

NEPAL

Historical Study of A Hindu Kingdom

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Volume 1.

INTRODUCTION

The name of Nepal is not unknown, even outside the narrow circle of erudites. The charm of the Himalayas, [has reflected itself so to speak, on the Hindu kingdom which the great chain shelters, Gaurisankar and the other giant peaks that impart dizziness to the imagination of school boys, evoke to the memory the image of Nepal, stretched out on the map at the feet of these colossus, Between Tibet to the North, and British India that squeezes her to the South East, and West, the Kingdom of Nepal occupies little room. Nepal properly speaking would occupy even less. The local practice, in accordance with the tradition, reserves exclusively the denomination of Nepal to an oblong valley, situated in the very heart of the country, half-way to burning Hindustan and the lofty frozen plateaus, laughing, fertile, populated, acquired from old, to civilization and which has never ceased exercising a predominance over the rough surrounding mountains. It is the story of this humble valley, that I have attempted to retrace here.

Must I excuse myself for having consecrated so much effort on so restricted a subject. I do not think so. A chain of facts that are inter-linked, whatever be its apparent aim, is better than the distraction of a curious mind. It awakens memory and brings it creative imagination. If the destinies of the human race, are not a vain game of hazard, if there exist scrupulous or inscrupulous laws that govern them, the history of one human community interests the whole of humanity since it brings to light the hidden precepts and projects under the confused mass of events. It is the unknown, always dangerous, that draws back; if one succeeds in discovering, how a forlorn valley has peopled itself with inhabitants, has organized itself, has policed itself, how the worships, the languages, the institutions have by degrees transformed themselves, the study develops into greater interest on the Hindu domain. India, in her whole, is a world without history: she created herself gods, doctrines, laws, sciences, arts, but she has not divulged.

We are glad to present English translation of Sylvain Levi's *LE NEPAL* through the *Journal of the Department of Archaeology, Ancient Nepal*. It is well known that the original work is in French. As the English version will be more useful for Nepalese scholars and common readers, we have decided to publish it in series in *Ancient Nepal*. The English copy of the work is in the collection of Kaiser Library, Kathmandu. Ed.

the secret of their formation or of their metamorphosis. One must be well initiated in Indian ways to know at the expense of what patient toil, the learned men of Europe have established far distant connecting links in the obscurity of an almost impenetrable past; what strange combinations of heteroclitic date have enabled to edit a tottering chronology, even now thoroughly incomplete.

Civilized nations have preoccupied themselves in general, by conveying a durable remembrance to posterity; organised in community, they have directly extended to the group the distinctive sentiments of the individual. They have desired to decipher the mystery of their origin and to survive in the future. The priests, the poets, the erudites have offered themselves to this very powerful need. The Chinese have their annals, as the Greeks have Herodote and the Jews their Bible. India has nothing.

The exception is so singular that it has, at the very outset caused surprise and given rise to interpretations. One has especially alleged as a decisive argument, the transcendental indifference of the Hindu feeling penetrated by universal vanity, the Hindu surveys with superb disdain the illusive course of phenomena; to better humble the human smallness his legends and his cosmogonies drown the years and the centuries into incommensurable periods that involve the imagination in the throes of a vertigo. The sentiment is exact: but in India as elsewhere, the highest doctrines have had to adapt themselves to the incurable failings of humanity. The commemorative inscriptions and panegyrics carved out of stone that are strewn over India, prove that from an early date, kings and other distinguished individuals have safe-guarded themselves against being forgotten. The long and pompous geneologies that frequently serve as a preliminary to roval deeds even show that the chanceries were setting up in their archives an official history of the dyna-

sty. But the political administration of India condemned these crude materials as they were most likely to disappear and end with fatal results. If contented peoples had no history, then anarchy also had none, and India had exhausted herself in perpetual, anarchy. Foreign invasions and internal rivalry have never ceased to overthrow the order of things. Sometimes, at long intervals, a genius would rise and knead in his strong hands the amorphous mass of kingdoms and principalities, and make of India an empire, but the work perishes with the workman: the empire gets dislocated and the self-made soldiery proceed in the work of her dismembrment into states of lesser importance. Too large to adapt herself to a monarchy, India is wanting in natural divisions that would assure her of a stable partition; hegemony wanders hazzardly over the stretch of this vast territory and travels from the Indus to the Ganges, from the Ganges to the Deccan. Capitals spring up, shine with effulgence and go out; marts, warehouses and sea-ports of the day before, are deserted, empty and forgotten on the morrow. From time to time a surge passes over this upheaval and gradually breaks all in its fall. Alexander enters the Punjab and the distant Ganges shakes off the yoke of its powerful rulers; the English land on the coast and the Mogul empire is shaken. India which is imagined as ordinarily obsorbed in her marvellous dream and separated from the rest of the world, is in reality a vulgar prey on which rushes the cupidity of the facinated universe. The Vedic Aryans, the persians under Darius, then the Greeks and the scythians, and the Huns, and the Arabs, and the Afghans, and the Turks, and the Moguls, and the Europeans unchained in emulation; portuguese, Dutch, French, English; the history of India is almost totally blended with the history of her conquerors.

If India, by the abuse of her instability, was condemned to be deprived of a political

history, she could at least have acquired a religious one. Buddhism nearly gave her that one. Born from a vigorous personality which a mythical disguise could not effectively mask, propagated by a succession of patriarchs, regulated by councils, patronized by illustrious sovereigns, the Church of Buddha reminds herself of the stages of her growing greatness; having appeared and having been published in the course of time, she did not hope for a stunning eternity. She fixed her duration to a definite period and eager to lead men to salvation, she measured with sadness, centuries travelled over, and centuries still open before her. The Buddhist priests, solitary in their convents, contemplated, without doubt, the storms of the world, alike deceiving mirages of universal nothingness; however, as members of a community answerable for its interests, they carefully kept the register of donations and of privileges granted by the favour of kings. The church had her annals; the convent had her diary. But a sweeping tempest swept away Buddhism, the monasteries and the monks together with their literature and traditions. To left alone and face to face with invading Islam, opposed to the fanaticism of the conqueror, the resources of his Indiscernible suppleness; he disdained history which contradicted his ideals and gainsaid his beliefs, he created himself heroes to suit his taste and sheltered with them in the past of legends.

Three countries only have cherished the memory of their real past: due South, Ceylon, surrounded by the sea, due North, Kashmere and Nepal in the mountains. All three have a common character in contrast with India; nature has traced them a well defined horizon, that the eye can compass without being able to overcome. Separated from India, they can never mingle with her, and pursue their destinies by themselves, surrounded by a fatal circle.

Ceylon, ancient and always flourishing metropolis of Buddhism, grew proud of a continuous chronicle which covers over two thousand years; from the time that the son of Emperor Asoka came to erect the first monastery, about 250 before the christian era, his monks have not ceased to range methodically in didactic poetry, the annals of the Singhalese Church. Their exactitude submitted to the control of Greeks and Chinese has succeeded brilliantly in the double test. But Ceylon is a world little set apart; her politics, which sometimes express the truth, separates even to-day, Ceylon from the Empire, Anglo-Indian, to reconnect her immediately to the British crown. The peninsula belongs to Rama, the hero of the Brahmins; but the island, subdued by his weapons for a short time, never the less remains to his antagonist, the demon Ravana. The maritime routes of the East that open out like a fan around her, have poured in all the races of the world, Arabs, Persians, Malay and African negroes and white men from Europe and yellow men from China. India stretches towards her almost to touching point, but what an India dark India, dravidian India, where Brahminism has always had to divide the empire with the indigenous religions, with Buddhism, with Islam, with the christians under saint Thomas, with the jesuits under Madoure. Ceylon is an annexation of India, she is not a province, less even a reduced image.

