bogle was in Tibet, Tashi Lama himself mentioned this subject and told him that when the Dalai Lama became of age, he hoped in concurrence with him and the Changea Lama to open a communication for this Government with the Court of Peking and to procure leave for a person to proceed thither on our behalf; but that he could not attempt it without great disadvantage while the Dalai Lama was a minor and Gesub in power.

These obstacles being now removed, the present season appears favourable for the prosecution of this design. The objects of it have been repeatedly recommended by the Company, who have expressed their strongest approbation of the former commission and urged us to take every opportunity of

continuing a correspondence with Tashi Lama and of cultivating a good understanding with the Government of Tibet.

On these grounds I beg leave to recommend that Mr. Bogle be appointed to proceed again into Bhutan and Tibet with instructions to cultivate and improve the good understanding subsisting between the Chiefs of those countries and this Government, to endeavour to establish a free and lasting intercourse of trade with the Kingdom of Tibet and the other states to the northward of Bengal, to endeavour by the means of the Lamas of Tibet to open a communication with the Court of Peking and if possible procure leave to proceed thither, and that the objects of this last destination be left to his own discretion in the application of such opportunities and advantages as may be presented to him.

[Quoted from Bengal General Consultation of 19th April 1779, No. 2 above.]

The Gentleman whom I have chosen for this commission is Lieutenant Samuel Turner, whom I recommend to the Board for the deputation which I have proposed. I will lay before the Board the letters I have received and the narrative of the Gosain to be recorded.

Resolved that Lieutenant Samuel Turner be accordingly appointed with a salary of 3000 Sicca Rupees per month.

## 9

### The Turner mission to Bhutan and Tibet

Samuel Turner was a kinsman of Warren Hastings, according to George Woodcock the son of his wife's sister.<sup>23</sup> He was born c. 1749, received an East India Cadetship in 1780 and was appointed a lieutenant in the Company's military service in 1781. After his Tibetan mission of 1783 (described below) he served in 1792 under Lord Cornwallis in the Third Mysore War (against Tipu Sultan). In 1798 he was promoted to Captain, and shortly after he returned to England where he purchased a country seat in Gloucestershire. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in January 1801, and he died in January 1802. He was highly regarded both by Warren Hastings and by Lord Cornwallis. The narrative of his mission, *An Account of an Embassy to the Court of the Tashoo Lama of Tibet*;

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23. Woodcock, *Into Tibet*, *op. cit.*, p. 183. Woodcock does not specify, but this was surely Hastings' first wife (Mrs. Buchanan according to Moon, *Hastings*, *op. cit.*, p. 30, Mrs. Campbell according to the article on Hastings in the *Dictionary of National Biography*) who died in 1759. Her first husband, an army officer, had perished in the Black Hole of Calcutta in 1756. There were two children of this marriage, George and Elizabeth, the latter dying in infancy and the former in early childhood.

containing a narrative of a journey through Bootan and part of Tibet, was published in 1800 (also a French translation by J.H. Castéra in the same year, and a German translation by Sprengel in 1801), with a second edition in 1806.

The Turner mission began, as had Bogle's, with communications from Tibet brought down by Purangir Gosain (in 1774 along with Padma the Tibetan, see above Ch. II, No. 7). On 12 February 1782 Purangir arrived in Calcutta to describe to Warren Hastings what had taken place during his journey with the Tashi Lama to Peking. He also carried with him from Tibet letters of good will both from the Regent at Tashilhunpo, the late Panchen Lama's brother whom Bogle knew as Chanzo Cusho (Chungpa Hutukhtu), and the late Lama's steward or cup-bearer whom Bogle called Sapon Chumbo (Solpön Chenpo) and who served as a kind of chief executive. These documents expressed continued interest in the Tibetan monastic establishment at Ghusari in Bengal near Calcutta (to which more land was added, apparently as a result of these communications: see Ch. XIII above, No. 12), and they hinted at the possibility of continued commercial contacts between the Company and Tibet. Shortly after this, news reached Calcutta from Tibet that an infant successor to the late Tashi (Panchen) Lama had been discovered. Warren Hastings thereupon decided to send another mission to Tashilhunpo, ostensibly to offer his congratulations on the discovery of the new Incarnation, but in practice in the hope that it might be possible not only to carry on in Tibet where Bogle had left off in 1775 but also to settle a number of outstanding territorial issues with the Bhutanese en route to and from Tibet. The result was the formal appointment of Samuel Turner to a Tibetan mission on 9 January 1783, as set out in No. 8 above. Turner was to be accompanied by Dr. Robert Saunders as surgeon and Lt. Samuel Davis of the Bengal Engineer Corps as general assistant and mission artist.<sup>24</sup>

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24. Dr. Saunders, some time after his return from Tibet, retired from Company service and set himself up in London as a physician. Dr. Saunders contributed a Part IV to Turner's book, entitled "Some Account of the Vegetable and Mineral Productions of Bootan and Tibet".

Samuel Davis (1749-1819), who was prohibited from going on from Bhutan to Tibet (on the grounds that Bogle had been allowed but a single European companion), proved to be a superb draftsman as witness his original Bhutanese watercolour pictures, now in America, which were beautifully published by Michael Aris in *Views of Medieval Bhutan, op. cit.*, and it is a tragedy that we do not possess comparable illustrations of Tibet. Samuel Davis' own account of Bhutan was published posthumously in 1830. See: "Remarks on the Religious and Social Institutions of the Bouteas, or Inhabitants of Boutan, from the unpublished Journal of the late Samuel Davis, Esq., F.R.S. &c. Communicated by J.F. Davis, Esq. F.R.S., M.R.A.S.", *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. II, 1830. Samuel Davis later attained high office in the East India Company service, becoming a Director of the Company in 1809. His son, Sir John Davis, Bart., KB, accompanied the Amherst Mission to Peking in 1816 and

The Turner mission set out from Calcutta in March or April 1783, and, following Bogle's route, entered Bhutan at Buxaduar on 12 May and reached Tashichodzong (Tassisudon) on 1 June, where they remained, with a short excursion to Punakha, until 8 September when they left for Tibet. On 22 September, accompanied by Purangir but without Davis (who was obliged to stay behind in Bhutan, whence he soon returned to Bengal, because of objections from Tibet where it was argued that Turner could not bring in more Europeans than had Bogle), the mission reached Tashilhunpo. Turner had spent over three months in Bhutan, in part delayed by Bhutanese civil war (an unsuccessful revolt by the Dzongpön of Wangdiphodrang), in part overcoming the reluctance of both the Bhutanese and the Tibetans in allowing him to proceed.

During his months in Bhutan, Turner carried on some negotiations with the Deb Rajah (Desi Chhotul Jigme Singye, who succeeded Bogle's Deb, Kunga Rinchen, in 1776) over territory disputed for many years between the Zamindar of Baikuntpur, a Company dependent, and the Bhutanese (see, for example, Chapter XIV above, No. 24). Turner, evidently following the instructions of Warren Hastings based upon the opinion of the late Dr. Hamilton, agreed to cede to the Bhutanese a tract along the banks of the Tista including Fallacotta and Jalpaish (which may, or may not, be the same as Jalpaiguri), probably in return for Bhutanese co-operation in the fostering a trade between Bengal and Tibet.<sup>25</sup> Turner's Bhutanese negotiations have left but the slightest trace in the records.<sup>26</sup>

In Tashilhunpo Turner was able to have a number of interviews with the Regent (Bogle's Chanzo Cusho) and the former Tashi Lama's Cup-bearer, the Solpön

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later was one of the founders of the British Colony of Hong Kong of which he was Governor from 1843 to 1849.

25. 19th century British observers, notably Ashley Eden (who played a key part in the Anglo-Bhutanese crisis of 1864-65), considered this cession unfair in that the land in question had already been confirmed in the possession of the Ruler of Baikuntpur.

Rennell's *Bengal Atlas*, based on surveys prior to 1780, shows Fallacotta well to the west of the Tista and Jelpesh some distance to the east and opposite the west bank river town of "Jelpigory" (Jalpaiguri), all in a tract which Rennell called "Bootis Hazary" (presumably meaning "tract paying land taxes of some kind to the Bhutanese", according to Wilson, *Glossary, op. cit.*, p. 205, *huzuri*) which separated Baikuntpur (also on the Tista but upstream of Jalpaiguri) from Cooch Behar. This tract, sometimes known as the "Taluk of Ambaree Fallacottah", was ceded to the British by the Bhutanese in 1865 in the Treaty of Sinchula following the Anglo-Bhutanese war of that year. It is clear that between Turner's time and 1865 this tract had never ceased to be an object of friction between the Bhutanese and their neighbours.

26. See: Turner, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. 79; A. Eden and others, *Political Missions to Bootan*, Calcutta 1865, p. 4.

Chenpo, both of whom Bogle had known. The infant Tashi (Panchen) Lama was not then at Tashilhunpo but at Terpaling, a monastery about 25 miles to the south-west of Tashilhunpo which Turner visited on his way back to India from Tashilhunpo, calling on the Lama (aged 18 months) on 4 December 1783, and again twice on 6 December, setting out for Bengal on the following day.<sup>27</sup> He stopped briefly at Tashichodzong, leaving the seat of the Deb Raja on 30 December. In March 1784 Turner met Warren Hastings at Patna (the Governor-General was on his way to Lucknow) and presented his report dated 2 March 1784.

While in Tibet, Turner was unable to visit Lhasa. He depended for his impressions of the political situation north of the Himalayas and *vis à vis* China almost entirely upon what he was told by the Tashilhunpo Regent and the Cup-bearer, neither of whom could be described as being particularly reliable. He concluded that at present Tibet was to a great extent closed to an expansion of British influence by the attitude of the powers that be both in Lhasa and in Peking; but he did not rule out the possibility that in time, and given certain developments in both Tashilhunpo and Lhasa, the Chinese might be induced to return to the position which, it was said, the late Tashi (Panchen) Lama had established whereby Tashilhunpo was promised a real measure of freedom of action with respect to its relations with its neighbours to the south, notably the East India Company in Bengal. But at present, lacking the powerful support of one of the two great Tibetan Incarnations, Turner thought that Hastings' "plans cannot be pushed to any great extent". In other words, at this moment Tibet did not provide any significant access to Peking.

