

Nepal on the Eve of the Rana Ascendancy

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Part of the material in this paper originally was collected to supplement the very brief discussion of "Pre-Rana Administration" in Satish Kumar's Rana Polity in Nepal¹. As background for my own study on the Rana administration, I intended only to indicate the considerable number of positions within the administrative hierarchy that Kumar failed to mention.

However, after reading selections from the private papers of Brian Hodgson, British Resident in Nepal from 1831 to 1843, I realized that a more complete presentation of the administration in Nepal at that time could be offered. For with the information Hodgson provides, it is possible to identify many of the persons in the higher positions of the administration then, and to learn something of their duties. Perhaps more interestingly, we find a rather detailed, and surely the only available account in English, of the major governmental offices in Kathmandu in the early 1840s. Materials drawn from the Hodgson papers form the substance of this paper.

To "set the stage", administratively, for the advent of the Rana period, Satish Kumar relies upon a "pajani" list (giving the names of those appointed to government positions) for 1845 and by which he claims to present "the hierarchy of officers and servants in the administration"². Yet it is apparent that either the list he is using (contained in a "vamsavali" or a kind of genealogical history) is not complete, or that he has not given it in its entirety. It probably is a pajani list only for the highest officials of the state, the "Bharadars", but there were many other ranks of administrative officials in the government at that time which he does not mention.

As for the Bharadars, we should note that there is disagreement among writers on the earlier Shah dynasty period (say until 1800) as to what officials and how many officials formed this group. Kirkpatrick³ and Hamilton⁴ set the number at twelve or thirteen, though they agree only that four of them were sardars. Rose and Joshi⁵ list thirteen ranks whose incumbents could have totalled twenty-five to thirty persons. Nevertheless, one interesting feature of Hodgson's 1836 list⁶ is that he shows eighteen Bharadars in seven ranks, five of the eighteen being palace functionaries. In all likelihood the personality of the official was as significant in determining his role and influence at the Court as the rank he held. Hodgson's list suggests that until 1836 the collectivity known as the Bharadar was still small in size, even though its standing vis-a-vis the Prime Minister, Bhimshen Thapa was less that it had been under the earlier Shah kings.

Hodgson notes, however, that between 1838 and 1843 the number of Bharadars increased from eighteen to forty-nine⁷. By the latter year, six priests were listed as Bharadars, and nineteen other officials were brought in as well. Altogether, one hundred and twenty-six officers, excluding the lowest grades of clerks and menial workers, formed the nucleus of government servants in 1843. As this was the period just after the downfall of Bhimshen Thapa, the resurgence of factional Court politics, in which various cliques vied for control of the administration, probably accounts for the sudden increase in the number of officials.

Before we consider who these high officials were, it is well to note that there are some discrepancies among the documents to which I am referring. While the particulars about a few specific individuals may not be clear, they do not alter the general observations and conclusions that emerge from these lists. One such list which Hodgson has compiled is of "the principal persons at the Court of Nepal, 1843". Those who had no government assignments at the time but who still were considered important personages appear on this list. A roll of the Bharadars and other officers in 1843, described as a "complete list of the non-military functionaries of Government at the Capital"⁸ is also referred to in this article. A third list, bearing no title but written in Nepali, would seem, by its detailed nature, to be a copy of an official document⁹. It also dates from 1843 and appears to be the document from which Hodgson derived much of his information. This Nepali copy gives the names, ages, and assignments, if any, of persons presented according to their "thar" (surname).

Who were these Bharadars and what were their roles in the administration at this time? It is well-known that the small number of high officials was drawn from prominent families who formed the Court of Nepal. Some of the particulars in Hodgson's papers substantiate this, but it may be worthwhile to present in a more detailed manner some of this information regarding the Bharadars.

Table I shows the highest or "pagadi" (type of head-dress) positions within the government; the numbers within each rank, and the number of officials classified by "thar" (designating lineages within a caste). In some cases, persons with the same thar name were quite closely related. But persons having the same thar name are not necessarily related, and some surnames are common to 2 or more castes as well.

That the great majority of officials were Brahmans or Chhetris comes as no surprise. The ranks of Kaji and Sardar were fairly widely shared among the families so represented in the government, but the other posts (which had fewer occupants) were more confined to members of one or two thars. It is interesting that fourteen of the fifty high-ranked people were palace functionaries (the dwares) or those who performed services for the royal family and possibly for the prime minister (the gurus and dasas). A few years later,

TABLE 1
TOP 50 OFFICIALS BY RANK AND CASTE, 1843

Caste	Name	Rank									
		Guru	Chautariya	Kaji	Sardar	Kapardar	Khajanchi	Dada	Dwaria	Totals	
BRAHMANS	Adhikari	6	5	12	17	1	1	4	4	50	
	Aryjal				1		1			1	
	Baidya				1					1	
	Misra	2								2	
	Paudyal	4								4	
	Adhikari				1					1	
CHHETRIS	Basniat			2	2					4	
	Boghti				1					1	
	Karki				1					1	
	Khatri				1					1	
	Kuwar			1						1	
	Pandey			4		1				5	
	Sahi			2	1					3	
	Shah		5	1	3					9	
	Thapa			1	2			1		4	
	Other				1					1	
MAGARS	Rana			1				1		2	
	Khawas				2					2	
	Unknown							2	4	6	