Kashmere, which is inland, acts like a pendant to the great island. The mountains surround her but do not imprison her. Passable defiles connect her with Tibet at Kachger, at the villeys of pamir, accessible passes slope down to the Punjab, towards this historical threshold of India, where all the invaders have had to pitch their first battle. Ceylon, is the advanced sentinel at the crossways of the Indian ocean, Kashmere penetrates like an angle under the pressure of India, to the very heart of Asia. But, welded to India, she shares her

destinies; conquered, like her, by the Turks of Kaniska and the Huns of Mihira Kula, she pursues like her, a period of splendour and of might between the VIth and the Xth Century, then, exhausted, by her struggles against the barbarians of the west, she succumbs to the efforts of Islam. A chronicle composed in the XIth century, alone reminds one to-day, of the glories of the past; but it has sufficed to make these immortal. The Sanskrit literature that the kings of Kashmere had protected and often even studied has worthily repaid their good offices; the Raja-tarangini of the poet Kalhana has saved their names and exploits from oblivion. Others have wished later on, to take up the threads again, and pursue the work of Kalhana, but the interest of the subjects had vanished. Kashmere had escaped the Hindu genius and was no more but an obscure annexation of Mohammedan India. If Nepal has a history, alike Kashmere and Ceylon, her history is a very modest one. Entrenched between her glaciers and her impenetrable forests isolated like an undefined dominion between Hindustan and Tibet, she has never known the refined civilization of Kashmerean courts, or the opulent activity of the great Buddhistic island. Her annals do not remind one either of Mahavamsa pali, or of the Sanskrit Raja-tarangini, their very shape betray their contrast; they consist in dynastic lists (Vamsavalis) combined with the lists of endowments and royal donations; the compilers who have gathered and founded them, have not attempted to raise them above the dignity of a literary work. The usual language sufficed them, they had chosen to speak in the half-Tibetian of the Nevars or the Aryan dialect of Hinduised Nepalese. Their narratives, poor and usually meagre, dwell with complaisance only on miracles and prodigies. It only swells into details at the mythical period and at the modern period. The strength of recent souvenirs only is able to withstand the dazzling brilliancy of the legendary past.

Heroes and gods, cradled by popular belief move from century to Century, always truer and more real, proportional, as each generation gives it, its soul and its faith. One sees them, one feels them everywhere present; man is the blind instrument of their wills and caprices. The revolution of 1768 which gave Nepal to the Ghurkas is only, to the chroniclers, but the sequel of a treaty first arranged in heaven. History propagated in this way is reduced to a pious epic, mounted on an apparatus of suspicious chronology. Science happily has at its disposal other ways to control and complete the tradition. The epigraphy already substantial and which dates back from the VIth century; the ancient manuscripts, numerous in Nepal where the climate has better preserved them than in India; the literature of local origin; the narrations of pilgrims and of Chinese envoys, the informations taken from the history and from the Indian literatures, in short the enquiries gathered by European travellers, Since the XVIIth century.

All these documents of various ages, origins, languages, sentiments, once compared, criticised and co-ordinated, make up a harmonious setting where the attention can easily encompass the destinies of an Asiatic tribe, subdued by contact with India during a period of duration of at least twenty centuries. From the earliest of times Nepal was a lake; the water that comes down from the neighbouring summits, is gathered in captivity at the feet of the mountain that surround it. But a divine sword forces a breach; the Valley empties itself, the soil dries up; the first intruders arrive. They come from the North led by Manjusri, the hero of Buddhistic sagacity who holds sway in China and who still manifests himself to-day under the guise of the Son of Heaven. The mythical age opens then; the imagination of Nepalese story-tellers had no difficulty in peopling this distant past, abandoned wholly

to their fantasy; but their inventions, apart from reality, which inspire them in spite of themselves result only in reproducing the history in a sort of symbolic prelude. The dynasties that they relate emerge one from a Chinese world, another from the oriental Himalaya, another from India. After myriads of years in which the legendary gods and heroes occupy the scene personages of the most modern type suddenly make their entry. A hermit, the patron and eponym of Nepal, instals on the throne simple shepherds. It is history which commences or at least historical times. The Gopals, the Abhiras represent the first pastors who ventured with their flock on the grassy and lonely slopes of the mountains. Their names, though being given in Sanskrit, must not make an illusion; forerunners of the Gurungs and of the Bhotiyas who live now in the higher alps of the Gurkha Kingdom, they came like them from the Tibetan plateaus. Picturesque accounts gathered from the neighbourhood of Nepal show that the herdsmen of old were forced by reason of snow and ice, to remain on the other slope; but one amongst them in searching for a lost sheep wandered in the snows surmounted a mountain pass and discovered a new verdant and fertile world. He returned, with the glad news which spread from place to place; a multitude of conquistadors ventured the on road to the south.

The tribe of Nevals who took possession of Nepal, belonged to a race of men whom nature stamped with a bold hand, accustomed to heights, thought impracticable, exposed to the glacial rigours of a long winter, but swept by a vivifying breeze cheered up by a smiling summer, removed from the trade of the world confined in their horizon as well as in their ambitions associating the pleasures of a nomadic life with the rustic pleasures, of a sedentary life, these herdsmen of a boundless Arcadia mingled kindness to barbarism eclogue to ferocity, boisterous mirth, frank and jovial

gaiety; they play about like children, dream like wise men and strike like brutes. Bands of plunderers under a ringleader, armed, drilled by a genius, Buddha's doctrine has also turned out monks, savants and philosophers. Their dialect indistinct and rough has however, adapted itself quite readily to poetry to science and to abstruse speculations. Born and sprung up from this robust stump, the bough, Neval, the one nearest to India, was the first to flourish.

Never had foremost to triumph over an imminent peril to the East the shepherds of Nepal a parent tribe, had occupied the basin of the seven kosis; spread over this vast territory, which nature herself had cut up in narrow valleys by high mountain barriers, the tribe of Kiratas had broken up into principalities; but weary perhaps of exhaustion in fruitless rivalry guided perhaps by the wisdom of neighbouring India, they organised themselves in confederacy, alike the Mallas or the Vijjis of Aryan country, and powerful by their union, they created an empire which overflowed on the southern plain, spread towards the sea to the Ganges delta, and left its remembrance in Hindu Epic whilst to the west their expansion and triumphal progress wrested out Nepal from the shepherd Kings. The Vamsavali records a long list of Kirata Kings whose barbarous names seem to bear the stamp of authenticity. It is during the course of this period that Buddha firstly, and then the Emperor Asoka, visited Nepal. Taken literally, the two facts are at least doubtful, if not improbable: they express, however, a portion of the truth. Buddhism was born at the feet of the Nepalese mountains and at the opening of routes which led from Nepal to the plains, to the limits of the Aryan sphere; The proximity of the Himalaya has perhaps tempted the first apostles, eager to propagate the works of salvation. And later on, about 250 before J. C. when Asoka undertook his pious pilgrimage to holy places,

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holy places, his route, still recognisable by the pillars he erected, guided him at least in that mixed region where the Nepalese highlander meets the Hindu from the plains.