What Turner concluded did still exist in Tibet (at least as seen from Tashilhunpo), and in Bhutan too, where the trade agreement negotiated by Bogle in 1775, and confirmed in 1778-79 (see No. 25 in Chapter XIV above) would seem to have remained more or less in force, was a potential interest in an expansion of trans-Himalayan trade, always provided it did not involve, at least initially, the direct participation of Europeans. There were problems, not least the fact that the top men in both Tibet and Bhutan were also the leading merchants who in no way welcomed competition; but their obstructive attitude could no doubt be overcome in time through a demonstration of the benefits to their own interests to be derived from a general environment of commercial growth. Such a development, of course, would have wider consequences: as Turner put it, "whenever a regular intercourse takes place, between the agents of the government of Bengal and the chiefs of

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27. Turner's account of his meeting with the infant Incarnation appeared in 1788 in the 1st Volume of *Asiatick Researches*, the publication of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (of which Warren Hastings was one of the founders), "An Account of an Interview with Teeshoo Lama".

Tibet, I shall consider it as the sure basis of an intercourse with China; and it will probably be, by the medium of the former, that we shall be enabled to arrive at Pekin."<sup>28</sup>

Turner managed to obtain from Tibet two yaks of which one, a bull, survived the journey to England where Warren Hastings had now retired.<sup>29</sup> Turner also obtained a number of those goats bearing the undercoat wool used in the Kashmir shawl industry. Some of these animals eventually reached England only to die there shortly after landing.

Turner, like Bogle before him, made a careful examination of the commercial potential of Tibet. This amplifies in some significant respects Bogle's work with a great deal of new detail on, for example, the Tibet-Ladakh trade and the trade with China by way of Sining.<sup>30</sup>

## 10

### The end of an era, 1784 to 1793

In 1784 Warren Hastings resolved to do something practical about encouraging a regular commercial intercourse between Bengal and at least one of the Tibetan Chiefs, the Tashilhunpo Regent. He issued an advertisement directed towards any Indian merchants in Calcutta and elsewhere in Bengal who might be interested, proposing that they assemble early in 1785 for an "adventure" in the Tibet trade by way of Bhutan, and he listed, following Turner's report, the kind of goods that

28. Turner, *Tibet*, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

29. This animal was the model for a famous painting by George Stubbs. An engraving based on this picture is reproduced in Turner, *Tibet*, *op. cit.*, Plate X. Turner was much taken with the Tibetan yak: he devoted an article, with one illustration (not that by Stubbs) of the animal, to the subject in the Fourth Volume of *Asiatick Researches* in 1795. See: "Description of the Yak of Tartary, called Soora-Goy, or the Bushy-tailed Bull of Tibet", by Lieutenant Samuel Turner, *Asiatick Researches: or Transactions of the Society Instituted in Bengal, for Inquiring into the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences and Literature, of Asia*, Vol. IV, Calcutta 1795.

30. The Turner mission can best be studied in Turner's own book, published in 1800, Turner, *Tibet*, *op. cit.* There are excellent summaries in Woodcock, *Into Tibet*, *op. cit.*, and S. Cammann, *Trade Through the Himalayas*, *op. cit.*

Like the Bogle mission before it, the Turner mission has left some trace in the Tibetan records which note the fact that the English envoy gazed upon the Tashi Lama in a spirit of religious awe as well as bringing with him "many not inconsiderable presents". There is no mention, however, of anything remotely political. See: L. Petech, "The Missions of Bogle and Turner According to the Tibetan Texts", *T'oung Pao* XXXIX, Leiden 1950.

might do well beyond the Himalayas and what might be brought back in return. The "adventure" was to be exempted from any taxes or duties in Company territory. The "adventure" duly took place in early 1785.<sup>31</sup> Trade seems to have been satisfactory and the Indian merchants were able, evidently on the basis of terms reiterated by Turner to the Deb Rajah in 1783, to cross and recross Bhutan without undue difficulty. The experiment, however, was not to be repeated (at least not on this scale): instead, Tibetans and Bhutanese visited the annual Rangpur fair the development of which owed so much to George Bogle.<sup>32</sup>

In 1785, but after Hastings had left India for good (February 1785) and his place taken as Governor-General by John McPherson,<sup>33</sup> Purangir was allowed to take up to Tibet letters which Hastings had prepared just before his departure for the Tashilhunpo Regent and the infant Panchen Lama. One declared objective was to congratulate the infant Panchen Lama, who had recently (1784) been formally installed in Tashilhunpo in a ceremony which took place in the presence of ambassadors sent by the Ch'ien-lung Emperor from Peking as well as representatives of the VIIIth Dalai Lama and his Regent.<sup>34</sup> Also behind this Purangir visit, of course, was the wish to observe, and if need be directly supervise, the commercial "adventure" from Bengal then in progress: when Purangir reached Tashilhunpo, on 8 May 1785, quite a few Indian merchants had already arrived

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31. See: A. Lamb, *British India and Tibet 1766-1910*, London 1986, p. 15.

32. The Rangpur fair continued to receive modest financial encouragement from the Government of India until 1832, after which the attendance of Bhutanese traders fell off rapidly. See: Markham, *op. cit.*, p. lxix.

33. McPherson was born in 1745 in the island of Skye (where his father was a minister). He was educated in Aberdeen and at the University of Edinburgh. He reached India in 1767 as nominal purser of an East India ship commanded by an uncle. After various adventures in the service of Mohammed All, Nawab of the Carnatic, in 1770 he became a Writer in the East India Company in Madras. He continued to keep in touch with the Nawab, and his financial dealings with that Indian ruler resulted in his dismissal from the Company in 1776. He then returned to England where he entered Parliament. In return for his political support for Lord North, he was able to return to India to take up the place on the Council vacated by Hastings' old friend Richard Barwell in 1780. In June 1786 Macpherson was created a Baronet, and in September of that year he was replaced as Governor-General by Lord Cornwallis. He returned to England and once more entered Parliament where his subsequent career was not without financial scandal. He died in 1821. Macpherson was on the whole, to put it mildly, a man whose personal integrity was open to question. He was, however, no fool; and he fully appreciated what Warren Hastings hoped to secure through contacts with Tibet.

34. The Chinese presence was impressive. According to Purangir, the Chinese ambassador was accompanied by a formidable escort not only of local Tibetan forces but also of Chinese troops under the command of a general officer.



there and more were on their way. Purangir, it must not be forgotten, was trading quite substantially on his own account. Purangir remained in Tibet until October in 1785: he turned up again in Calcutta in early January 1786 with a letter, accompanied by gifts including three tolas - Sicca Rupee weights - of gold, from the Tashilhunpo Regent to the Governor-General expressing friendship on the part of the infant Panchen Lama. Macpherson, acting as the Governor-General following Hastings' departure, evidently concluded that this flow of contacts between Calcutta and Tashilhunpo provided grounds for hope that Tibet might eventually turn out to be the channel for a direct correspondence between the East India Company in Bengal and the Chinese Imperial Court in Peking in which the Board of Control and Court of Directors in London still expressed considerable interest.<sup>35</sup>

Purangir, on his arrival in Calcutta, lost no time in reporting to Samuel Turner what had happened in Tashilhunpo and what it portended for the future of relations between Tibet and the Company. According to Purangir, while the Tashilhunpo Regent regretted the departure of Hastings, in whom he had the greatest confidence, yet he saw in this event no reason to break off those contacts between Tashilhunpo and Calcutta which had been in progress now for over a decade. The Tashilhunpo Regent, so Purangir said, was convinced that the English East India Company had no territorial ambitions with respect to Tibet or Bhutan: its sole interest was the promotion of trade, and this too was seen as meritorious in Tashilhunpo (though there was a clear implication in Purangir's report that the Tashilhunpo Regent's benevolent attitude was not shared either by the authorities in Lhasa or by the Chinese: much winning over had yet to be done).

In 1784 the structure of the East India Company underwent a further major change comparable in its consequences to the Regulating Act of 1773: this was the result of (the Younger) William Pitt's India Act of August 1784. After a considerable debate in which, among other proposals, the outright nationalisation by the British Crown of the East India Company was considered and rejected, it was resolved to create in London a Government Department, the Board of Control, to supervise Company affairs, the day to day management of which would continue in the hands of the Court of Directors. The new Board would be headed by a President, in effect a Government Minister, who would wield the real power if the need arose in matters where it was felt that the interests of the British Crown

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35. Text in: Diskalkar, "Tibeto-Nepalese War", *loc. cit.*, p. 366, as well as in Turner, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. 430. There was also a letter in the name of the Tashi Lama. For Macpherson's views, see: India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous, vol. 608, Bengal Consultation of 26 January 1786.

were at stake.<sup>36</sup> The first President was Henry Dundas (1742-1811, Viscount Melville in 1802), a Scot who for many years was the most powerful figure in his native land ("Henry the Ninth" he was sometimes called). The 1784 Act and its immediate amendments removed the limitation on the power of the Governor-General by his Council which had been such an unfortunate feature of much of the period of Warren Hastings' administration.<sup>37</sup> The Council was reduced from five to three and the Governor-General was given the power to override it. The first of the new style Governors-General, Lord Cornwallis who replaced Macpherson in the latter part of 1786, was the effective (and unchallenged) ruler of British India, always subject to the approval of the distant Court of Directors and

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36. The Board consisted of six commissioners who were formally entitled the "Commissioners for the Affairs of India"; but Board of Control was the popular name for the body. Initially, the Board actually met from time to time: by 1816, however, this practice had ceased and its powers were exercised by the President on his own. The 1784 Act also revised the structure of the Court of Directors. There was created a Committee of Secrecy, consisting of three Directors, through whom all important contacts with the Board of Control took place. The remaining 21 Directors retained virtually no political power. The Court of Proprietors, at one time a body with very real powers indeed, was severely restricted in its ability to interfere in any way in the decisions of the Board of Control.