TABLE IITHE PRINCIPLE PERSONS AT THE COURT OF NEPAL¹

(1843)

<u>Caste</u>	<u>Thar</u>	<u>of Persons</u>	<u>Totals</u>
<u>BRAHMAN</u>	Adhikari	1	
	Aryjal	2	
	Baidya	1	
	Misra	2	
	Paudyal	6	12
<u>THAKURI</u> (<u>CHHETRI</u>)	Sahi	4	
	Shah	14	
	Other	1	19
<u>CHHETRI</u> (others)	Adhikari	1	
	Basniat	12	
	Bhandari	2	
	Boghti	1	
	Karki	2	
	Khatri	1	
	Kuwar	2	
	Mahat	1	
	Pandey	15	
	Pant	3	
	Thapa	12	52
MAGAR	Rana	7	7
KHAWAS ²		4	4
Others	Not ascertainable	6	6

1. Includes the 50 pagadi officials

2. Offspring of a slave woman; illegitimate offspring.

the chobdars, jyotishis, and jetha-budha (five persons, in all) were also numbered among those who formed the group of the state's most important officials, and they were not "administrators" either, but were connected with the royal household.

Hodgson has listed fifty pagadi officials or members of the Bharadar. If we examine the other two lists and assume that they do enumerate the most important and influential figures at the Court, we find eighty-five names. As fifteen of the pagadi officials are not shown on the list of "principal persons", adding their names give us an even one hundred individuals who occupied high ranks and had specific assignments; who enjoyed titles to a rank but had no particular duty that year; or who were out of service altogether but were recognized as having some claim to office or priority in appointment should the services of additional persons be required by the Government. In fact, the records show that only fifty-six of these one hundred "V.I.P.s" held specific positions of authority within the Government that year. Thus not all who were prominent in the life of the Court would hold administrative positions (or be in active military service) in any one year, but those who were appointed to civil or military duties mostly came from families who participated in court life. Table II presents these one hundred persons.

A number of these officials had military regiments attached to them, and they controlled the appointment and dismissal of these troops¹⁰. All of the provincial governors were also assigned troops. Later we shall see that other "companies" (of soldiers) in Kathmandu which carried out essentially non-military functions and may have included many with only a rudimentary sort of military training, were assigned to the head officials of some of the offices. It should be noted that most of the officials found in the military hierarchy and who did not have significant "civil" administrative responsibilities are excluded from our discussion. Many of those officers came from the same (especially Chhetri) families which staffed the major administrative positions given above.

Important figures at the court, however, might not hold an assignment at a given time; their status was termed "dhakre". What Rose and Joshi wrote with military personnel in mind applies equally well to the officials under consideration here.

Any officer retired from the military roll was entitled to continue to use the title he had earned while on active duty; he was regarded as having an honorary position in the administration and was, moreover, eligible for immediate recall at the government's discretion. There was little or no stigma attached to the fact that a person was "Dhakre", or off the payroll¹¹.

The number of such individuals at the Court in 1843 was considerable if Hodgson's figures are accurate. Of the fifty-one "principals" (excluding the gurus), he notes that eighteen, or more than one-third fall in the dhakre category¹². For seventeen others, their ranks are given but no specific assignments are indicated. Should vacancies occur for whatever reasons in the top positions, then, there was a supply of reserve personnel from among the same influential families waiting to assume duties whenever called.

The Names and Functions of Personnel

Satish Kumar has given fourteen posts in the administrative hierarchy of 1845 as follows: guru, purohit, minister, chautaria, kaji, kapardar, khanzanchi, sardar, captain, mir munsii, subba, dware, chobdar, and vakill¹³. The total number of officials in the above posts was approximately sixty.

In Hodgson's second list, those "entitled to bali or payment in kind as civil functionaries" for 1843, we find the following enumeration of the Bharadar positions: guru, chautaria, kaji, sardar, kappardar, khanzanchi, dada, and dware. Below these forty-nine officials were eighty-three others "below the rank of Bharadars"¹⁴. These other ranks were as follows: subba, dittha, munsii, jetha budha, maz(d)iki, khardar, mukhia, omaria, tharghar, chobdar, kotwal, bichari, arjabegi, tahvildar, jamadar, kothia, and daroga. From other materials in Hodgson's papers we find mention of these ranks or officers¹⁵: adhai, pradhan, baithake, bahidar, nausinda, bhansari, sipahi, and tahlua. Including the gurus and other priests, then, there is evidence that at least thirty-four positions within the "civilian" (as distinct from the army) hierarchy of administration were recognized just prior to the Rana period. Some details and conjectures about these ranks and the persons occupying them are presented below.

(A) Guru. Kumar states that the gurus' function "was to advise the king on matters of Hindu law and to decide cases involving explanation or interpretation of the Dharmashastra. The chief of them, traditionally called the Charmadhikar, functioned more or less as the chief judge for dealing with criminal cases"¹⁶. From other materials in the Hodgson papers, it appears that in 1843 there were eight such gurus: six of them Poudyals and two Misras (names of Brahman thars)¹⁷. A Poudyal was the Dharmadhikar; four were "mantris", and one was a "gayatri" guru.