Supported by the power of the great Buddhist emperor, or only by his own zeal, the missionary of Buddhism has taken root in Nepal. India followed him there. Under the influence of the new religion, illustrious families attempted to connect themselves, really or fictitiously, to the Buddhist novelty of India. One, amongst them acquired such reputation, as to overthrow the Kiratas, about a century after the Christian era, and to create a dynasty which survived nearly eight centuries. The descendants of Kiratas pretended having sprung up from the clan Licchavi who held sway at the time of Buddha, over the wealthy town of Vaisali and who still existed in the most glorious names of the Indian aristocracy. Nepal under the Licchavi regime, united with the scheme of Hindu states but without pledging her independence. The most powerful of Gupta emperors, sovereign of nearly the whole of India, inscribes Nepal among those kingdoms beyond the borders, that maintain with him friendly relations. In short, at the beginning of the VIth century, real history commences with the epigraphy. The first document known, shows India's civilisation attaining her full bloom. The literary tongue, Sanskrit, which reaches at that period the classical perfection in India of brahmins, is handled without difficulty, in the heart of the mountains, by learned poets, by the fashionable, by the dainty, in the employment of the court or by ordinary laymen. Buddhism and Brahmanism, long separated and rivals in India, penetrate and almost mingle in Nepal. The monks had consecrated to the religion of Buddhas, the hill of Svayambhu, they had erected a sanctuary of antique shape which tradition dates back to Emperor Asoka; scattered in the valley hemi-

spheres of earth and brick built on the elementary style of primitive monuments of Indian Buddhism testify to the date already distant of the country's conversion. Siva and Visnu had fixed their abode on two other heights. Siva, the known associate of Himalayan retreats and summits, is adored here under the name of Pasupati, Master of cattle, and this vocabulary, happily adapted at first to a population of herdsmen and afterwards imposed by a long usage, indicates even to-day, the god as well as the protector of the dynasty and the patron of Nepal. Visnu popularly called Narayana is less intimately connected than his competitor, with the life of the country. Around them lesser divinities, partly common to the Bonyes and to the Brahmans, had their temples, and their priests, and their faithful. Hereditary royalty would be transmitted from father to son; the king's power would extend outside the valley, to the east and to the west; but a restless feudalism, indocile, would subdue to almost nothingness the royal domain and the authority of the sovereign. There were no large towns as yet; the villages, where the cultivators and tradesmen gathered, only bore indigenous names purely Nevars. The inscriptions and the chronicle allow one to follow the development of Nepal up to the VIIIth. century where she reaches her apogee. Fortune seems then to suddenly widen the political horizon of this little Kingdom. Drilled and disciplined by one or those leaders of men that central Asia now and then produces, the Tibetan tribes unite; a state is created, organised, which threatens at its very birth the old Chinese colossus. China on the other hand reminded by her the aggressors, of the "western Countries" which she had almost forgotten. Since the Huns, attempts by the fervour of her pilgrims and the adroitness of her manderins, to force her way to India. India, herself on the North, united for a while under the Empire of a learned and curious monarch, answers China's call and attempts to break the cordon of barbarians which close

her frontiers, to the North-west the Tekins Turcs are masters, on the verge of being overthrown by the Arabs.

Nepal seems to promise an easy way across, to this commerce of nations. She is the uniting thought of the two worlds. India has converted and civilised her. Tibet who speaks her dialect, reckons her as one of her vassals; but subjugated Nepal has given a queen to her conquerors. A Nepalese prince sits on the throne of Lhasa; fervent Buddhist, she installs in her palace her gods, her priests and her holy books. Clotilde has once again converted Clovis; the barbarous king surrounds himself with monks, learns theology after his battles. Chinese ambassadors, sent towards India, pass through Tibet, suspend their Journey at Nepal and become official guests enticed by the political fortune of Tibet, Nepal is influenced considerably by China; she sends her messengers and presents; an army of Nepalese soldiers even descend to the plains of India to avenge an insult she suffered. Chinese monks came to settle down learn and perish in the monasteries of Nepal.

This intensity of exchange, promoted a surprising prosperity. Old royal dwellings that were too poor or stingy were discarded, palaces sprang up that sheltered with the King a Court of dignitaries; the convents and temples grow handsome wealthy and increased; sculpture and paintings decorated works of architecture. Nepal's art astonish the refined Chinese themselves. Towns are built; capitels emerge from the earth, one after the other. Science encouraged, and sustained by liberal donations, flourishes; Royalty gives the example: Amsuvarman composes a Sanskrit grammar. In the convents learned monks multiply and increase the copies of holy scriptures and canonical treatises, diverting themselves in their spare work by paintings and finely executed

miniatures.

But the resources of Nepal are not sufficient for her needs, deprived of the reform which swept over her, she falls in decay (or degenerates). India has ere long returned to anarchy; Tibet and China in the throes of perpetual struggles exhaust each other mutually. Tired of a vassalage which falsified her destinies, Nepal rose in arms, and struggled against her Tibetan chieftains; distracted by diverse influences that pretended to prevail, the kingdom splits up, crumbles up and sinks in a feudal chaos, the Licchavis disappear, swept away by the turmoil. A clear and precise date emerges from this fog and is inscribed on the portal of a new period. The year 880 of J. C. inaugurates Nepal's era.

For a long time already, Nepal had been initiated by India in the usage of a local era. The ambition of the Indian chiefs, Emperors and petty kings went so far as to create an era proper which perpetuated their memory; the use of a distinct era was held as a symbol of independence, of proud and free might; it was like a national emblem, carrying the blazon of a dynasty. Amongst all these difficulties, in which struggles the history of India, the multiplicity of eras is an element of inextricable confusion. A number of kings often waver in the chronology, at the mercy of the time awaiting a decisive synchronism. The Guptas who dominate the Indian history for a hundred and fifty years, were still pulled about fifteen years ago, between the 1st and 6th century of the Christian era. Even the origin of the most popular eras escape the historian; we can still ignore the circumstances that gave birth in 57 B. C. to the Vikrama era, and in 78 A. C. to the Saka era, as well scattered, however, in contemporary India, as in the India of the middle ages. The Licchavis of Nepal had founded or introduced into the valley, an era which appears, if my calculations are correct, from the

year 111 J.C; at the beginning of the VIIIth century, they must have accepted as a mark of servitude, the era of Tibetan conquerors. The year 880 officially describes the rupture of the bond of vassalage. Nepal escapes from Tibet which is torn by religious upheavals and a new dynasty is substituted for the Licchavis: the Mallas.

The Mallas, alike the Licchavis, are the heirs, more or less legitimate of an antique name, consecrated by the biography of Buddha. At the time the chieftain lived, the mallas formed a confederacy of tribes, as yet little advanced in civilisation; it is on their territory that the founders of the two great schismatic doctrines, Buddha and Jina, had come to die. Later on they disappeared from history, absorbed in the Magadha Empire or driven back to the mountains. They appear in Nepal on the first of the country's epigraphic monuments; their name is retraced later on in other inscriptions of the Licchavis. Established outside and to the west of the valley, they refuse to recognize the authority of the Nepalese dynasty and appear even to impose on them, sometimes, a sort of retribution.

Rulers of Nepal in their turn, the mallas introduced a kind of feudal federation which reminds one of the constitution of ancient Mallas. At the end of the XIth, century (1097 J. C), a sudden shock announced to the little valley, the breaking up of neighbouring India and peesage of future revolution; under cover of the disorder provoked, from the Indus to the Ganges, by the Mohammedan invasion, a Hindu devout and an orthodox, native of Deccan, enters fully armed in Nepal and occupies the throne, which he bequeaths to his descendants. But the conquest is premature; the new dynasty reigns only by name. Anarchy is complete; each borough has its chief who is opposed to the monarch; the capitals have their provincial kings. The rivalry of convents

add to the rivalry of parties. A prince of the mountains, supported by the Brahmanic faction believes the times ripe; predecessor of the Ghurkas, he attacks palpa in Nepal, occupies it, but thinking himself too weak to hold it, retires precipitately. In spite of successive defeats, his repeated efforts testify to the continuous growing interest of the Brahmans.