37. An interesting feature of the 1784 Act, which was to be repeated in subsequent British legislation about India even after the abolition of the East India Company and the assumption by the British Crown of direct control over Indian affairs in 1858, was the limitation placed upon the power of the Governor-General to engage in what might be termed wars of aggression. Thus the 1784 Act stated that: it should not be lawful for the Governor-General and his council, without the express authority and consent of the Court of Directors, or of the Secret Committee, to declare war, or commence hostilities, or enter into any treaty for making war, against any of the country princes or States in India, or any treaty guaranteeing the possession of any country prince or State, except where hostilities had actually been commenced, or preparations actually made for the commencement of hostilities, against the British nation in India, or against some of the princes of States who were dependent thereon, or whose territory was guaranteed by any existing treaty. [Quoted from: Vincent A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India from the Earliest Times to the end of 1911*, 2nd Edition, Oxford 1923, P. 552.]

As we shall see, this did not make it easy for Lord Cornwallis, when asked, to promise to attack Nepal in the event of a Gurkha attack on Tibet. Tibet was certainly, in the context of the 1784 Act, not a "country State", and it could not be argued that Tibetan territory was protected by any existing treaty with the East India Company.

President of the Board of Control.<sup>38</sup> The 1784 Act was to alter significantly the pattern of British Indian foreign policy. The kind of *ad hoc* arrangements which Hastings had made for contacts with Tashilhunpo by way of Bogle and Turner, and of which there were other Asian examples such as Chapman's Indochinese venture of 1778 (see: Alastair Lamb, *The Mandarin Road to Old Hué: Narratives of Anglo-Vietnamese Diplomacy from the 17th Century to the Eve of the French Conquest*, London 1970), were not really suited to the new environment where the envoy would be not only the agent of a trading company but also, unavoidably, an official representative of the British Crown, if only because in the final analysis he was responsible to a Minister of that Crown. In the context of the China trade the significance of this change very soon became apparent.

In theory the new order in London was not intended to imply Crown interference in the Company's trading operations. In practice, of course, trade and politics could not be separated. Parallel with his India Act, Pitt introduced the Commutation Act of 1784 which radically modified the financial climate of the Company's trade in Chinese tea. Hitherto the import of tea into the British Isles had been subject to very heavy duties. Inevitably there developed an active smuggling trade in tea from the Continent of Europe. In his 1784 Commutation Act, Pitt reduced the tea duty to 12.5 per cent *ad valorem*, more than enough to remove the financial advantages of most of the smuggling trade.<sup>39</sup> An immediate consequence was that in England tea prices fell and tea demand shot up. The Company imported into Britain in the period 1786-90 approaching twice what it had imported in 1775-80, with a corresponding reduction in the imports of various European companies, French, Dutch, Danish and Swedish, much of which was intended to be smuggled into England.<sup>40</sup> Against this new economic background the financial problems of the Canton tea trade, which we have already noted in connection with Bogle's proposals for a second mission into the Chinese sphere of influence, became, if not more acute, at least more apparent to British politicians who tended to think in terms of formal embassies.

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38. Charles Cornwallis, 2nd Earl, created Marquis in 1793. Born in 1738. He commanded the British forces in America at the surrender at Yorktown in 1781 which ended the American War of Independence, he was Governor-General of India from 1786 to 1793, he served as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1798 to 1801, he was plenipotentiary to negotiate the treaty of Amiens with France in 1802, he briefly took over as Governor-General of India in 1805 in place of Wellesley (who was recalled), and he died in India soon after taking office.

39. Excise duties (which were included in this figure of 12.5 per cent) inevitably crept up over the years: by 1819 they had reached something like 100 per cent *ad valorem*.

40. See, for example: Morse, *Chronicles*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Ch. XL.

Henry Dundas, the first President of the Board of Control, had contacts with participants in the China trade outside the East India Company who made him only too aware of how the expansion of the British tea trade (and the corresponding increase in British tax revenues), to be expected from the Commutation Act, might be affected adversely by the conditions of trade imposed upon foreign merchants by the Chinese authorities in Canton. One of Dundas' informants was a certain George Smith, resident of Kingston, Surrey (and, also, so he described himself, Madras and Canton), a private (Country) trader involved in the Canton tea business. In 1783, before the India and Commutation Acts of the following year, Smith had told Dundas that the situation on the China coast needed to be changed drastically. More ports should be opened to European trade. Duties and taxes should be regularised and reduced. Contracts with Chinese merchants should be legally enforceable in Chinese courts. All this called for a formal British diplomatic mission to Peking. Smith favoured the negotiation of some kind of Anglo-Chinese alliance to the specific disadvantage of France and Russia.<sup>41</sup>

Smith soon became personally involved in an affair in Canton which could have had very serious consequences indeed and which served only too well to emphasise the points which he had already made to Dundas. In November 1784 the *Lady Hughes*, Captain Williams commanding, a Country (private) trader based in Bombay with George Smith on board as a supercargo (in effect a merchant passenger), fired a salute off Whampoa Island, apparently intended as a courtesy on passing the forts guarding the river approaches to Canton. Unfortunately, a boat with some minor Chinese officials on board lay in the way of the guns, and two of the Chinese were killed, one instantly and one a day later. Smith, who evidently had already left the vessel and gone on to Canton, was more or less arrested by the Chinese authorities who sought satisfaction for what they clearly considered (or decided to consider for their own reasons) an attack on the Chinese state: they demanded the surrender of the gunner responsible, and they made it abundantly clear that without this they would act severely against the entire European factory establishment in Canton and bring about a total cessation of trade. One Chinese official indicated, however, that all the Canton officers wanted to do was to establish exactly what had happened by questioning the gunner, who stood in no personal danger. The gunner concerned (or some substitute) was duly (30 November) handed over, whereupon Smith was released. Almost six weeks later (8 January 1785), far from being set free unharmed by the Chinese, the gunner was executed by strangulation. It is not clear from the published accounts

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41. For Smith's correspondence with Dundas, see: Pritchard, *Crucial Years*, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-233. Pritchard gives the date for the key letter from Smith to Dundas as 16 February 1783.

of this episode whether the gunner (or his substitute) was European or Asian.<sup>42</sup>

The *Lady Hughes* affair, while but one incident in a situation which, while extremely unsatisfactory, was certainly nothing new, yet was sufficiently traumatic, when added to a long history of difficult relationships with the Chinese authorities in Canton, to impel interested parties on the European side of the China trade towards a quest for guarantees that nothing like it would, or could, ever happen again. Thus in February 1785 the East India Company Select Committee of Supercargoes at Canton advised its superiors in London, with very much the same language that Smith had used with Dundas two years before, that a British envoy, in the name not only of the Company but also of the British Crown, should be sent "to the nearest port to Peking" whence he would try to attract "the notice" of the Chinese Court and, in the process, bypass "the misrepresentations of provincial Mandarins."<sup>43</sup> The argument was reinforced by direct correspondence between George Smith and Henry Dundas in which Smith (26 November 1786) declared that "nothing less than an Embassy" to Peking could eliminate the trials and tribulations of which he was complaining.<sup>44</sup>

The decision actually to send a British envoy to Peking seems to have originated with Henry Dundas rather than with the East India Company. An occasion to be exploited might, so reports from the Supercargoes in Canton suggested, be found in the forthcoming eightieth birthday of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor. Sir George Staunton, who had been secretary to Lord Macartney when the latter was Governor of Madras (1780-85), put himself forward as a possible envoy ( he was destined to accompany Macartney as Secretary on his Chinese mission in 1793); but Dundas evidently preferred a fellow Scot, one Lt. Colonel Charles Cathcart, a Member of Parliament and also a senior officer in the Bengal Army with recent diplomatic experience through negotiations with the French East India Company in Île de France (Mauritius) in 1786.<sup>45</sup> Cathcart was duly appointed as envoy,

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42. Morse, *Chronicles*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Ch. xxxix, contains a detailed account of the *Lady Hughes* affair. See also: Peyrefitte, *Anglais*, *op. cit.*, Ch. V.

43. The Select Committee's letter of 5 February 1785 is printed in: Peyrefitte, *Anglais*, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

44. See: Pritchard, *Crucial Years*, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

45. Charles Allan Cathcart was born in 1759 into an old noble Scottish family. His father was the 9th Baron Cathcart who had been British Ambassador to Russia from 1768 to 1771. Charles Cathcart was appointed at a very early age to the position of Quartermaster-General to the Bengal Army. In 1784 he was elected a Member of Parliament, where he was a close political supporter of Henry Dundas. In character Cathcart, though of a far grander aristocratic background, in some ways reminds one of George Bogle; and it is to be much regretted that he did not get the chance to at least attempt negotiations with the Chinese Court.

receiving his instructions from the Ministry on 30 November 1787. He was to be the representative of the British Monarch, King George III, to the Ch'ien-lung Emperor, even though the bulk of the expenses of the mission would be met by the East India Company.

It is not the place here to consider the details of the Cathcart project beyond the fact that they show a number of traces of the experience derived from Warren Hastings' experiments in contact with Tashilhunpo in Tibet and the arguments behind them. We have already seen how Bogle's memorandum proposing a second Tibet mission (see above in this Chapter, No. 4) made some reference to Russian relations with China. Dundas, who was behind Cathcart's instructions,<sup>46</sup> like Bogle, was aware of the Chinese adventures earlier in the century of John Bell of Antermony (and so too, probably, was Lt. Colonel Cathcart, whose father, Lord Cathcart, had been British Ambassador to Russia not so long ago). The conclusion which Dundas drew from the Izmailov mission of 1720-21 (and which Bogle carefully did not) was that the Chinese "Emperor himself is accessible, that the reception of Foreigners at Peking is courteous, and that the Policy of encouraging foreign Trade is not ill understood there." Dundas knew about what had been going on between Calcutta and Tashilhunpo since 1774. He concluded, however, that "the newly discovered communication thro' Thibet from Bengal seems too long and hazardous" a route by which to approach the Chinese capital, as indeed was an overland route by way of Russia: the embassy should go to the China coast by sea and then make its way to Peking by the most convenient, or practicable, route. All the same, this overland possibility was not forgotten. Cathcart had suggested in the planning stages of the embassy that, should he manage to reach Peking, he might then send his personal secretary, Captain Alexander Agnew (in the military service of the Company), back by way of Tibet to Bengal, and this possibility does not appear to have been ruled out subsequently.

The embassy sailed from Spithead on 21 December 1787 on the 28 gun frigate H.M.S. *Vestal*, Captain Sir Richard Strachan, Bart., commanding. On 10 June 1788 in the Bangka Straits (in what are today Indonesian waters) Cathcart died, apparently of dysentery: he had, in fact, been ill for most of the voyage. The *Vestal*, after Cathcart's burial on what was the territory of the Dutch East India Company, promptly returned to England. The Cathcart project, therefore, was never put to the test and the theory behind it, that it was indeed possible to establish on terms acceptable to the British Government useful relations with the Chinese Emperor, remained a theoretical object of policy awaiting further experiment.