These mantris, or ministers, were part of the "cabinet" formed by Fateh Jang Shah in 1843. A "gayatri" has been defined as "a verse from the Rgveda, in the 'gayatri' metre, to be recited mentally by every brahman at his morning and evening devotions"¹⁸. A Poudyal and a Misra were the gayatri gurus, one assigned to the Raja, the other to the heir apparent.

The second Misra priest was called the "diksche guru", or one who gave tantric mantras. After the Ranas came in power, the Pandeys became the "raj gurus" and replaced the Poudyals.

(B) Purohit. Kumar states that these priests were to "attend and perform royal ceremonials and rituals"¹⁹. Aryjals (a Brahman thar) were the purohits at this time. They also recited mantras, and depending upon their personal relationships with the authorities, they might be asked for advice in state matters as well.

(C) Chautaria. They were royal collaterals, and Kumar writes that "most of them functioned as governors of various districts"²⁰. However, at the time under consideration here, we find only one of the ten districts whose governors are listed headed by a Chautaria. Of the other Chautarias who had definite assignments besides this governor at Doti, one was a captain in Dailekh; one was stationed in a Nepalese office in Benares; one was the superintendent of the Magazine (a place for the manufacturing of arms); and one was a "minister". The Prime Minister at this time was also a Chautaria.

(D) Kaji. The Kajis, drawn from the "senior members of noble families", served as "governors...or assistant governors of a district, cashiers or treasurers, (and as head officials) in some offices"²¹. That is, kajis were assigned to high positions in different areas of government, much as the chautarias and sardars were. All might have soldiers under them as well.

These sources for 1843 indicate that men of kaji rank were "governors" in the districts of Pyuthan and Dhankuta; one was an envoy to China ("vakil"); others were placed in charge of the offices of Kumari Chowk, Kampu Dafdar Khana, the Kausi records; and Dak Chowk Dhukuti. (Descriptions of these offices are given in the next section). Another person of kaji rank was a minister.

(E) Sardar. They too undertook a variety of tasks; Kumar states they were of the nobility and "occupied civil and military offices of importance"²². Our sources place four of them in charge of the districts of Ilam, Salyan, Jumla, and Pokhara, and one at the fort at Chisapani. One was in China (perhaps as a member of the mission sent to the Emperor); one was a dittha of the courts; two were dadas (see below); and two or three were designated as "hajuria". Hajurias were "always present" with the King and served as personal attendants and body guards.

For a number of the sardars, as from some kajis and Chautarias too, no offices are given in the records. The records may be incomplete; the persons may have received temporary assignments from time to time; or they may have been in the dhakre category. These holders of the highest ranks, kajis and sardars--some of whom were chautarias--thus were employed as general administrators, often with military responsibilities as well.

(F) Kapardar. This official has been described variously as the chief of the royal household, the keeper of the King's wardrobe, and the one in charge of jewelry and other valuable stores in the palace. Hodgson called him the "comptroller of the Royal Household" and "a gentleman of rank" whose office then was known as Kot Bhandar or Kadel Chowk²³.

(G) Khanzanchi. Kumar noted that a relation of the purohits usually served as the government treasurer, and there is an Arjyal as khanzanchi in 1843. He was in charge of the Kausi (also called Kausi Tosakhana), and monies were received and issued under his authorization²⁴.

(H) Dada. There is no mention in these or other writings I have seen regarding this post. The word has been defined as "the tutor or male attendant of a nobleman's child"²⁵. If we remember that in earlier days tutoring the children of noble families involved instruction in horsemanship, the use of weapons, perhaps wrestling and other athletic skills, and, on the educational side, an introduction to the genealogy, traditions, and duties of the ruling and warrior clans, as well as the basics of reading and writing, it is not surprising to find persons of sardar rank appointed as dadas. For theirs was an important task: to supervise the kind of "education" that youngsters of the nobility would require in preparation for the leadership roles they were destined to occupy in this type of administrative system.

(I) Dwaria. At this time, dwares were probably the Palace gatekeepers. The importance of their position lay in their regulation of traffic in and out of the Palace. Possibly they were also the receivers and bearers of petitions sent in by those who did not have access to the Palace and the King. A remark of Hodgson's suggests that they were ushers who carried the gold scepters of the palace.

In another text, the dware has been described as "an official at the royal palace to collect certain levies"²⁶. Kumar calls them "royal guards"²⁷. Conceivably all of these functions could have been performed by the four dwares listed among the Bharadars in 1843. Later, women who kept an eye on internal movements within the Palace were known as dwares.

(J) Subba. From the early Shah period, Subbas served as officers in charge of district administration. According to our records, there were subbas stationed at Gorkha and Chitwan, with five others being administrators in the Terai. But men of subba rank were also assigned in the capital to the Kumari Chowk, and Kot Bhandar offices, where they were the deputies of the kaji and kapardar in charge.