In 1324 a third attempt succeeded in installing a Brahmanic dynasty in Nepal; the conqueror Hari simha Deva, victim of the musulmans who had chased him from Tirhout, searches in the mountains, a refuge and a compensation. He brings with him an academy of Brahmanic jurists whom he protects and who is ardently busy in Codifying, the traditions which is in danger of disappearing under the Islam triumph. The subtle intricacies of the Brahmanic organisation, spread and gained ground, but it was set reserved in store to the Mallas, who were better qualified for this role, to work out a harmonious conciliation between the local custom and the exigancies of the Brahmans. In the second half of the XIV th. century Jaya Sthiti Malla, assisted by the Hindu doctors, outlines clearly the rules of the social and religious organisation. The whole population is divided into two classes running in accordance with the two churches; the faithful of Hindu gods are subdued by the strict rules of the Brahmanic castes, the followers of Buddhistic divinities are divided into professional groups, according to casts. Laws, the salient of points in which disclose the scrupulous method of the Hindu genius, stipulate the details in dress, of the house, of functions allotted to each of the groups. A well established reform for a system of weights and measures also gives evidence of the economical transformation of Nepal.

The work of Jaya sthiti, Malla, restores to Nepal a durable stability and prepares her for a period of prosperity. Circumstances are

propitious. The religious zeal of the Mongul khoubilai khan, saved Tibet from anarchy, given power to the Lamas enriched and multiplied the convents, restored the studies and reanimated the commercial activity. The dynasty of the Ming, which succeeds to the mogols in china, retakes the traditions of the Huns and the T'ang, binds its fortune to Buddhism, dreams of uniting under its protection the scattered members of the Church, Its ambassadors travel by the great roads of Asia; Nepal exchanges missions and presents with the imperial court; the king of Nepal, taken for a Lama by error, receives this title, the investiture of china. The king yaksa, the Malla, compels to obedience the vassals and the refractory rivals and reestablishes for a while, unity; but this charlemagne ends up like Louis the Debonnaire; be it either by parental weakness or by an avowal of inability, he shares his empire between his sons. The small valley became the permanent seat of three kingdom, and the battle ground of three dynasties.

This ambition to excel, is at first glorious and prolific. Bhatgaun, the creation of the Mallas, beautifies herself with splendid monuments erected by a dynasty of builders; her palaces and her temples were the splendours and the porwesses of the Nepalese art. Kathmandu grew proud of his king poets, the literary men, and even of her polyglots; one amongst them which covers the slabs, of the town, with its lucubrations, outlines on the facades of his palace, two french words; AUTOMNE LHIVERT (Autumn Winter) in 1654, patan, the metropolis of Buddhism and the stronghold of faith, has a mystical king, who lives as an ascetic and disappears one day under the anonymous garb of a religions mendicant. This is the time when Europe first hears about Nepali, as in the days of the fabueous Manjusri, the passages allowing communications, open out in the North. A jesuit the P. of Andrada,

gathered the first news in Tibet in the year 1626, in 1662, two heroes in thier work of asiatic exploration, the P. Orueber and the P. Dorville leaving pekin for India, cross Nepal. At the same period the Frenchman Taveriner who visits the states of the great Mogul as a keen tradesman, enquiries abot the road that leads from India to central Asia. Offered as a spoil at the same, time, to the two forces of European Expansion, Nepal evades the tradesmen and succumbs to the missionary. But the jesuits who discovered her, find themselves frustrated by the ill-will of the pope. The Friars take up the responsibility: they establish in Nepal and in Tibet, missions that were no less charitable then that were fruitless. The P. Horace della penna, alone, who died at patan in 1745 deserves a homage from science. Expelled from the country after a sejour of sixty years, the Friars carry away the satisfaction in the knowledge that they had destroyed thousands of ancient manuscripts.

The departure of the Friare is the counter-strokes of a revolution which crowns and accomplishes in a short time the slow and tortuous work of centuries. The kingdoms of the Mallas have all three perished at the same time, exhausted by their quarrels and perpetual wars, undermined by internal disputes by the undiscipline of an aristocracy jealous of its rights and liberties, by the underhanded ways of the Brahmans The Ghurkas are the masters of Nepal. Spring up from a little village perched up on the mountains of the west, and which has given them their name, they pretend to be the natives of India, proper legitimate descendants of the ancient ksatriyas, equals of the most authentic Rajput. However, their traditions cannot dissimulate their real origin which is also betrayed in the lines of their face. These proud representatives of integral Brahmanism were born of a reprobate cross-breeding; some of them are issues of Brahmanic adventures

others of Rajput adventures, which the muslim conquest had ejected out of India and who had come in search of fortune in the mountains. The refugees, contracted with the indigenous girls, irregular unions; the children who were born claimed and obtained in society a rank worthy of parental blood, but which India more scrupulous refused to acknowledge. Helped by their adversaries dissensions, the Ghurkas have, however, triumphed only after bitter struggles; the honour of the success, was due to their chief, Prithi Narayan, a crafty politician, a valiant soldier, and a far-seeing tactician, cautious in the working out of his plans, stubborn in executing them, dispassionately barbarous or generous after mature deliberation. The capture of Kirtipour characterises his method; installed on its perpendicular rock and defended with bravery, the town repels the assaults of the Ghurkas. Insensible to failures, Prithi Narayan raises the siege, returns the following year, besieges the town again, fails again, and does not discourage. Treason surrenders him the place which force could not capture. He published an amnesty, disarms the inhabitants, and regardless of age or sex, cuts their lips and noses off. Europe who had partly to pay the costs of victory, furnished the means. The British troops of the company who flaunted their victorious banner through Bengal and the country of Avadha, taught the Ghurka king, the value of discipline, while European merchants supplied him with fire-arms which decided success.

In their irresistible enthusiasm, the Ghurkas, era long, extended their domination beyond the valley, to the frontiers that nature had imposed to her expansion. From kali to sikkim, from the Terrai to the Tibetan passes, the autonomous, tributary and vassal principalities, are incorporated in the Ghurka kingdom. Frank or disloyal, the Ghurka excels over his adversaries in perfidy as well as in strength. Overcome by his triumphs, the conqueror even covets Tibet.

The plunder of hoarded treasures in the convents, promises an honest reward to the crusade of Brahmanism against Heresy. But China, the queen sovereign and protectress of the lamas is alarmed at the unknown neighbour just sprung up; she takes energetic measures, gathers an army, drives the Ghurkas out of Tibet and pursues them in their own territory; then exhausted by her effort and satisfied at the lesson she had taught, is contented to impose on the vanquished a submission of mere form. Nepal enrolled as a vassal state, undertakes to solemnly despatch every five years, a tribute to the Emperor who is the incarnation of the divine manjucris.