When H.M.S. *Vestal* left Spithead in December 1787 with Charles Cathcart

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46. The Instructions to Cathcart of 30 November 1787 were written in the name of the Secretary of State Lord Sydney: there can be no doubt, however, that Henry Dundas was behind them.

aboard, bound for the China coast, it was indeed still just possible that some useful result might be produced by contact between a British representative and the Chinese Court. As Cathcart's instructions pointed out, the Russian Izmailov mission to the K'ang-hsi (Kangxi) Emperor of 1720-21 could be taken as a hopeful precedent. "If", the Instructions declared, "Political Jealousy were the chief Principle to excite such alarm in the Chinese as should lead them to discourage the entrance of Foreigners, it should seem that it would apply with singular force against the Russians, who from the propinquity of their Dominion, the reputed Greatness of their Power, and the Danger of their leaguings with the Princes of those Tartar Countries which have sent forth former Conquerors of China, might possibly in imagination at least, cause distrust in the reigning Government, or affect its security." Yet the fact was that Russian caravans had not been excluded from China, indeed they were "now continually sent from the Russian Dominions." It followed, therefore, that the Chinese Government in Peking was not inherently hostile to foreign contact. The attitude of the Canton authorities should not be taken to represent the attitude of the Emperor: "a National character is not to be formed, nor the dispositions of the superior Government estimated from the Practices of a Sea Port, situated at the most distant extremity from the Metropolis and a Province formerly the seat of Pirates and Robbers."<sup>47</sup>

The writer of Cathcart's instructions may well have read too much into the Izmailov Embassy, yet there is no doubting that it did help pave the way for the extremely important Sino-Russian border agreement of Kyakhta of 1727 amplifying the ground-breaking Sino-Russian Nerchinsk Treaty of 1689 which showed that it was indeed possible for a foreign power to negotiate a treaty with the Ch'ing Dynasty of China. Article V of the Nerchinsk Treaty specified just the kind of relationship which the English East India Company hoped might emerge in Canton or elsewhere on the China coast. It declared (in the Latin version) that "in keeping with the cordial relations which have been established [between Russia and China] in the form of the permanent treaty citizens of all classes bearing proper passports will be free to cross into the other country, there to engage in buying and selling and reciprocal trade as they see fit."<sup>48</sup> This was the kind of situation which Bogle and Turner hoped to bring about between Bengal and Tibet, and to a certain extent, with the big exception of European traders, did for a while actually achieve. The Russians managed this, it is clear from a reading of John

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47. Cathcart's Instructions of 30 November 1787, quoted in: Morse, *Chronicles*, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 161.

48. See: J.R.V. Prescott, *Map of Mainland Asia by Treaty*, Melbourne 1975, p. 14, for text of the Nerchinsk Treaty of 1689. In the Kyakhta Treaty of 1727, which Prescott also reproduces, pp. 34-38, provision was confirmed for the visit at specified intervals of a limited number of Russian merchants to Peking.

Bell's narrative, by accepting pragmatically some of the Chinese ideas about relative status, particularly the question of foreigners undergoing in some measure the ceremony of the kowtow, of ritual prostration, before the Imperial personage.<sup>49</sup> As Cathcart's instructions further note, the Portuguese in 1753 were also able to make their way from Macau to Peking on Catholic Church business and their envoy was "treated with great Honor" (but the instructions are silent on the kowtow issue).<sup>50</sup>

It may well be that Charles Cathcart, had he made his way to Peking, would with true Scots pragmatism have used his own judgement to sacrifice the purely ceremonial for the real commercial substance relating to the circumstances of European trade at Canton, or, indeed, any new port which might be opened up as a result of his representations. We will never know.

What is sure, however, is that by the summer of 1788 the political situation in Tibet along the Himalayan border zone between British India and what was the Chinese sphere of influence in the Tibetan segment of their Central Asian dominions was in the process of a change so radical not only as to rule out for a long time (over a century it was to transpire) any meaningful progress in trans-Himalayan trade but also to poison the atmosphere of potential relations between

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49. The kowtow was a form of ceremonial prostration by the representative of any state whatsoever before the Imperial presence. In Izmailov's case it involved the envoy kneeling thrice and knocking his head nine times on the ground before addressing the Emperor. In the case of the Izmailov mission the Chinese agreed that in any mission they might send to Russia their representative would comply with equal punctiliousness with Russian ceremonial. Thus, when the Chinese envoy T'o-shih went to Russia in 1732 he actually knelt before the Tsarina Anna.

50. Among the papers prepared for Macartney's embassy of 1793 is an analysis of earlier European embassies to the Chinese Imperial Court compiled by James Cobb of the East India Company. Cobb started with the Dutch embassy of 1655, which was received by the child Emperor Shun-chih (Shunzhi) and duly performed the kowtow ceremony. There was another Dutch embassy in 1667 and a Portuguese one the year before (which was treated, it would seem, with particular contempt by the Chinese). Cobb then turned to the Izmailov Embassy of 1720-21, in which John Bell of Antermony participated: this certainly went through all the ritual prostrations before the Emperor. Finally, the Portuguese embassy to Peking of 1753 was described: it was no triumph. All this being considered, and to it added the more recent opinions of the Christian (Catholic) missionaries still resident in Peking, the general conclusions rather optimistically still were (1) that embassies to the Chinese Court by representatives of European Powers were indeed possible, and (2) that, given the current (1787 and after) balance of power, there was no reason why Chinese self interest should not incline the Court of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor to giving a British mission a favourable hearing (even if the Christian missionaries there were basically opposed to Protestants). See: Peyrefitte, *Anglais, op. cit.*, Ch. VI.



the entire Chinese Empire and the British, both Company and Crown (and many other European entities as well). By the beginning of 1789 the implications of what was taking place in the remoteness of the Himalayas was probably beginning to be appreciated well enough in Peking.

There was one political constant in the Himalayan region which lay behind Bogle's mission and subsequent contacts between the East India Company in Bengal and the Panchen Lama's Court in Tashilhunpo: this was the rise of the Gurkha power in Nepal and its disrupting effect both on trans-Himalayan trade routes and on the established patterns of relationships and power between the Himalayan States and their neighbours to the north and to the south. The Gurkha conquest of the Kathmandu Valley in 1768-69 completed the closure of the Bengal-Tibet trade route by way of the old Newar kingdoms. After 1769, the Gurkhas continued to threaten territorial expansion to the alarm of the powers that were situated to their north and east, immediately at the expense of Sikkim (then certainly viewed both in Lhasa and Tashilhunpo as a Tibetan dependency) and, next, of Bhutan (which by Bogle's day had lost what it evidently considered its legitimate interests in Vijayapur), and, ultimately, it was clearly seen, of Tibet itself. At the same time, Gurkha encroachments were felt along the northern borders of Bengal and Bihar, both of which had come under the effective administrative control of the East India Company in 1765. Warren Hastings and Bogle's Tashi Lama, in 1774 a figure of towering political influence in Tibet, agreed in detecting all sorts of advantages in the encouragement of contacts between Bengal and Tibet, but of these probably the most significant (at least in Tibetan eyes, and perhaps in those of the more thoughtful Bhutanese as well) was the possibility that somehow the rising military power of the East India Company in northern India might serve to check the territorial ambitions of the Gurkha rulers. Significant too, but perhaps of lesser importance in the view of a Tibetan Incarnation, was the economic factor, that the Gurkha conquest of the Kathmandu Valley, completed in 1769, had severely disrupted the traditional trading patterns between Tibet on the one hand and Bengal and Bihar on the other: contacts with the East India Company might somehow revive this commerce in which many in Tibet, not least certain monasteries and noble families, had at one time profited.

The Gurkha factor emerges clearly enough in the conversations which Bogle held with the Tashi Lama in Tashilhunpo, for instance in the audiences of 28 December 1774 and 9 January 1775 (see, for example: Ch. X above, p. 234). Bogle had suggested that, in the event of Gurkha aggression against Tibetan territory, the Company might well come to Tibet's aid (perhaps only by offering mediation), and he further told the Lama that he could write to the Regent in Lhasa to this effect, that "the Governor [Warren Hastings] would be ready to employ his mediation to make Gorkha desist from his attempts on the territories

subject to Lhasa, and that I [Bogle] had reason to think, from Gorkha's dread of the English, that it would be effectual." George Bogle, of course, was in fact bluffing because it was evident from the disastrous story of the Kinloch expedition of 1767 that the Gurkhas were not in the least frightened of the English East India Company: rather, the Company had good reason to treat the Gurkhas with extreme caution.<sup>51</sup> Despite the potential for Anglo-Nepalese arguments over such matters as boundaries and local trade, which had been evident since the 1760s, the Company in the post-Bogle era had handled the Gurkha government with great moderation. Here are some examples of this attitude. In 1776 the British accepted the Gurkha position in Morung. In 1783 they adjudicated in favour of the Kathmandu regime in a territorial dispute with one of the Company's dependent Zamindars (Mirza Abdulla, over Rautahat and Pachrauti districts). In January 1784 Warren Hastings gave serious consideration to sending a mission to Kathmandu under one Mr. Foxcroft to negotiate improved conditions of trade with the Company: the mission was never sent, it would seem, but the idea behind it reflected well enough Hastings' thinking about Nepal.<sup>52</sup> Finally, in 1786 the Company granted Nepal a virtual duty free trade with Bihar and Bengal, and it gave up for the time being attempts to collect revenue from some border tracts which were disputed between the Company and the Gurkhas.<sup>53</sup> All this was powerful evidence that no British Governor-General was going to contemplate lightly confrontation, let alone hostilities, with the Gurkhas.

Samuel Turner, however, did nothing to remove the impression which Bogle must have created in the minds of the Tashilhumpo authorities. While the Tashi Lama of Bogle's time had gone, his brother was still in a position of power as Regent for the infant Incarnation: doubtless he did not forget what Bogle had said. In other words, in the eyes of the regime in Tashilhunpo - the thoughts of the Lhasa people could well have been quite another matter - the English East India

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51. The Kinloch expedition is discussed in some detail in the second volume of this book. Bogle must surely have known all about this episode in British imperial history which took place only three years before his arrival in India, and papers concerning which must have been available to him in the files of the Select Committee at Fort William in the service of which Bogle was employed at the outset of his career.