(K) Dittha. They had been the judges who presided over the courts (Adalats) in Kathmandu. By the 1840s however, there were some ditthas who might not have been exclusively "judicial officers" as Kumar terms them. For example, three ditthas were at Kumari Chowk. There was a court there at this time, but a dittha as well as a subba could serve as the deputy to the kaji who headed the office of Kumari Chowk office proper²⁸. Two other ditthas helped maintain the records of the Kausi; others were placed in the Sadar Dafdar Khana, the "powder magazine", and the Hattisar, the office in charge of the royal elephants. Later on during the Rana years, there were many persons of dittha rank who had nothing to do with the courts or legal departments and clearly were not "judicial officers".

(L) Munsi. Originally, the munsi was an official who knew Persian and perhaps other languages necessary for correspondence with foreign governments. At this time there was a Bhotia Munsi in the Kausi who directed correspondence with Tibet and China²⁹. More loosely, a munsi could be a secretary or scribe.

(M) Jetha-Budha. At an earlier time the jetha-budhas, "elder statesmen, held intermittent positions as emissaries to district officials or to the courts of foreign states"³⁰. By 1843 only one remained, described by Hodgson as the "personal attendant of (the) Rajah". A few years later, we find the jetha-budha under the Kadel Chowk with three sipahis under him; his name also is linked with the "chaya kotha" or tea room³¹. By then his days of glory obviously were over.

(N) Nazdiki. This is an obscure post, but Hodgson's note that the nazdiki was a "companion" to the Raja is in agreement with the word's Persian meaning as "one who is nearby".

(O) Khardar or Kharidar. These were writers, assigned at this time to the Kausi, the Sadar Dafdar Khana, and Kumari Chowk. The kharidar of the Kausi had under him the two men who took care of the correspondence with Tibet and China, and it appears also that he supervised the work of some nausindas too³².

(P) Mukhiya. District headmen were called mukhiyas. In the central administration mukhiyas were writers. In the Kausi and the Kot Bhandar the mukhiyas kept accounts of receipts and expenditures. In Kumari Chowk each mukhiya supervised the work of the nausindas under him.

(Q) Omaria or Umrao. In earlier times Umraos served as commanders of military posts in the provinces and districts. They were local chiefs who were responsible for raising and equipping men for battle. The efforts made to establish a national army made this quasi-feudal arrangement obsolete. Only the Umrao of Banikot received recognition among the Bharadars in 1843.

(R) Tharghars. Originally the title referred "to those six chiefs of different castes (note: more properly "thars"), Aryjal, Khanal, Pande, Panth, Bohara, and Rana who assisted Dravya Shah in the conquest of Gorkha"³³. (The Ranas referred to here were Magars and not related to the Kuwars or later Shamsher Ranas). From then on persons from these six thars were considered dignitaries and assigned various duties. The tasks of the six tharghars mentioned in the 1843 documents are not given, but tharghars were often involved in the measurement of lands. A few years later, tharghars were working under the Sadar Dafdar Khana.

(S) Chobdar or Chopdar. They were royal attendants, usually Brahmans, who carried short staffs. When the King went for an outing, the chopdars would walk beside him bearing gold or silver maces, etc.

(T) Kotwal. Kotwals have been described as watchmen or "chief police officers of a town or district"³⁴. The two Hodgson mentions were probably the "police chiefs" in the Kathmandu area.

(U) Bichari. They took evidence from the parties in court cases, investigated the details of the cases, and functioned as court recorders³⁵.

(V) Arzabegi. Under the Moghal government, this was an officer appointed to receive and present petitions. In the 1840s in Nepal, an arzabegi was attached to the Adalat (court); later we find him as the superintendent of the jail. He has also been referred to as the person who announced to a condemned man his sentence and who presided over the execution³⁶.

(W) Tahvildar. A tahvildar is a cashier or treasurer. The persons on our list were assigned to the Basantpur Tahvil and to the Courts. In Kumari Chowk, the tahvildars would "receive the money brought in and pay the fees and salaries of the officials of that office"³⁷.

(X) Jamadar. Jamadars were mostly attached to the army, but they could be assigned to civilian offices. Others of military rank who might perform civilian duties included colonels, captains, subedars, laptans (lieutenants), kumbhedans, majors, hawaldars, amaldars, huddas, and sipahis. In the Kausi two jamadars supervised the work of harkaras, or menials, who carried in supplies and were sent on errands as messengers.

(Y) Kothia or Kote. Our sources state only that one kote was attached to the Hattisar and one to the Bhatgaon Magazine. They are described elsewhere as those who watch over the places where guns are stored³⁸ and as the headmen of contingents of baggage porters or collies³⁹.

(Z) Daroga. In the Moghal administration, darogas were government superintendents of departments such as artillery, intelligence and posts, etc. In Nepal they were assigned to the Hattisar and served as officials in charge of the care of teams of elephants.

(AA) Adhai. The adhai was an official in the Kot Bhandar. He dealt with the representatives of cultivators of "sera" lands which were "lands assigned for the supply of agricultural commodities to meet the requirements of the royal household"⁴⁰. Hodgson describes him as the "working superintendent" of all the lower ranking personnel in the Kot Bhandar, including the goldsmiths and jewellers employed by the Palace. The adhai was also the head storekeeper who received the supplies and money brought to the Kot Bhandar⁴¹.