Reminded of their exact strength, the Ghurkas avoided open rupture henceforth with her two powerful neighbours, the Chinese at the North, and the English of the South; they now rely on their diplomacy and ruse to compensate for the weakness of their forces, and dreams to embroil China and Great Britain in a struggle annihilating both. Disgusted with the Ghurka's bad faith and intrigue, England declares war on her in 1814; two years of campaign equally honorable and glorious to both, and also equally marked out by disastrous failures, brought the British to the gates of Nepal. The treaty signed at Segowlie in 1816 outlines between the two states a well defined frontier and regulates Nepal's relations abroad; Nepal undertakes not to take in her employment any British Subject, or any Subject from a European or American state without the consent of the British Government; a representative of the British Government had to reside near the Nepalese court.

In order to obtain these moderate concessions on the one hand and to abide by them, on the other, English and Ghurkas fought a murderous and disastrous war, with the same obstinacy, for a period of two years. England

on account of her trade wished to open out the road of central Asia which Taveriner had foreseen; the Ghurkas were in no way less determined to do away with strangers. An unfortunate incident had from the very start awakend the Ghurkas' suspicions; while they were pursuing their conquest of Nepal, the English, called to help, by the Mallas, attempted a military diversion; but the climate of the Terrai and the difficulty of the mountains compelled them to beat a retreat. Prithvi Narayan as monarch of his country hastened to expel the christian missionaries and the Hindu tradesmen who could have provoked an English intervention. However, in 1792, when the Chinese invasion threatened the Ghurkas in their very capital, the successors of Prithvi Narayan searched for help from the English side, and, to entice them, they proposed to negotiate with them a treaty of commerce; then, alarmed at the step undertaken which threatened the integrity of their independence, they hastened to conclude peace with China. Colonel Kirkpatrick the Company's envoy arrived too late in Nepal; He was received with scornful indifference, and withdrew from the place after a sojourn of two months. He brought back a magnificent collection of notes on the country's geography, history, antiquities religion, agriculture, commerce and institutions, which notes later on written down by a stranger's hand, were published in 1811.

Kirkpatrick inaugurated in Nepal, a new phase of European Expansion. Apostleship zeal had at first brought in to the Himalayas who were solely occupied in preaching and the missionaries extending their doctrine which was hidden from profane curiosity Modern politics takes footing in Nepal with kirkpatrick and is inspired by the commercial ambition and the spirit of enterprise ennobled, and made prolific by the co-operation of all the human knowledge and skill. In 1802, the English attempted at finding new circumstances to enable

them to install a resident in Nepal; the attempt fails again but it managed to last a year; Hamilton who accompanied the resident, took up again and extended the researches of kirkpatrick; his relation published in 1818 throws a new light on the country so little known. In short, after the treaty of 1816, the British residentship is definitely established; from 1820 Hodgson is appointed. During a career of twenty five years, which career is entirely developed in Nepal, Brian Houghton Hodgson, explores with the same pleasure, the same divination, the same patience; he is a grammarian geographer othnographer geologist, botanist, zoologist, archaeologist, jurist, philosopher, theologian; everywhere he constitutes, everywhere he surpasses in landable deeds. French Indianism cannot forget that without the discovered materials by Hodgson and generously placed at the service of erudition, the great and learned Burunouf would not have composed his admirable introduction to the history of Indian Buddhism. The name of Hodgson remains indisselubly found with the science of Nepal. Recently only (1877) a doctor of the embassy, Dr. Wright, in perpetuating the noble tradition of British officials at the service of India, has enriched the library of Cambridge with a treasure of ancient manuscripts, especially Buddhistic, and has made the local chronicle, the Vansavali easily accessible to learned Europeans, by en English translation.

The conditions of the treaty of Segowlie, in accordange with the prudent distrust of the Ghurkas, reserved almost Exclusively to the personnel of the British residence, the study of Nepal on the soil itself. Apart from the Resident, his assistant and the doctor, no European was allowed to enter Nepal and even less to settle down there. Besides, the Resident himself is compelled to abide by certain unpleasent conditions in life; he lives, outside the town and at a distance from the capital,

in an enclosure reserved for him, under the protection of a company of British sepoys, and under the surveillance of a Nepalese outpost deputed to prevent the access of all natives not in possession of a permit from the Darbar; his ramblings always under the surveillance and protection of a Ghurka soldier, are confined to the boundary of the valley; his official relations with the Darbar were limited to a periodical exchange of ceremonial visits and to the discussion of current affairs.

Outside these official guests, admitted and suffered against one's will, a few rare privileged, who were fortunate not to intimidate the susceptibilities either of the English nor of the Ghurkas, obtained a temporary permit of sojourn. It is especially on scientific men that his honorable advantage falls. "The tradesman, says a Ghurka proverb, brings the Bible, the Bible brings the bayonet" The great European power and the small Asiatic kingdom come to understand and proclaim the neutrality of science, which belongs to the whole of humanity, Englishmen, Russians, German, Frenchmen were authorised to study or to undertake researches on Nepalese territory, of ancient monuments which the climate of the mountains and the political or religious institutions of the country had preserved against all other causes of destruction that raged in India proper. As early as six years ago, the Ghurka's government gave a new proof of the kind interest she was turning towards science, by authorising in the Terai, archaeological investigations which led to the discovery of Kapilavastu, the ancient cradle of Buddha.

These individual concessions, always granted knowingly after a minute enquiry and controlled by a strict surveillance, did not infringe on the principle of deliberate isolation which the Ghurka government followed with secular fidelity. Since the double test of the Chinese war and the English war, the Ghurkas acquainted with their real strength, mapped out them-

selves as a programme to maintain the independence of their country and to reserve themselves for a more favourable future. They did not relinquish the thought of conquering Tibet, which the great war of 1856 testifies; As conquerors of Tibet, they obtained more from her, than they had lost in the war against the English; following the example of European nations in the far East, they exacted a concession of territory from Lhasa and installed a diplomatic agent entrusted to represent the interests of Nepalese residents, as well as to take notice of local affairs and intrigues. On the side of India, one can guess their underhanded machinations against the British power, but they were not betrayed; In 1857 when the mutiny of the sepoys threatened the fall of the British regime, they placed at the service of the Governor-General nearly ten thousand fighting men who contributed towards quelling the rebellion. Their loyalty or at least their clear foresight, earned them for payment several of the rich districts of the Terai, which they had lost in 1815.

It is particularly within their frontiers since the conquest that they spent their energy. The organisation of a new empire had taken up the greater portion of it; the intrigues of the palace had consumed the rest. By virtue of an inexorable law which weighs on the Asiatic dynasties, the heirs of Prithvi Narayan, are connected more to pathology than to history; they are degenerates of various types, nervous, irritable, sanguinary impulsive, alcoholic, erotic and idiots; a long series of minorities, leaves the child king in the dreadful hands of an uncle of a mother, or of a minister jealous of the throne and interested in prolonging the child's complete exhaustion, by precocious debaucheries. The idle king becomes the mayor of the palace. Two tribes, the Thapas and the pandeys have fought for the real authority; both showed worthy signs of exercising it. Damodar pandey and his father Amar Singh are reckoned amongst the military glories of the Ghurkas, with