52. See: D.R. Regmi, *Modern Nepal, Vol. I, Rise and Growth in the Eighteenth Century*, Calcutta 1975, p. 407; Rishikesh Shaha, *Modern Nepal. A Political History 1769-1955*, 2 vols., New Delhi 1990, Vol. I, p. 48, has Foxcraft (not Foxcroft), and the date 1 June 1784 for Hastings' proposal.

53. L.E. Rose, *Nepal. Strategy for Survival*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1971, pp. 33-4. Anglo-Nepalese disputes over border tracts in the Terai, it should be noted, were a major factor in the outbreak of the Company's war with Nepal in 1814.

Company had offered, in return for Tibetan encouragement in the development of a trans-Himalayan trade by way of Bhutan, to provide practical assistance to Tibet, perhaps diplomatic but perhaps also military, in the event of a Gurkha assault upon Tibetan territory. It is possible that Warren Hastings, on learning what Bogle had said to the Tashi Lama, fully understood this; and it could well be that he was prepared, upon his own authority, to do something to make good such a promise, even if it was only an implied one, provided the potential rewards appeared sufficiently worthwhile. A feature of Pitt's India Act of 1784 (as has already been noted above), however, was to limit severely (if only in theory, given the practical problems imposed by distance) the ability of the Governor-General to wage what might be considered as aggressive warfare beyond the limits of Company territory. Hastings' successors, and certainly Lord Cornwallis who took over from Macpherson in the latter part of 1786 (and who had unhappy memories of military misadventure in America), would not embark lightly upon war with the Gurkhas (though eventually, under Lord Moira - the Marquess of Hastings - the Government of British India felt itself obliged to do that very thing in 1814).<sup>54</sup>

Not so long after Turner's mission, in 1788, the kind of crisis between Tibet and the Gurkhas which Bogle's Tashi Lama had feared did in fact break out. As we shall see, it presented the Government of the Company in Calcutta with challenges which were not easy to comprehend, let alone meet.

Bogle's visit to Tibet more or less coincided with a period when the Gurkha pressure upon neighbouring states was temporarily easing off. Prithvi Narayan, the founder of the Gurkha kingdom, died in early 1775 (while Bogle was in Tibet). His successor, his son Pratap Singh, was then 23 years of age. He showed comparatively little interest in military affairs (which does not mean that all Gurkha military activity ceased: it did not) and, in any case, seems to have been immediately preoccupied with potential challenges to his position including one from supporters of his 17 year old brother Bahadur Shah. There is some evidence that Pratap Singh, if only to leave his hands free to deal with internal threats, tried to resolve some of the major outstanding disputes with his neighbours including the question of Sikkim, where Gurkha territorial ambitions appear to have been put on hold for the time being, and Tibet, where a complex economic argument had been in progress ever since his father had completed the conquest of the Newar kingdoms of the Kathmandu Valley in 1768-69. The main issues here were trade relations between Nepal and Tibet, severely disrupted by the late wars, and the question of coinage.

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54. For the history of the Gurkha War which broke out in 1814, see, for example: H.T. Prinsep, *History of the Political and Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings 1813-1823*, 2 vols., London 1825; J. Pemble, *The Invasion of Nepal. John Company at War*, Oxford 1971.

The coinage issue derived from the fact that Tibet had relied on money minted in Nepal, largely from silver obtained in Tibet (much of it originally from China). This practice went back to the sixteenth century. The coins were known, after the Newar Rajah Mahendra Malla of Kathmandu (reigned c. 1550 to 1570), as mahendramallis or indermalles and the like (see: Bogle's discussion of this in Ch. XIII above, No. 4).<sup>55</sup> These coins were by no means of pure silver, and at the very end of the Newar period they were seriously debased, but they retained their value in Tibet where they were well known and convenient. According to the Company envoy who visited Nepal in 1793, William Kirkpatrick, the Newar rulers had made a profit out of this coinage amounting to as much as 1,00,000 rupees each year.<sup>56</sup> Not surprisingly, the Gurkha ruler Prithvi Narayan wanted to continue with this profitable transaction: his coins, however, even though they had a far higher silver content than those of the last Newar rulers, did not find a ready acceptance among Tibetan merchants. When Bogle was in Tibet the Gurkha authorities were trying to promote the circulation there of their newly minted currency and the Tibetans were finding ingenious excuses why they could not accept it (see: Ch. VII above, No. 3, p. 160). This reluctance seemed to puzzle the Nepalese who could not understand why the Tibetans should value the debased Newar mintage and refuse the far purer Gurkha products (see: Ch. X above, p. 253): apparently the Gurkhas did not understand the degree that they were distrusted and, indeed, disliked in Tibet.

With the passing of Prithvi Narayan in 1775, the Gurkhas were prepared, it seemed, to be more flexible on this issue (as well as a number of other outstanding disputes). In August 1775, after some discussions between Tibetan and Nepalese delegates in the Kuti region on the Nepal-Tibet border, an agreement was signed which appears for the time being at least to have reduced tensions. A mechanism, either at governmental level or through merchants, would be devised to work out the local rate of exchange between gold and silver. The position of the Newar merchants in Tibet would remain unchanged. A boundary between Nepal and Sikkim would be established which the Gurkha regime said they would respect. The agreement did not solve the problem of the circulation and valuation of the

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55. The coins were originally the monopoly of Kathmandu, but subsequently they were also minted by the two other Newar kingdoms of the Kathmandu Valley, retaining the same name. See: Boulnois, *Poudre d'Or*, *op. cit.*, generally, for all questions relating to Tibeto-Nepalese coinage. See also: N. Rhodes, "The development of currency in Tibet", in M. Aris & Aung San Suu Kyi, *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*, Warminster 1980; P. Landon, *Nepal*, 2 vols., London 1928, Vol. II, Appendix XXV.

56. See: Colonel William Kirkpatrick, *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul, being the Substance of Observations made during a Mission to that Country in the Year 1793*, London 1811, p. 211.

old coinage and the reluctance to accept the new. It did not even resolve the Sikkim question since the Gurkhas in late 1775 tried (albeit without success) to advance across the agreed border into Sikkimese territory. It did, however, postpone for a while a critical breakdown in relations between the Gurkhas and their Tibetan neighbours, at least as long as the spirit of Pratap Singh remained dominant in Kathmandu.<sup>57</sup>

Pratap Singh died in 1777. He left as successor an infant son, Rana Bahadur Shah, with his widow, Queen Rajendralakshmi, who acted as Regent. Queen Rajendralakshmi was soon challenged by Pratap Singh's younger brother Bahadur Shah (not to be confused with Pratap Singh's son Rana Bahadur Shah) who, when the Queen died in July 1785, assumed the Regency. Queen Rajendralakshmi had been too concerned with maintaining her power in Nepal to give much thought to imperial ventures (though, of course, individual Gurkha commanders never ceased from the search for fresh fields for conquest). Up to July 1785, however, one can say that the Pratab Singh foreign policy of relative moderation remained more or less in force. This attitude, however, did not survive the arrival of Bahadur Shah as Regent. Bahadur Shah was very much cast in the mould of Prithvi Narayan: he embarked with energy on a process of fresh Gurkha expansion.

Even under the Regency of Queen Rajendralakshmi, as we have already noted, Gurkha military activity had never ceased. There were problems with recently conquered territory in the eastern Himalayas towards Sikkim. The surviving Chaubisi Rajahs took the opportunity of apparent Gurkha political weakness to attempt to invade the Gurkha dominions from the west. Gurkha troops attacked Lamjung, to the west of the Kathmandu Valley, and defeated it, with the result that one of the few remaining trade routes through the Himalayas between Tibet and Bihar (and avoiding the Kathmandu Valley) was severed. All this paved the way for the far more intensive military activity of Bahadur Shah's nine years Regency between Queen Rajendralakshmi's death in 1785 and her son, Rana Bahadur Shah, coming of age in 1794, a period which Father Stiller, perhaps the leading modern western historian of Nepal, characterised as "the golden age of

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57. There exist a number of versions of this 1775 agreement: they differ in certain respects but agree on essential points. See: Rishikesh Shaha, *Modern Nepal, op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 44 (for a Nepali version); Rose, *Nepal, op. cit.*, p. 32 (for, it has been argued, a version based on Chinese sources); and Shakabpa, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. 157 (for a Tibetan version). One of the Tibetan negotiators of the agreement was Depon Padstal (whom Bogle knew as Depon Patza - see: Ch. X above, p. 242 above) a Tibetan General then in the service of Lhasa. L.F. Stiller, *The Rise of the House of Gorkha. A Study in the Unification of Nepal 1768-1816*, New Delhi 1973, p. 192, is not entirely certain that this treaty or agreement actually existed; but the evidence that it did seems to be strong enough.

Nepal's unification".<sup>58</sup>

In the summer of 1788 Bahadur Shah invaded Tibet along the axis of the main routes linking Kathmandu to Tashilhunpo and Shigatse. The reasons for this catastrophic collapse in Tibeto-Nepalese relations are certainly complex, and by no means entirely clear: the authorities differ. Three basic elements, however, are not open to question.

First: the old problem of the refusal (or reluctance) of Tibetans to accept newly-minted Nepalese coinage (or, at least, agree to a relative devaluation of the coinage of the later years of the Newar period) persisted, despite the fact that some of these coins of the Gurkha period contained a higher bullion content than the last mintages of the pre-Gurkha Newars.<sup>59</sup> Bahadur Shah badly needed money to finance his various military adventures, and he was not prepared to abandon this potential source of profit to the Nepalese state. One objective of the 1788 venture was to oblige the Tibetans to accept current Nepalese-minted money on terms satisfactory to Kathmandu, that is to say at a rate of exchange which, in Gurkha eyes at least, fairly reflected its silver content.