(BB) Pradhan. This term was applied to several different functionaries: those who were headmen of certain communities within Kathmandu valley; and local officials who collected revenue in villages within the valley⁴². The pradhans in Hodgson's account are officials in the Kausi who have charge of a small number of sipahis. One of their tasks was to "keep the keys of the store-rooms and count and measure and weigh what comes in and goes out"⁴³.

(CC) Baithake. A "baithak" is an audience hall, state apartment, or drawing room, and servants in charge of those in the palace were called baithakes. They would also dress their masters.

(DD) Bahidar. A bahidar keeps account books or ledgers. Writers of different ranks might work as bahidars, as mukhiyas did in Kumari Chowk. Likewise, the bahidar could carry out other duties in those days. For example, the bahidars in the Sardar Dafdar Khana and the Dafdar Khana of the Khampu would sometimes go with a few soldiers to the places from where soldiers were entitled to receive grain as their pay; there they would inspect the crops to insure that the transactions were carried out properly⁴⁵.

(EE) Nausinda. They were the lowest rank of scribes. There were more personnel in this rank than in any other within the "civilian" hierarchy (and excluding the sipahis). A considerable number of them worked in the offices of registry and accounts. Nausindas registered the papers which came in and left the offices and copied letters and documents.

(FF) Bhansari. These officials were attached to the "bhansar" or offices which collected custom duties.

(GG) Sipahi. Some of the sipahis assigned to the offices in the 1840s were not "soldiers", although those who stood guard at the banks and treasuries undoubtedly were affiliated with the police or military. Such guards or watchmen were deployed at the Kausi, Kumari Chowk, and surely at the Tahvils and other offices

as well. More generally, sipahis were "piuns", or unskilled laborers who could be utilized as the need arose for simple maintenance work or for transporting loads. Unskilled laborers were also referred to as "harkaras" and "chaprasis". "Lazimas" were workers of various types such as musicians, craftsmen, porters, elephant drivers, etc.

(HH) Tahluwa. There was one or two menials assigned to every office of this rank. They would bring water or run errands for the staff. They would wait outside the office door for whatever summons might come.

There were at least three other functionaries during this time, two being attached to the Palace. They were:

(II) Jyotishi. These were astrologers whose counsel was taken to determine the auspicious time to perform certain actions. Oliphant has given an example of such a case: On the return of Jung Bahadur from England in 1851, he stopped and made camp on the outskirts of Kathmandu while the jyotishis decided upon the proper hour for him to make his entrance into the city⁴⁶.

(JJ) Baidya. Physicians of the ayurvedic system who knew how to prepare and administer medicines made from herbs and other indigenous plants.

(KK) Vakil. This term designated a diplomatic representative sent by the Government. Most hold the rank of sardar or kaji.

Besides the above personnel, there were, at least through the 1830s, a number of "companies" (military units) which were placed under the heads of some offices. The companies were assigned tasks relating to the office's functioning: thus they too had a role in the work of administrative offices⁴⁷. The sipahis in these companies at an earlier time could have been old soldiers who had been replaced in their regiments by younger and better trained men. Over the years, men who had never served in the military were probably recruited directly into some of these companies as unskilled laborers. Among the companies we find particular information about the following ones:

(a) The Samar Jang Company, also called the Chapras Company, more than one hundred in number, was at this period (the late 1830s) under the Kotwal (of subedar rank) of Kathmandu.

(b) The Durga Bakas or Dafdarwalla Company was attached to the kaji in charge of the military pay office of the Kampu.

(c) The Nijamat or Kumari Chowk Company was assigned to the kaji who presided over Kumari Chowk Office.

(d) The Sadar Dafdar Company was placed under the head of the Sardar Dafdar Khana Office.

The Central Government Offices

Having discussed the officials and other personnel of the government, I now shall present portions of a paper written by Hodgson in the early 1840s in which he gives a description of the main offices in Kathmandu and the works for which they were responsible. Being a portrayal of the governmental administration in Nepal at that time, this interesting account runs, in part, as follows⁴⁸.

1. Kousi. "The Kousi is the office whence and to which the general administration of the Terai issues and is referred, the Subahs being appointed through it and their collections delivered to it. So the Customs wholly, so all contracts and contractors for Govt. land revenue that is unsigned. So all tributes. All receipts from these sources are conveyed to the Kousi or General Treasury whence the following expenses are provided for: 1st, the whole household expenses of the Palace. 2nd, all presents made by the Durbar to foreign Govts. and their representatives, to holy men and strangers of distinction. 3rd, all annual, monthly, and daily doles of the Durbar to religionists and mendicants. 4th, all Khillats (documents) given when office is conferred. The Kousi is the great storehouse for money and goods wanted for the personal and official consumption of the Durbar; the coin is put in the 3 Baithaks, the goods in the Tosha Khana...

The Kousi is in the Nholcha quarter of the Palace and formerly was a mere Dewani-Khas of the Rajah and was called Bangya Baithak because of the crookedness or angular form of the apartment"...