whom however, bravery is a commonplace thing. Since the beginning of the XIXth. century the Thapas had succeeded in maintaining the power almost uninterruptedly. Bhim Sen (Bhimasena) supports himself for thirty years in the functions of prime minister; having suddenly fallen in disgrace, he was thrown in irons and cut his own throat in prison. His nephew, Jang Bahadur, is much more fortunate; he is the hero of modern Nepal, the ideal of the new-mannered Gurkhas; the literature and the press have popularized his adventures and prowesses, even in the west. Brave as much as cunning with a quick eye, a mind of acute discernment, always on his guard and master of himself, Expert in the ways of men and beasts, hunter without rival of games, matchless rider, he lulls the adversary to sleep or disconcerts him, strikes without scruple, the derisive stroke and faces the enemy everywhere at the same time. If necessary, he pirouettes on horse-back on a plank over an abyss, he spends a day hanging with his shriveled nails to the wall of a well, follows the tiger in the tall grasses, strikes down with a weapon shot, his competitors in power, or delivers them to be slaughtered by a frantic soldiery. He fears not to wound the prejudices of the caste so rigorous with the Gurkas, or to leave a covered post, vacant; he travels to Europe, is "the lion of the London season and of the Paris season and returns to Nepal with his prestige doubled. By prudence, he does not usurp the throne; he is prime minister, dictator; he confers on himself the title of maharaja, plays the comedy of abdication to test his associates and attendants and to recognize his forces, he re-appears more powerful than ever. After him the dictatorship evades his direct descendants and passes to nephews, by a bloody family drama. The actual prime-minister, Chandra Sham Sher Jang Rana Bahadur, succeeded his two brothers Bir Sham Sher and Deva Sham Sher, one dead and the other deposed. He bears the titles of maharaja, prime-minister and marshal of Nepal. The king,

Prithvi Vira Vikrama Shah bears the title of Adhiraja (Vulgarly. Dhiraj); he lives confined in his palace, given up to women and to drink, exhibited like an unconscious doll on days of great ceremony.

This despotic administration which concentrates all the powers in the hands of the maharaja, perfects and rectifies itself by a singular institution in which is manifested the old feudal spirit. All the expenses of the state, from the maharaja to the humblest are borne annually. Each autumn, a commission designated by the king, revises the list of all employments, expels those who are incapable, the indigene, the suspicious, provides for all the posts, disbands the class and chooses amongst the Ghurka candidates, soldiers called out to serve in the army. The Ghurkas as a matter of fact by taste and dignity allow the subdued Nevars to follow other professions. He is only born to carry arms and to fulfil the duties of the state. His most modest ambition is to receive as a relief one of the morsels of ground (or soil) which the state concedes to the soldiers in its service. To satisfy so many desperate cravings, the Ghurka Darbar has had to recourse to the ingenuous proceeding of annual rotation which curbs the spirit of those in earnest and allows to exclude others. The red seal of the king is essential to invest the maharaja as well as the ordinary soldier in order to defend his power constantly threatened, and to prevent a blind caprice of the royal ogre, the maharaja takes pains to furnish at his leisure, the house of the sovereign, gives him his creatures for servants, his daughters or his kinswomen for wives. But to betide him, if a rival of the seraglio baffles his calculations or loosens from his interest at the critical hour of the yearly signature, the favourite of the king.

In spite of the revolutions in the palace and of the struggles of different parties, the Ghurka

ka administration uninterruptedly pursues the work of re-organisation. The conquest creates a difficult situation. On the heights, a Himalayan tribe, of Indian mixture is brought into existence by the Brahmans who had taught it their dialect, inculcated their prejudices, prescribed their institutions, their ceremonies and their divinities and that is well adapted to the use of arms, but incapable of existing otherwise than by war and raids; below we find a nation already formed, an amalgamation of races foreign to India, born in the same cradle in the mountains of the north, hardly penetrated by the Brahman, that passes as the conversion of a spurious Hinduism, but is still faithful to the beliefs, laws, and practices of Indian Buddhism, which India had already renounced. Initiated by the monks and learned men to the literary language of Aryan India, Sanskrit, the race is connected in their true custom to idioms of Tibetan origin charmed by the arts of peace, of culture, of pomps and religious festivals, but is ungovernable and restless by that love for freedom and frivolity. The Ghurka's iron hand suppressed every opposition. The new monarch had no occasion to quell any revolt. Examples of drastic nature taught the vanquished, from one end of the kingdom to the other, the fundamental laws of the Ghurka administration. In the political domain they were taught servile obedience to the Ghurkas who were the sole holders of power and in the social domain, the respect of the cow and of the Brahman; sacred and intangible creatures. The coarse shepherds of the Alps who drove their cattle with the whip, and the Nevars of the valley who loved to relish the succulent viands, were taught to honour the symbol of the victorious orthodox. Buddhism wavering between two titles, as a doctrine of heresy, and as the notional church of the Nevars, lost its influence and its privileges. The convents and the temples found themselves denuded of their properties, deprived of accumulated donations

that served as a means of subsistence; impoverished and neglected, they deteriorated; the Buddhist Pundits compelled to subsist from the alms of a community reduced the indigence, stopped recruiting and instructing students. Public favours which were reserved to the faithful of Hinduism, brought to the Brahmanic gods more adherents, which predication would not have sufficed to convert. The dialect of the Nevars and their congeners of other valleys had to give place to the Ghurka language, the khas or parbatiya, born like the Ghurkas themselves from a union between the Himalayan and Hindu elements, gradually invaded by the Hindi of the plains to the detriment of the indigenes of the soil, and hawked about in most secluded districts by the administration and the army. The Nevar corporations already regulated according to the Hindu way by the consellers of Jaya Sthiti, the Malla, were assimilated to the orthodox castes and subdued like them to the jurisdiction of a Brahmanic priest.

The victory of the Ghurkas completed the annexation of Nepal to Brahmanic India. Populated by races anti-Aryan, converted and civilised by the Indian Buddhism, conquered and swallowed up by Hindu Brahmanism, Nepal had already travelled through the first three stages of Indian history. Having been included rather late in the cycle of events, she has yet to know the last phase, which she foresees from now, but where India is busily engaged from a long time: The struggle against Islam and the intrusion of Europe. It is there exactly the original feature and particular interest of Nepal's history. Ceylon and India stopped in the stage of Buddhism and made to devote by the preponderating forces of foreign influences; Kashmere is India herself. Nepal is India in the course of her making on a territory as conveniently restricted as a laboratory, the observer can easily encompass the chain of facts which modern India has drawn

from primitive India. He understands by what means a handful of Aryans, carried by an adventurous march to the Punjab, and come in contact with a multitude of barbarians, managed to subjugate her, frame her, make her docile, organise her and propagate her dialect with such success that three fourths of India speak today Aryan Idioms; one amongst them, Hindi, is spoken by more than eighty million men. Religion has played the essential part in this progress. Brahmanism first protected the Aryan integrity, and allowed full play to the heretics. The magical formalism of the worship had been instrumental from the beginning in the birth of a sacerdotal caste in which hereditary notions were handed over from the fathers to the sons. The growing pretensions of the clergy were the cause of the feudal aristocracy uniting for the defence of their threatened power. Imitation worked the rest. A net-work of castes came into existence consecrated by the priest, and secluded by the barrier of ritual sanctity.

However, on the confines of the elected group, a bold interloper destroyed the dream of solitude; adventurers, spongers, pirates, pioneers came to mingle their ideas of emancipation and to connect by an unreliable chain the Aryan to the aborigines. Towards the VIth century before the Christian era, when Brahmanic expansion had already penetrated by more than half the valley of the Ganges, the Himalayan "Piemont" skirted the orthodoxical communities, it is there that Buddha and Jina conceived the magnanimous and bold dream of a doctrine of salvation extended to all men, irrespective of birth. Their predication received with enthusiasm by ardent disciples, raised up missionaries impatient to enlighten and deliver souls. The political revolutions of India served their zeal. Powerful growing states, called for enlarged religious bodies. After the passage of Alexander, the first emperor who reigned over the whole of India, was also the first patron of Buddhism. Pursuing her career, the Church of Buddha

spreads beyond India, catechises the Greeks of Bactriana, enrolls a Menander in the lists of her Saints swallows up the Scythians who came down the Pamir, preaches to these coarse plunderers words of kindness and charity, wins to her interests their king Kaniska who opens central Asia to the work of their missionaries; China, Korea, Japan, Indo-China, the Indian archipelago and Tibet, listen to the sublime truths from India and strengthen their faith with the holy scriptures and legends which India sends them.