Second: there was a breakdown in several other elements of the 1775 Tibeto-Nepalese agreement. The Gurkhas felt that the Nepalese Newar merchants in Tibet were not being treated as fairly as had been promised. It looked to the Tibetans that the Gurkhas had not abandoned up their ambitions for further territorial expansion, particularly with respect to Sikkim. Chinese sources state that an increasing, and major, source of Tibeto-Nepalese friction was the unilateral Tibetan decision to increase duties on Nepalese goods crossing into Tibet.<sup>60</sup>

Finally: there was the story of one of the late Tashi (Panchen) Lama's brothers. One brother of the late Lama, the man whom Bogle knew as Chanzo Cusho (Chungpa Hutukhtu), a major Incarnation in the Yellow Sect, was appointed Regent in Tashilhunpo. There was another brother, also an Incarnation but in the Red-cap Sect (Karmapa), the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu (whom Bogle did not name,

58. Stiller, *House of Gorkha*, *op cit.*, p. 173. For my account of the events leading up to and including the two Tibeto-Nepalese wars I have found this work extremely useful, along with R. Shaha, *Nepal*, *op. cit.*; D.R. Regmi, *Modern Nepal*, *op. cit.*, Cammann, *op. cit.*; and Diskalkar, *loc. cit.*

59. Prithvi Narayan had insisted upon the importance of maintaining a currency with a high bullion content. There is evidence that his successors were not so scrupulous, at least with respect for coins destined for Tibet, and that the silver content of such money soon dropped to as little as sixty per cent. It may well be, therefore, that one reason for the Tibetan refusal to accept Nepalese coins in 1788 (as opposed to 1774-75) was indeed their poor quality. See: Boulnois, *Poudre d'Or*, *op. cit.*, p.154.

60. This, for example, is the only reason given in: Ya Hanzhang, *Dalai Lamas*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

nor did he mention the fascinating fact that in his Tashi Lama's family there were no less than three (or, indeed, four, if we include the "Thunderbolt Sow") sibling "Living Buddhas", but in Ch. XI above, A, he is rather dismissive of the Red-cap Lamas, and elsewhere he expressly declared that he did not want to go into sectarian questions in Tibetan religion, which may perhaps help to explain this omission - it is unlikely that Bogle did not hear of the existence of the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu during his months with the Tashi Lama).<sup>61</sup> Sometime not long after the Tashi Lama's death in China, the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu fled to Nepal and put himself under the protection of the Gurkha Court. The reason for this dramatic step is not entirely clear. Many accounts suggest that it was the result of a dispute following the death of Bogle's Tashi Lama in 1780 over the distribution of the late Incarnation's assets. Chinese sources suggest that the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu was deprived of what he considered his just share because of his membership of the Red-cap Sect, and that he then sought help from the Gurkhas to obtain that to which he felt himself entitled. There are other explanations, including the improbable story of the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu's fear that, following the death of his brother in China (whom he said he believed to have been murdered), his life was in danger. Whatever the causes, the arrival of the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu amongst the Gurkhas made them aware (if they were not so already) of the great wealth of the Tashilhunpo monastery and, it has been argued, persuaded Bahadur Shah that he might find there an answer to his financial problems.<sup>62</sup>

The Nepalese sources indicate that, as the Tibeto-Nepalese dispute developed in virulence and intensity, Bahadur Shah tried to obtain mediation from the Chinese Emperor in Peking, but that his memorial to the Ch'ien-lung Emperor was not forwarded by the Chinese Ambans in Lhasa and his letters to the Lhasa and Tashilhunpo authorities were returned unopened. Bahadur Shah then decided

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61. The Sharmarpa Hutukhtu (Shamar Trulku), indeed, was the chief Incarnation in the Red Sect: he was either the tenth (according to Déshayes) or ninth (according to Shakabpa and Rose) in the line. Some authorities see the trouble in Tashilhunpo which precipitated the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu's flight to Nepal as part of a growing tension between Yellow and Red Sects emphasised by the discovery, in 1782, of a successor to Bogle's Tashi (Panchen) Lama within the family of the VIIIth Dalai Lama, a fact which greatly strengthened the power throughout Tibet of Lhasa, the centre of the Yellow (Gelukpa) Sect. (See, for example: L. Déshayes, *Histoire du Tibet*, Paris 1997, p. 180.) Sharmarpa Hutukhtus had maintained close links with Nepal for many years, and the in the 1780s the Sharmarpa had been offered asylum in the Kathmandu Valley should sectarian conflict in Tibet make it necessary for him to go abroad. An earlier Sharmarpa (8th or 9th) was born in Nepal. The Red Sect (Karmapa) Incarnations, unlike those of the Yellow Sect, were not of necessity celibate.

62. For the 1788 Gurkha invasion of Tibet, see: Cammann, *op. cit.*; Stiller, *Gorkha, op. cit.*, pp. 190-198.

upon direct action in the summer of 1788, attacking both Sikkim (where Darjeeling was occupied in September), and Tibet where Gurkha forces soon overcame Tibetan resistance and effectively blockaded Shigatse. The Tashilhunpo Regent fled his monastery, which does not appear to have been touched by the invaders.

Faced with this crisis, both the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Ambans in Lhasa informed Peking of what was happening: the Dalai Lama may also have written to the Moghul Emperor in Delhi, which was hardly likely to be productive at this stage in Indian history. The reaction of the Tashilhunpo Regent was rather different. He sent two Kashmiris, Mohammed Rejeb and Mohammed Wali, down to Calcutta with letters for the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis. These arrived by way of Rangpur (where D.H. McDowell was occupying Bogle's old position as Collector) on 22 January 1789.

The gist of these communications was as follows. The Gurkhas had invaded Tibet (and Sikkim) and had occupied a number of important forts. Their aggression would soon be known to the Chinese in Peking via the Lhasa Ambans, and, as the Tashilhunpo Regent said, "God knows what will happen" when the Chinese troops arrived in Tibet, as they surely would in due course if something were not done quickly to defuse the situation. The Tashilhunpo Regent, speaking on behalf of the Panchen Lama, still a child, was in favour of making a local peace with the Gurkhas (that is to say, without involving the Chinese). What would be particularly welcome in Tashilhunpo, he thought, would be this: the English East India Company should send a large force against the Gurkhas; the Gurkhas might then seek peace rather than face war on two fronts; the Tashilhunpo Regent could thereupon step in with an offer of suitable terms; finally, the Chinese Emperor could be told that the war was over and Chinese troops no longer required. The Tashilhunpo Regent requested that this correspondence with the Company be kept completely secret from the Chinese who, did they once discover that he was in contact with a foreign power, would "bring down ruin and destruction on me". What the Tashilhunpo Regent was particularly concerned about was the possibility that the Gurkhas might actually receive Company assistance: he asked the Governor-General to promise that, should the Gurkha ruler ask for such help, the Governor-General would refuse to offer it. In other words, if active Company military aid against the Gurkhas were not forthcoming, at least there should be an assurance of Company neutrality.

The Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, did not reply to this appeal from Tashilhunpo until early in 1789. He then agreed not to give any assistance to the Gurkhas and to keep the correspondence from Tashilhunpo a secret from the Chinese. Lord Cornwallis, however, was not going to send Company troops against the Gurkhas for three good reasons. First: it would be extremely expensive.



Second: the Company had received no provocation from Nepal. Finally, the Chinese Emperor would surely be greatly annoyed at such unsolicited Company intervention in the affairs of territory under the protection of Peking. Lord Cornwallis pointed out that the Company carried on extensive trade by sea with China, to the mutual benefit of both parties; neither the Company nor the Chinese Emperor would be grateful for circumstances arising which might interrupt such a lucrative commerce. Lord Cornwallis concluded with the expression of the hope that it might yet be possible, perhaps by way of Tashilhunpo, to establish a direct overland diplomatic relationship between the Company and the Chinese Emperor (along the lines of Bogle's plan): were this to come about, then problems, like the present one with the Gurkhas, might be resolved by mutual consultation. One presumes that Lord Cornwallis had at the back of his mind the possibility, however remote, of a new British mission to China in place of the abortive Cathcart venture, the outcome of which might well be jeopardised by ill-considered Company activities on the Inner Asian periphery of the Chinese Empire.<sup>63</sup>

By the time that Lord Cornwallis' reply to the Tashilhunpo appeals could have reached Tibet the Tibeto-Nepalese crisis was in the process of resolving itself without any assistance from the English East India Company. In the spring of 1789 negotiations took place between the Gurkhas and Tibetans at Kyirong (Gyirong), just on the Tibetan side of the border on the old main trade route. The Tibetans were represented by a number of very senior Lhasa officials including a Kalon (member of the Kashak or Tibetan Cabinet), under the eyes of some Chinese commanders who had come with the vanguard (between 1,000 and 2,000 strong) of a Chinese force from neighbouring Szechuen (Sichuan) Province. Helping mediate between the two sides was the Sharmarpa Hutukhtu. The Gurkhas agreed to withdraw to their own territory and to end the war on, at least according to the Nepalese version, the following terms: (1) a rate of exchange was fixed in Tibet between the older and the newly-minted coinage; (2) the Tibetans agreed to let Nepal continue the practice of minting coinage for circulation in Tibet; (3) the Nepalese (Newar) merchants in Tibet were confirmed in the enjoyment of a special status including certain extraterritorial rights; (4) Tibet would pay the Gurkhas an annual tribute of 300 ingots of silver, the equivalent of 9,600 Chinese ounces (taels), or about Rs. 50,000.<sup>64</sup> The Gurkhas also agreed, but this was not written into the formal text of the settlement, that they would send at once a mission to the Chinese Emperor in Peking in a manner such that it would comply

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63. This correspondence between Tashilhunpo and Lord Cornwallis is printed in Diskalkar, *loc. cit.*, Nos. 6 & 7; and it is discussed in Cammann, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-119. Cornwallis' replies to Tashilhunpo were written on 27 February 1789.

64. These were Nepalese Rupees, which were worth slightly less than the Sicca Rupee of the East India Company, 1.25 Nepalese to 1 Sicca.

with the Chinese forms of a "tribute mission": the mission duly visited the Chinese capital in, it would seem, early 1791, bringing with it all sorts of gifts for the Emperor including a number of elephants.

The Tibetans paid their tribute to the Gurkhas in 1789. In 1790, however, they did not. Indeed, the Dalai Lama declared that he was not bound by this clause of the 1789 agreement. Bahadur Shah's reaction was to launch a major military assault on Tashilhunpo which, along with Shigatse, was in Gurkha hands by the end of October 1791. This time the great Tashilhunpo monastery was well and truly plundered.