2. Kumari Chowk. "The Kumari Chowk is the General Office of account for the whole kingdom where all accounts of collections and contractors must be examined and passed, a fee of 5 rupees being taken for every Rs. 1000 of Bahi or Books so examined. The Kousi recommends the collector or contractor and is answerable for him. The Kumari Chowk merely takes his accounts; and those also of all great servants of the govt..."

(A)ll other lands (except those assigned as khang) and revenues are accounted for once per annum in the Kumari Chowk (although) the Collector or Thekdar may pass 2 or 3 years without offering or being compelled to account; but when anyone does account it is to the Kumari Chowk and usually once per annum or sooner if (the collector) is ejected or changed. Bali (crops) that is not assigned as Khua and Khang (emoluments) is called Ukas; also Sera or demesnes is accounted for in Kumari Chowk. Also all customs and excise...(and accounts from the) mines, Hattisar, Kath Mahal, the Terai in all branches of receipts and charge, and in a word, the whole income and expenses of the Kingdom save Khua and Khang or assignments in lieu of salary and pay.

For (about) the last twenty years, the Kumari Chowk has exercised judicial functions like the other courts of the capital and with like powers civil and criminal. There is a separate hall for the Judicial corps... (This Adalat) is for the investigation of revenue and quasi revenue cases⁴⁹...

Of the general tax or fee of 5 (rupees) per 1000 on accounts passed, half goes to government and the other half in fixed proportions to the officers of the (office) down to the jamadars. Besides this, 5 rupees on each contractor's or collectors's total affairs are payable to the nousindas.

3. Sadar Daftar Khana. "The general office of Registry for all assignments in lieu of pay, whether to Gurus, Bharadars, lesser Pagaries, or to the privates of the whole army except the Compoo, which has a special office of the same kind for that end. The Sardar Daftar gives to every office holder of govt. down to Subedar a separate Red-Sealed Poorja or Serkat (for) taking the Khet and Khua granted him as pay; and for the privates (it gives) one general statement called Lal Dhadda for each regiment or separate company. The Sadar Daftar also takes cognizance of all disputes between the Mhures or peasantry and the govt. assignees on account of these assignments.

It has also the charge of the Hulaks (post offices) or Daks which are provided for by assignments or remittances to certain villagers. It is also thru the Sadar Daftar that govt. grants (as Bekh, Phikdari, Maswanthi) are made. The yearly arrangements between the govt. assignees and the agricultural tenant (Adhia or Kuthia) are made in the Sadar Daftar; govt. standing in the light of proprietor of these assigned lands; and the Sadar Daftar being its instrument for the arrangement of the lease annually to the satisfaction of the landlord's assignee and cultivator"...

4. The Kot Bhandar or Kadel Chowk. "(It) is the same as the Kapardar's Kot, ie., is the office of the Kapardar or controller of the Royal Household. The receipts are from Sera or Desmesne Khet (fields), also (from) Goth or Dairits. The expenses are all those of the inhabitants of the Palace as daily food of Keta-ketis (slaves), Potwars (collectors of land revenues?); (they) get 2 manas of chamal (rice) with quantity sufficient of dahal (lentils) and ghee (clarified butter) and alone of all the servants are fed, unless Bharadars or Chiefs (who) are in attendance call occasionally for food when it is supplied to them. Also (the expenses) of (the) Royal Family; also their cloths and ornaments, with all the household utensils and furniture; also the annual allowance of three murees of rice and thirty pathis of wheat to each Keta-keti; also all Mez bani (sent to guests of (the) Rajah)...

There are also some 15-20 goldsmiths and jewellers in constant pay and employ of the palace; and they are under the Kapardar... The Sera lands are usually leased to Kutia Mhuis, (although) a

little is cultivated by the Durbar's Keta-ketis with (the) aid of Jhara or pressed men (ie., forced labor)... Of Sera Khets, most pay in kind; of Sera villages, some pay in money and some in kind; of Sera Goths, the produce comes either in ghee or in money. Each Goth or herd of cows and buffaloes has a head or Gothala who is usually a contractor to deliver so much ghee and so much (money) per annum at 3 or 4 installments to the Kapardar's Kot, and into the Arrai's (Adhai) hands...It ought to have been noted among the expenses of Kot Bhandar that the annual pay of the "Panj Baja" (or players night and morn on the Nagara, the Narsingha, the Sahnai, the Jhati, and the Jyamko, which are the 5 favorite instruments) is provided for by the Kappardar's Office".

5. Dak Chowk Dhukuti. "(It) is the permanent deposit of net savings, and is required to be added to by one lakh (100,000 rupees) per annum at the time of Laxmi's festival and cannot be drawn upon for any expenditure. (This is a) provision made against war expenses in circumstances forbidding the imposition of war taxes. The treasury is supposed to be now 1 crore (10 million), and it occupies 1 chowk or square of the palace called 'Dak Chowk'. 'Dhukuti' is treasure (or) deposit, from the Newari (word) 'Dhuku' (meaning) a special place of deposit. There are some officers attached to the Dak Chowk: the key of the treasure is in the hands of the Maharaja".