But while she triumphs outside India, Buddhism with draws, falls back in retreat and expires in India. Brahmanism surges up behind the off spring whom she disavows and benefits by the legacy. She claimed those common gods whom Buddhism had borrowed from her, for the secular prestige of her caste; depository of supernatural sagacity and power. Lords, chieftains, kings, acclaim her with good-will, almost with favour; she serves the purpose of a counterpoise and of a safeguard. The convents of Buddhism, continuously enriched by pious donations, powerful by their long existence, their stability, their hierarchy, masters of the souls as well as of vast domains, hold in check the lay authority and threaten to annihilate her. The Brahman is less dreadful. He has not contracted any vow or engagement; he is free, independent, isolated; he mingles with the century, makes no new orders, and does not live in community. But this solitary being happens to be a patient workman, and sure of a methodical task which goes through centuries. Brought into existence by a long past of ancestors, all subdued to the same doctrines and practices, modelled by a traditional education, well behaved in his social ways by the prohibitions of wine and women, the Brahman, incarnates an ideal reform. He does not dream of human fraternity, or of universal salvation; he only aims at supremacy, and to gain that end he needs the system of castes, his person is holy

in unison with his institutions, his belief, his doctrines.

Driven by chance or by the necessities of life on the territory of the barbarians, the Brahman at the very first, consecrates his new domain. The doctors of orthodoxy have vainly attempted to outline, like a moat around the Aryans, narrow confines wherein are enclosed the ritual sanctity; the frontiers have always advanced from the Punjab to the Ganges, from the Ganges to the sea; the Aryan country ended up by mingling with India. Modern jurists do not exact, as a guarantee but the presence of the black antelope in liberty; and the black antelope still awaits the Hindu-Buffon to come and determine her. Complaisant zoology allows a wide scope to the casoists. In 1854, in the thick of a war against Tibet, [the official interpreter of Brahmanic law in Nepal, had to declare himself, owing to state reasons on the nature of the yak, authentic ox, first cousin to the cow, 'bos grunniens' of naturalists; he boldly arraigns him in the family of the stags, the now hungry Ghurka soldiers could without scruple kill the animal and nourish themselves.

The territory annexed, religion follows. The Brahmanic pantheon, always accessible, willingly welcomes luke warm guests, some of them, less patronised are eager for a venturesome adoption and swell the congested ranks of the divine plebs; others, better favoured, are keen, though not wholehearted, in the higher divinities: The stone, the fetich, the image, consecrated by the local religion are recognised as the incarnation of the Hindu deities and their legends piously recollected serve the purpose of enriching the literature of edifying accounts and miracles. The pilgrims are moved to restlessness; merchants, quacks, beggars, vagabonds, and ascetics who incessantly thread across India in quest of fairs, of credulous souls, of alms or of grave meditations, are all imbedded

in orthodoxy and ever ready to scandalise one another in the infringement of the good rules. Stirred up by more frequent interchanges, the imitation of India now works up rapidly; the indigenous dynasty does not content itself with suspicious ancestries which once satisfied its pride. It attempts to equalise itself with the princes of India. The Brahman, always conciliating, knows how to graft the extrinsic branch on the old stump of the races of the sun and moon. He only requests as the price of this enhancement, a faithful obedience to the laws of the caste. A slave to its greatness and ambitious also to consecrate it by worthy alliances, the royal family extends the pledges of its orthodoxy, and secludes itself behind approved barriers. Having commenced from the top, the reform spreads from place to place, the Brahman, realist, plays the winning game on the selfish sentiments of humanity and on its pride, disdain and taste of distinctions. Group by group, the community divides itself into castes, at first professional and satisfied by an hierarchy which allows everybody to disdain inferiors. The struggle is won from the very start. From the day that the gods of Nepal demanded the rights and privileges of the Brahmans, they abdicated and thereby exposed themselves to a downfall; the divine right, does not entertain the idea of exchange, if the Brahmans were admitted to reign, they must reign alone. The event justified it. The western countries haunted by their prejudices and the memories of their history, have been contented in general, to explain the annihilation of Indian Buddhism by imaginary persecutions. No document or positive proof had ever attested to these, Whether in their interested rivalry, the priests and the Brahmans have had recourse to violence, one can hardly equitably doubt, and the legends of the two countries do not attempt at an elucidation. Often in their accounts, a controversy of doctrine, ends up in the expulsion of the vanquished. But these incidents have never taken up the character of a me tho-

dical and systematic persecution. The Hindu mind opposed itself to it. The political state would not have permitted it. Sufferance or fanaticism are conceptions unknown to India. The Hindu believes readily in all the gods; his faith, like his reason, is large enough to embrace the contradictions. He has his preferences but his prudence treats with caution those divinities he ignores and takes care not to loosen them against him. Besides, India indefinitely sliced up about the xth. century, lent herself less than ever to common measures against a church. The conscious will that we love to consider by pride, as the means of history, only played a moderate roll in the catastrophe of Buddhism. Buddhism disappeared from India when she lost, her right to exist. Her convents and her missions had penetrated, bound the whole of India, and had her initiated to unity by faith and by the clergy: They were able to create an universal community, the church of the four cardinal points. Their work stopped there, their discipline, uniform and severe, could only suit the monks; the lay society too supple and too diverse, escaped them. To prepare a new progress, Brahmanism was essential, undulating like the Hindu world and liable to all transformations, unchangeable only in a social Doctrine alike Buddhism in her monastic Doctrine. It was through her that India, was to realise her social unity. Buddhism it is true could still render to India another service on the eve of a new invasion. For ten centuries she had the glory to stop, soften, appear and to absorb the barbarous conquerors. But the new-comers did not resemble their predecessors. They came neither from the elegant Hellenism, nor from the credulous Steppes. They came out from fierce Arabia, soldiers of jealous god who would not suffer a rival: At the first shock, Persia and Turkestan alarmed had abjured their old beliefs; the advanced posts of Buddhism had capitulated, the convents were set fire to, the monks, were dispersed, and the church of Buddhism had

vanished. In order to resist this furious onslaught Brahmanism needed a stronger bulwark. The rage of Islam spent itself in vain against an unseizable adversary, whose chief was without cohesion and invincible by His army's very dispersion. She was even going to serve them, increase their prestige and their strength. The hatred of the stranger in which exalts the pride of the Brahman was about to awaken India to a conscience, obscure and rudimentary, it is true, of the national unity.

Already under the auspices of Aryan religions, learned India had realised linguistic unity; Sanscrit, drawn from Aryan dialects, elaborated by grammatical schools, reserved at first to Brahmanic orthodoxy, had been adopted or usurped by all the churches, and extended to ordinary literature had imposed itself to the chancelleries as an official language and had created in the chaos of dialects in India an universal means of communication between learned men and "honest people". Of a firm determination and of a delicate art, it had propagated in all the communities of India a common idea of reasoning, sentiment and of beauty. Side by side with the sanscrit of other tongues, sprung out like it from the same Aryan stump, but which did not pretend like it to "perfection" had proceeded leisurely amongst the people, uprooted the idioms of the greater half of India and nourished of the Aryan sap, but born and grown up on the Hindu soil, they were naturally adapted to serve as a connecting link between the victorious Aryans and the subdued Indigenes.