News of all this reached the Imperial Court in Peking surprisingly quickly. It was decided to mount a major military operation against the Gurkhas, both to teach them a lesson they would not soon forget and to demonstrate in Tibet who were the real masters and protectors in that corner of Central Asia. The campaign was entrusted to an important Manchu officer, Fu-k'ang-an (Fu Kang'an), who eventually commanded a force of over 17,000 troops which entered Tibet in mid-winter both by Sining from Kokonor in the north-east and by Tachienliu from Szechuen Province in the east.<sup>65</sup> The Chinese army approached the Nepalese border, pushing back the Gurkha rearguard and routing elements of the retreating main Gurkha body loaded with the fabulous booty from Tashilhunpo, in June 1792. The Gurkhas were pursued almost as far as Nawakot, on the northern edge of the Kathmandu Valley and a mere 20 miles from the Nepalese Capital, when peace negotiations were initiated which soon brought this extraordinary conflict to an end.

In the first months of 1792 the Tibetan authorities both in Lhasa and

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65. Fu-k'ang-an was very important Manchu official indeed, member of one of the Manchu Banners (clans), the Yellow Bordered, son of a high official and nephew of an Empress. He served in succession as a financial official, as a military governor in the Manchu homeland of Manchuria, and as Governor-General of a series of Chinese Provinces, first Shensi and Kansu (Shaanxi and Gansu), then Fukien and Chekiang (Fujian and Zhejiang), and finally, from 1789, Kwangtung and Kwangsi (Guangdong and Guangxi). This last office gave him first-hand experience of the trade with Europeans at Canton, from which he is said to have derived considerable wealth: he was reputed to be both greedy and corrupt. After the Gurkha campaign he became Governor-General of Yunnan and Kweichow (Guizhou), in which post he died in 1796 while campaigning somewhat ineffectually against rebel hill tribes. His brother, Fu-ch'ang-an, was encountered by Lord Macartney while the latter was on the way to Peking in 1793, and Fu-k'ang-an himself met Macartney at Jehol on his return from Tibet. See entries in: A.W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, Vol. I, Washington, D.C., 1943.

Tashilhunpo, and also the Chinese commander Fu-k'ang-an,<sup>66</sup> wrote to the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, to ask him not to assist the Gurkhas in any way in their resistance to the Chinese. These letters were delivered by Purangir, who then was obliged through ill health to give up his task as messenger, which he handed over to his disciple Daljit Gir Gosain. Lord Cornwallis made a formal reply, written on 25 September 1792, to the Dalai Lama (as well as similar letters to the Tashilhunpo authorities and the Chinese military command) in which he pointed out that the Company enjoyed friendly relations both with Nepal and with the Chinese Empire. He was anxious that hostilities between Tibet and Nepal should cease as soon as possible and he was prepared to act as a mediator between the two parties. He announced that, with such mediation in view, he proposed as soon as the rains were over to send one of his officers to Kathmandu to explain the Company view to the Nepalese Rajah. What Lord Cornwallis did not say in this correspondence was that a distinct set of Anglo-Nepalese negotiations had already been in progress for some time, and of a kind which could well suggest that the Company was anything but impartial in this crisis.

While in September 1789 the Company had stopped the despatch to Kathmandu of a consignment of 500 muskets which the Gurkhas had acquired in British (or British-influenced) territory, at the same time there had been during the course of 1788-89 exchanges of gifts and very friendly letters between Lord Cornwallis and the Government of Bahadur Shah in which the Company, among other proposals, promised, if not actively to assist, at least not to hinder in any way Nepalese pilgrims from visiting Indian holy sites.<sup>67</sup> The British Resident in Benares, Jonathan Duncan, was certainly now advocating a policy of closer relationships between the Company and the Gurkhas, and there can be no doubt that he saw in the growing tension in Tibeto-Nepalese relations an opportunity to this end.<sup>68</sup> While the second Gurkha invasion of Tibet was in progress, Duncan had established his own representative in Kathmandu, one Maulvi Abdul Kadir Khan, a judicial official (munsif) in the Diwani (native civil) Court in Benares and son of

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66. The letter from Fu-k'ang-an was written in the Manchu script which nobody in the Company service in Calcutta was able to read. It was assumed, however, that it said the same as other letters in Persian. See: Cammann, *op. cit.*, p. 127; Diskalkar, *loc. cit.*, p. 393.

67. Regmi, *Modern Nepal, op. cit.*, pp. 408-9.

68. Jonathan Duncan, a friend of George Bogle, entered the service of the East India Company in 1772. He was Resident in Benares from 1787 to 1795. In 1795 he was appointed Governor of Bombay, a post which he occupied until his death in 1811. See: Markham, *Tibet, op. cit.*, p. cxxxv

the Chief Kazi (Muslim judge) in that Court.<sup>69</sup> Abdul Kadir Khan seems to have completed the negotiations, which may have already been in train for some time, for a commercial treaty between the Gurkhas and the Company which was duly signed on 1 March 1792: it provided for very low rates of duty on goods traded between Company and Gurkha territories (2½ %) and paved the way for a British mission to visit Kathmandu.<sup>70</sup> The Gurkhas evidently thought (or hoped) that this document would also produce British military assistance against the Chinese: during the course of 1792 the Nepalese asked for the loan of two battalions of Company European infantry, two battalions of sepoy and at least ten guns manned by European NCOs, along with the appropriate stores, for all of which adequate payment was offered.

Lord Cornwallis politely, but firmly, declined any military help on the grounds that the Company had for many years carried on a profitable trade with the subjects the Emperor of China: he offered, however, his mediation between the Gurkhas and the Chinese authorities in Tibet should such a step be desired by Kathmandu. He proposed to send up to Kathmandu for this purpose one of his Officers, Colonel William Kirkpatrick it was to be, accompanied by Abdul Kadir Khan. By the time that Kirkpatrick had entered Nepal (February 1793), however, the Tibeto-Nepalese crisis had effectively been resolved without any Company participation whatsoever. Indeed, Kirkpatrick rapidly appreciated that his mission was unlikely to produce results of the least value to the British: by the beginning of April 1793 he was back on Company soil in India.<sup>71</sup>

The consequences of the Chinese intervention in the Tibeto-Nepalese crisis in 1792 were to be of the greatest significance for the subsequent course of internal Tibetan politics and of the nature of its relationship with polities to its south.

The Gurkhas were obliged to surrender some at least of their booty from the sack of Tashilhunpo and to accept, formally, what in Chinese eyes was a tributary status with an obligation to send an appropriate mission to Peking every five years (which Nepal in fact did more or less regularly until 1908: thereafter, with the

69. For some years Abdul Kadir Khan was to act as intermediary between Kathmandu and the Company somewhat in way that Purangir Gosain had acted between Tashilhunpo and Calcutta since 1774.

70. The text of this treaty is printed in: Madan Kumar Bhattarai, *Diplomatic History of Nepal (1901-1929)*, New Delhi 1990, Appx. I.

71. For accounts of the Kirkpatrick mission to Tibet and its background, see, for example: Cammann, *op. cit.*; K.C. Chaudhuri, *Anglo-Nepalese Relations from the earliest times of British Rule in India till the Gurkha War*, Calcutta 1960, Chapter V. Kirkpatrick's own narrative, *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul*, *op. cit.*, was first published in London in 1811, and subsequently reprinted in India on several occasions.

collapse of the Ch'ing Dynasty, the missions ceased). The question of the value of Nepalese coinage in Tibet was abandoned. From 1792, indeed, there emerged a Chinese minted Tibetan coinage (from a Chinese Imperial mint in Lhasa to supplement a Tibetan mint already set up the previous year). The old system of coins continued, but its supply, let alone its quality, no longer depended upon the mints in the Kathmandu Valley.<sup>72</sup> The Sharmarpa Hutukhtu, whose flight to Nepal from Tibet was seen by many as one of the causes of the crisis, had died (possibly suicide), but the Chinese insisted that his remains (ashes), and his assets, be transferred from Nepal to Tibet.<sup>73</sup> The treaty which the Gurkhas had secured from Tibet in 1789 was declared invalid. While commercial relations between Nepal and Tibet were by no means severed by the crisis and those Newar traders in Tibet who were prepared to accept certain conditions imposed on them by the Chinese were able to continue their business much as before (perhaps even in the enjoyment of certain extraterritorial rights), it was clear to many Company observers that there now existed no prospect by way of Nepal of a revival of that extensive and valuable trans-Himalayan trade which had flourished before the Gurkha conquests of the 1760s. One other direct consequence of the Sino-Nepalese peace settlement of 1792 was the explicit abandonment by the Gurkhas of their ambitions towards Sikkim.<sup>74</sup>

The most significant consequences of the Tibeto-Nepalese crisis of 1791-93 were felt by the Tibetans. Up to the Gurkha invasion the local Tibetan authorities in Tashilhunpo and Lhasa enjoyed a real measure of autonomy provided, as Bogle observed, they took care not to provoke the distant Chinese Emperor. This now changed. Tashilhunpo, which in Bogle's day possessed a significant degree of freedom of action both in internal administration and in the conduct of relations with neighbouring regions in the Himalayas and in northern India, appears now to have become to all intents and purposes directly subject to Lhasa. The Tashilhunpo Regent, Bogle's Chanzo Cusho, ceased to correspond with the Governor-

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72. See, for example: N.G. Rhodes, "The Development of Currency in Tibet", in M. Aris & Aung San Suu Kyi, eds., *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*, Warminster 1980.

73. The Sharmarpa Hutukhtu's wife, along with a score of his supporter, who had been imprisoned in Lhasa at the beginning of the crisis, were at this time released.

74. The Nepalese documents relating to this peace agreement, according to Professor T.P. Mishra, have not come to light in the archives, though the general outline of the terms is clear enough from other sources. See: Mishra, "Nepal-Tibet Treaty of 1856", *loc. cit.*, n.8.

General of British India (what happened to the Regent is not clear).<sup>75</sup> In Lhasa the structure of Chinese authority was overhauled and revised so as to emphasise the dominant position of the Ambans (the two Chinese Residents) and, behind them, the Chinese Emperor. In 1794 Sung-yun,<sup>76</sup> a very important Manchu official, was appointed senior Amban in Tibet as a symbol of the new Chinese policy.