6. Bhandar Khal Tahvil. "It's the Tahvil or Government Bank established in the Bhandar Khal. 'Tahvil' is not a treasury in the ordinary sense or place of government receipts and payment, but 'Tahvil' is a special appropriation of government funds to Banking or profits upon loans at 10%, the loans being made to anyone who can find security. It is a new device of 1839 to turn a penny and answers well, giving satisfaction too to the country. Bhandar Khal is the name of a quarter of the palace where one of these Banks is fixed with three lakhs of capital"...

7-8. Basantpur Tahvil and Makhan Kot Tahvil. "(They) are like (the) Bhandar Khal (Tahvil), (being) Banks set up by govt. in the quarter(s) of the Palace so named. Their establishment is the same as that of Bhandar Khal, and their capital the same, or 3 lakhs".

9. Char Adalat. "The 4 Adalats or Courts of Justice at the Capital are Intachapti, Kotling, Taksar, and Dhansar. The 4 courts are near each other in Kathmandu"... (Since Hodgson's essay on the functioning of these courts has been published elsewhere, I will omit his remarks in this section)⁵⁰.

10. Kampu Daftar Khana. "It is the registry and management office of lands appropriated to the pay or Khangis and Khua of the Khas, or anassigned regiments of the Compoo...In fact the Compoo Daftar is for the Khas part of the Compoo what the Sadar Dafdar is for the rest of the Compoo, and all the other parts of the army as well as the Civil List"...

11. Hitti Chowk. "(It is) an office for meeting petty and sudden expenses of the Durbar in kind, in choora (beaten rice) and oil and tumeric (a spice) and chillies. The oil (is used) for burning if the Court go abroad at night; choora for daily doles of prisoners in the Public Jail of the Capitol, and for a luncheon to all persons pressed by the Corvee (Jhara or Begar) to work within the Durbar. Chillies with the chooria and haldee (are provided) for the Durbar's whole consumption and also for (the celebration of) Holi (a festival) there. The receipts to meet these expenses are assigned lands or Khets at Bhatgaon, Kirtipur, and Patan".

12. Tusal Dhansar or Bhu Bhandel. "(It) is a registry office for all transfers of landed property in the district of Kathmandu, and a similar office exists for Patan and Bhadgaon. (It is) also an office for taxing the manufacture of sugar in money and kind and for supplying the Durbar's wants in goor (sugar) out of the produce of the tax...

(A)ll the class of Dangools or land measurers is under the Bhu Bhandel...If the transfer (of land) be by Govt. grant, then the Dongools must measure the land under superintendence of the Thar Ghars. If the covenant be between individuals, the measuring is not indispensable. The bahidars are Jaisis and form a class of professional and official registrars whose operations used to be universal and compulsory whence all litigation at law was staid. But now registry is optional and neglected. The Red Seal on the deed of sale is said to be indispensable still, but not the agency of this special class of Registrars"...

13. Chi Bhandel. (The more common spelling is "Chhemdel"). "(It is) an office of registry for the transfer of property in houses. ("Che" is "house" in Newari). A red seal countersigned by the head of Chi Bhandel is needful and the taxes above names in Bhu Bhandel attach.

2nd: all craftsmen of the City are attached to this office, and those recorded therein who are considered servants of the Govt. (are) bound to work for it in their several crafts for a consideration explained elsewhere. These are the "700" (craftsmen), and if more and wanted by the Govt. at any time they are summoned through the Chi Bhandel.

3rd: it is a privilege of the head of the Chi Bhandel to carry the Rajah's sword at the Indra Jatra Festival.

4th: "Nangla", "Korcha", and "Mandara" or all cordage and ropes wanted by the Durbar are supplied by this office. The supply of these trifles is all the expense; the receipts are the fees and taxes on sales. If the Govt. grant a house to any one, it must be measured by another class of measurers called "Peechoo", analogous to the Dongools; the Thar Ghars must be present (during the measurement). Private sales of houses do not require this measuring"...

14. Pokhal Dyang. "(It is) an office of universal inspection into all titles and rights with a view to usurption. It was established only in 1839 by the Kala Pandeys and (it) brought all possessions into question. It is already fallen into disgrace and disuetude"...

15. Taksal Bhot Bhansar. "(It is) a double office: first the taksar of mint; second a custom house for goods reported from Tibet (Bhote).

...the coin or precious metal that is minted is chiefly that brought by trade from Tibet⁵¹. Silver chiefly comes in lumps... Whoever brings (it) must produce (it) at the mint for preemption by the Govt., if it please, at a fixed rate. Thence the silver passes into the mint and being much adulterated is issued in... current rupees, whence arises a further profit to Govt...Company's rupees (Indian currency) come in payment of (?) rents but they are not melted and recoined. They go to pay for all foreign luxuries of the Durbar, and the surplus is hoarded in the Dhukuti as a reserve against war. Gold also comes from Tibet in the course of trade but in small quantity.