In this manner, the Aryan talent manifests itself, in the history of Nepal as well as in the general history of India, as the essential means for progress, and Brahmanism as the most authentic and most accomplished medium of Aryan talent. But its work is hardly completed when the Brahman sees the growth of

competitors who pretend to take it up and spread it. Other Aryans, disowned and forgotten parents, arrive from the extreme points of the West, bearing as a sign of recognition, after a separation so often secular, their language, first brother of Sanscrit, and their feverish thirst for conquest. Impassive India has already seen them quarrel amongst themselves with arms the right to spread the benefits of their civilisation. Nepal who is behindhand escapes them once again, but she has not long to await them. The triumph of Brahmanism foretells the near crisis. Already the English are installed as protectors more than as neighbours on the frontiers of the south, east and west. To act as a counterpoise to them, to Ghurkha relied on suzerain China, whom he thought all powerful. Were not the ambassadors sent every five years to Peking travelling for nine months without interruption on the domains of the son of Heaven? But the latter events, closely followed at Kathmandu, have shaken China's prestige. The decadence of the central Empire seems to open to Nepal the coveted route to Lhasa, as an outlet to allow the flow of the congestion of her military forces. As a soldier and nothing else but a soldier the Ghurka conqueror suffocates in his circle of mountains. The insufficient quantity of soil does not suffice to the maintenance of a population entirely agricultural, and always armed on a war footing. As a devoted subject to his motherland clarsighted and as a friend of Nepal, the Englishman, Hodgen preoccupied himself from 1830 with a threatening danger to British peace; he proposed as a remedy to recruit the Ghurka soldiers as mercenaries to the service of India; his advices given attention to, have rewarded the English with these magnificent regiments who alone can compete with the bravery and endurance of the formidable sikha. But a contingent of hardly 15000/ men recruited under the British banner, does not relieve entirely the troubles of Nepal and prepares perhaps another

er peril! Whatever was the result of the tested loyalism of these mercenaries they remained, like the swiss of old, faithful firstly to their motherland. They returned to their country, after the term of their service, drilled into the discipline and tactics of Europe, having learnt to read, write calculate, measure and build embankments, and re-inforced the Ghurka troupes with a precious supplement.

With them, with the armament and the munitions, which the Nepalese arsenals were unceasingly turning out, the plunder of Tibet would not have been impossible, in spite of the formidable impediments which nature had erected.

But in default of the weakened Chinese, another power, Russia, Who re-builds the Empire of the Moguls, undertakes the responsibility of watching over the Great-Lama. The old division of the two Buddhist Churches. re-appears in Asia, manifested by the action of European politics: to the South, England, mistress of ceylon, holds Burma under her direct authority, siam under her influence, the two great annexes of the church grew dim; to the North, Russia reunites under her domination or protection, the dispersed fragments of the church of Lama, connected with the Grand Vehicle; already, under the Mogul tents the great Catherine passes for the incarnation of the goddess Tara, and the czar for a Bodhisattra. The least movement of the Ghurkas shakes up Russia and may provoke in Tibet an intervention which England wishes to avoid at all cost. Tibet penetrated by the Russians, England would be compelled to lay hands immediately on Nepal, to safeguard at least her frontier. Would she outrun the events, give in to the pressing invitations of the exalted Jingo party and yield to the temptation of enlarging by a conquest, her Hindu domain? One is allowed to doubt. Nepal has not the means to pay for conquest: "The Game was not worth the candle"

expressly declares a man familiar with Nepal—Dr Wright. The country only derives importance by her mountain passes as the outlet for direct commerce between Hindustan and central Asia; but the business of Tibet, poor and scattered, does promise but the meagre profits to the tradesmen, and the day has not yet arrived when European Industry will exploit the precious metals buried in Tibetan soil.

The independence of Nepal is thus partly connected to the ingenities of European politics; she partly relies on the discretion of her Governments. The kindred of the sham shah who holds the real power, has remained staunch to the traditions of Jang Bahadur and of Bhimsen Thapa; it has known how to preserve the integrity of the country by an attitude of prudent reserve, waived aside the stranger without repulsing him brutally, insulated the kingdom without isolating itself. The actual Maharaja, like his elders, reads and talks English, receives the newspapers which is brought to him from the British frontier by a courier, comes down to India whenever necessary and pays visit to the viceroy. He takes an interest in European affairs, speaks without embarrassment of the Emperor William and of the revenge. Conscious of his duties as chief and as a Ghurka, he spends days on the manoeuvring grounds in drilling his troops, administers justice, and controls the administration. But a palace tragedy, of the nature Nepal had so often seen, can suddenly bring into power those extremely in favour of isolation, hostile to people as well as to ideas from outside, stubborn with unruly pride and insulting disdain. A war outside, a revolution inside and it is perhaps the undoing of the last independent state of India.

Having come to Nepal in 1898 in the research of antiquities and of Buddhist manuscripts, I immediately felt the unexpected interest of the drama which was being enacted. Familiar by my studies with India's past, I thought I

could watch her resuscitate in this duel of races, languages and religion which a lost valley in the Himalaya shelters. Before the uncertain hour of probable denouement, I thought it opportune to set up in a common narrative, the singular destinies of this corner of earth wherein is re-enacted on a reduced scale the general destinies of India. The history of Nepal thus conceived appears to me less as a local monography than as a prelude to that general history of India which discourages the best-willed, by its compass and its deficiencies but which would be unjust and grievous to neglect. To see the problems that the study of a simple valley lays out and partly resolves, one guesses that which is promised in the study of a vast country, populated by two hundred million men, cradle of a primitive civilization, soil of the election of a religious sentiment and coveted treasure by all the conquerors. I broached my task as a philologist, by the examination of inscriptions, texts and manuscripts, but I would have failed in my purpose, had I not looked up into the past, right on to the present, which is the logical and real prolongation: the division of a mass of time in successive ancient, modern contemporary periods, however arbitrary it may be can in certain cases justify itself by practical or pedagogical reasons. On the Indian domain where literature has by aesthetical principles preserved so few memories of the real life the isolated past from the present remains an undecipherable enigma. I had to look up the works of my predecessors; the names of Kirkpatrick, Hamilton, Hodgson, Oldfield wright, Bendall will appear nearly on every page, my book is in its greater whole a methodical index of their works, completed, by new discoveries and controlled in a weak measure by my own observations. Two months spent in Nepal in the company of indigenous pundits have given me the sensation of the local life, but I have not been able to undertake there and then a deep enquiry. Admitted as an archaeologist to the country I would have abused the hospitality

in outgoing the programme agreed on, and fault would not have been excusable profit; I have spoken of the insurmountable difficulties which paralyzed the much awakened curiosity of the traveller. It pleased me to reciprocate by a loyalty without reserve to well-wishing confidence of the Darbar. My diary of the voyage which I have reproduced in its slightly defaced form, will complete perhaps, like a succession of instantaneous photographs, the impression which slowly appear from the accumulated

materials. The reader will grasp, noted here and there, the minute details of the Nepalese life, as it appears to the philologist in mission, whose profession allows him to frequent particularly princes and pundits, stopped on the threshold of society, by the formidable prejudices of the caste, but who from outside, observes with passion, the march past of men and things, alike the animated commentary of forgotten ages.

to be Continued