From the Company point of view, though this may well not have been fully appreciated in Calcutta for some time, the possibility of any useful dialogue with the local Tibetan authorities was eliminated (and, indeed, would remain so long after Markham wrote his optimistic dedication to Lord Northbrook of his edition of Bogle in 1875 which is reproduced here above in Chapter I).<sup>77</sup>

75. The last letter from the Tashi Lama's administration, that is to say the Tashilhunpo Regent, was received by Lord Cornwallis 28 June 1793, brought down by Daljit Gir Gosain. See: Diskalkar, *loc. cit.*, No. 18.

76. Sung-yun (1752-1835) was in fact a Mongol, of the Plain Blue Banner. He served in Tibet until 1799. Apart from occupying important Court positions in Peking, Sung-yen had been Imperial agent on the Sino-Russian frontier from 1786 to 1792, and in the latter year had been negotiator with the Russians of a revision of the 1727 Kyakhta Treaty (as revised in 1768). Sung-yun accompanied Lord Macartney for part of the way from Peking to Canton on the British Ambassador's return from his mission. There could have been no senior Chinese official with more experience of China's relations with the European Powers in the service of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor at this time. Macartney formed a high opinion of Sung-yun: no doubt the fact that Macartney, who had earlier served as British Ambassador in Russia, gave the two officials a subject of common interest to discuss. See: J.L. Cranmer-Byng, ed., *An Embassy to China, Being the journal kept by Lord Macartney during his embassy to the Emperor Ch'ien-lung 1793-1794*, London 1962, p. 369, n.38; C.M. Foust, *Muscovite and Mandarin, op. cit.*, Ch. VIII; Hummel, *Eminent Chinese, op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 691-692.

77. As a result of the intervention in the Tibeto-Nepalese crisis by Fu-k'ang-an, the Chinese imposed upon Lhasa what amounted to a constitution which in Chinese sources is often referred to as the Ordinance of the Twenty-nine Articles. The main points were as follows:

(1). The Chinese would supervise the process of selection of the key Tibetan Incarnations, notably the Dalai and Panchen Lamas. Involved was a kind of lottery, in which names of a number of possible selections were placed in a golden urn. This device has been interpreted to imply that the Chinese had the final say in the selection of an Incarnation; but it could equally well have meant that the Chinese merely wished to see that the mechanism of selection was not abused by local Tibetan factions. Be that as it may, the essential point was that now the Chinese had a direct role in the mechanism of selection.

(2) The status of the two Ambans, or Chinese Residents in Tibet, was considerably raised: they now ranked with the Governor-General of a Chinese Province (such as neighbouring Szechuen).

(3) A standing army of some 3,000 men (locally recruited) was put at the disposal of the Ambans, of which 1,000 would be stationed in Lhasa and 1,000 in

From the Tibetans point of view the main conclusion to emerge from these two Tibeto-Nepalese crises was that Peking, while indeed far away, was physically able, and if sufficiently provoked, willing to intervene directly in Tibetan affairs, as in fact it had on at least two occasions in the first half of the 18th century. The English East India Company, on the other hand, despite the persuasive arguments of Bogle and Turner, was quite ineffective in this respect. Indeed, it must have been thought in Lhasa that the Company had actually assisted the Gurkhas in their invasion of Tibet. Such, for example, would surely have been the Tibetan interpretation in Lhasa of Jonathan Duncan's Anglo-Nepalese commercial agreement of 1792: what was thought of this and other matters in Tashilhunpo was of now of little importance because the Nepalese crises followed by Chinese intervention had destroyed whatever freedom of action of the authorities there that the Tashi (Panchen) Lama might have created in the 1770s when George Bogle visited him.

From the Nepalese point of view a different conclusion was drawn. The Company had failed to render the Gurkhas aid in their hour of need. On the other hand, the Company shared a long common border with the Gurkha kingdom. The Gurkhas, stopped from territorial expansion to their north and their east by the Chinese-imposed peace, now turned with greater energy to expansion to their west (along the Himalayan range into Kumaon and Garwhal) and to their south along the Terai: in both directions they were to come into conflict with the Company which would in the second decade of the 19th century produce, first, war, and,

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Shigatse.. Rates of pay should be adequate and arms of good quality and sufficient quantity. In addition, it seems, the Ambans were given their own escort of 2,000 Chinese and Mongol troops (according to T.-T. Li, *The Historical Status of Tibet*, New York 1956, p. 54).

(4) The Ambans were to have the last say in any communication between Tibet and neighbouring states such as Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan, not to mention Mongolia. There certainly was no specific provision for direct correspondence between Tibet and the English East India Company (though, in fact, a spasmodic, albeit tentative, correspondence between Calcutta and Lhasa continued into the 2nd decade of the 19th century).

(5) Sectors of the Tibet-Nepal border were to be defined and boundary markers erected. Foreigners entering Tibet across this and any other border required proper passports.

(6) The coinage issue was dealt with. The silver content and value of Tibet-minted coins was specified. Old Nepal-minted coins could be exchanged for the new coins at specified rates: there was, however, to be no more minting of Tibetan coins outside Tibet.

The text of all the twenty-nine articles is given in English in Ya Hanzhang, *Dalai Lamas, op. cit.*, pp. 72-83. See also: Li, *op. cit.*; W.W. Rockhill, "The Dalai Lamas of Lhasa and Their Relations with the Manchu Emperors of China 1644-1908", *T'oung Pao*, XI, Leiden 1910.

second, a process of Anglo-Nepalese rapprochement which was to ensure the survival into the post-British era of Indian history of Nepal as a fully independent state. In the very short term, the Tibeto-Nepalese crises of 1788-93 contributed to the fall of Bahadur Shah who, soon after Pratap Singh's son Rana Bahadur Shah came of age (not long after Kirkpatrick's return to India), was put in prison where he died in 1797. As Father Stiller said, "the passing of Bahadur Shah from the scene was in reality the end of an era in the history of Nepal", though the working out of the full implications of this event were extremely complex and took several decades to reach a definite conclusion.<sup>78</sup>

The Chinese also drew their own conclusions from these happenings in Tibet and Nepal, of which two predominate. First: they resolved to prevent, if at all possible, any direct diplomatic contact between the Tibetans and the Government of British India to the south. Second: they believed that the British in India (whom they probably found it impossible to distinguish from the British anywhere else) had actively helped the Gurkhas against the Tibetans and Chinese despite their protestations of friendship for China and their offers to mediate between the authorities in Tibet and those in Kathmandu. Lord Macartney, whose Embassy to China was in progress during 1793 while the Tibeto-Nepalese crisis was still unwinding, may well have believed that this Chinese perception of the part played by the British on behalf of the Gurkhas was a factor of some significance in the lack of success of his mission: his Secretary (and Deputy) Sir George Staunton certainly thought so.<sup>79</sup> While the reasons for Macartney's failure are by no means simple and involve many issues far removed from the affairs of Nepal and Tibet, yet it is reasonable to believe that these particular events, and the impression they created upon Chinese official thought, did play their part.

As far as the promotion of a significantly profitable trans-Himalayan trade was concerned, the ostensible major objective behind Bogle, Hamilton and Turner, the Tibeto-Nepalese crisis was, if not a disaster, at least a serious setback. As Samuel

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78. Stiller, *Gorkha, op. cit.*, pp. 314-315.

79. See, for example: Cranmer-Byng, *Embassy, op. cit.*, p. 86; Staunton, *Embassy, op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 48-49.

Even when Bogle was in Tashilhunpo there were rumours circulating in Tibet of a European (possibly English) assisting the Gurkha military, and the Chinese evidently believed that such persons had been present in 1791-92. While the published records have so far yielded no trace of such individuals, it is a fact that in late 18th century India there was no lack of European adventurers with military experience who were prepared to serve "Country" powers (as the British were to discover on more than one occasion: one of the Mahratha commanders encountered by the future Duke of Wellington at Assaye in 1803, for instance, was Pohlman, a German who had once served as a sergeant in a British Hanoverian regiment).



Turner noted in 1793, the Chinese had now established frontier posts, notably at Pharidzong, on the border between Bhutan and Tibet on the line of the trade route which the Company saw as the alternative to that by way of Nepal so damaged by the Gurkha conquests of the 1760s, and this "has unhappily put a stop to all communication between the northern states, and the provinces of Bengal, as the Chinese, with their accustomed jealousy and caution, guard the station they were permitted to occupy. The approach of strangers, even of the natives of Bengal and Hindostan, is utterly prohibited." In addition, Turner went on, "a most violent prejudice prevails even against the Hindoo Goseins, who are charged with treachery against their generous patrons, by becoming guides and spies to the enemy, and have in consequence, it is said, been proscribed their accustomed abode at Teshoo Loomboo, where they had ever been patronised in great number by the [Tashi or Panchen] Lama, and enjoyed particular favour and indulgence. From this period, unhappily, is to be dated the interruption which has taken place in the regular intercourse between the Company's possessions, and the territory of the Lama."<sup>80</sup>

Could things have worked out differently? It can be argued that had the Company been able somehow to restrain the Gurkhas, then the Tibetan crisis might have been averted. Indo-Tibetan trade, perhaps still along the Bhutanese route, perhaps even, if relations between the Gurkhas and the Company could have so developed, along the old Nepalese routes including that through the Kathmandu Valley, might have flourished and expanded. But the truth is that the only way the Gurkhas could have been restrained, as was realised clearly enough by the British in 1767, was by a direct military intervention in Nepal. After the failure of the Kinloch expedition of that year, the Company was not going to embark upon Himalayan military adventures without a great deal more provocation, and for far better political objectives, than were present in the late 1780s and early 1790s. Eventually, of course, in 1814, the Government of India did feel obliged to take direct action against the Gurkhas. This, however, was in a very different political climate both in India and in the land beyond the Himalayan range. It had no immediate consequence for Indo-Tibetan commerce. If the Chinese Government in Peking thought about it at all, it would have been to conclude that the British were dangerous and best kept at the same arm's length as they had been hitherto.<sup>81</sup>

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80. Turner, *Embassy, op. cit.*, pp. 441-442.

81. A survey of the economic, political and diplomatic consequences, both immediate and in the longer term, of the events of this era which saw the Bogle and Turner mission is to be found in the second volume to this book.