16. Bhansar. "Custom House; no one govt. office, as all the customs are farmed: those of north and south trade and of internal and external. The former at Kathmandu levies under the names of kirana, nirkhi, kapas, sager, bhainsi; and imports and exports from north and south between Sindhuli and the Palpa confines. A contractor pays for this some 1½ to 1 and three-quarters lakhs per annum. Beyond to the westward, customs are levied by Palpa (and Doti authorities). Beyond to the eastward, Dhankuta and Chaudandi authorities levy. In the Terai, the Subbas (levy)"...

In addition to the major offices given in Hodgson's account above, there is evidence that the following offices also were in existence around 1845⁵².

17. Tundikhel Baidya Khana. It was the office of Nepali doctors located near the large parade ground in Kathmandu.

18. Astabal Khana. This was the office which managed the horse stables. Workers called sawaris were assigned to it.

19. Phil Khana. It was the office in charge of the elephant stables. Darogas were assigned to it; and each elephant was under the charge of three workers.

20. Pharas Khana. It was in charge of the storage and handling of carpets, beddings, mats, and other such articles. ("pharasi" means "Persian").

21. Palki Khana. A "palki" was a palanquin or sedan chair in which dignitaries were borne. This office must have been responsible

for arranging this means of transportation.

Excluding the military establishment, there seem to be four general types of offices at this time. One was comprised of the banks and treasuries (mostly located within the Palace walls) and the mint. Secondly, there were offices for the registration and management of lands and other properties. The courts formed another class of offices. Finally, there were offices created to provide services for the Palace, and perhaps for sections of the nobility and the military as well. Such was the form of administrative institutions in Nepal when Jang Bahadur Kuwar emerged as the most powerful figure in the Kingdom.

FOOTNOTES

1. Kumar, Satish. Rana Polity in Nepal. Asia Publishing House, London, 1967.
2. Ibid., p. 92.
3. Kirkpatrick, William. An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal. London, 1811, pp. 197-203. (Reprinted as vol. 3 in series I of Bibliotheca Himalayica 1969).
4. Hamilton, Francis. An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal. Edinburgh, 1819, pp. 108-09. (Reprinted as vol. 10, series I in Bibliotheca Himalaica 1971).
5. Rose, Leo. E., and Joshi, Bhuban Lal. Democratic Innovations in Nepal. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1966, pp. 26-7.
6. (Brian) Hodgson's Manuscripts, India Office Library, London, IOLM/3/1061, p. 228.
7. Ibid., p. 272
8. Ibid., pp. 85-9.
9. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op.cit., Vol. 52, pp. 23-28.
10. Ibid., #IOLM/3/1061, pp. 75-7.
11. Rose and Joshi, op. cit., p. 28
12. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 23-5. The document written in Nepali shows 32 of the 78 persons it gives as "dhakre", while the duties of 14 others are not specified.
13. Kumar, op. cit. pp. 92-5.

14. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., IOLM/3/1061, pp. 85-89.
15. Ibid., Vol. 52, p. 147.
16. Kumar, op. cit., p. 92.
17. Hodgson's Manuscripts, Vol. 52, p. 169.
18. Turner, Ralph Lilley. A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1965, p. 141.
19. Kumar, op. cit., pp. 92-3.
20. Ibid., p. 93.
21. Idem.
22. Ibid., p. 94.
23. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., vol. 18, p. 154.
24. Ibid., p. 148.
25. Turner, op. cit., p. 302.
26. Regmi, Mahesh Chandra. A Study in Nepali Economic History, 1768-1846. New Delhi, Manjusri Publishing House, 1971, p. 226.
27. Kumar, op. cit., p. 95.
28. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., Vol. 18, p. 149.
29. Idem.
30. Rose and Joshi, op. cit., p. 28.
31. Cf. Bali Khana Kitab 1905 V.S., Kitab Khana, Kathmandu.
32. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., Vol. 18, p. 149.
33. Kumar, op. cit., p. 31.
34. Regmi, op. cit., p. 224.
35. Hodgson, Brian H. "Some Account of the Systems of Law and Police as Recognized in the State of Nepal", in Miscellaneous Essays Relating to Indian Subjects. Trubner & Company, 1880, Vol II, pp. 211-50.

36. Dhungana, Ram Chandra. Sankship Nepali Kosh. Kathmandu, Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2007 V.S., p. 11.
37. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., Vol. 18, p. 151.
38. Sharma, Bal Chandra.
39. Turner, op. cit., p. 107.
40. Regmi, op. cit., p. 229.
41. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., Vol. 52, pp. 154-5.
42. Regmi, op. cit., p. 229.
43. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., Vol. 52, p. 149.
44. Idem.
45. Ibid., p. 154.
46. Oliphant, Laurence. A Journey to Kathmandu. London, 1852, p, 64.
47. Hodgson's Manuscripts, op. cit., #IOLM/3/1061, pp. 76-7.
48. Ibid., Vol. 18, pp. 147-63.
49. Ibid., p. 3. This paragraph is taken from another section of the manuscripts written a number of years earlier.
50. Cf. Hodgson, Miscellaneous Essays Relating to Indian Subjects, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 211-50. See also "Adalats of Nepal" in Hodgson's Manuscripts, IOLM/3/1061, pp. 1-30.
51. Cf. Bali Khane Kitab, 1905 V.S.